

Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

**Wednesday 27 September 2023 at
2.00 pm**

**To be held in the Town Hall,
Pinstone Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Dawn Dale
Councillor Maroof Raouf
Councillor Mohammed Mahroof
Councillor Nighat Basharat
Councillor Jayne Dunn
Councillor Maleiki Haybe
Councillor Ian Horner
Councillor Talib Hussain
Councillor Ann Whitaker

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Education, Children and Families Policy Committee discusses and takes decisions on:

Education and Skills

- Schools
- Mainstream and specialist education (early years, children and young people)
- Learning and Skills policy, programmes and interventions (children and young people)

Children and Families

- Children and family support and social work
- Fostering and adoption
- Children in care, care leavers and corporate parenting
- Residential services
- Youth justice
- Child safeguarding

Meetings are chaired by the Committees Co-Chairs, Councillors Dale and Rooney.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda. Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Policy Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the [Council's webpages](#) or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Policy Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last on the agenda.

Meetings of the Policy Committee have to be held as physical meetings. If you would like to attend the meeting, please report to an Attendant in the Foyer at the Town Hall where you will be directed to the meeting room. However, it would be appreciated if you could register to attend, in advance of the meeting, by emailing committee@sheffield.gov.uk, as this will assist with the management of attendance at the meeting. The meeting rooms in the Town Hall have a limited capacity. We are unable to guarantee entrance to the meeting room for observers, as priority will be given to registered speakers and those that have registered to attend.

Alternatively, you can observe the meeting remotely by clicking on the 'view the webcast' link provided on the meeting page of the [website](#).

If you wish to attend a meeting and ask a question or present a petition, you must submit the question/petition in writing by 9.00 a.m. at least 2 clear working days in

advance of the date of the meeting, by email to the following address:
committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

In order to ensure safe access and to protect all attendees, you will be recommended to wear a face covering (unless you have an exemption) at all times within the venue. Please do not attend the meeting if you have COVID-19 symptoms. It is also recommended that you undertake a Covid-19 Rapid Lateral Flow Test within two days of the meeting.

If you require any further information please email committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms. Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA
27 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Order of Business

Welcome and Housekeeping

The Chair to welcome attendees to the meeting and outline basic housekeeping and fire safety arrangements.

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Exclusion of Press and Public

To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting

(Pages 7 - 10)

4. Minutes of Previous Meetings

To approve the minutes of the last meetings of the Committee held on the 21st June 2023 and the 3rd July 2023.

(Pages 11 - 24)

5. Public Questions and Petitions

To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public

6. Members' Questions

To receive any questions from Members of the committee on issues which are not already the subject of an item of business on the Committee agenda – Council Procedure Rule 16.8.

(NOTE: a period of up to 10 minutes shall be allocated for Members' supplementary questions).

7. Work Programme

Report of the Director of Policy and Engagement

(Pages 25 - 50)

Formal Decisions

8. Short Breaks Frameworks Contract Extension

(Pages 51 - 62)

9. Exclusion Prevention Alternative Provision

(Pages 63 - 98)

10. Citywide Approach to Improving School Attendance

(Pages 99 - 120)

11. **Commission of Education System** (Pages 121 - 148)

12. **Start for Life: Early Years Strategy** (Pages 149 - 252)

Item for Noting

13. **Youth Justice Overview Report** (Pages 253 - 256)

Formal Decisions

14. **Youth Justice Service – Appropriate Adult Service** (Pages 257 - 266)

15. **Youth Justice Service – Reparation & Unpaid Work Services** (Pages 267 - 274)

16. **Youth Justice Service – Victim Engagement & Support Service Contract** (Pages 275 - 284)

Items for Noting

17. **2023/24 Q1 Budget Monitoring** (Pages 285 - 296)

18. **Update report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services** (Pages 297 - 306)

NOTE: The next meeting of Education, Children and Families Policy Committee will be held on Thursday 2 November 2023 at 2.00 pm

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

The Council's Code of Conduct applies to all Members of the Council including co-opted Members and independent Members.

This note is intended to provide general guidance for Members on declaring interests.

However, you may often need to obtain specific advice on whether you have an interest in a particular matter. If you need advice, you can contact:

- the Director of Legal Services
- another Council lawyer; or
- Democratic Services.

If at all possible, you should try to identify any potential interest you may have before the meeting so that you and the person you ask for advice can fully consider all the circumstances before reaching a conclusion on what action you should take.

Do you have a personal interest in any matter on the agenda or meeting?

You will have a personal interest in a matter if it:

- i. (a) relates to an interest that you have already registered on the Register of Interests;
- ii. (b) relates to an interest that should be registered but you have not yet done so; or
- iii. (c) affects your well-being or financial position or that of members of your family or your close associates, to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of people in the ward affected by the decision.

Note: The definition of family is very wide and includes a partner, step-relations, and in-laws. A "close associate" is someone whom a reasonable member of the public might think you would be prepared to favour or disadvantage.

If you have a personal interest you must:

- i. declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) at the beginning of the meeting, before it is discussed or as soon as it becomes apparent to you; but

- ii. you can remain in the meeting, speak and vote on the matter unless the personal interest is also prejudicial.

However, in certain circumstances you may have an exemption which means that you might not have to declare your interest.

Exemption 1. You will have an exemption where your interest arises solely from your membership of or position of control/management in:

- a body to which you have been appointed or nominated by the authority; and/or
- a body exercising functions of a public nature (e.g. another local authority).

In these exceptional cases, provided that you do not have a **prejudicial interest**, you only need to declare your interest if you intend to speak on the matter.

Exemption 2: You will have an exemption if your personal interest is simply having received a gift or hospitality over £25 which you registered more than 3 years ago.

If you have an exemption:

- i. you need only declare your interest if you address the meeting; and
- ii. you can vote without declaring the interest providing you do not speak.

When will a personal interest also be prejudicial?

Your personal interest will also be prejudicial if a member of the public who knows the relevant facts would reasonably think the personal interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest; and

- i. either the matter affects your financial position or the financial position of any person or body through whom you have a personal interest. For example, an application for grant funding to a body on your register of interests or a contract between the authority and that body; or
- ii. the matter relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration that affects you or any relevant person or body with which you have a personal interest. For example, considering a planning or licensing application made by you or a body on your register of interests.

Exemptions: You will not have a prejudicial interest if the matter relates to the following:

- i. the Council's housing functions – if you hold a lease or tenancy with the Council, provided that the matter under consideration is not your own lease or tenancy;

- ii. school meals, transport or travel expenses – if you are the parent or guardian of a child of school age, provided that the matter under consideration is not the school the child attends;
- iii. statutory sick pay;
- iv. Members' allowances;
- v. ceremonial honours for Members; or setting the Council Tax.

If you have a prejudicial interest, you must:

- (a) Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- (b) Leave the room unless members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. If that is the case, you can also attend to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter.
- (c) Once you have finished making representations, answering questions etc., you must leave the room. You cannot stay in the room whilst the matter is being discussed either can you remain in the public gallery to observe the vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence a decision about the matter.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Advice can be obtained from the Interim Director of Legal Services on 27 34018
deborah.holmes@sheffield.gov.uk

Guidance is also available from the Standards Board for England's
Website **www.standardsboard.gov.uk/theCodeofConduct/Guidance**

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Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Meeting held 21st June 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Dawn Dale (Chair), Mohammed Mahroof (Group Spokesperson), Paul Turpin (Substitute Member), Ann Whitaker, Maleiki Haybe, Ian Horner, Talib Hussain, Sioned Mair-Richards (Substitute Member), Nighat Basharat

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Maroof Raouf and Councillor Jayne Dunn

2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 Councillor Dale asked that Item 8.1 be altered to add a response as follows: 'Officers requested a deferral and the Committee agreed that this be brought to today's meeting.'

5. APPOINTMENT TO URGENCY SUB-COMMITTEES

5.1 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

(a) agrees to appoint Members to serve on the Education, Children and Families Urgency Sub-Committee as follows:

Cllr Jayne Dunn to fill a vacancy.

(b) as respects the appointment of Members to serve on the Urgency Sub-Committee or other Sub-Committees of the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee, where vacancies exist or in cases of urgency to ensure quoracy or representation, the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the relevant political group whip, be authorised

to appoint Members to serve on such Sub-Committees, as necessary, on the understanding that details of such appointments will be reported to the next or subsequent meetings of the Policy Committee.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

6.1 The Committee received 9 public questions from Racism Sheffield. The Lead Questioner, Fatima Salim, read many of the questions alongside other members of the group. Ms Salim asked:

‘Those who know racism happens behind the scenes, do nothing, or defend their position knowing that they are wrong, are just as complicit as the perpetrators. If this type of matter comes to the public arena, we want to know if politicians will apologise, whether staff will be held to account, or will this it all be brushed under the carpet?’

Councillor Dale provided a response as follows:

‘The recent Race Equality Commission in Sheffield has concluded that racism and racial disparities remain significant in the lives of Sheffield citizens. Sheffield City Council is committed to ensuring positive action is taken to address these issues. We are committed to becoming an Anti-racist City.

We are working hard to ensure we collect data and have measurable targets to monitor and oversee both how we deliver our services in the community and to POC but also how we look to employ people from our diverse communities. We are also a learning organisation that looks to educate and develop our leaders and learn from both good and bad experiences and where people believe they have been aggrieved. We will apologise when we get things wrong. We will look to learn and work in collaboration to get things right.

We are looking over the next year to work with Schools and MAT in partnership with Learn Sheffield to increase diversity on Governing Bodies to represent the communities and pupils they serve and also to focus on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion and to play their part in ensuring Sheffield is an anti-racist City.

We encourage all schools to ensure that there is a culture where racism can be reported and that it is thoroughly investigated, and appropriate actions taken. Sheffield City Council is committed to working with schools to ensure racism is challenged and inclusivity is at the heart of education across the city.’

6.2 Question two was as follows: ‘Everyone knows that POC have to work twice if not 3 times as hard just to be recognised if they want to be in leadership positions. Could you tell us how are you supporting current POC in leadership positions and how will you ensure they will always have a fair chance at

leadership so that young BAME students can have achievable aspirations?’

Councillor Dale provided the following response: ‘The Race Equality Commission in June 2022 stated that perceptions of bias emerged as a factor in how professionals across sectors experienced their working life. There is a commitment that Sheffield will be an Anti-Racist City. Over the next academic year Sheffield City Council will continue to work to ensure that there are equal opportunities to progress into leadership roles and we will actively engage with POC in leadership roles or aspiring to be leaders to understand barriers and together find solutions. Sheffield City Council with regard to the Family and Children’s Committee will again share the Race Equality Commission findings with all education institutions and childcare providers in the City and work with them to look at how we ensure that all our employees have equal access and opportunity for leadership roles.’

- 6.3 Question three was as follows: ‘How many headteachers do you have of colour in Sheffield? What support, safe space, have they been given? If not, why?’

Councillor Dale provided the following response: ‘Sheffield City Council does not hold the number of headteachers of colour working in the City. Each individual school whether Local Authority or Academy maintains its own record of this information as they are the employer. Sheffield City Council always looks to provide support when requested by the school as an employer. Schools however provide their own pastoral support to their employees and have their own Human Resource facilities. We however recognise this is possibly an area for development and will work with our education institutions and leaders over the coming year to identify and issues and work collectively including with employees and leaders of colour to find better solutions.’

- 6.4 Question four was as follows: ‘As there are only 4 POC headteachers currently in Sheffield, what has the head of education and offices done to protect them? If they are not protected, how do we expect our POC children to be protected?’

Councillor Dale provided the following response: ‘Sheffield City Council is committed to lead on becoming an Anti-Racist City. We value all our headteachers who work across the City in both Local Authority Maintained Schools and Academies. Headteachers are employed by their school organisation and as such are provided support by their Chair of Governors and Governing Body or Trust. The question suggests that more can be done to support Headteachers who are POC. The new Strategic Director of Children’s Services has offered an open invitation to speak to leaders and headteachers of colour over her first few weeks and will prioritise this to understand barriers and issues that are faced by these valued leaders in our City who role model possibilities and opportunities for our children.’

- 6.5 Question five was as follows: ‘What are you doing to support women of colour in senior positions in schools?’

Councillor Dale provided the following response: 'The new Strategic Director of Children's Services along with her team are committed to ensuring Sheffield is an Anti-Racist City. She has offered an open door to all leaders of colour to look at any additional support that can be offered and how we share good practice across all education institutions.'

6.6 Question 6 was as follows: 'We are aware of the race commission that Sheffield has just had. Can you tell us how systemic racism in the Sheffield education system is being monitored? And do officers and people in power know what this looks like?'

Councillor Dale provided the following response: 'Sheffield City Council commissioned the report and are acting on its recommendations. There are specific actions overseen by this committee to ensure we work towards an Anti-Racist City and organisation. Senior leaders work hard to understand the concepts of implicit and explicit racism and unconscious bias and look to listen and co-produce solutions with POC and with underrepresented groups in Sheffield. Senior leaders strive to actively promote equality, diversity, and inclusion.'

We are committed through our action plan to:

- Collect accurate data of school governance, leadership teams, teaching and support staff diversity for LA maintained schools
- Further develop EDI resources including guidance and training to support schools and schools' staff including racial literacy and cultural competency.
- Promote equality related awareness days across schools
- Work with Learn Sheffield to keep the REC as an agenda item on Governors, CEO's briefings to share and collate information and best practice.
- Governor and staff recruitment are anonymised and governors are brought together every 6 months to share practice/experiences. Continue to support and develop opportunities for governors from Black, Asian and Minoritised Ethnic backgrounds.
- Support the early years sector by convening regular meetings to address issues of race and EDI and signposting to agencies who can support them further.
- Support a Locality approach through our education localities. Develop a programme of inclusive engagement, linked to the local population, start with the priority areas where we know improvements are needed.
- Support the Early Years Sector through three twilight sessions as well as carry out setting visits to support on a one-to-one basis. We deliver training 'Introduction to ... Inclusive environments' which supports settings in creating a warm and welcoming environment within their early years provision.
- Whilst recruitment and retention in Early Years is a national issue, Sheffield is working with colleges and universities to encourage people into the workforce or to develop their skills further. To share good

practice, we deliver city wide networking events and briefings as well as training opportunities.

Sheffield City Council is committed to working with POC and with lived experience to ensure these are the right priorities for the coming year to ensure we promote an Anti-Racist approach across all our partners and educational institutions.'

- 6.7 Question 7 was as follows: 'Have senior council officers and members had training to understand what racism can look like and if an allegation is made is their tactic to defend rather than address?'

Councillor Dale provided the following response: 'The second action of the Race Equality Commission was that organisations need to invest in educating and developing leaders and employees. There is already training which is provided. Over the coming few months we will be reviewing this to ensure that it meets the requirement to become an Anti-Racist City. We will also work with schools through Learn Sheffield to review current race equality training to ensure it meets our objective.'

- 6.8 Question 8 was as follows: 'Are you aware that POC teachers will have more allegations made against them than white teachers. How is this being monitored in Sheffield? Do you value people in leadership and do you see this as a benefit to our young children?'

Councillor Dale responded as follows: 'Governing Bodies are responsible for complaints made about their school both by pupils, parents and their employees. As a Council that is leading an anti-racist approach we are committed to working with educational institutions to support this agenda. We value leaders and want to ensure that all communities in Sheffield are fairly represented and heard – this is essential on a number of levels and not least for our future generation both for their opportunities and the diversity they bring to our City.'

- 6.9 Question 9 was as follows: 'Like many industries, the education system in Sheffield is built on systemic and institutionalised racism. As it your responsibility, what has the head of education and officers done to ensure diversity amongst teachers and specifically within leadership?'

Councillor Dale responded as follows: 'The Race Equality Commission from June 2022 'The Race Equality Commission (REC) has concluded that racism and racial disparities remain significant in the lives of Sheffield's citizens. What has been shared with the Commission spans education, crime, justice and policing, sport and culture, health, business and employment, civic life and communities, and more. The perpetuation of racism, and racial disparities across sectors and major institutions in the city compel the Commission to restate the urgency to instigate positive measures and improvements in organisations and among its citizenry'. We are committed to addressing these issues and look to learn from lived experience to ensure we are an Anti-Racist City.'

The one year on actions that have been delivered to move the organisation and city closer to becoming Anti-Racist is being published imminently. This will and has included a focus by Council Officer's when visiting schools and education institutions to discuss the Race Equality Commission and possible implications. We have been reviewing the training package for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion meeting with providers to discuss possibilities. We have shared good practice about equality awareness days in schools which has been well received. We have been working with Learn Sheffield on raising the profile of Race Equality Commission recommendations and priorities. We have far more work to do in this area and will review our actions and also progress over the coming months working closely with members of the community and the Education, Children's and Families Policy Committee.'

- 6.10 Ms Salim expressed unhappiness with the answers provided by the Committee, and stated she felt they were formal. She asked the Committee to state what was being done currently to address racism in the Education system. Councillor Dale offered to create meetings with Racism Sheffield and encouraged the public speakers to attend future meetings and to hold the Committee to account if they felt commitments were not being met. Councillor Dale stated this had been added to the Work Programme and that this would be looked at over the coming year.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

- 7.1 The Committee received the Committee's Work Programme for consideration and discussion. The aim of the Work Programme is to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this Committee, other committees, officers, partners, and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee. Changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, had been made in consultation with the Co-Chairs, Deputy Chair and Group Spokesperson, via their regular pre-meetings, and these were set out at the beginning of Appendix A of the report. It was highlighted that the Committee had begun to consider items which would be included on agendas from March 2023 onwards.
- 7.2 Councillor Mair-Richards suggested that the References from Council or other Committees be added as an agenda item, rather than being included in section 2.0 of the Work Programme.
- 7.3 Councillor Turpin asked that the recommendations of the Race Equality Commission be added to the Work Programme. Councillor Haybe asked that Race as a wider issue be added to the Work Programme. He offered to create some wording.
- 7.4 Appraisal of Learn Sheffield to be added to the Work Programme, with a specific focus on what they are doing to address racial inequality.
- 7.5 Councillor Mahroof asked that SEND be added to the Work Programme.

7.6 Councillor Basharat asked that Home Tuition be added to the Work Programme.

7.7 Councillor Mair-Richards asked whether any Committee looks at Sheffield Children's Book Awards in Sheffield. Councillor Dale stated she would look into this, both within Education and within the libraries team.

7.8 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1, be agreed, including the additions and amendments identified in Part 1, with the suggested amendments above.

8. SHEFFIELD THRESHOLD OF NEED REFRESH 2023

8.1 Mark Storf was in attendance to present a report which sought to approve the refresh of Sheffield City Council's Threshold of Need Guidance.

8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

- Approve the revised Threshold of Need Guidance for Sheffield City Council use, with a view to it also being adopted by partners across Sheffield

8.3 Reasons for Decision

8.3.1 Sheffield City Council is a key partner in Safeguarding the Children, Young People and Families of Sheffield. Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility and revisions to the Threshold of Need Guidance will support professional, partners and individuals to make better decisions when identifying risk, identifying the appropriate level of interventions required and making more informed referrals. Approval of Sheffield City Council's involvement in the publication of the updated Threshold of Need Guidance will reduce inequalities and contribute to Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnerships meeting its objectives.

8.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

8.4.1 Not to approve Sheffield City Council's involvement in the publication of updated Threshold of Need Guidance. This option was rejected. In Sheffield safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and revisions to the Threshold of Need Guidance will support professional, partners and individuals to make better decisions when identifying risk, identifying the appropriate level of interventions required and making more informed referrals. The revision will also support Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership realise it's objectives.

9. FUTURE OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT – SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND CONTRACTING WITH LEARN SHEFFIELD

9.1 Steve Middleton was in attendance to present a report which followed the report presented to Committee on the 13th of December which presented options for the future funding of Sheffield City Council school improvement activities and outlined further investigative work that needed to be undertaken as to how best to deliver these activities. The purpose of this report was to update on the outcome of that further investigative work.

9.2 **RESOLVED:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

- Agrees that the council should continue to directly deliver some statutory school improvement services according to established practices and processes.
- Also agrees that the council should not now look to insource all school improvement services and notes that whilst the current contract for school improvement activities through Learn Sheffield will expire on 31st August 2023 officers will look to move forward the proposal for a new contract for limited school improvement activities from 1 September 2023 for two years.
- Notes that SCC will continue as a member of Learn Sheffield and remain the 'supervising authority' for Learn Sheffield.

(NOTE: The result of the vote on the resolution was FOR - 7 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 2 Members.

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1 SCC has been forced by changes to school improvement strategy and funding at a national level to reconsider how services are provided. The current contract arrangements will soon expire, and the current funding arrangements are no longer available. The School Forum have agreed that they will no longer fund school improvement with Learn Sheffield through de-delegation.

9.3.2 The recommended option will allow SCC to continue delivering quality services to its maintained schools, in a context where the School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant has affected funding. This recommendation is in alignment with the latest DfE guidance in Schools Causing Concern and "Reforming how Local Authorities School Functions are funded" (DfE 2021).

9.3.3 The recommendation will enable SCC to:

- Make effective use of a significantly reduced financial resource.
- Know its schools by further developing its own monitoring and intervention processes in collaboration with Learn Sheffield.
- Continue to develop a strong relationship with its local partner, Learn Sheffield
- Continue to maintain strong relationships and offer support to school leaders and governors.
- Ensure support, challenge and intervention is matched to need and provided in a timely manner.
- Continue to coordinate and integrate statutory school improvement services with other services provided by the council such as inclusion and SEND.

- Have confidence that SCC is fulfilling its core statutory school improvement activities

9.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

9.4.1 Insourcing - If SCC were to provide no further investment in Learn Sheffield, SCC would need to develop its own strategic approach to statutory school improvement and fulfil all statutory school improvement activities currently provided by Learn Sheffield. This would require a significant increase in capacity and activities within SCC and associated impact on budgets as well as disruption to service continuity. Learn Sheffield are an established and trusted partner with School Company status and have offered services that are affordable within existing budgets.

9.5 (NOTE: During the discussion of the above item the Committee agreed, in accordance with Council Procedure rules, that as the meeting was approaching the two hours and 30 minutes time limit, the meeting should be extended by a period of 30 minutes).

10. ANNUAL UPDATE OF THE BUSINESS SUCCESSFUL FAMILIES PROGRAMME

10.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Integrated Commissioning which provided an annual update to the Education, Children and Families on the Building Successful Families programme, referred to nationally as the Supporting Families programme.

10.2 The Education, Children and Families Policy Committee noted the report.

10.3 Councillor Dale asked that this be added to the induction programme for new members to the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee.

11. 2022/23 FINANCIAL OUTTURN

11.1 Jane Wilby was in attendance to present a report which brought the Committee up to date with the Council's final revenue outturn position for 2022/23.

11.2 The Education, Children and Families Policy Committee noted the report.

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Extraordinary Meeting of the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Meeting held 3rd July 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Dawn Dale (Chair), Maroof Raouf (Deputy Chair),
Mohammed Mahroof (Group Spokesperson) Ann Whitaker, Maleiki
Haybe, Ian Horner, Talib Hussain and Jayne Dunn

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 No apologies for absence were received.

2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS RELATED TO THE ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED

4.1 No public questions or petitions were received on the items to be discussed.

5. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL SUFFICIENCY PLANS

5.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the citywide mainstream primary and secondary school places strategy, following the annual data review and sought agreement to the overall strategy and implementation approach.

5.2 Councillors Mohammed Mahroof and Maroof Raouf asked that regular updates be provided on these items.

5.3 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

(a) Approve the overall strategy and implementation approach set out in this paper (including that secondary Number on roll forecasts are initially uplifted by 3% in order to meet demand at the highest allocation point); and

- (b) Notes that individual schemes will be brought through to the Finance Committee as part of the standard capital approvals process in the usual way.

5.4 Reasons for Decision

5.4.1 The proposed primary school expansions in Planning Areas 2 & 5 will contribute to:

- Need for places: without additional places in the areas, the impact on families of not getting a local place will be significant as well as the impact on neighbouring schools.
- Children's outcomes: the standard of education that are provided at the two schools is of a good quality – both schools are rated by Ofsted as "Good."
- Equality: the catchment area in Planning Area 5 is characterised by deprivation and a higher proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic population. The school in Planning Area 2 is in a small rural community and includes Black and Minority Ethnic pupils and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. By increasing places at these schools, the needs of all children are met, and the needs of more vulnerable children and families located in the city.

5.4.2 The secondary school places sufficiency expansion strategy and subsequent secondary school expansion proposals will help meet:

- Need for places: without additional places in the areas identified, the impact on families of not getting a local place will be significant as well as the impact on neighbouring schools.
- Statutory duty: the proposals will help ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties under the Education Act 1996 to provide sufficient school places, promote parental choice, diversity, and fair access.

5.5 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

5.5.1 A detailed Options Appraisal was undertaken to consider alternative options to help address the primary deficits prior to feasibility studies. At that stage it was recommended that the only viable option was to expand the two primary schools identified.

5.5.2 A detailed Options Appraisal was undertaken to consider alternative options to help address the secondary deficits as part of Phase 1 expansions. At that stage it was recommended that the only viable option to address the deficits was to expand some secondary schools. This remains the only viable option for Phase 2 expansion implementation.

6. COMMISSIONING PLAN 2023-2026: EARLY EDUCATION & CHILDCARE, PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND POST 16 SECTORS

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Integrated Commissioning providing an update on the citywide mainstream primary and secondary school places strategy, following the annual data review and seeks agreement to the overall strategy and implementation approach.

6.2 Councillor Maleiki Haybe asked whether the Unions were consulted. Andrew Jones stated that they would be in future.

6.3 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

(a) approve the overall strategy and implementation approach set out in this paper (including that secondary Number on roll forecasts are initially uplifted by 3% in order to meet demand at the highest allocation point); and

(b) notes that individual schemes will be brought through to the Finance Committee as part of the standard capital approvals process in the usual way.

6.4 **Reasons for Decision**

The proposed primary school expansions in Planning Areas 2 & 5 will contribute to:

- Need for places: without additional places in the areas, the impact on families of not getting a local place will be significant as well as the impact on neighbouring schools.
- Children's outcomes: the standard of education that are provided at the two schools is of a good quality – both schools are rated by Ofsted as "Good."
- Equality: the catchment area in Planning Area 5 is characterised by deprivation and a higher proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic population. The school in Planning Area 2 is in a small rural community and includes Black and Minority Ethnic pupils and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. By increasing places at these schools, the needs of all children are met, and the needs of more vulnerable children and families located in the city.

The secondary school places sufficiency expansion strategy and subsequent secondary school expansion proposals will help meet:

- Need for places: without additional places in the areas identified, the impact on families of not getting a local place will be significant as well as the impact on neighbouring schools.
- Statutory duty: the proposals will help ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties under the Education Act 1996 to provide sufficient school places, promote parental choice, diversity, and fair access.

6.5 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

6.5.1 A detailed Options Appraisal was undertaken to consider alternative options to help address the primary deficits prior to feasibility studies. At that stage it was

recommended that the only viable option was to expand the two primary schools identified.

- 6.5.2 A detailed Options Appraisal was undertaken to consider alternative options to help address the secondary deficits as part of Phase 1 expansions. At that stage it was recommended that the only viable option to address the deficits was to expand some secondary schools. This remains the only viable option for Phase 2 expansion implementation.



Report to Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

27th September 2023

Report of: Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement

Subject: Committee Work Programme

Author of Report: Fiona Martinez, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Fiona.martinez@sheffield.gov.uk

Summary:

The Committee's Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. This aims to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee.

Any changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, have been made in consultation with the Co-Chairs, and the document is always considered at the regular pre-meetings to which all Group Spokespersons are invited.

The following potential sources of new items are included in this report, where applicable:

- Questions and petitions from the public, including those referred from Council
- References from Council or other committees (statements formally sent for this committee's attention)
- A list of issues, each with a short summary, which have been identified by the Committee or officers as potential items but which have not yet been scheduled (See Appendix 1)

The Work Programme will remain a live document and will be brought to each Committee meeting.

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. That consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1;
3. That Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

1.0 Prioritisation

1.1 For practical reasons this committee has a limited amount of time each year in which to conduct its formal business. The Committee will need to prioritise firmly in order that formal meetings are used primarily for business requiring formal decisions, or which for other reasons it is felt must be conducted in a formal setting.

1.2 In order to ensure that prioritisation is effectively done, on the basis of evidence and informed advice, Members should usually avoid adding items to the work programme which do not already appear:

- In the draft work programme in Appendix 1 due to the discretion of the chair; or
- within the body of this report accompanied by a suitable amount of information.

2.0 References from Council or other Committees

2.1 Any references sent to this Committee by Council, including any public questions, petitions and motions, or other committees since the last meeting are listed here, with commentary and a proposed course of action, as appropriate:

2.2 None received

3.0 Member engagement, learning and policy development outside of Committee

3.1 Subject to the capacity and availability of councillors and officers, there are a range of ways in which Members can explore subjects, monitor information and develop their ideas about forthcoming decisions outside of formal meetings. Appendix 2 is an example 'menu' of some of the ways this could be done. It is entirely appropriate that member development, exploration and policy development should in many cases take place in a private setting, to allow members to learn and formulate a position in a neutral space before bringing the issue into the public domain at a formal meeting.

3.2 Training & Skills Development - Induction programme for this committee.

Title	Description & Format	Date
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None to report		
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Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Part 1: Proposed additions and amendments to the work programme since the last meeting:

New Items	Proposed Date	Note
NEW: Youth Justice Annual Plan	September '23	This is a briefing on the Youth Justice Plan, the work, key performance indicators and priorities of Sheffield Youth Justice Service. The annual review is submitted by the end of June each year and the review has therefore been completed.
NEW: The Childcare Reforms	February '23	The likely impact of implementation of the Chancellor's Spring Budget 2023 Announcement of proposed Childcare Reforms.
NEW: 2024 to 2027 Revenue & Capital Budget	November '23	Joint report with the DoF and Exec/Strategic Director
NEW: Children and Families Sufficiency Strategy	November '23	To seek a decision on the approval of the Children's Sufficiency Strategy and duty in relation to Looked After Children
NEW: Start for Life Sheffield: Early Years Strategy	September '23	A new 5-year Early Years Strategy has been developed following extensive consultation. The completed document has been developed which considers all current and planned developments in EY both Locally and Nationally, mitigates against the negative impacts of multiple disadvantages, and supports Sheffield's young families to reach their potential Committee members are requested to approve the Strategy which will be in place from 2023 to 2028.
NEW: Short Breaks Framework contract extension	September '23	To extend the current Short Breaks Framework Agreement by 12 months from April 2024 to March 2025 to allow a thorough re-commissioning process.
NEW: Exclusion Prevention Alternative Provision	September '23	To secure a high quality, sustainable Exclusion Prevention AP offer to support children and young people with social and emotional barriers to learning and help them engage with education and avoid exclusion.
NEW: Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2021-22	November '23	Report is presented in line with statutory requirement detailed in Working Together 2018 to inform elected members and to invite questions and feedback. This report covers the period from April 2021 through to March 2022.
NEW: Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2022-23	November '23	Report is presented in line with statutory requirement detailed in Working Together 2018 to inform elected members and to invite questions and feedback

		This report covers the period from April 2022 through to March 2023.
NEW: Sheffield City Council Draft School Improvement Framework 2023-2024	November '23	The framework sets out how the authority will carry out its core statutory responsibilities with maintained schools following the end of the commission to Learn Sheffield in September 2023. It sets out the processes and procedures by which Sheffield City Council (SCC) will work to ensure all maintained schools offer the highest quality of education to all pupils. It reaffirms the statutory roles and responsibilities of school governors and the Local Authority. Learn Sheffield is currently commissioned by SCC to deliver the core statutory duties relating to school improvement. This contract runs until 31 August 2023. From September 1, 2023, SCC will undertake these duties directly to maintained schools.
NEW: Increased cost of School Swimming Transport	November '23	The service seeks approval of the extra spend. The predicated contract total is now £1,311,975 over the 3.5yr contract. Please note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The service is a traded service. – All of this contract will be paid by schools. – SCC School swimming Service pay the transport companies and then charge the schools at the end of the swimming blocks (in February and July) – Therefore, the increased cost will not impact on SCC finances but will have an impact on how many lessons schools can afford.
NEW: Children's Residential Strategy	November '23	This paper will set out the key actions to support the on-going development of the in-house residential service.
NEW: Citywide Approach to Improving School Attendance	September '23	Update required on current activity and future planning for developing a citywide approach to improve School Attendance.
NEW: Re-commission of Victim Engagement Service for Sub-Region Youth Justice Services	September '23	The current contract ends on 31 st March 2024. We need to seek approval from Committee to agree to a sub-regional tender for the provision of a Victim Engagement Service Contract for Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley Youth Justice Services. Doncaster do not wish to be part of this contract.
NEW: Re-commission of Reparation Service for Sub-Region Youth Justice Services	September '23	The current contract ends on 31 st March 2024. We need to seek approval from Committee to agree to a sub-regional tender for the provision of a Reparation

		Service Contract for Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley Youth Justice Services. Doncaster do not wish to be part of this contract.
NEW: Re-commission of Appropriate Adult Service for Sub-Region Youth Justice Services	September '23	The current contract ends on 31 st March 2024. We need to seek approval from Committee to agree to a sub-regional tender for the provision of an Appropriate Adult Service Contract for Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster's Youth Justice Services.
NEW: Corporate Parenting Plan	November '23	We are currently consulting and developing our new strategy for 2023-2026. We aim to have this presented to our Corporate Parenting Board in November 2023. This will set out our ambition for children and young people over the next 3 years and how we will hold ourselves to account. This will be informed by what our children and young people have told us, what our partners have told us, and today we invite you to contribute your thoughts and aspirations too. This strategy is about focusing on what really matters to children - family, love and a safe, stable and reliable place to call home. These are the things that ultimately make a difference to children's happiness and success.
NEW: Race Equality revised plan	November '23	Awaiting Form 1
NEW: Commission of Education System	September '23	Following the ending of the Capita Partnership in 2021 the Council put in place contractual arrangements to ensure it was still able to access various key systems previously provided under the Partnership. The Council currently has a single contract in place with Capita Business Services Ltd for the joint delivery of four core IT systems including Capita One Education.
NEW: Update report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services	September '23	To provide a Strategic Director's update regarding the performance and governance of Children's services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children's Services) accountabilities and delivering on our statutory requirements. It also provides an update regards progress in relation to the Council's Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.
Rescheduled Item	Proposed Date	Note
NEW: MOVED: The Childcare Reforms	February '24	Moved from September's Committee to February's Committee

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Part 2: List of other potential items not yet included in the work programme

Issues that have recently been identified by the Committee, its Chair or officers as potential items but have not yet been added to the proposed work programme. If a Councillor raises an idea in a meeting and the committee agrees under recommendation 3 that this should be explored, it will appear either in the work programme or in this section of the report at the committee’s next meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

Topic	
Description	
Lead Officer/s	
Item suggested by	
Type of item	
Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	
Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	
Lead Officer Commentary/Proposed Action(s)	

Part 3: Agenda Items for Forthcoming Meetings

Meeting 2	27th September 2023	2pm				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy</i>	Prior member engagement/	Public Participation/	Final decision-maker (& date)

			<i>development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
2023/24 Q1 Budget Monitoring	Budget Monitoring	Jane Wilby	Monitoring			Education, Children and Families
NEW: Youth Justice Annual Plan	This is a briefing on the Youth Justice Plan, the work, key performance indicators and priorities of Sheffield Youth Justice Service. The annual review is submitted by the end of June each year and the review has therefore been completed.	Sam Taylor	Performance/Monitoring	Member briefing session	None required	Education, Children and Families
NEW: Start for Life: Early Years Strategy	New Sheffield Early Years Strategy "Start for Life, Sheffield" A new 5-year Early Years Strategy has been developed following extensive consultation. The completed document has been developed which considers all current and planned developments in EY both Locally and Nationally, mitigates against the negative impacts of multiple	Marie McGreavy /Joe Horobin	Strategy, Policy and Development	ECF Committee have been consulted on the draft consultation	Full consultation took place in Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023. This included an Early Years event on the 20 th October 2022. Feedback from this event started to give direction in terms of priorities for the strategy and these priorities were further tested with additional professional groups	Education, Children and Families

	<p>disadvantages, and supports Sheffield's young families to reach their potential</p> <p>Committee members are requested to approve the Strategy which will be in place from 2023 to 2028.</p>				<p>as well as with Parents and Carers through focus groups and online surveys. We have used our networks of existing community links to ensure that voices of seldom heard groups are represented in the consultation. In addition, surveys undertaken related to Early Years focussed activity undertaken in the last two years, for example Early Years School Readiness review consultations were used to inform the strategy</p>	
<p>NEW: Short Breaks Frameworks Contract Extension</p>	<p>To extend the current Short Breaks Framework Agreement by 12 months from April 2024 to March 2025 to allow a thorough re-commissioning process.</p>	<p>Joe Horobin</p>	<p>Decision</p>	<p>Member briefing</p>	<p>The Short Breaks Service is well utilised and well considered by families. We routinely collate feedback using case studies and have</p>	<p>Education, Children and Families</p>

					<p>regular discussions with the Parent and Carer Forum representative through the Short Breaks Steering Group. We actively listen to the experiences of Providers through formal contract monitoring and informal support.</p> <p>The recommissioning process would include direct consultation with parents and carers, children, new and existing Providers and professionals from services who work with children with disabilities to inform the new Framework Agreement.</p>	
<p>NEW: Exclusion Prevention Alternative Provision</p>	<p>To secure a high quality, sustainable Exclusion Prevention AP offer to support children and</p>	<p>Emma Bryant/ Matthew Peers / Tim Armstrong</p>	<p>Decision</p>	<p>Routine engagement and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal and informal discussion groups, to 	<p>Education, Children and Families</p>

	<p>young people with social and emotional barriers to learning and help them engage with education and avoid exclusion.</p>			<p>described in Appendix 1 will be sufficient.</p>	<p>include school sector, AP providers, parent/care rs, pupils (within limitations to this).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-design of the offer within the ongoing review of the delivery model for AP in Sheffield.• Online consultation with school leaders and staff.	
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<p>NEW: Citywide Approach to Improving School Attendance</p>	<p>Update required on current activity and future planning for developing a citywide approach to improve School Attendance.</p>	<p>Tim Armstrong</p>	<p>Strategy/Policy development</p>	<p>Routine engagement and development described in Appendix 1 will be sufficient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-design of the offer with children, young people and families (within limitations to this). • Online questionnaire feedback with school leaders and staff. • Formal and informal discussion groups, with key stakeholders including school sector, health providers, city leaders. 	<p>Education, Children and Families</p>
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<p>NEW: Re-commission of Reparation Service for Sub-Region Youth Justice Services</p>	<p>The current contract ends on 31st March 2024. We need to seek approval from Committee to agree to a sub-regional tender for the provision of a Reparation Service Contract for Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley Youth Justice Services. Doncaster do not wish to be part of this contract.</p>	<p>Mark Storf</p>	<p>Performance/Monitoring</p>	<p>Education Children and Families members briefing</p>	<p>None required</p>	<p>Education, Children and Families</p>
<p>NEW: Re-commission of Victim Engagement Service for Sub-Region Youth Justice Services</p>	<p>The current contract ends on 31st March 2024. We need to seek approval from Committee to agree to a sub-regional tender for the provision of a Victim Engagement Service Contract for Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley Youth Justice Services. Doncaster do not wish to be part of this contract.</p>	<p>Mark Storf</p>	<p>Performance/Monitoring</p>	<p>Education Children and Families members briefing and Communities member briefing</p>	<p>None required</p>	<p>Education, Children and Families And Member briefing for Communities, Parks & Leisure</p>

<p>NEW: Re-commission of Appropriate Adult Service for Sub-Region Youth Justice Services</p>	<p>The current contract ends on 31st March 2024. We need to seek approval from Committee to agree to a sub-regional tender for the provision of an Appropriate Adult Service Contract for Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster's Youth Justice Services.</p>	<p>Mark Storf</p>	<p>Performance/Monitoring</p>	<p>Education Children and Families members briefing and Adult Health and Social Care member briefing</p>	<p>None required</p>	<p>Education, Children and Families and cross cutting with Adults, as there are vulnerable adults aged 18+ supported by the service</p>
<p>NEW: Commission of Education System</p>	<p>Following the ending of the Capita Partnership in 2021 the Council put in place contractual arrangements to ensure it was still able to access various key systems previously provided under the Partnership. The Council currently has a single contract in place with Capita Business Services Ltd for the joint delivery of four core IT systems including Capita One Education.</p> <p>This contractual arrangement is due to come to an end on 30th June 2025.</p>	<p>Dominic Sleath</p>	<p>Decision</p>	<p>Member Briefing</p>	<p>None required</p>	<p>Education, Children and Families</p>

	To prepare for the end of this arrangement, the Council must commission an Education System. This system will facilitate the work of over 30 Services and 500 Officers. The Procurement Strategy will be developed with Commercial Services.					
NEW: Update report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services	To provide a Strategic Director's update regarding the performance and governance of Children's services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children's Services) accountabilities and delivering on our statutory requirements. It also provides an update regards progress in relation to the Council's Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.	Meredith Teadsdale-Dixon				Education, Children and Families
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> 					

Meeting 3	2nd November 2023	2pm				
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Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <i>This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer</i>
NEW: 2024 to 2027 Revenue & Capital Budget		Philip Gregory	Decision			Education, Children and Families
NEW: Sheffield City Council Draft School Improvement Framework 2023-2024	The framework sets out how the authority will carry out its core statutory responsibilities with maintained schools following the end of the commission to Learn Sheffield in September 2023. It sets out the processes and procedures by which Sheffield City Council (SCC) will work to ensure all maintained schools offer the highest quality of education to all pupils. It reaffirms the statutory roles and responsibilities of school governors and the Local Authority. Learn Sheffield is currently commissioned by SCC to deliver the core statutory	Andrew Jones	Performance/Monitoring	We will need to discuss outline proposals with the Committee's leadership We will need a further discussion with the committee's leadership once the framework is formulated (post-consultation) We will need a item on the full committee's main agenda.	We will consult with all schools and academies via the Education and Skills Bulletin, and we will consult with Learn Sheffield and its Board of Directors.	Education, Children and Families

	duties relating to school improvement. This contract runs until 31 August 2023. From September 1, 2023, SCC will undertake these duties directly to maintained schools.					
NEW: Increased cost of School Swimming Transport	<p>The service seeks approval of the extra spend. The predicated contract total is now £1,311,975 over the 3.5yr contract.</p> <p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The service is a traded service. – All of this contract will be paid by schools. – SCC School swimming Service pay the transport companies and then charge the schools at the end of the swimming blocks (in February and July) – Therefore, the increased cost will not impact on SCC finances but will 	Emma Banks	Decision	Member briefing	None required	Education, Children and Families

	have an impact on how many lessons schools can afford.					
NEW: Children's Residential Strategy	<p>This paper will set out the key actions to support the on-going development of the in-house residential service.</p> <p>This strategy will link closely with the council's sufficiency strategy and will set out the development of the in-house residential service portfolio.</p> <p>The residential service will be going through a period of transformation and will also include expanding the service. The strategy will set out the current needs and the new areas of focus including the new build children's home, which is part of the DfE bid which was won in 2022.</p>	Lindsey Knight	Strategy/Policy Developments	Member briefing	None required	Education, Children and Families
NEW: Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2021-22	Report is presented in line with statutory requirement detailed in Working Together 2018 to inform elected members and to invite questions and feedback.	Amanda Boughton Brown	Performance, monitoring and other	No prior engagement is requested.	The report covers the purpose of the SCSP, the work undertaken in the reporting year and the successes and challenges arising.	Education, Children and Families

	This report covers the period from April 2021 through to March 2022.					
NEW: Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2022-23	Report is presented in line with statutory requirement detailed in Working Together 2018 to inform elected members and to invite questions and feedback This report covers the period from April 2022 through to March 2023.	Amanda Boughton Brown	Performance, monitoring and other	No prior engagement is requested.	The report covers the purpose of the SCSP, the work undertaken in the reporting year and the successes and challenges arising.	Education, Children and Families
NEW: Children and Families Sufficiency Strategy	Our current sufficiency strategy runs from 2021-2023 and as such it is time to update our sufficiency strategy for 2023- 2026 The Sufficiency Strategy is reviewed by the Education, Children and Families Committee with a view to being approved by the Chair of the Committee and adopted by the council. The target date for the publication of the sufficiency strategy is November 2023	Sally Williams	Decision	Member briefing	Changes to the Sufficiency Strategy do not require public consultation. However, extensive consultation with our looked after children through the Bright Spots Survey informs both our Corporate Parenting Strategy and our Sufficiency Strategy.	Education, Children and Families
NEW: Corporate Parenting Plan	We are currently consulting and developing our new strategy for 2023-2026. We aim to have this presented	Sally Williams	Performance, monitoring and other	Member briefing / Corporate parenting board	Engagement with Children and Young people / external partners	Education, Children and Families

	<p>to our Corporate Parenting Board in November 2023. This will set out our ambition for children and young people over the next 3 years and how we will hold ourselves to account. This will be informed by what our children and young people have told us, what our partners have told us, and today we invite you to contribute your thoughts and aspirations too.</p> <p>This strategy is about focusing on what really matters to children - family, love and a safe, stable and reliable place to call home. These are the things that ultimately make a difference to children's happiness and success.</p>					
NEW: Race Equality Revised Plan	To agree an action plan for Children's Services following the Race Equality commission outcome. (Awaiting Form 1)	Meredith Teasdale	TBC	TBC	TBC	Education, Children and Families
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> 					

Meeting 4	19th December 2023	2pm				
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Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
2023/24 Q2 Budget Monitoring	Budget Monitoring	Jane Wilby	Monitoring			Education, Children and Families
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> 					

Meeting 5	8th February 2023	2pm	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required	Public Participation/ Engagement approach	Final decision-maker (& date) This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required	Public Participation/ Engagement approach	Final decision-maker (& date) This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer

			<i>decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	<i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	<i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	
NEW: MOVED: The Childcare Reforms	The likely impact of implementation of the Chancellor's Spring Budget 2023 Announcement of proposed Childcare Reforms.	Cathie Tandy	Strategy/Policy Development	N/A	<p>One key area of work to be undertaken will be to establish levels of expected demand amongst parents/carers, alongside existing capacity within the Early Education and Childcare Market, to help identify any gaps and to determine levels of provision required.</p> <p>Other key strands will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information to parents/carers regarding the offer and what they can access • Engaging with childcare providers 	Education, Children and Families

					and schools regarding the new entitlements they plan to offer.	
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Questions/ Petitions Work Programme 					

Meeting 6	19 th March 2023	2pm				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
2023/24 Q3 Budget Monitoring	Budget Monitoring	Jane Wilby	Monitoring			Education, Children and Families

Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> 					

Items which the Committee has agreed to add to an agenda, but for which no date is set.

Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer

Appendix 2 – Menu of options for member engagement, learning and development prior to formal Committee consideration

Members should give early consideration to the degree of pre-work needed before an item appears on a formal agenda.

All agenda items will anyway be supported by the following:

- Discussion well in advance as part of the work programme item at Pre-agenda meetings. These take place in advance of each formal meeting, before the agenda is published and they consider the full work programme, not just the immediate forthcoming meeting. They include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers
- Discussion and, where required, briefing by officers at pre-committee meetings in advance of each formal meeting, after the agenda is published. These include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers.
- Work Programming items on each formal agenda, as part of an annual and ongoing work programming exercise
- Full officer report on a public agenda, with time for a public discussion in committee
- Officer meetings with Chair & VC as representatives of the committee, to consider addition to the draft work programme, and later to inform the overall development of the issue and report, for the committee's consideration.

The following are examples of some of the optional ways in which the committee may wish to ensure that they are sufficiently engaged and informed prior to taking a public decision on a matter. In all cases the presumption is that these will take place in private, however some meetings could happen in public or eg be reported to the public committee at a later date.

These options are presented in approximately ascending order of the amount of resources needed to deliver them. Members must prioritise carefully, in consultation with officers, which items require what degree of involvement and information in advance of committee meetings, in order that this can be delivered within the officer capacity available.

The majority of items cannot be subject to the more involved options on this list, for reasons of officer capacity.

- Written briefing for the committee or all members (email)
- All-member newsletter (email)
- Requests for information from specific outside bodies etc.
- All-committee briefings (private or, in exceptional cases, in-committee)
- All-member briefing (virtual meeting)
- Facilitated policy development workshop (potential to invite external experts / public, see appendix 2)
- Site visits (including to services of the council)
- Task and Finish group (one at a time, one per cttee)

Furthermore, a range of public participation and engagement options are available to inform Councillors, see appendix 3.

Appendix 3 – Public engagement and participation toolkit

Public Engagement Toolkit

On 23 March 2022 Full Council agreed the following:

A toolkit to be developed for each committee to use when considering its 'menu of options' for ensuring the voice of the public has been central to their policy development work. Building on the developing advice from communities and Involve, committees should make sure they have a clear purpose for engagement; actively support diverse communities to engage; match methods to the audience and use a range of methods; build on what's worked and existing intelligence (SCC and elsewhere); and be very clear to participants on the impact that engagement will have.

The list below builds on the experiences of Scrutiny Committees and latterly the Transitional Committees and will continue to develop. The toolkit includes (but is not be limited to):

- a. Public calls for evidence
- b. Issue-focused workshops with attendees from multiple backgrounds (sometimes known as 'hackathons') led by committees
- c. Creative use of online engagement channels
- d. Working with VCF networks (eg including the Sheffield Equality Partnership) to seek views of communities
- e. Co-design events on specific challenges or to support policy development
- f. Citizens assembly style activities
- g. Stakeholder reference groups (standing or one-off)
- h. Committee / small group visits to services
- i. Formal and informal discussion groups
- j. Facilitated communities of interest around each committee (eg a mailing list of self-identified stakeholders and interested parties with regular information about forthcoming decisions and requests for contributions or volunteers for temporary co-option)
- k. Facility for medium-term or issue-by-issue co-option from outside the Council onto Committees or Task and Finish Groups. Co-optees of this sort at Policy Committees would be non-voting.

This public engagement toolkit is intended to be a quick 'how-to' guide for Members and officers to use when undertaking participatory activity through committees.

It will provide an overview of the options available, including the above list, and cover:

- How to focus on purpose and who we are trying to reach
- When to use and when not to use different methods
- How to plan well and be clear to citizens what impact their voice will have
- How to manage costs, timescales, scale.

There is an expectation that Members and Officers will be giving strong consideration to the public participation and engagement options for each item on a committee's work programme, with reference to the above list a-k.



Report to Policy Committee

Lead Officers of Report: Sally Willoughby, Senior Manager, Strategy, Policy, Development and Performance

Becky Towle, Assistant Director, Children's Services

Tel: 0114 205 3834

Report of: Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning and Sally Williams Interim Director, Children and Families

Report to: *Education, Children and Families Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: 18.09.2023

Subject: ***Commission of short breaks and transitions services***

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2125				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to seek approval to uplift the short breaks budget to create additional capacity within the service to meet the needs of children with disabilities and their families. The report identifies growing demand for short breaks and the need to commission a short break specifically for children transitioning to adult services. The report seeks approval to extend the current Framework Agreement for Short Breaks for 12 months until 31st March 2025.

Recommendations:

That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee approves the following changes to the existing commissioning strategy for Short Breaks:

- 1) an extension of the commissioning strategy for a period of 12 months (to 31st March 2025) at an estimated value of £754,110
- 2) an increase in the budget/capacity for short breaks services from now until 31st March 2025 at an estimated cost of £302,556
- 3) the addition of transition services at an estimated value of £100,852

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

Lead Officer to complete:-

1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Kayleigh Inman</i>
		Legal: <i>Richard Marik</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Bashir Khan</i>
		Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Meredith Dixon - Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Sally Willoughby Becky Towle	Job Title: Senior Manager, Strategy, Policy, Development & Performance <i>Assistant Director, Children's Services</i>
	Date: 13 September 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee to commission a budget uplift in order to meet current demand and deliver additional short breaks services from external providers for a period of 18 months, for an estimated value of £302,556 for the remainder of 23/24 and 24/25.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to commission a further 12-months of existing short breaks service provision for a value of £754,110 for 24/25.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is also to commission a Transition short break service from external providers for a period of 18 months, for an estimated value of £100,852 for the remainder of 23/24 and 24/25.

Background

- 1.4 The Council has a duty under the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 to provide:
- day-time care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere
 - overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere,
 - educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes, and
 - services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.
- 1.5 Sheffield City Council commissions a range of charities, voluntary groups and independent sector providers from across the city, to deliver a programme of day-time Short Break Services and Activities for children and young people with disabilities in Sheffield. These services provide a range of important leisure and development activities for disabled children and provide a break from caring for parents and carers, and form part of the statutory local offer to children and families.
- 1.6 Research has shown that children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) or a Learning Disability, ADHD, Autism, etc are at higher risk of poorer outcomes than their non-disabled peers. Daytime Short Break Activities are specialist activities and clubs which are not open to the general public but are solely for disabled children whose needs are more complex requiring specialist provision to meet their needs to support access and engagement.
- 1.7 Children with disabilities and their families were disproportionately impacted by the Covid Pandemic. This includes lockdowns and not being able to access a break from caring through school attendance and short break

activities, and difficulties accessing a range of health and social care services. For some children this meant longer spells at home outside of lockdowns due to their vulnerable health status and risk of complications due to covid.

- 1.8 Equally, the cost of living increase disproportionately impacts families with multiple vulnerabilities such as caring for children with significant and complex disabilities and health needs. Caring for children and young people with this level of need puts some families under increasing financial pressure and impacts emotional wellbeing, family functioning and resilience.
- 1.9 There are currently 12 Providers on the Short Break DPS Framework (term of 4 years and value of £2.1m), delivering within 3 different LOTS. Each LOT is specifically designed around levels of need and complexity to ensure that children are matched to the most appropriate service, and to ensure that Providers have the necessary skills, training, facilities and equipment needed to provide a safe and high quality experience for the children and young people that attend. The LOTS are identified below:
- LOT 1: Mixed level of need
 - LOT 2: High level complex need
 - LOT 3: Significant need including health needs
- 1.10 All clubs are session based with a range of activities offered after school during term time, weekends and in the school holidays. They are delivered in a range of venues across the city from community spaces to special school buildings etc. Activities vary from crafting to sensory play, life skills such as baking, social activities and games and physical play. Some clubs provide outings to local swimming pools, parks and outdoor spaces. All children and their families are assessed through the SNIPS service and matched to the appropriate short break session in the most appropriate LOT on the Framework.
- 1.11 Session costs vary, according to the level of complexity of the children who attend, and which Provider delivers the session. The average session cost across the LOTS is £1,327. Whole year delivery is 50 weeks.

Demand for short breaks

- 1.12 Due to the Covid Pandemic many Providers had to cease delivery over the first 2 years of the contract or move their offer online during lockdown. Over the last year all Providers are delivering sessional short-break services again and uptake in places is increasing beyond capacity for some sessions.
- 1.13 There has been a rise in the number of children identified as having SEND in Sheffield in line with national trends, including a rise in requests for EHCPs for children with more complex needs. Year on year, more families are requesting short breaks, which the Council must provide as part of their statutory duty.

- 1.14 Furthermore, the increase in demand for daytime short breaks has been partly due to the lack of overnight short breaks, caused by pressure on inhouse residential placements. The children waiting for overnight respite have been offered an enhanced day time short break package which has created waiting lists for some clubs.
- 1.15 Central government has recognised this and has made a commitment to increase short breaks funding by 2025 after designing and testing new delivery models, as part of their Change Programme. (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan, March 2023) Until then, local authorities must meet the statutory duty within existing budgets.
- 1.16 It is therefore proposed that the Council commission a budget uplift in order to meet current demand and deliver increased capacity of its existing short breaks services for a period of 18 months for a value of £302,556. Demand has exceeded the original expectation year on year and annual spend continues to rise putting significant pressure on the original budget. The commission of additional capacity will ensure that the Council can meet increased demand and ensure that all families assessed as requiring a short break can access the service.

Short breaks services for a further period of 12 months

- 1.17 The current short breaks services expire on 31st March 2024. The contract commenced 1st April 2020 at a value of 2.1m over 4 years. Demand has exceeded the original expectation year on year and annual spend continues to rise putting significant pressure on the original budget.
- 1.18 To allow commissioners to undertake a thorough data led commissioning process it is proposed that the Council's existing short breaks services are extended by a further 12 months for an estimated value of £754,100.
- 1.19 The commissioning of the extension of current short breaks services for 12 months from 1st April 2024 will provide further opportunity to:
- Enable Providers to test their delivery model for a further year rather than remotely or with significantly reduced numbers due to Covid.
 - Ensure that Provider costs remain stable for a further year and provide continuity of fees to small Providers to enable them to deliver short break activities, especially given the current economic climate.
 - Allow children with disabilities and their families continuity and security in their current provision following the upheaval caused during the pandemic, whilst Commissioning undertakes the planning of a robust recommissioning process, including co-production activity with children and families.
 - Allow sufficient time to enable Sheffield City Council to test the Short Break Model and monitor and review the effectiveness of the provision

being delivered outside of pandemic restrictions This will enable a more complete data set to inform the recommissioning process and ensure that commissioning intensions are evidence based. Reviewing and broadening the categorisation of LOTS on the Framework would ensure that needs are more clearly defined and more effectively met.

- Allow sufficient time to broaden the scope of the Framework to potentially include other related short break provision to provide a more coherent offer for families and a more efficient way to commission. This would streamline the whole Short Break system, provide more choice for families, best value for money and generate market interest and sustainability through the development of a Market Position Statement.
- Allow the Government time to design and test the short breaks model as part of their Change Programme for SEND and incorporate this emerging evidence into the commissioning process.

Transitions as part of the short breaks service

- 1.20 Whilst some current short breaks provision offers independent life skills, this in in a mixed age group environment. The Council therefore requires a more targeted approach to bridge children into adult services as well as preparing them with skills and experiences to promote independence and successfully build new connections with adult services. This will help the Council better meet the transition needs of children with disabilities as identified in the SEND Accelerator Plan.
- 1.21 The transitions short break will offer a weekly, day time group based short break session, specifically for children aged 16-18 years. The session will cover independent practical life skills and social activities as well as bridging into adult short breaks services and other areas of support, developing links and relationships to provide a seamless transition. Parents and carers will receive a short break from their caring responsibilities whilst their children engage in this session.
- 1.22 It is therefore proposed that the Council commission Transitions short breaks services for a period 18 months and for an estimated value of £100,854 to specifically meet the needs of children with disabilities as they transition to adult services.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

- 2.1 This proposal supports the ambitions within the Our Sheffield Delivery Plan 22/23.
- Strong and connected neighbourhoods which people are happy to call home
 - Healthy lives and wellbeing for all

- Happy young people who have the start they need and the future they want
- 2.2 Extending the existing services will enable the Short Breaks Service to continue to support disabled children and young people to attend meaningful and enjoyable short break activities in their local communities and develop a greater connectivity within their neighbourhoods. Furthermore, parent/carers will be able to access a short break which will enable them to reconnect with their support networks and the wider community.
 - 2.3 The Short Break Service offers opportunities for children/young people to take part in activities that promote confidence, wellbeing, and opportunities to socialise with their peers. The service will also provide some much-needed support to parents/carers which in turn will increase their resilience and emotional wellbeing to enable them to continue to care for their child/young person. All of which will contribute to the ambition of healthy lives and wellbeing for all.
 - 2.4 The activities provided through the service will be varied, fun and engaging and shaped by the views of the children and young people accessing them. They will provide opportunities for children/young people with a range of disabilities (from 5-18 years of age) to socialise and make new friendships, all of which will contribute to the ambition of 'Happy young people who have the start they need and the future they want'.
 - 2.5 Additional capacity in the short breaks service will mean that more families assessed as needing a short break will be able to access this without waiting until a space becomes available. Parents and carers requiring a short break from their caring responsibilities will be able to have the respite they need helping to create resilience and promote positive family functioning.
 - 2.6 Children and young people aged 16-18 will be able to access a more targeted short break to meet their specific needs, and better prepare them for adult life and the transition to adult services.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 Through the joint work on the SEND Accelerated Progress Plan children/young people and their families have told us that we can better support children and young people by:
 - Providing places to go and things to do after school
 - Providing activities that need to be fun and active
 - Creating opportunities to socialise and access the wider community
- 3.2 We routinely ask Providers to capture anonymous feedback from children and young people and parent/carers utilising the service as part of our contract management processes.

- 3.3 This proposal outlines the need to extend the current provision for 12 months and create additional capacity and a specific Transitions short break. Therefore, we would not recommend the need to carry out any further consultation which is above and beyond what we routinely compile as part of the quality assurance framework. The extension would enable the planning and delivery of robust stakeholder consultation to inform the recommissioning process for the start of a new Framework contract in April 2025.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- to help evidence meeting the requirements of the duty, we have carried out a full Equality Impact Assessment.

- 4.1.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

- 4.1.3 An annual analysis of the usage of short break services is undertaken, mapping usage and to identify the demographics of children and young people accessing the service, this includes age, ethnicity, geographical location and primary need.

- 4.1.4 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out at the start of the Framework commissioning process in 2019. This was reviewed in June 2023 which

identified that the assessment was still relevant in all sections with an addition made only to the category of age as a planned Short Break Transition Service would support young people up to and including 18 years of age. For the purpose of this proposal, the review found no need for further update of the EIA.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 The current contract is delivered by a Framework of Providers and is in the final year of the commissioning cycle. The proposal is to extend the current contract by 12 months and then go out to competitive tender for a further 3 years with the option to extend for a further year. This would start from 1st April 2025. This extension would include additional capacity for short breaks and the Transitions service.

4.2.2 An average session cost for additional short breaks capacity and Transitions is £1,327 per session. We require 3 additional short breaks sessions and 1 Transition session per week to meet demand. This equates to 26 weeks in 23/24 and 50 weeks in 24/25. The table below identifies the addition cost of increasing capacity and providing a Transition short break for the next 18 months, subject to contract extension.

	23/24-part year	24/25 full year	18-month Total
Transition	34,502	66,350	100,852
Upscaling	103,506	199,050	302,556
Total	138,008	265,400	403,408

4.2.3 Financial projections for existing short break service for 23/24 is currently forecast at approximately £754k with a further £138k for upscaling and Transitions to meet demand; a total of £892k. This will result in an overspend on the budget, which will be temporarily mitigated from within existing underspends.

4.2.4 The cost of extending the current Framework Agreement for 12 months including continuation of the additional capacity and transitions for 24/25 would be £1.019m. This requires the Framework Agreement to be varied to meet the increased cost.

4.2.5 As this is a demand led arrangement the actual cost of the extension could be higher or lower than the projections dependent upon how many children and young people access the service, the complexity of their needs and staff ratios and which Provider on the Framework provides the service.

4.2.6 The original value of the 4 year contract was £2.1m which is projected to overspend by £400,000 by the end of the financial year 2024. The expansion of the services to meet demand is unfunded and will cause pressure on the short break budget in 24/25. Mitigating savings would need to be made elsewhere in Children's Services to remain within the financial envelope.

4.2.7 The value of this contract means that a competitive tender process in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 must be followed. The procurement process to be followed shall be compliant with these requirements and those of Contract Standing Orders and they will be conducted by Commercial Services with a dedicated procurement professional lead. It will also involve the Lead Contract Manager from the commissioning service.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 Under the Children Act 1989, the Council has a duty to provide services designed:

- to minimise the effect on disabled children within their area of their disabilities;
- to give such children the opportunity to lead lives which are as normal as possible;
- to assist individuals who provide care for such children to continue to do so, or to do so more effectively, by giving them breaks from caring.

4.3.2 In performing this duty, the Council must (under the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011):

- have regard to the needs of those carers who would be unable to continue to provide care unless breaks from caring were given to them;
- have regard to the needs of those carers who would be able to provide care for their disabled child more effectively if breaks from caring were given to them to allow them to: undertake education, training or any regular leisure activity; meet the needs of other children in the family more effectively; or carry out day to day tasks which they must perform in order to run their household.

4.3.3 Furthermore, under the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, the Council must provide services:

- to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively.
- providing a range of: day-time care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere; overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere; educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes; and services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

4.3.4 The contracting arrangements in this report are permitted by the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997.

4.3.5 The provision of the services as set out in this report will ensure that the Council meet these statutory duties and the proposal in the

report that these duties will be met by way of amendments to an existing contract may be one option (subject to separate Council approval).

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no climate implications in relation to the delivery of this service. Where a service will be delivered by external partners and Providers we will aim to work with providers who align with our ambition to be a new zero city by 2030, through the procurement process. We encourage providers to think about the climate impacts of delivering the service, such as the use of office space, staff and client travel, energy and resource use, and opportunities to increase awareness of positive climate action and take appropriate steps to reduce their impacts in the delivery of the service.

4.5 Other Implications

- 4.5.1 There are no additional implications arising out of the request to extend the current contract.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The Transitions short break and additional short break capacity could be tendered separately, outside of the Framework Agreement. This would be timely and less cost effective for the Council. Commissioning this separately would add further complexity and potential cost to the commissioning arrangements for short breaks and create confusion for the market place as existing Framework Providers would potentially bid for this work. The Framework Providers have already been tested and quality assured and the DPS allows for additional capacity to be sought through existing Providers.
- 5.2 A shorter recommissioning process is an option; by utilising current data and intelligence and conducting small scale stakeholder feedback and market engagement to mitigate the risk identified above. However, the services commissioned may not be based on sufficient evidence and stakeholder and market engagement which undermines the process. This option cannot guarantee that the services commissioned are evidence based, supported by key stakeholders or that the market is primed to deliver anything other than what they already deliver. This option greatly reduces the opportunity to broaden the scope of the Framework and incorporate the Governments learning from their Change Programme.
- 5.3 Short breaks are delivered in community venues around the city by providers with appropriate buildings and facilities, and the experience and infrastructure required to offer high quality, safe provision. Commissioning a short breaks model in this way supports the council's best value duty and ensures that the council has sufficient short breaks provision with a built in option to upscale to meet demand. It would be extremely challenging for the council to deliver such an expansive and specialised service across the range of venues in-house as the services are sessional and run on the same day and time each week across the city. Providers overcome this challenge

by delivering a range of other services and contracts which make renting premises and hiring staff viable and provides consistency for children and families.

- 5.4 There are no additional implications arising out of the request to extend the current services.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 To seek approval from the Education, Children and Families Committee to extend the current Short Breaks service for a further 12 months, from the 31st of March 2024 to the 1st April 2025 and commission additional capacity and a Transitions short break for the remainder of 23/24 and 24/25 to meet current and projected demand. This ensures that the Council can meet its statutory duty to provide short breaks for all families that need the service without delay or disruption.
- 6.2 Extending the contract will enable a further year to test and review the current delivery model and gather a comprehensive data set including feedback from key stakeholders and opportunities for coproduction. It will allow Commissioning to broaden the scope of the Framework to streamline the Short Breaks Service offer and engage proactively with the market by developing a Market Position Statement to support sufficiency. Learning and strategic direction from the Governments Change Programme will also influence this process.
- 6.3 We have a statutory duty to provide short break services. They deliver improved long-term outcomes, keeping families together and enabling children to develop new skills. Children with disabilities and their families have been particularly impacted by Covid, and again with the cost of living rise. Extending the contract for 12 months minimises disruption and allows children to settle into their provision now it is fully compliant with the original specification post pandemic.
- 6.4 The Council requires short breaks in order to:
- meet the needs of our children
 - to provide clubs and activities that our children look forward to going to
 - offer a range of support in the form of short breaks so that families have a choice of what they feel will be helpful
 - look at the local communities where these children live and belong to see if there are Providers that can offer varied and engaging short breaks
 - to know what we can do so that existing clubs are inclusive of children with additional needs.



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Tim Armstrong,
Head of Access & Inclusion

Tel: 0114 2053100

Report of: *Andrew Jones*

Report to: *Education, Children & Families Committee*

Date of Decision: *31st January 2023*

Subject: *Alternative Provision Review*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (1421)				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

- To present the strategic direction being taken in developing Alternative Education Provision in Sheffield.
- To seek approval on the commissioning of an Alternative Provision framework agreement for delivery from September 2023 for a period of 3 years. This will replace the current framework that will end in July 2023. As part of this to outline steps being taken to explore how to develop greater sustainability of the framework.

Please note that this report sits alongside agenda item progressing the Alternative Provision free school bid.

Recommendations:

That the committee

1. Endorse the strategic intent to develop and implement appropriate changes to the citywide model of Alternative Provision in line with further consultation with schools, providers, parents, and young people.
2. Approve the commission of a new framework for providers to deliver alternative provision services for use by Sheffield schools and services within the children's services portfolio, as set out in this Report.
3. Endorses that, in developing the new framework, work is undertaken to develop models of greater sustainability for providers on the framework and costs that support the appropriate placement of children on the framework.

Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: <i>Kayleigh Inman and Ged Higgins</i>
	Legal: <i>Nadine Wynter and Tehrim Raza</i>
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>Bashir Khan</i>
	Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	SLB member who approved submission: <i>Andrew Jones</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted: <i>Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Tim Armstrong</i>
	Job Title: <i>Head of Service, Access & Inclusion</i>
Date: 31st January 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1.1 The vision of Sheffield's co-produced inclusion strategy, 2020-2025, is:

“Sheffield will be an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that all children and young people get the right support at the right time so that they can live a happy and fulfilled life”.

1.1.2 The strategy includes a commitment to develop a wide range of education, health and care services that delivers the right support at the right time. This includes development of sufficient high quality Alternative Provision (AP) places.

1.1.3 The Sheffield one year plan articulates an intent to reduce exclusions in all forms. As of September 2022, 24% of children met at least one criterion within this data set. The data set includes all children with attendance below 90% alongside indicators relating to illness, suspension, exclusion, reduced timetables, pupils not on roll and pupils who move to elective home education.

1.1.4 Within the SEND/AP green paper and recently published SEND local area framework, there is an expectation of a citywide approach to AP that is co-ordinated and is focused on three areas:

- Upstream interventions
- Short term interventions
- Long term transitional placements

1.1.5 Our strategic intent is to ensure that more children are accessing an appropriate education, reducing the reasons for exclusion from their education and leading to better life outcomes. We recognise that the breadth of needs across family support, emotional health and well-being, Special Educational Needs and barriers to attendance all need to be addressed to ensure impact.

1.1.6 This position is the backdrop for our developing Alternative Provision strategic approach and intent to use Alternative Provision as an appropriate planned intervention to reduce exclusions in all forms.

1.2 Sheffield's current offer:

Currently within Sheffield, Alternative Provision falls into the following areas:

- Sheffield Inclusion Centre – Commissioned for 250 places for children who have been permanently excluded from school.
- Becton School – Chapel House – Commissioned for 100 places for children who are medically too ill to attend school.
- Sheffield Alternative Provision framework – 22 Providers have applied to join the framework. All are classed as unregulated (ie

they are not a registered school) but have a series of checks to ensure they are appropriate. On an annual basis over 300 children are placed for a total of over 600 days delivery per week.

- Commissioned Alternative Provision interventions – Sheffield Inclusion Centre and Coit Primary school are funded by the LA to deliver short term AP interventions for a total of 52 places for either 1.5 or 2 days delivery per week.
- Schools also use unregulated provision that is not on the Sheffield framework.
- Schools have a range of internal AP to address challenging behaviour.

1.3 Developing our model:

Through our development work we have identified the following aims for our offer:

1. **Our AP offer needs to deliver the right evidence-based interventions to address presenting needs.** We know that there is no 'one size fits all' solution. It needs to be flexible and consider geographical location, the curriculum, the therapeutic offer, duration of the intervention and effective transition either back to school or into future long term placement. For some it needs to be a 'step out' of school, for others a specialist intervention and for others full time extended provision.
2. **AP needs to be an appropriately chosen intervention rather than a means of last resort.** It needs to focus on reducing exclusions in all forms and the number of missed learning days across the city, supporting better outcomes for some of our most vulnerable students.
3. **Our offer needs to be appropriately funded to ensure sustainability.** To ensure sustainability for all parts of the offer citywide, we are reviewing how Alternative Provision should be funded so that it is sustainable and equitable citywide.
4. **We need the right sufficiency of provision at all ages and across all areas of need.** This will need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is appropriate and fits within wider in school activity to address exclusions in all forms.
5. **Allocation of placement works best when it is co-ordinated and sits within a wider inclusion offer to ensure that packages of support are built around the child.** Alternative provision needs

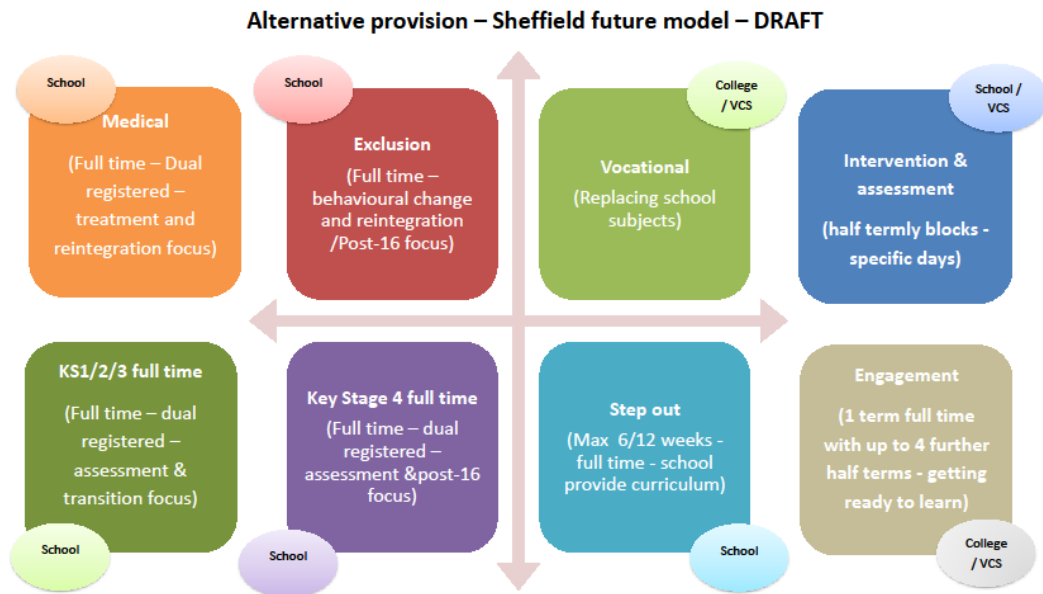
to be used as a targeted intervention and so allocation needs to sit within a wider plan around the child. Any allocation process needs to be flexible and delivered at pace. Allocation needs to consider both the needs of the individual child and the needs of the group they would be joining. The child and their family need to understand what is in place and why.

6. **We need to evidence the impact of all AP interventions.** This will be best done through our inclusion tracker to ensure that it is impacting individual children and reducing the level of exclusions in all forms.
7. **All provision must be appropriately quality assured to ensure consistent impact.** We are seeking to implement the IntegratEd framework across all Sheffield AP to ensure consistent practice.
8. **AP needs to enable effective planning and transition / reintegration.** Too many children remain in alternative provision with no clear plan of next steps. Whenever a child enters AP there must be a plan of what success looks like for that child and effective support for transition and reintegration. All children in AP must have a clear plan of what it is intending to achieve. This plan must be outcome focused.
9. **Citywide expertise needs to be targeted early.** We need to ensure that the expertise that develops in AP can be translated into schools early, working upstream to support children and build the expertise of the schools workforce. Where children are accessing AP there needs to be strong and positive relationships with their school to enable shared learning and practice that meets the need of the child.
10. **All children in AP must have support to access effective academic learning.** Whilst not all AP needs to offer and deliver academic qualifications or teaching, there must be the support to enable children to make progress to next level learning and the world of work. As part of an overall plan for the child, a focus on effective curriculum for their future must be in place.

1.4 **Proposed future model of delivery:**

- 1.4.1 To have a full and effective system of Alternative Provision, we need to be clear on the different parts of the offer and how we develop choice across the system. This means that we should aim to have 'types' of delivery that can be put in place by multiple providers. Some providers will have the capacity to deliver more than one 'type' of provision, but not all will. We anticipate that to have a full system we will need a range of school based, college based and 'unregulated' provision.

1.4.2 We are currently proposing that the following types of delivery are required. We intend to consult with pupils, parents, schools, and providers to confirm that this is the case.



- Medical - provision that delivers alongside a clear treatment plan for those who are medically unable to attend school
- Exclusion – Provision for children excluded from school focused on supporting behavioural change and re-integration to a future full-time placement or post-16 education
- Vocational – Creation of a vocational offer that sits alongside the school-based curriculum that is qualification led and supports transition to post-16 education
- Intervention & assessment – Short term, part time, targeted provision that assesses or addresses needs, enabling a reduction in risk of exclusion
- Key stage 1-3 full time provision – Provision focused on assessing and meeting needs that supports effective transition back to school with the skills in place to manage the curriculum. Provision is likely to be over an extended period. Pupils would remain dual registered ensuring a link to their home school for reintegration.
- Key stage 4 full time provision – Provision focused on assessing and meeting needs that supports effective transition into post-16 education with the skills in place to manage the curriculum. Provision is likely to be until the end of Year 11. Pupils would remain dual registered ensuring a link to their home school for

possible reintegration or access to elements of the curriculum.

- Step out – Short term, full time step out provision to address potential excludable issues, for example drug use, offensive weapons, violent behaviour. Ideally this should be up to 6 weeks. Within the provision there should be effective assessment of the risks of exclusion
- Engagement – Provision for learners who are at a point where they are unable to engage with a formal learning environment, focused on enabling them to get ready to learn

1.4.3 The offer would be underpinned by the inclusive offer available across all our schools to ensure effective practice starts in our schools and is supported through appropriate interventions at the right time.

1.5 **Next steps to delivering the model:**

1.5.1 The above proposals are presented for committee to agree the policy direction of Alternative Provision and agree progression to citywide consultation.

1.5.2 To implement them the following specific actions and changes will be needed:

- Re-procure the AP framework to deliver the **intervention & assessment, vocational** and **engagement** offer. This needs to be completed for September 2023 and so process needs to begin in February 2023.
- Secure AP Free schools (via DfE build or other means) to deliver **KS1/2/3** and **Key Stage 4 full time** provision plus additional **intervention & assessment** and **step out** provision. Bids need to be completed in February 2023. If these bids are not successful then different routes to procure these will be needed.
- Work with the Sheffield Inclusion Centre to consider delivering the **Step out** and **intervention & assessment** alongside the **Exclusion** offer. This would create potential for earlier intervention.
- Develop an option for the **Engagement** model that works within legal processes (ie not provided by a single unregulated provider).
- Partner with the Sheffield College to consider the development of the **vocational** offer alongside those on the AP framework.
- Maintain the current **medical** offer via Becton School – Chapel House but ensure that the commission reflects the need to act early.

- Review the funding model for Alternative Provision to ensure a clear citywide model to support the offer. This review has started, and school's forum have been updated on it.
- Implement a consistent quality assurance process across all Sheffield AP.
- Ensure a clear admissions, assessment, review, and reintegration process across the offer that links to the wider Sheffield Inclusion model and is financially sustainable. This would create a single entry point for AP.
- Consult on the proposals detailed above to ensure that it is appropriate in line with needs of schools, pupils and their families and is deliverable by providers. As part of this consultation we will seek to agree what success looks like.

1.5.3 To further develop the model beyond those changes, we will need to:

- Complete a gap analysis and data modelling to understand the current level of provision and the full level of needs across the city.
- To use the data modelling to assess the wider need and understand the future trajectory of demand in the city so that we can engage further with stakeholders on future citywide modelling.
- To link our model and modelling to any wider review of social emotional and mental health needs for children in the city to understand how support needs can be met earlier and through a wider offer of support.

1.6 **Re-procuring the Alternative Provision Framework**

1.6.1 We are proposing to procure an AP framework agreement with a term of 3 years and an estimated value of £1 million per year, to provide alternative provision services.

1.6.2 SCC currently procures, contract manages, and quality assures the network of off-site alternative provision providers for use by Sheffield schools and services. This includes opportunities into post-16 education via Sheaf training. This is currently achieved via a framework arrangement commercially procured and compliant with both Contract Standing Orders and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

1.6.3 The current framework arrangement (2022-2023) has been a single year framework to enable review and revised models to be developed as part of a citywide strategic approach. This proposal therefore seeks to establish a new AP framework (September 2023-July 2026), with a term of 3 years to deliver provision.

- 1.6.4 The new AP framework will be procured using an open tender process in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. It is difficult to estimate the number of providers that will be awarded entry onto the framework via the open tender process, however it is estimated that the combined value of any subsequent call-off contracts will not exceed £1 million per year.
- 1.6.5 A procurement strategy will be developed in liaison with Commercial Services which will ensure that the framework is procured in compliance with Public Contract Regulations 2015 and Contract Standing Orders. Financial colleagues will be consulted in the design of the funding model to ensure affordability within existing budgetary constraints.
- 1.6.6 The procurement process will establish a framework of suppliers who demonstrate the capacity and capability to deliver provision in line with the proposed wider model; to deliver against the **intervention & assessment, vocational and engagement** offers. It is anticipated that providers will deliver distinct offers within the model that includes provision at primary, secondary and addresses SEN.
- 1.6.7 Providers on the framework are subject to further competitions. This means that providers joining the framework have no guarantee of work as it is dependent on schools led demand. Therefore, providers may struggle to maintain viability if the provision represents a major source of their income. This has a negative impact on the overall sustainability of the programme. Several providers have had to close in the past 18 months, meaning that the offer in the city becomes limited. The nature of the framework also means that any provider can seek to develop provision without there being a clear rationale for their place in the market. We believe we need to create a clear strategic intent within the framework and ensure sustainability for providers.
- 1.6.8 As such we are also proposing to explore further how we can guarantee a level of provision within the framework. We will need to explore how risk is managed and underwritten and consult on any model for this. We do not believe that we will be able to guarantee placement in all providers but want to work with providers and schools to establish how we can create this level of sustainability. Any guaranteed provision must fit with the model of AP being proposed. As the overall citywide funding model develops, we will need to review this to ensure that the provision is sustainable and equitable alongside the rest of the offer.
- 1.6.9 Having a procured offer that offers guaranteed levels of work creates a financial risk for the Local Authority as all places may not be utilised, but overall, the sustainability of provision is expected to improve as providers will have greater stability and clarity of income. This should drive quality as it will enable staff retention.
- 1.6.10 Through the procurement process we will detail more specificity about expectations and the offer in line with the proposed citywide model. We will expect allocation to be supported through the local authority creating

a single point of entry that ensures that provision is targeted as part of a plan. As part of the cost to schools there will be an expectation that there is sufficient resource to fund the progressions team, ensuring effective oversight of provision and a single point of entry.

1.6.11 We will seek to enable further targeted procurement within the framework so that we can work with specific schools where needed to secure additional provision that delivers quality provision.

1.6.12 The committee are asked to approve the commissioning of the new framework and to agree for the LA to explore and develop a model of financial guarantee for some placements within the framework.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

2.1 The One year plan focuses on reducing exclusion in all forms. The development of a coherent citywide approach to Alternative Provision that fits with other activity to drive improvement is essential in supporting this aspiration. It will create greater choice and oversight of provision that is used in a targeted way to ensure that vulnerable children can successfully make progress.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 To develop our offer of Alternative Provision we have sought to engage with schools, providers, children, and parents. Most recently elected members have engaged in workshops to shape the future vision and practice of AP in the city.

3.2 Our children and families have told us that:

- AP provides a safe place for learning
- Students feel valued at AP
- Students feel that AP gave them a fresh opportunity to learn
- AP helps them to develop confidence and self-worth
- Many students want to remain in AP and not return to school

3.3 Our schools have told us that:

- They want AP to be a part of the curriculum offer
- Cost is not the primary issue as the key requirement is quality provision that can meet need
- They have concerns about quality of some provision
- They want to offer interventions to learning which support students to avoid exclusion
- They want better collaboration to support re-integration
- They want provision which focuses on behaviour and emotional regulation

- 3.4 Our providers via the framework have told us that:
- They have concerns over the funding and sustainability of their provision
 - They want to work more closely with schools to support students re-engagement
 - There is a need to acknowledge the development of personal and life skills before/alongside academic engagement
 - They want the LA to support with upskilling and staff training

3.5 There is further consultation that is required to agree whether our current proposals are the right ones for the city. Following decision from the committee we will consult on the proposed model.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

4.1.2 This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

4.1.3 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

4.1.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, it highlights that the establishment a new Alternative Provision framework covering September 2023-July 2026 supports the One year plan focus on reducing exclusion in all forms. A coherent citywide approach to Alternative Provision that fits with other activity to drive improvement will create greater choice and oversight of provision that is used in a targeted way to ensure that these vulnerable children can successfully make progress and that this mitigates against the longer term negative impacts of exclusion.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 Commercial considerations – a procurement strategy will be agreed in consultation with Commercial Services to ensure that the framework and subsequent further competitions are procured and awarded in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (and any subsequent procurement legislation which amends or replaces the relevant Statutory Instrument) and Contract Standing Orders.

4.2.2 The anticipated value of the framework has increased from £750k to £1m due to growing numbers and likely growth over the next 3 years. Alternative Provision is funded through the school system and schools will need to manage within their existing resources.

4.2.3 If guaranteed funding arrangements are proposed, there are likely to be further financial implications. A paper will be brought to the committee for approval at a future date once the options for this have been investigated.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The proposals outlined in this report will support the Council to meet its statutory duties under several pieces of education legislation. Under the legislation local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who, because of illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies to all children of compulsory school age resident in the local authority area, whether they are on the roll of a school, and whatever type of school they attend.

4.3.2 Statutory guidance also sets out the Government's expectations of local authorities and maintained schools who commission alternative provision and pupil referral units. The statutory guidance acknowledges that some local authorities or partnerships of schools have developed a local directory of 'approved' provision, which meets clearly defined standards (including registration where necessary, safeguarding, health and safety, quality of accommodation, quality of education etc.).

4.3.3 Schools and local authorities, working in consultation with management committees and the governing bodies of alternative provision Academies and AP Free Schools, are expected to set an overall policy for referrals or admission to alternative provision. There is also an expectation that there will be clear criteria for referring and admitting pupils, including those who are dual registered.

4.3.4 The current Alternative Provision Framework ends in July 2023 and the proposal is to enter a new framework agreement for 3 years. Regulation 33(3) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 limits the term of a framework agreement to 4 years.

4.3.5 The proposal to procure the new AP framework using an open tender process and awarding contracts following further competitions is in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (Regulations 74-76) and the Council's Contracts Standing Orders.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 As part of our net zero 2030 ambition, we will be looking to work with partners who have shared values. As part of the procurement process social value questions will be asked to consider the climate impact of any provider seeking to join the framework.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Consideration has been given to remain with the current fractured Alternative Provision model. This has been rejected as it lacks a clear plan and direction and does not fit with local and national ambitions.
- 5.2 Consideration has been given to removing the AP framework, allowing schools to individually develop any offer they wish to utilise directly with providers. This has been rejected as it creates greater risk of poor practice. The lack of regulated provision within the city means that we continue to need a framework of provision to reduce risk of exclusion and provide appropriate interventions.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 We are recommending that the Local Authority supports the further development of a citywide Alternative Provision model as this will create a clear strategy that delivers consistent and quality provision for which the LA has oversight.
- 6.2 The approach will enable the LA to develop the quality of provision and ensure that it is integrated to wider practice to support inclusion within the city. It will ensure that the LA is able to meet it's statutory duties to arrange alternative provision in school or elsewhere under section 19 of the Education Act 1996.
- 6.3 It is recommended that the framework is procured as part of our work to ensure sufficient suitable provision is developed within the city.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Emma Bryant,
Commissioning Officer, Integrated Commissioning

Tel: 0114 474 3129

Report of: *Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning*
Report to: *Education, Children & Families Policy Committee*
Date of Decision: *27 September 2023*
Subject: *Exclusion Prevention Alternative Provision*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2310				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>“Appendix 2 is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i>				

Purpose of Report:

This report sets out the Exclusion Prevention Alternative Provision (AP) service and describes how the services have been delivered to date.

This report then sets out the proposal to commission a new Exclusion Prevention Alternative Provision service which will commence from April 2024, with additional capacity and improvements to the delivery model, to better meet the needs of children and young people and further prevent exclusion.

Recommendations:

That the Education, Children & Families Policy Committee approves the commissioning of Exclusion Prevention Alternative Provision from an external provider for a period of three years and for an estimated value of £1.5m, as set out in this report, with the ability to increase capacity by up to £900,000 if additional funding can be identified.

Background Papers:

Alternative Provision Review, Report to Education, Children & Families Policy Committee, 31st January 2023

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Carol Harris and Anna Beeby
		Legal: Richard Marik
		Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton
		Climate: Matthew Peers
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	Meredith Dixon-Teasdale
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Dawn Dale
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Emma Bryant	Job Title: Commissioning Officer, Inclusion & Learning
	Date: 7.9.23	

1. PROPOSAL

Summary

- 1.1
- The Exclusion Prevention service already exists and is currently delivered by Sheffield Inclusion Centre.
 - The current service ends at the end of March 2024.
 - This paper seeks approval to commission a new service from April 2024.
 - The current service has had positive impact on preventing exclusion (approx. 90% of children in receipt of service); through the new commission we are aiming to do more of what works and address gaps, such as lack of full-time alternative provision to prevent exclusion.

- This proposal is aligned with the citywide Alternative Provision (AP) model discussed at committee in January 2023, and the wider Inclusion Strategy.
- The new provider will be expected to ensure that they work with child, family, and school to create successful intervention that enables the child to be successful in their home school.
- There is a tight timeframe to ensure the new commission is in place for April 2024, the tender process is planned for October 2023.

Background

- 1.2 The vision of Sheffield’s co-produced Inclusion Strategy, 2020-2025, is:
- 1.3 **“Sheffield will be an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that all children and young people get the right support at the right time so that they can live a happy and fulfilled life”.**
- 1.4 The strategy includes a commitment to develop a wide range of education, health and care services that delivers the right support at the right time. This includes development of sufficient high quality AP places.
- 1.5 The Sheffield one year plan articulates an intent to reduce exclusion in all forms. Permanent exclusions in Sheffield are rising and have now surpassed pre-pandemic figures (further detail is provided in Appendix 1). Within this context, high quality AP is needed to provide short term intensive support to help pupils re-engage with education and have a greater level of belonging within their school and community.
- 1.6 Within the government’s recently published SEND/AP Improvement Plan and SEND local area framework, there is an expectation of a citywide approach to AP that is co-ordinated and is focused on three areas:
- Upstream interventions
 - Short term interventions
 - Long term transitional placements
- 1.7 Our strategic intent is to ensure that more children are accessing an appropriate education, reducing rates of exclusion and leading to better life outcomes. We recognise that the breadth of needs across family support, emotional health and well-being, Special Educational Needs and barriers to attendance all need to be addressed to ensure impact.
- 1.8 In January 2023, Education, Children and Families Policy Committee endorsed the development of a citywide AP model to deliver consistent and quality provision that supports inclusion within the city. This report is attached as a background paper.
- 1.9 The commissioning activity proposed below is in line with the proposed future model of delivery reviewed by Committee in January 2023, which

recommends, among multiple strands of AP, targeted short term provision to assess and address the risk of exclusion.

- 1.10 This position is the backdrop for this proposal to commission Exclusion Prevention AP with increased scope to reduce exclusions and enable children and young people to feel that they belong in their school and community.

The current service

- 1.11 Within the current AP offer for the city, for approximately five years, Sheffield Inclusion Centre has delivered short term, part time AP for children who are on roll at a school but are at risk of exclusion.
- 1.12 Service provision will cease in March 2024, and we are proposing that a new Exclusion Prevention AP service is commissioned that will replace and expand on the existing offer, with delivery to commence in April 2024.
- 1.13 Note that Sheffield Inclusion Centre currently deliver two separate services for the Local Authority:
1. Exclusion Prevention AP for children at risk of exclusion (referred to above).
 2. Sheffield Inclusion Centre provide education for children who have been permanently excluded. This provision will continue and is unaffected by Sheffield Inclusion Centre ceasing to deliver Exclusion Prevention AP.
- See Appendix 2 for further information.
- 1.14 Children accessing the service are at significant risk of exclusion. They are referred by schools to a local authority led multi-agency panel, and if appropriate, panel will then refer the child to the service. The provision is accessed by the child on a part time basis for a short-term period, usually two to three terms.
- 1.15 There are currently four AP hubs across the city, delivering 20 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) placements for primary and secondary pupils. One of the four hubs is based in locality B as there is a high number of exclusions in the area (further detail provided in section 4.1). Locality B is made up of Burngreave, Firth Park and Shiregreen & Brightside (a map of localities is provided in Appendix 3).
- 1.16 A comprehensive review of the service was carried out in 2022. The service has had consistent positive impact, with permanent exclusion avoided for around 90% of children.

Overview of proposal

- 1.17 The existing Exclusion Prevention AP service will cease in March 2024, and it is proposed that the Council commission an external provider to deliver the service, with some added capacity and improvements to the

current delivery model, for a period of 3 years and an estimated value of £1.5m.

- 1.18 The proposed commission will provide a minimum of 24 FTE placements for children at risk of exclusion.
- 1.19 The intended impact of the proposed commission is:
- Exclusion will be prevented for at least 85% children supported.
 - A reduction in suspensions and improved attendance for children supported.
 - Schools will have increased knowledge, skills, and capacity to meet the needs of children at risk of exclusion.
 - Children will tell us they feel better able to cope at school, engage with learning and have a greater sense of belonging.
 - Parents and schools will see positive change in their children.
 - Reduced number of full-time places required at Sheffield Inclusion Centre (currently 300). It is anticipated that a reduction in places required in the Inclusion Centre will release further resource for exclusion prevention activity.

Proposed delivery for the service

- 1.20 The proposed delivery model aligns with statutory guidance regarding 'Good Alternative Provision':

Good alternative provision is that which appropriately meets the needs of pupils which required its use and enables them to achieve good educational attainment on par with their mainstream peers. All pupils must receive a good education, regardless of their circumstances or the settings in which they find themselves. Provision will differ from pupil to pupil, but there are some common elements that alternative provision should aim to achieve, including:

- *good academic attainment on par with mainstream schools – particularly in English, maths and science (including IT) – with appropriate accreditation and qualifications;*
- *that the specific personal, social and academic needs of pupils are properly identified and met in order to help them to overcome any barriers to attainment;*
- *improved pupil motivation and self-confidence, attendance and engagement with education; and*
- *clearly defined objectives, including the next steps following the placement such as reintegration into mainstream education, further education, training or employment.*

- 1.21 The following elements will be delivered within the proposed service:
1. Potential for both full time and part time placements
 2. Placements for Primary and Secondary pupils
 3. A locality B based hub to address need within this geographical area
 4. Small groups and high staffing ratio

- 5. Teacher led delivery with links to the curriculum
- 6. Strong leadership with a full time manager leading the service

1.22 Key approaches for delivery:

- Individual child plans underpinned by whole family support through multi-disciplinary teams.
- Continuous links and communication between the referring school and the AP, with the aim of reintegration to full time education in the referring school from the outset.
- Detailed and robust handover with clearly documented, detailed guidance provided to the referring school to support them to continue strategies and approaches that have been successful.
- Structured, high-quality provision including the following elements:
 - Trauma informed and relational approaches and trained staff.
 - Mentoring and CBT approaches may also be part of the work.
 - Teaching and learning with clear links to the curriculum
 - Individualised child plans that reflect the child's needs, strengths and aspirations and identify the changes that are needed to support reintegration.
 - Parental involvement within the plan and support to parents where identified as needed, via Early Help or other services.
 - Effective systems for assessing and tracking pupils' social, emotional and behavioural progress.
 - Robust safeguarding system and process informing all aspects of delivery.

1.23 Short term full-time placements are appropriate where there is an immediate risk of exclusion or where the pupil faces specific barriers to engagement that can be addressed intensively over a short period, for example substance use.

1.24 School leaders tell us that there is a need for good short-term full time AP that is 'upstream' of the AP provided by SIC once a child has been excluded.

1.25 There will be a high level of teacher involvement and oversight, in line with the government SEND and AP Improvement Plan (2023), which highlights the importance of an appropriately skilled workforce.

1.26 This aligns with the proposed model for Sheffield developed as part of the ongoing review of AP, which prioritises support to access effective academic learning so that children can progress to next level learning and the world of work.

1.27 A high level of staffing is essential to keep this cohort of children safe, create an environment in which they can thrive, and deliver one to one interventions to help them develop skills and strategies that can transfer

to the school setting.

- 1.28 The proposed service allows for strong leadership, with the cost of a full-time school leadership post incorporated.
- 1.29 We know that permanent exclusion is avoided for most pupils accessing our existing Exclusion Prevention AP, so the cost should be considered in relation to the cost of permanent exclusion, which is likely to bring with it a high cost over a longer term. The estimated cost to the state per pupil who is permanently excluded is £370,000 (Social Finance 2020).
- 1.30 An outreach element delivered under the current service, has not been incorporated in the proposed recommission. This is because there are now alternative mentoring and advisory offers in the city. Pupils accessing the commissioned service will receive outreach support with staff visiting them at school both during and after their time in the AP.

Additional services

- 1.31 Under the Council's current funding envelope, the Council have sufficient funding to commission a minimum of 24 FTE placements for a period of 3 years and estimated value of £1.5m for the exclusion prevention AP service. However, should additional funding of between £700k and £900k become available to the Council, it is intended that the Council shall have the option to increase the services to provide a minimum of 36 FTE placements (bringing the total value of the services to between £2.1m and £2.7m).
- 1.32 It is therefore proposed that the value of the commission can be increased if funding is identified.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

- 2.1 The One year plan focuses on reducing exclusion in all forms. The recommissioning and expansion of Exclusion Prevention AP supports this aspiration and will provide greater choice of provision that is used in a targeted way to ensure that vulnerable children can successfully make progress.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 As part of the ongoing review of AP, engagement with schools, providers, children, and parents has taken place, including workshops attended by elected members.
- 3.2 Our children and families have told us that:
- AP provides a safe place for learning
 - Students feel valued at AP

- Students feel that AP gave them a fresh opportunity to learn
- AP helps them to develop confidence and self-worth
- Many students want to remain in AP and not return to school

3.3 Our schools have told us that:

- They want AP to be a part of the curriculum offer
- Cost is not the primary issue as the key requirement is quality provision that can meet need
- They have concerns about quality of some provision
- They want to offer interventions to learning which support students to avoid exclusion
- They want better collaboration to support re-integration
- They want provision which focuses on behaviour and emotional regulation

3.4 Feedback from children, families and schools on the existing Exclusion Prevention AP tells us that:

- Children enjoy attending the provision and the activities
- Children feel it helps them in life and at school
- Parents and schools see positive changes in children
- Schools value good communication from the AP
- Schools say the AP prevents exclusions

3.5 A survey was recently circulated to school leaders. They told us that:

- They sometimes struggle to find suitable AP
- They would like to see more short term, full time, early intervention AP
- They would use Exclusion Prevention AP commissioned by the Local Authority
- Family engagement is important
- Alignment with the school curriculum is important
- Extended support on reintegration is needed

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 Protected characteristics that will be impacted by the proposed commission are: age, disability, race, and sex. In addition, the proposed commission is intended to mitigate against inequalities relating to poverty and financial inclusion.

4.1.2 It is intended that all children supported and their families will benefit in the following ways:

- In most cases, permanent exclusion will be avoided.
- Children will develop strategies and resilience that will enable them to cope better with the school setting, engage with education and thrive at school.

- There will be a reduction in suspensions and improved attendance for children supported.
 - Their school will have increased knowledge, skills, and capacity to meet their needs
 - Children will tell us they feel better able to cope at school, engage with learning and have a greater sense of belonging.
 - Parents will see positive change in their children.
- 4.1.3 **Race:** BAME children are significantly over-represented in the cohort of children identified as at risk of exclusion and referred to the existing service for support. A breakdown of the ethnicity of children accessing the service over time shows the following:
- White British - 62.4%
 - White gypsy/Roma - 11.4%
 - White and black Caribbean - 7.9%
 - White and any other Asian - 3.0%
 - All other ethnicities were 2.5% or less.
- 4.1.4 This compares to National Census data 2021 showing that within Sheffield Local Authority:
- 74.5% of the population were White British
 - 0.5% of the population were of Roma or White gypsy/Traveller ethnicity combined
 - 0.4% of the population were White or Black Caribbean
- 4.1.5 This issue is addressed in the Sheffield Race Equality Commission report 2022, which identifies that BAME pupils made up 52% of pupils on roll at the Pupil Referral Unit (i.e. pupils who had been permanently excluded) and within that 52%, children of Roma ethnicity made up 20%.
- 4.1.6 These outcomes are largely unchanged: in 2022-23 academic year, 47% of exclusions in Sheffield were of BME children, and within that, 14.5% were of children of Roma ethnicity.
- 4.1.7 The proposed commission is intended to prevent exclusion for all children referred, including BAME children. We know that the existing service is successful in preventing exclusion for 90% children accessing, including BAME children.
- 4.1.8 As part of the proposed commission, an AP hub will be based in locality B, which is made up of Burngreave, Firth Park and Shiregreen & Brightside (a map of localities is provided in Appendix 3). This is because there is a high number of exclusions in this part of the city.
- 4.1.9 Since 2020, locality B has had the highest number of pupils excluded, compared to the other six localities in the city. Between 2019 and 2022, 27.8% of exclusions were of children at schools in locality B.
- 4.1.10 Of children excluded in locality B, a high proportion are BAME, and within that, a high proportion are Roma. Of children excluded in locality

B between 2019 and 2022, 49.8.5 were BME and 16.6% were Roma. Equally, of BAME pupils excluded across the city during the same period, 53.5% were in locality B. Of Roma children excluded across the city, 80.9% were in locality B.

- 4.1.11 It is intended that several elements of the proposed commission will improve outcomes for children accessing the locality B based provision and the service as a whole:
1. Individual child plans underpinned by whole family support through multi-disciplinary teams.
 2. Teacher led delivery with links to the curriculum.
 3. Continuous links and communication between the referring school and the AP.
 4. Robust handover with detailed guidance provided to the referring school to support them to continue strategies and approaches that have been successful.
- 4.1.12 The provider for this hub and the service as a whole will be expected to work to engage families from all communities, including where there are barriers to engagement such as mis-trust of services. Within the procurement process, providers will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of strategies to engage hard to reach families, and successful experience in this area.
- 4.1.13 We have considered views and feedback from children and parents, including BAME children and families, in relation to the existing service. However, it has not been possible to engage directly with BAME children and families within the planned timeframe for commissioning a service without any gap in delivery. Commissioning will seek to carry out further, on-going engagement with BAME organisations representing ethnicities over-represented in the excluded cohort, and with BAME children at risk of or with experience of exclusion.
- 4.1.14 This approach will help us understand how effectively the commissioned service is meeting need for BAME children and families and how to improve it further.
- 4.1.15 **Disability:** Of children accessing the existing service, 90.2% are identified as having SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) at the point at which they start to access. For 63.4%, the primary need (the child's foremost need) falls into the category of Social, Emotional and Mental Health. Many of the children have experienced trauma, ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) or attachment issues.
- 4.1.16 The proposed commission will support children with these needs through a Nurture based, Trauma Informed approach. The intention is that with intensive support, children will develop strategies and resilience that will enable them to cope better with the school setting, engage with education and thrive at school.
- 4.1.17 **Age & Sex:** By supporting vulnerable children from primary phase

through to key stage 3 (age 14), the proposed commission supports the ambition for Sheffield to be an age-friendly inclusive city. Boys are disproportionately affected by exclusion. Since 2019, 75% of exclusions in Sheffield have been for boys. Of pupils accessing the existing service over time, 81% have been boys. The proposed commission is intended to prevent exclusions in Sheffield; given that the majority of excluded pupils are boys, this will have positive impact for boys. Girls at risk of exclusion who are referred will also benefit.

4.1.8 **Poverty and financial inclusion:** Receipt of Free School Meals is a key indicator of financial disadvantage. Pupils receiving Free Schools Meals make up around 30% of the total pupils in Sheffield. In annual year 2021-22, 70.2% children who were excluded received Free School Meals, and in annual year 2022-23 it was 68.6%. This demonstrates that financially disadvantaged children are over-represented within the cohort of excluded children. In addition, we know that excluded children are likely to experience poverty as adults. The proposed commission is intended to prevent exclusion, and in doing so, improve outcomes for already disadvantaged children and help prevent future poverty.

4.1.9 Impact for the cohorts listed above will be measured and analysed on an ongoing basis throughout the contract period. The Equalities Impact Assessment will be reviewed during the Autumn term of academic year 2025-26, once the service has been delivered for a complete school year (academic year 2024-25). A milestone relating to equalities to be reviewed at this point will be for 75% of children of Roma heritage accessing the service to avoid exclusion. This target will be increased over time as the provision becomes established. Further milestones will be added in response to ongoing analysis of outcomes for specific cohorts.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 Commercial considerations – with this requirement being considered outside the scope of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, a waiver of Standing Orders in the form of the procurement strategy will be agreed in consultation with Commercial Services to ensure that Exclusion Prevention AP is procured and awarded in a manner that will meet principals of equal treatment and transparency.

4.2.2 Financial considerations - The proposed cost of the new commission to SCC will be £500k per annum. This is within the current funding envelop.

4.2.3 It is hoped that savings/efficiencies can be made in other parts of the service to enable an increase to the commission up to an additional £700k-£900k. Options are currently being explored and the value of the commission will be based on the outcome of this activity. This may result in the commission cost increasing from £1.5m to between £2.1m and £2.7m over the course of the contract.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Council has a duty (so far as their powers enable them to do so) to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary education and secondary education and further education, are available to meet the needs of the population of their area under s13 Education Act 1996.
- 4.3.2 The Council also has a duty to arrange suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision under s19 Education Act 1996.
- 4.3.3 The proposed commission in this report shall contribute towards the discharge of the Council’s duty under s13 by reducing the number of children excluded from school. The proposed commission shall also go some way to alleviating any pressures faced by the Council in discharging its duty under s19.
- 4.3.4 The contracting arrangements in this report are facilitated by the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 We will aim through the procurement process to work with providers who align with our ambition to be a Net Zero city by 2030. We will encourage providers to consider the climate impacts of delivering the service, such as use of office space, staff and client travel, energy and resource use, and opportunities to increase awareness of positive climate action, and to take appropriate steps to reduce their impacts in the delivery of the service.
- 4.4.2 The location of the AP will be considered as part of the procurement process. The current service is delivered across four sites so there is some scope for pupils to access the provision locally, with the locality B AP providing local provision for children in the local area. With the proposed increased reach there is scope for six or more sites, which may provide more opportunities for children to be placed locally. This has benefits for children and families as well as the environment.

4.5 Other Implications

- 4.5.1 *None*

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Not recommissioning Exclusion Prevention AP was considered.
- 5.2 This was rejected as high-quality preventative AP is needed to mitigate against the increase in exclusions. Exclusion Prevention AP has been

successful in the city in preventing exclusion for most children accessing. It is not affordable for AP on the AP Network to deliver provision of this kind without being subsidised, as a very high level of staffing is required.

- 5.3 Delivering the AP in house was considered.
- 5.4 This was rejected as specific expertise and extensive experience in re-engagement / Nurture AP is needed to deliver high quality interventions. This level of expertise does not exist within current Council services and there would be a significant additional cost to developing this.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

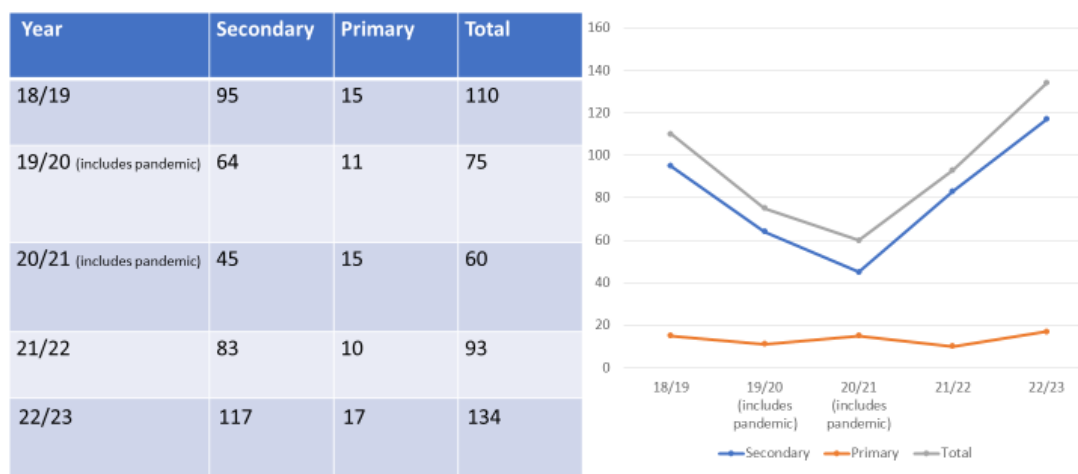
- 6.1 We recommend that an Exclusion Prevention Alternative Provision Service is commissioned from an external provider for a period of three years, in order to support vulnerable children to develop social and emotional skills and resilience to help them engage with learning and avoid exclusion.
- 6.2 This approach is in line with the proposed future model of delivery reviewed by Committee in January 2023, which recommends, among multiple strands of AP, targeted short term provision to assess and address the risks of exclusion.
- 6.3 The intended impact of the proposed commission is:
- Exclusion will be prevented for at least 85% children supported.
 - A reduction in suspensions and improved attendance for children supported.
 - Schools will have increased knowledge, skills, and capacity to meet the needs of children at risk of exclusion.
 - Children will tell us they feel better able to cope at school, engage with learning and have a greater sense of belonging.
 - Parents and schools will see positive change in their children.
 - Reduced number of full-time places required at Sheffield Inclusion Centre (currently 300).
- 6.4 If this proposal is approved, members will be kept up to date on progress via member briefings, and further updates as required.

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Background – exclusion data

1. Permanent exclusions in Sheffield are rising and have now surpassed pre-pandemic figures. The graph below shows exclusion figures over time. We can see that this has risen across the board but with a particular increase in exclusions within the secondary phase.

Exclusion - raw data September 2022 to May Half Term 2023

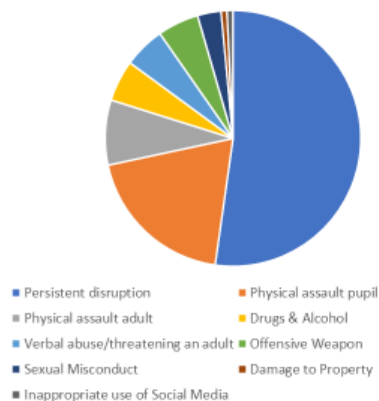


2. The reasons and context to permanent exclusions are varied, but many of the children who are excluded in Sheffield have complex needs and are amongst the most vulnerable children in our city.
 - In this academic year up to May half term, 15 children with EHCPs have been permanently excluded.
 - Two children who are looked after have been excluded.
 - Children from the Roma community, and those from a Black African / Caribbean background are disproportionately excluded in our city.

3. The graph below shows the recorded reasons for permanent exclusions across all stages this academic year:

Reasons for exclusion (all stage – to May half term 2023)

Reason	Total
Persistent disruption	70
Physical assault pupil	26
Physical assault adult	11
Drugs & Alcohol	7
Verbal abuse/threatening an adult	7
Offensive Weapon	7
Sexual Misconduct	4
Damage to Property	1
Inappropriate use of Social Media	1



4. When we look more broadly at children who are excluded in all forms using a data set that includes children who are missing school for a range of reasons (persistent absence, exclusion, illness, etc), a snapshot of data taken on 26th April 2023 shows that:

- 28% (20,032 of 72,467 pupils) of all pupils are excluded in all forms
- 74% (1,274 of 1,723) Roma children (56% White traveller, 39% white or black Caribbean, 36% Pakistani, 25% White British)
- 51% (1,626 of 3,213) children with EHC Plans (39% SEN Support, 25% no SEN)
- 68% (237 of 346) Children on CPP (55% CiN, 52% Early Help, 43% CLA, 26% No C&F involvement)
- 38 children hit 6 triggers on this dataset (190 hit 5, 523 hit 4)

5. Sheffield Inclusion Centre (SIC) cohort data shows similar themes. The cohort on 2nd May 2023 was a total of 240 children:

Gender: 74.58% Male,
25.42% Female

SEND status: 20.42% have an EHC Plan
46.25% SEN Support
31.25% no SEN

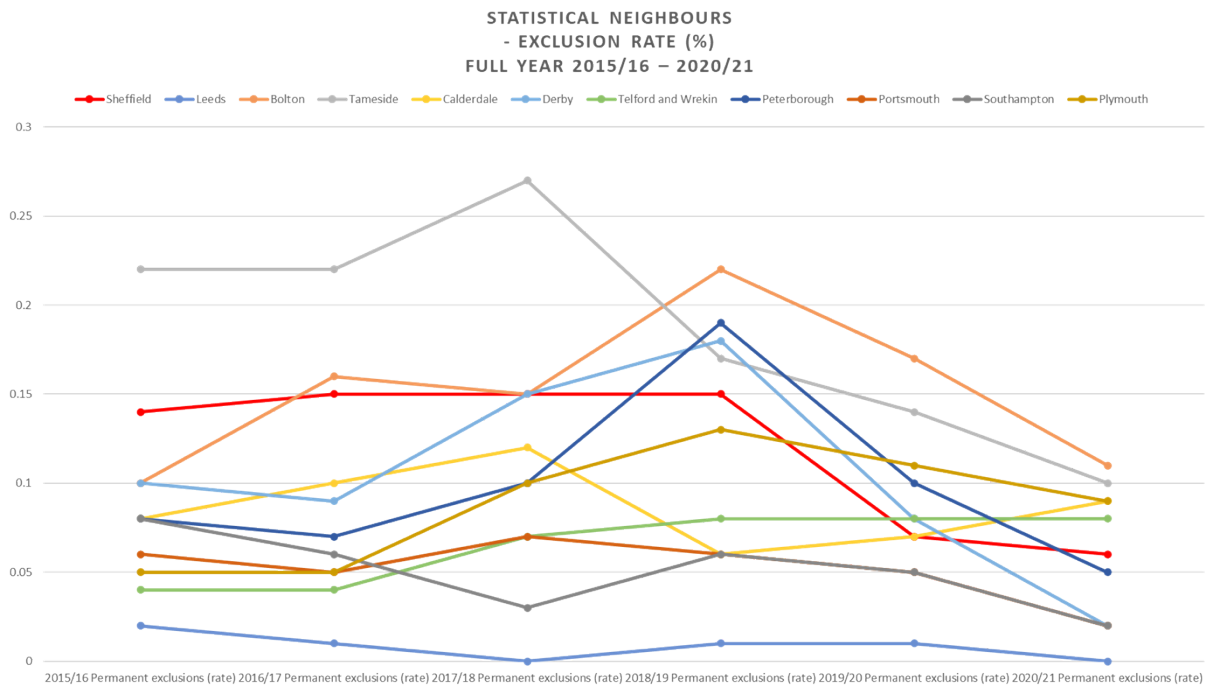
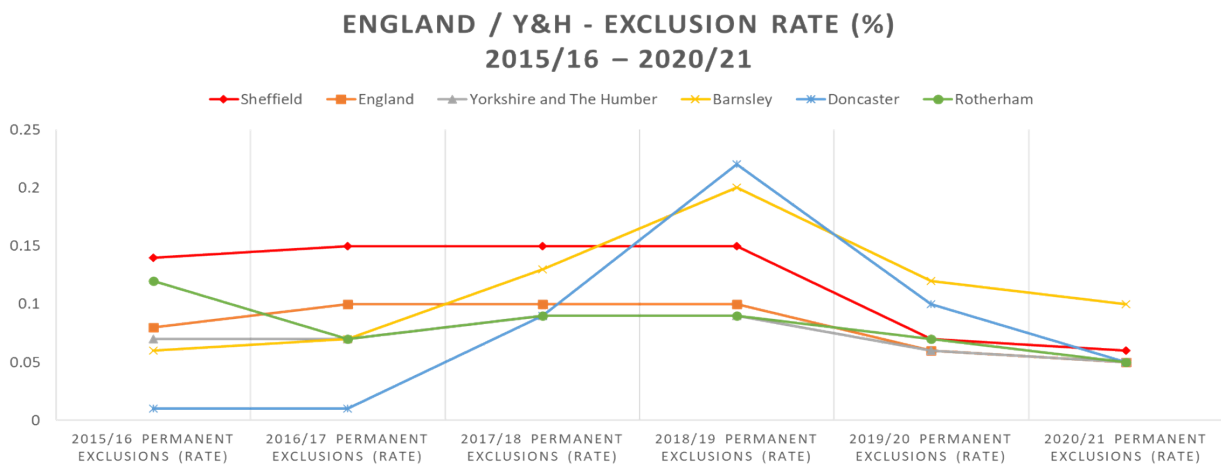
Ethnicity: 50.42% White British
18.75% Gypsy, Roma, Traveller
10.83% White /Caribbean, Black Caribbean
5.83% Pakistani
4.58% White African, Black African

10.8% Other ethnicity

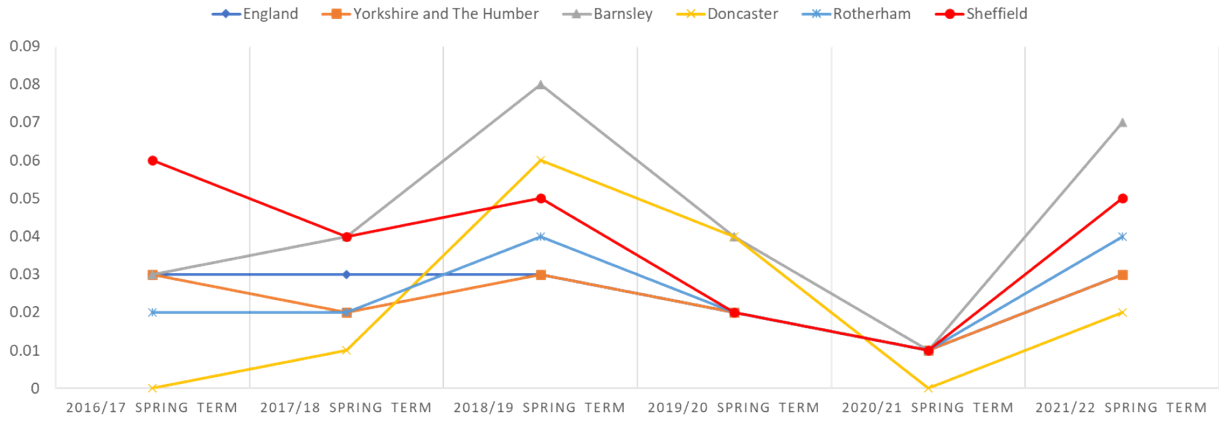
Care Needs: 7.2% are subject to Child protection.
 17.5% are open to services under Child in Need
 11.2% are open to Early Help

6. National comparative data

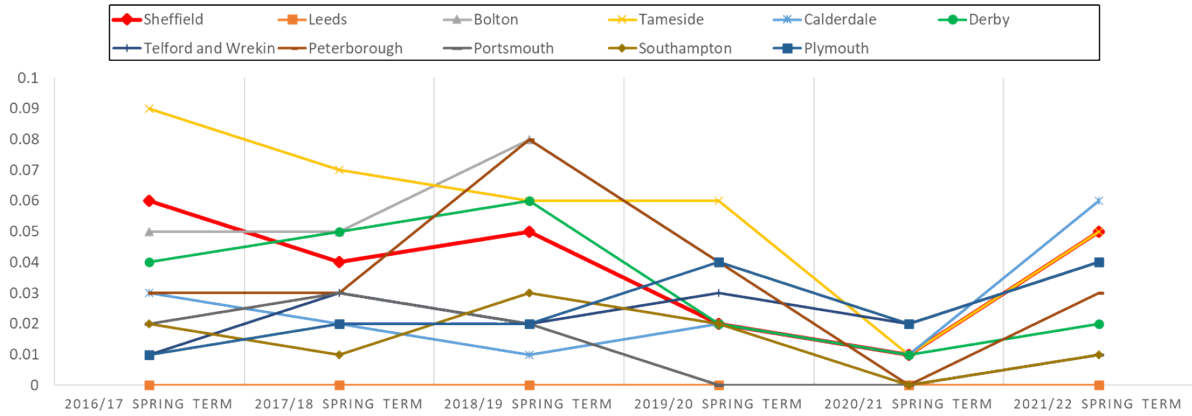
Comparative data is only currently available for exclusion and suspension to the end of the Spring Term 2021/22. Full year comparative data is only available to the end of academic year 2020/21. Comparative data against geographical and statistical neighbours for both full year and Spring term is shown below:



**ENGLAND / Y&H - EXCLUSION RATE (%)
SPRING TERM 2015/16 – 2021/22**



**STATISTICAL NEIGHBOUR - EXCLUSION RATE (%)
SPRING TERM 2015/16 – 2021/22**



Anecdotal evidence shows that Sheffield is following a national trend of increasing exclusions but at potentially a higher rate than our neighbours.

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Sheffield Local Authority: Wards & Ward Localities

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Ward Localities

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Tim Armstrong,
Head of Access & Inclusion

Tel: 0114 2053100

Report of: *Meredith Dixon-Teasdale*

Report to: *Education, Children & Families Committee*

Date of Decision: *27th September 2023*

Subject: *A citywide approach to improving school attendance*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (2336)				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

To raise with committee the current challenges related to school attendance in the city and to provide an update on current activity and future planned work to support and improve school attendance across the city.

To seek commitments from elected members on the importance of enabling good school attendance.

Recommendations:

That the Education Children and Families Policy Committee

1. commit to play a role as system leaders on improving school attendance across the city working across Sheffield City Council and with partner organisations.
2. commit to continue to support activity to improve school attendance.

That the Committee will continue to work with officers to agree further actions which it can take which will positively impact on attendance outcomes in the City in line with the attendance charter and campaign.

Background Papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – 2022/23 Annual Report – Attendance

Appendix 2 – Attendance Charter

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Kayleigh Inman</i>
		Legal: <i>Nadine Wynter</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Bashir Khan</i>
		Climate: <i>N/A</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Tim Armstrong</i>	Job Title: <i>Head of Access & Inclusion, Education & Skills directorate</i>
	Date: <i>08/09/23</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 What the data tells us:

School absence in Sheffield is a substantial and growing barrier to the success of our children as they move towards adult life.

The national picture of school attendance is a significant concern. Data shows that whilst a lot of work is taking place across the country to address the reasons for school absence, too many children are missing too much of their education.

National data estimates based on governments data feeds from 80% of all schools, shows that overall absence in school year 2022/23 was 7.5%. At primary this was 6%, secondary 9.3% and in special schools 13.1%. Persistent absence data (children with below 90% attendance) shows that 22.3% of all children were persistently absent from school. At primary this was 17.2%, secondary 28.3% and in special schools 38.7%.

National data shows that children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds and those with SEN are significantly more likely to be absent from school. Absence rates were:

- 11.4% of pupils eligible for free school meals, 6.2% those not eligible
- 13.3% for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan), 11.1% for pupils with SEN support, 6.9% with no identified SEN

Sheffield data shows that we are operating below the national average data for attendance and above the national average for persistent absence in all measures. We have historically been near the bottom of national league tables for local authority areas school attendance. Whilst there have been some improvements during 2022/23, particularly against other local authority areas, we should rightly be significantly concerned by the high level of absence in Sheffield schools and continue to increase the work to address this.

The attached annual report: '2022-23 Annual Report – Attendance' (Appendix 1) provides detailed information on school attendance data in Sheffield, where improvements have been made, the causes of absence, the specific attendance work that has been undertaken to address this challenge and the extent of the challenges that remain.

1.2 National guidance on school attendance:

In September 2022, the Department for Education introduced new non-statutory attendance guidance; Working together to improve attendance. Sheffield City Council has worked hard to introduce the recommendations within this guidance.

We have been successful in meeting the expectations of the new guidance at a higher rate than other local authorities:

- In Term 1 99% of schools had a Termly Attendance Support Meetings (TASM), 98% in Term 2 and 99% in Term 3.
- All but 1 maintained school has allocated an attendance champion who is part of their senior leadership team.
- Citywide and Locality networking opportunities have been offered every half term with 93% of schools having attended at least 1 session.

During 2022, Sheffield benefitted from the support of a Department for Education Attendance Advisor. This supported a self-assessment of our position on attendance and provided guidance on our plans to improve attendance and implement the 'Working together to improve attendance' guidance. The advisor provided positive feedback on the work taking place across Education and Skills to implement the guidance and improve attendance, but also acknowledged that it will likely take several years of consistent and citywide system focused work for improvements to be realised.

1.3 Reasons for absence:

Despite these successes we know that there remain significant barriers to effective school attendance. Children tell us that they want to go to school, but struggle when the right support is not in place either in or outside school, and when they don't feel like they belong within the school and local community.

Reasons for absence from school include:

- Poor mental health and well-being / Anxiety
- Educational neglect and families struggling to ensure their child can access school
- Where a child is not allowed or expected to be in school including reduced timetables, suspension and permanent exclusion
- Term time leave
- Mobility of children and limited school places in certain areas of the city
- Disagreement and incidents between child, family and school
- Illness and health needs, including time taken out of school for medical appointments
- Children's special educational needs not being met within school

Children being in education is not only vital for their future life development but is also a protective factor in keeping them safe from harm. Data shows us that children open to a social worker are more likely to have poor school attendance. Likewise, children in the criminal justice system and those at risk of exploitation statistically have lower school attendance.

1.4 Developing strategic system leadership to improve school attendance:

To drive improvements in school attendance, it needs to be a focus of leadership across the city at every level. The Committee are asked to commit to playing their role as system leaders and leaders across Sheffield City Council to improve school attendance.

The Strategic Director of Children's Services has agreed that this is an area of significant concern and is committed to ensuring a strategic approach to addressing poor attendance in the city.

We are working with colleagues across the Council and with other key strategic bodies to look at how we can take a whole system approach to addressing school absence. This will be working with already established committees within the Council, multi-agency partnerships and anchor institutions to ensure we have a clear narrative that every school day counts and children and young people should be in school to ensure they learn, achieve, learn life skill lesson, social skills and belong as a member of a community. We should have an expectation across Sheffield that children should be in school every school day and have support from all anchor institutions through our attendance charter. We will work with all parts of Sheffield City Council to find ways to optimise school attendance and with our NHS providers and commissioners.

Committee members are asked to champion school attendance when they have the opportunity to do so when working with other bodies and through the Local Area Committees.

We should expect that as a council our own employees are supported to ensure that their own children attend school. This should become a clear and natural narrative that non-attendance for whatever reason becomes an unusual occurrence and we will know this by the level of attendance rising across Sheffield at all stages and ages. We would want this to become the narrative across Sheffield and for all anchor institutions to support this.

As corporate parent we should ensure that our looked after children are provided the best support to attend school and we seek to remove barriers to them attending through the work of the Corporate Parenting Board. Services including the virtual school, Inclusion and Attendance and Social Care are working to ensure that attendance is a priority for Sheffield looked after children whether they live in the city or not.

1.5 Attendance charter:

In 2022, as part of our attendance campaign 'Every school day matters' we co-produced an attendance charter (attached at appendix 2) where Sheffield City Council and other anchor organisations committed to the following:

We pledge to:

- Work jointly to improve attendance across our city.
- Champion the benefits of good school attendance in our work.
- Support families to help their children develop and maintain good attendance habits in the early years and throughout their school life.
- Celebrate good and improved attendance.
- Listen to children and young people's experiences, and how they affect their ability to engage in school life daily.
- Make sure that the right kind of support is available so that children and young people can attend school.
- Work together to remove barriers to good attendance.
- Minimise disruption to learning if children and young people are unable to attend school.
- Review how our organisation can support all children and young people to have good school attendance in our city.

We are now asking organisations and individual services within organisations including Sheffield Council to commit to three things that they can do to implement the charter and make a difference to school attendance in the city.

1.6 Planned activity to address school absence in the coming year:

Work is taking place in many areas to address specific reasons for absence and improve overall school attendance. Some of this work is new, other examples are at the early stages of development. There is other work that is much more embedded. The following are some of the planned activity in the coming year that is either new or builds on work from the past year or two.

- We have refreshed our attendance campaign at the start of the academic year to again promote the importance of school attendance. This has included bus and park advertising and further training and promotion to services on the importance of school attendance.
- We will again set citywide Key Performance Indicators for attendance, working with schools to create individual targets for whole school attendance, reduction of persistent absence and reduction of severe absence (absence below 50%). We will work with individual schools to target this work building on the good work completed last academic year.
- We will continue to develop our Inclusion Model, focusing on the 'Team around' the family, school, locality, and city, as part of our work to address the barriers to successful school attendance. We will continue to direct our work to ensure that attendance is part of

every child's plan where services are involved and to identify children who need support to access school but do not currently have it.

- We will continue to work with colleagues to identify children at risk of 'educational neglect'. Some parents are unable to take all possible action to ensure that their children access the education that they are entitled to. In the past year we have worked with social care colleagues to create an 'educational neglect' pathway so that appropriate family support can be put in place where families do not have the capacity to ensure that their child accesses their educational entitlement. This is a new process and so in the coming year we will be seeking to embed this within practice.
- We will work in partnership with schools and Learn Sheffield to ensure that school attendance is a core part of school improvement plans with a focus on ensuring children are welcomed and feel that they belong within the school community.
- We will work to embed EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) strategies across schools. The past year has seen this developed as an approach and will require further time to embed as practice.
- We have been working with health colleagues on pilots around how health needs can be met in school to reduce the time children miss education due to medical appointments, building on positive experiences during the pandemic. We will work with colleagues in the Children's Hospital Trust to expand on this approach.
- We need to consider how we can better target the interventions we can deliver to have the biggest impact and how we invest our limited resources in the best way. Data shows the geographical areas where absence is greatest and the needs which are prevalent such as high level of anxiety about attending school. Future investment is needed to target these.
- We will develop a belonging framework to articulate ways of working that drive local inclusion and belonging for all children within our schools.

1.7

A call to act:

Improving school attendance is not something that can be improved by a single service changing its way of working or by a school in isolation. It can only be improved by the whole city addressing the barriers that cause absence and creating a culture that states that missing education, even for a short time, is wrong. It is essential that Sheffield City Council provide leadership in driving forward improvement and support citywide, championing of attendance and challenging practice that means that children do not attend school.

This paper is presented to enable the committee to consider the challenges of school attendance and how policy and practice can ensure a clear focus on improving attendance so that all children are provided a better opportunity to move to a successful adult life.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

- 2.1 These proposals reiterate the approach of the 2021/22 one year plan where there was a commitment to reduce exclusions in all forms.

A focus on school attendance supports the following strategic goal for the city:

Happy young people who have the start they need for the future they want: young Sheffielders are happy, safe and have the opportunities they need to be fulfilled and reach their potential in a changing world.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 No specific consultation has taken place for this paper.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 This paper is presented to identify the citywide challenges related to poor school attendance and significant areas of absence. This report is an analysis around the challenges of school attendance which considers the protected and equality characteristics of children and recognises that practice needs to consider the specific needs of individual protected groups and communities. Data is used to identify specific groups, including BAME with the Roma community being the group with highest school absence; children with care needs; children with SEND.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no direct climate implications arising from this report.

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 There are no other direct implications arising from this report.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 The alternative would be to continue to see attendance as a single service or school issue. This option has been rejected due to the range of challenges that are in place and the need to prioritise attendance at school.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Children in Sheffield are consistently not attending school, risking future life chances and preventing academic success. More than that, education should provide a place of belonging, safety, fun and friendship for children and young people. Currently too many children are missing out on maximising those opportunities. It is recommended that school attendance be a strategic priority to address this.

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Sheffield

Every school day matters!

enjoy • learn • achieve

sheffield.gov.uk/schoolmatters

Sheffield School Attendance Charter

We believe that school attendance is important and is everyone's responsibility.

We pledge to...

- **Work jointly** to improve attendance across our city.
- **Champion the benefits** of good school attendance in our work.
- **Support families** to help their children develop and maintain good attendance habits in the early years and throughout their school life.
- **Celebrate good** and improved attendance.
- **Listen to children and young people's experiences**, and how they affect their ability to engage in school life daily.
- **Make sure that the right kind of support is available** so that children and young people can attend school.
- **Work together** to remove barriers to good attendance.
- **Minimise disruption to learning** if children and young people are unable to attend school.
- **Review how our organisation can support all children and young people** to have good school attendance in our city.



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Annual Summary for School Attendance in Sheffield 2022/23

“Sheffield will be an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that all children and young people get the right support at the right time so that they can live a happy and fulfilled life”.

Sheffield Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025

School attendance is everyone’s business. In Sheffield our expectation is that every child will be supported to access a formal and full-time education where they attend on time, every day.

School is not only a factor that helps to ensure that children are safe, but it creates a sense of belonging and identity for a child in their local community and is an enabler to successfully move to adult life. Unfortunately, too many children are not offered or accessing a full-time education. The reasons for this are wide and varied. To improve attendance, we need to identify the reasons for absence and address them.

To achieve improvements in attendance all parties need to work together. This includes the Local Authority, schools, parents, young people and wider community and services such as health, police, and the voluntary sector. No single organisation can achieve improvements alone.

Over the last 5 years Sheffield has seen a steady decline in school attendance and a rise in persistent absence (attendance below 90%). Sheffield has remained near the bottom of local authority league tables for school attendance. In the Sheffield City Council One Year plan issued in 2021, the following commitment was made to address the challenge of absence from school:

Reduce exclusions in all forms:

- We will launch a city-wide drive to improve the attendance of our children and young people in early years, schools, and post-16 settings.
- Work with schools to reduce exclusion through tackling the causes and delivering rapid improvements to inclusion.

DATA AND THE CURRENT PICTURE IN SHEFFIELD

What the data tells us

Attendance is a challenge nationally post-pandemic with significant decrease in overall attendance and increase in persistent absence. Attendance in Sheffield has not declined at the same rate as other Local Authorities across the country. Of the 151 LA’s, in 2022/23, Sheffield has moved rank from 144th to 131st at primary level, and 145th to 124th at secondary level. In special schools, persistent absence has reduced by 1.4% and is now above the average for core cities, statistical neighbours and Yorkshire and the Humber.

In academic year 2022/23 for the first time, we set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for school attendance and Persistent absence on a citywide, locality and school-based level. These were set as an intent to see significant improvement in citywide attendance.

The following table shows these citywide KPIs and the current reportable attendance data for academic year compared to the previous year. To note that the current data for attendance shows 2 figures – the first is the data that the LA holds from schools who provide a direct attendance feed, the second is based on data provided by the DfE from a total of 136 schools. Full data for the year will be published by DfE in the new academic year.

	Attendance 2021/22	Attendance KPI 2022/23	Attendance 2022/23	National Attendance Estimate 2022/23	Severe Absence KPI 2022/23	Severe absence Actual 2022/23	
Primary	93.3%	96%	93.4% (93.3)	94%	750	200	1408
Secondary	90.7%	95%	89.9% (90.1)	90.7%		1083	
Special	83.9%	95%	86% (81.3)	86.9%		125	
	Persistent absence 2021/22	Persistent absence KPI 2022/23	Persistent absence 2022/23	National Persistent absence estimate 2022/23	Reduced timetable KPI 2022/23	Reduced timetable actual 2022/23	
Primary	20.1%	18%	19.8% (20.4)	17.2%	300	179	736
Secondary	27.3%	22%	28.8% (28.5)	28.3%		480	
Special	46.9%	22%	38.7% (42.4)	38.7%		77	

During termly attendance support meetings in 2022/23, specialist officers worked with schools to set realistic KPI's of 1.5% attendance increase, targets on reduced persistent absence, and attendance action plans. This has been recognised as good practice by the DFE through the pilot project working with a DFE Attendance Advisor.

This targeted work has supported schools to see the following success in improving attendance:

	Number of schools who have successfully managed to:			
	Improve their attendance	Improve their PA	Increase their attendance by 1.5%	Decrease their PA by 1%
Primary	76 of 136	68 of 136	12 of 136	54 of 136
Secondary	3 of 30	6 of 30	1 of 30	5 of 30
Special	3 of 10	5 of 10	1 of 10	4 of 10

We have specifically worked to improve attendance at transition points as this has historically been an area of challenge. We set a KPI for transition year groups (FS2 and Y7) to be in line with the whole phase attendance. The data shows us that:

- FS2 actual attendance is 91.8%, compared to 93.4% average for primary.
- Year 7 actual attendance is 91.8%, compared to 89.9% average for secondary.

Specific Schools data

The following provides data from 2022/23 across Sheffield schools:

- Attendance at primary schools' ranges from 84% to 97.1%.
- Attendance at secondary ranges from 79.4% to 96.5%.
- 54 primary schools have attendance below the city average with 7 of these having attendance below 90.5%.
- 13 secondary schools have attendance below the city average with 7 of these having attendance less than 88%.
- 2 special schools have attendance below 80%
- Persistent Absence at primary schools' ranges from 0.4% to 59.6%.
- Persistent Absence at secondary ranges from 7.8% to 59.6%.

- 59.6% of pupils with an EHCP at primary age are persistent absentees, with 56.7% at secondary.

Persistent Absence in Sheffield

Persistent Absence within the city remains higher than nationally at primary level. Last academic year PA at primary was 20.1%, secondary 27.3% and special 30.8%. At secondary and special school levels this was lower than core cities, statistical neighbours and Yorkshire and the Humber. Sheffield were 65th out of 151 authorities for secondary PA in 2021/22 which was a significant improvement.

Specific Cohorts of Concern

The predominant cohort of concern at both primary and secondary age is children with an EHCP. At primary age they have an average attendance of 85.7%, and at secondary age 74.2%. Those recorded as SEN support are the next key cohort, followed by those on reduced timetables, those who are severely absent and pupils of 'other white' ethnicity, particularly those from the Roma population.

Most Improved Schools (percentage point increase in overall attendance) in 2022/23

Archdale (4.5%), Norton Free (1.9%), Owlter Brook (1.8%), Bradfield Dungworth (1.8%), St Josephs (1.7%), Waterthorpe (1.7%), Meersbrook Bank (1.7%), Dobcroft Junior (1.7%), Meadowhead (1.6%)

Most Improved Schools (percentage point reduction in Persistent Absence) in 2022/23

Anns Grove (11.5%), Waterthorpe NI (10.7%), Owlter Brook (10.2%), Brunswick (10%), Whiteways (9.2%), Archdale (7%), Rainbow Forge (6.6%), Intake (6.2%), Wybourn (6.2%)

BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE

There is no single solution to the challenge of attendance in Sheffield as there is no single cause of absence. Whilst parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child accesses a suitable education, schools and services need to work together with families to identify the cause of absence and solutions to help a child to access that education.

The following are some of the barriers that have been identified as causes of poor school attendance:

Term Time Leave – currently double the national average, with no upper limit to the number of days of leave that can be taken, and fines of £60 per parent, though currently parents are only fined for 1 child in a family. In HT6 alone 2% of absence was due to term time leave.

Mental Health – The number of children unable to attend due to the mental health has increased significantly over the last 5 years. An increase in places at Chapel House (Medical Alternative Provision) has been commissioned. There has been an increase in the number GP letters received by schools and Chapel House stating children are unable to attend.

Educational Neglect – We are growing in our understanding of the number of children in the city who are impacted by educational neglect. This is evidenced in parents/carers of children who have not responded to the normal range of interventions and support seeking to promote a child's education.

Reduced Timetables – we have seen a significant increase in the use of reduced timetables across the city with over 700 this academic year with fewer than 1 in 10 going back to full time within the 8-week recommended timescale. Schools across the city continue to advise that they use RTT for

behaviour reasons even though the new attendance guidance advises this is not appropriate. The predominant reason provided for the RTT is 'SEND needs unable to be met in school'.

Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions – The number of children receiving suspensions and permanent exclusions has increased significantly throughout the last 2 years. Across the academic year 21,000 days of absence have been recorded due to suspension and exclusion.

Mobility – Mobility of children in and out of the city continues to be higher than the levels seen 5 years ago, with the majority not providing a forwarding address. This means that they are recorded as absent whilst investigations are made into their onward location.

Resilience – We are seeing a higher level of child absence from school due to fall out, incidents, or breakdown in relationship between parent and the school. This has resulted in children being absent whilst investigations take place around the concerns. Complaints relating to children out of school due to bullying not being addressed is increasing.

Medical Appointments – Medical recording on registers is currently double the national average. Children are often absent from school for the whole day to attend appointments.

Illness – Sheffield's authorised absence rate is much lower than national averages, and all other comparators. Sheffield is 5th out of 151 authorities for authorising absence. Secondary schools authorise very little absence. In the academic year 21-22 illness in Sheffield secondary schools was 1.86% lower than the national average, with unauthorised absence 1.95% above national average, Parents tell us that when schools do not authorise the absence, when they have contacted the school and provided a reason, they are less likely to contact in the future to provide a reason, therefore future absences are recorded as 'no reason provided' unauthorised absence.

Off-site direction – There is an increase across the city of schools using off site direction. Whilst the intervention is designed to bring around change to a child's behaviour the child/parent often refuse to attend the other school resulting in unauthorised absence, compared to reintegration back into the classroom.

Dual Registration / managed move – Managed move can be a successful intervention for many young people, however for others they find the move difficult and their attendance deteriorates towards the end of the move or the start of the reintegration back to their own school.

School places – The height of the birth rate in Sheffield is currently entering secondary education meaning that for those who entered Year 7 in September 2022 and during the academic year, significant numbers of children have been allocated school places outside of catchment area or parental preferences. Whilst sufficient places exist across the city for all children, those who did not apply for 3 places including their catchment or who are late arrivals to Sheffield after allocation day have often not been able to be provided a place that parents are happy with. The same issue is in place for those who will start year 7 in September 2023.

Unmet needs – Parents are citing where their child's special educational needs are not being met within the allocated school as a reason for absence. Data shows that children with SEN are more likely to be absent from school, with those with an EHCP one of the most concerning cohorts of absence.

HOW WE ARE ADDRESSING ABSENCE IN SHEFFIELD

Compliance with national guidance

The Department for Education launched new attendance guidance for September 2022, 'Working together to improve attendance' with the intent that it would become statutory during the academic year. To date legislation has not been passed to make it statutory. The guidance introduced the category of 'severely absent' pupils as those whose attendance is below 50%. Alongside an expectation for whole school and local area policies and strategic approach to be in place, it also placed several additional expectations in place on previous guidance. These included:

- All schools to have an 'attendance champion' who is part of the senior leadership team.
- Schools to work with local authorities to address barriers to attendance at whole school and child level.
- Schools to put additional support in place to remove barriers to absence.
- Local authorities to have a school attendance support team that works with all schools in their area (including independent schools) to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.
- Local authorities to hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.
- A greater focus on supportive measures than punitive attendance legal measures.
- Creation of networking opportunities for schools and local areas to work together.

When the guidance was launched, Sheffield was in the fortunate position of having school attendance support already in place, including a recent investment in additional staffing. Unlike other local authorities, Sheffield had never moved to a traded service. As of September 2022, each locality within Sheffield has a dedicated Attendance Focused Inclusion and Attendance Specialist who hold the expected Termly Attendance Support Meetings and is the primary point of contact for schools. These officers are based within the Inclusion and Attendance Service and work alongside other officers in the service to support inclusion in education.

Sheffield has been successful in meeting the expectations of the new guidance at a higher rate than other local authorities:

- In Term 1 99% of schools had a Termly Attendance Support Meetings (TASM), 98% in Term 2 and 99% in Term 3.
- All but 1 maintained school has allocated an attendance champion who is part of their senior leadership team.
- Citywide and Locality networking opportunities have been offered every half term with 93% of schools having attended at least 1 session.

Exclusions in all forms data

As part of our work to address 'reducing exclusions in all forms' we have developed a citywide data set that goes beyond raw attendance data and looks at all children who are missing out on education in some form. By placing a ring around all children who are missing out on an element of their education, either through absence or through a lack of offered provision, we have been able to see the full scope of where children are not accessing a full education and to intentionally target cohorts and areas within our discussions with schools. This data set includes the following criteria over the previous 12 months:

- Attendance below 90%.
- Children recorded as 'Child Missing Education'.
- Children on reduced timetables.
- Children in receipt of Education Other than at School (EOTAS).

- Children in receipt of Elective Home Education which is recorded as being unsuitable.
- Children who are provided alternative provision as they are too ill to attend school.
- Children who have been permanently excluded from their school.
- Children who have received a suspension from school for 10+ sessions /5+ days.
- Children recorded as unauthorised absence for 20+ sessions / 10+ days.
- Children recorded as educated away from the school site for 20+ sessions / 10+ days.
- Children recorded as ill for 30+ sessions / 15+ days.

This data set is used to discuss with schools' particular areas of concern. It is also used to identify challenges across specific cohorts such as children with SEN, children with a social worker and different ethnicity groupings.

It should be noted that there is no route for us to compare this with other local areas as this is a Sheffield specific model to help us to understand the breadth of challenges to accessing education.

Attendance Campaign

In the 21/22 school year we launched a school attendance communications campaign with the slogan 'every school day matters'. Visibility was the primary aim of the campaign to get a clear message out that Sheffield thinks that good school attendance is important, and that as a city, we will support families. The following actions have been taking place:

2021/22

School attendance charter co-produced by local anchor organisations; banners for school gates; back to school letter to all parents from Director of Education and Director of Public Health; School matters microsite; social media campaign; Clear Channel boards across the city centre; workshops with schools to explore the challenges of improving attendance; promotion and presentation to services within the local authority on how they can support improved school attendance. Developments led to the roll out of the communications campaign publicly from March 2022.

2022/23

Poster distribution to all schools; posters circulated to all GP surgeries and dental surgeries in Sheffield with additional information on how they can promote good school attendance; a back-to-school letter to all parents from Director of Education and Director of Public Health in September 2023 which included a reminder to parents to take up vaccinations in schools; promotion and presentation to services within the local authority on how they can support improved school attendance. A social media campaign was launched but was truncated due to the death of the queen leading to changes in local authority social media use at that time.

2023/24

Actions being taken are: refresh of school matters microsite, ask for charter co-signatories to pledge activity to promote improved school attendance – 'what three things..?'; engagement with services and teams within SCC to ask 'what three things can I do to promote school attendance?'; links into Sheffield Childrens Hospital, primary care networks and GP surgeries to provide clear guidance and reinforce messages on promoting good school attendance.

Attendance Charter

As part of the new attendance campaign, 'Every School Day Matters', we identified a need to work closer with key stakeholders to explore what they could do to work with us to create excellence in attendance. Since the charter was launched, we have worked with these key stakeholders to share

the importance of school attendance and explore what 3 things they could do to support young people attend school more often. Some of this work includes:

- Dental surgeries now checking the age of a child when a parent books a routine appointment and automatically offering after school or school holiday appointments.
- Housing services challenging when a child is at home during school hours and arranging appointments to allow school pick up and drop off.
- Foundry Medical Practice appointing a school link safeguarding officer to work with schools in locality B to ensure repeated illness is addressed.
- Sheffield Childrens Hospital offering appointments in the community, in the school or virtual.
- Sheffield Library Services questioning why children are in the library during school hours.
- South Yorkshire Police doing more 'stop and ask' challenges for children in the community.
- Attendance data and cohort meetings half termly with key stakeholders to consider children open to them, and their current attendance pattern.

Attendance of children with a social worker, caseworker, or keyworker

In September 2022, the DFE expectations around working together to improve attendance were shared through service away days with those who are considered caseworkers or keyworkers within children's services. The half day sessions focused on ensuring compliance with the DFE guidance, supporting young people to engage in education and the barriers to attendance. The expectations around capturing the child's voice, whole family working, attendance being a priority discussion at all meetings and home visits, and attendance on every plan were made clear to all staff. In May 2023 a joint audit was completed to consider whether the expectations were evident in practice. The results of the audit showed in most cases 'improving' or 'maintaining good attendance' was a key focus. Actions identified from the audit are being share and implemented.

Sheffield Inclusion model

Throughout 2022/23 work has been taking place via a multi-agency project group to develop a consistent and clear delivery model to improve inclusion. This model is building on practice happening across early help, locality working to manage SEND and citywide approaches to address the risk of exclusion. A strong focus has been on developing a relational model that enables system wide targeting of support. Specifically, it has sought to articulate and pilot practice at 'Team around the family', 'Team around the school', 'Team around the locality' and 'Team around the city' levels. The intent is to identify barriers to accessing learning at child, school and system level and seek to address this through a multi-disciplinary approach. The pilots have shown that this way of working can reduce absence and exclusion and build confidence across partnerships. Across 2023/24 we will seek to further roll out this way of working.

Other attendance Initiatives developed during 2022/23

MACE – Education in now presented at every multi agency child exploitation meeting, to consider the impact of the exploitation on attendance, education, post 16 opportunities, and exams.

EBSA – Sheffield has rolled out the use of Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) strategies to support young people return to education through capturing the barriers from the child's voice and using graded exposure to return to school.

Educational Neglect Pathway – A group across Children's Services has come together to develop a clear pathway around educational neglect which has been shared with managers from across the service area and is being implemented to ensure escalation where families do not engage or require

extra help to engage with support measures. Educational neglect has been included within the new 'threshold of need' document for Sheffield.

Health – Relationships with GP practices, dentists, and the Integrated Care Board has improved this year with joint initiatives and communications to ensure we are working together to ensure children with health needs are able to attend.

Truancy – Working with South Yorkshire Police, City Centre Ambassadors, and the Meadowhall Security Team we have run truancy sweeps to explore the reasons young people of school age are not in school. Most of the reasons have been suspension, RTT or breakdown in relationship with the school although some general truancy was witnessed and addressed.

MHIS – Working with the mental health in schools (MHIS) teams we have identified strategies for school staff to work with young people at risk of not engaging with education due to their mental health.

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Survey to schools

In Half Term 6 we consulted with schools about their experiences of implementing the new guidance and the support they have received from the Local Authority.

Early feedback suggests that schools have updated their policies and practice as a result of the new guidance. Schools have shared that they value the support and have described the benefits they've experienced from the termly targeted support meetings:

- *A chance to talk through strategies to support families. Celebrating successes. Sharing good practice.*
- *Reflecting on attendance data, having an additional agency give guidance and support, if I have any questions my link workers are super fast at responding to me and if they don't know the answer they search to find this for me.*
- *We present key pupils and discuss each one. It's good to gain immediate support and advice. The AISW has been able to implement key actions and advise the school as to our actions. We have taken on board advice to support families.*
- *To get me thinking about better / more efficient ways of monitoring attendance; To help me be aware of other agencies who can support; To get me to challenge myself and consider areas of current weakness or needs for development.*
- *Up-to-date data is shared, sharing of possible strategies, support throughout (not just at these meetings).*
- *Critical friend conversations are invaluable.*

Good Practice evidence by DfE attendance advisor

Due to the low level of attendance in Sheffield, we were allocated a DfE attendance advisor who worked with us from December 2021 to December 2022. This enabled a self-assessment of our position around attendance and plans to be put in place. The advisor helped us work through our improvement plan and particularly recognised the following work as areas of good practice that we have been developing both during the period of direct work and through communication since:

Attendance Charter - As part of the new attendance campaign, 'Every School Day Matters', we identified a need to work closer with key stakeholders to explore what they could do to work with us to create excellence in attendance. A charter was launched.

KPI's - As a Local Authority we set Key Performance Indicators on a citywide, locality and school-based level. School KPI's, targets and improvement plans are set during the Termly Meetings.

Compliance - Each locality within Sheffield has a dedicated Attendance Focused Inclusion and Attendance Specialist who hold the expected Termly Attendance Support Meetings. In Term 1 we were 99% compliant with the DFE expectations, Term 2 98% compliance and for this current term we are on track for 99% compliance again.

Networking - Citywide and Locality networking opportunities have been offered every half term with 93% of schools having attended at least 1 session.

Education Neglect – A group across Children's Services has come together to develop a clear pathway around educational neglect. Education is now presented at a variety of multi agency meetings, to consider the impact of attendance on other factors.

EBSA – Sheffield has rolled out the use of Emotionally Based School Avoidance strategies to support young people return to education through capturing the barriers from the child's voice.

Truancy – Working with South Yorkshire Police, City Centre Ambassadors and the Meadowhall Security Team we have run truancy sweeps to stop, explore and support children not in school.

Data improvements

The above data section of this report shows where improvements have been made across overall and school-based attendance.

FUTURE PRIORITIES AND PLAN

To improve school attendance, we need to continue to promote attendance as a key strategic aim for the city within our corporate plans and across Children's Services. We need to continue to recognise that attendance is everyone's business.

Within academic year 2023/24 we will seek to progress the following activity:

- Setting key performance across schools, localities, and the city for 2023/24.
- Further roll out of the attendance charter, and the "what 3 things' can you do' to create a citywide response from anchor organisations, including across SCC services.
- Further roll out of the attendance campaign through bus advertising and further targeted materials.
- Progress the roll out of the Inclusion Model to support schools as our delivery model to support better access to education.
- Relaunching the GP Protocol to ensure GPs are encouraging children to continue to engage in education and empowering parents to consider reasonable adjustments with the school.
- Further roll out of an EBSA strategy and pathway for the city working to ensure that children are identified at the earliest opportunity and supported appropriately.
- Further development of what constitutes educational neglect and how this can be addressed across all services.
- Further targeted work with schools to ensure that reduced timetables are reviewed and reduced.
- Work with LearnSheffield to develop school improvement activity related to attendance.
- Continue to strengthen the activity that takes place at child level to address absence, including more targeted use of attendance legal measures where there is evidence that all

support has been put in place and where it's assessed that legal measures can support change in behaviours.



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Dominic Sleath,
Head of Service – ICT&DI

Tel: 07990791326

Report of: *Meredith Dixon-Teasdale, Strategic Director of Children's Services*

Report to: *Education, Children and Families Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: *27th September 2023*

Subject: *Commission of Education Management System*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

This report sets out the Education System and how it is currently provided.

This report goes on to describe the importance of the Education System and seeks approval to Commission an Education System.

This report also sets out the estimated upfront costs of implementation of the new system and the expected recoupment of these costs over the lifetime of the service.

Recommendations:

That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee approves the commission of an Education System from an external provider for a period of 10 years and estimated value of £4.3 million.

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Liz Gough</i>
		Legal: <i>Richard Marik</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Beverley Law</i>
		Climate: <i>Jonathan Pearce</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Dominic Sleath</i>	Job Title: <i>Head of Service – ICT&DI</i>
	Date: <i>27th September 2023</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

Background

1.1 Following the conclusion of the Capita Partnership in 2021, the Council put in place contractual arrangements to ensure it could still access various key systems previously provided under the Partnership. The Council currently has a single contract in place with Capita Business Services Ltd for the joint delivery of four core IT systems, including Capita One Education.

1.2 Capita provide the Capita ONE system. This is an Education System hosted by Capita in their data centre and accessed by Education staff in the Council. This service is due to come to an end on 30th June 2025.

Education System

1.3 The system facilitates the work of over 30 Services and 500 Officers.

1.4 The system is the Council's key Line of Business System for Education; it holds the records of every child or young person accessing funded education in Early Years Provision, Maintained Schools and Academies.

1.5 The system is vital for recording and reporting on the Council's statutory duties such as Special Educational Needs and Disability Interventions, Assessment and Reviews.

1.6 The system enables back-office functions such as Early Years funding.

1.7 The system also manages processes that the Council carries out on behalf of the Education settings in Sheffield such as school admissions, census checks and maximising Pupil Premium.

Commission of new Education System

1.8 To prepare for the end of this arrangement on 30 June 2025, the Council must commission an Education System to ensure service continuity.

1.9 The Council will need sufficient time to identify a compliant route to market to either procure a new system or retain the current system. The Procurement Strategy will be developed with Commercial Services and is subject to separate Council approval.

1.10 It is proposed that the selection of a system should be led by the Council's Education Service. The system must meet the requirements and specification being defined by Business Change and ICT and Digital Innovation Services alongside the Education Service.

1.11 It is proposed that the new system must have similar capabilities as the

current system as a minimum.

- 1.12 The proposed commission of the new service also provides an opportunity to improve on these capabilities, including Case Management for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision and interventions.
- 1.13 In the last five to ten years the market has matured and there are now several systems that could meet the Council's requirements better, including safe management of SEND cases.
- 1.14 The new system will have the capability to meet the changing needs of the Service.
- 1.15 There is also an opportunity to reduce the Total Cost of Ownership by selecting a system that has a lower annual maintenance cost.
- 1.16 It is therefore proposed that the Council commission an Education System from an external provider for a period up to 30th June 2035, for an estimated value of up to £4.3m which includes an expected recoupment of £800k to cover the upfront cost of implementation of the system.

Upfront cost of change

- 1.17 Once a new provider is commissioned, there will be an upfront cost of change to the new Education System. This will include supplier set up and implementation costs, commissioning external consultants for data migration, business analysis and project management as well as expanding the team to configure the system and for training and service engagement. This will also cover a period where we will have to pay for both systems while we configure the new one.
- 1.18 The value of this cost of change is dependent upon the provider ultimately commissioned.
- 1.19 There is no separate budget for the change to a new external service provider and an initial analysis exercise identifies the upfront costs to be in the region of up to £800,000 over 2 years. The cost of change will need to be considered in the Business Case, as part of the Business Planning process.
- 1.20 Over the period of the service there is an estimated payback time of 4-8 years and as such, a service period of 10 years would allow sufficient time to recoup these upfront costs.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 IT systems are now intrinsic to the efficient delivery of high-quality services.

2.2 An education system enables us to meet our Statutory obligations which include:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Statutory Assessment and Review Service (SENDSARS)
- School Admissions Process
- Early Years Pupil Premium Checking and Administration
- Funding Childcare Providers
- 2-year-old Free Early Learning applications
- 30 hours Eligibility Confirmation
- Refresh 30 hours checks
- Disability Access Fund Applications
- Safeguarding Children including the duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to identify and record pupils not on roll.
- Recording Fixed and Permanent Exclusions
- Data returns to the DfE.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 The system is not used by Sheffield citizens, it is a back-office system used to manage critical functions of the Council.
As such consultation is not required.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 We need to invest in a reliable and modern system to support the work of services. Young people in education and their parents/carers could be affected by a lack of investment in this area, as this could equate to lower quality service delivery.

4.1.2 The project team has drafted and will regularly update an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), to ensure impacts are mitigated where necessary. This will include ensuring IT software is accessible for users and is compatible with any assistive technology users of the software may have.

4.1.3 The project will adhere to GDPR standards as we recognise the importance of this when retaining information about our residents of Sheffield. We also recognise this may affect some groups more than others, such as disabled children and their carers, and those who are known to us through safeguarding services.

4.1.4 We will also adopt ethical procurement standards in our tendering process too and be mindful of EDI within this.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 The annual cost of the Capita ONE Education system is £430,000 per year. It is anticipated that ongoing costs may well increase as we are currently on a fixed term deal.

- 4.2.2 Benchmarking of other Local Authorities and soft market testing indicate that other systems are available at a significantly lower cost. In this respect the current service costs are considered to be relatively expensive and not representing value for money.
- 4.2.3 A project team has been recently formed to develop a Business Case for change, with an initial analysis exercise identifying those upfront costs of change to be in the region of up to £800,000 over 2 years. These costs will be considered as part of the 2024-25 Business Planning Process.
- 4.2.4 Potential annual savings could be between £100,000 and £200,000.
- 4.2.5 There is a likely payback time of 4-8 years. Therefore, it would be prudent to consider a procurement that could be extended beyond that time, for up to 10 years.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The Council has a variety of powers and duties in relation to education in the City including, *inter alia*, the duty (so far as their powers enable them to do so) to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary education and secondary education and further education, are available to meet the needs of the population of their area under s13 Education Act 1996.

4.3.2 By commissioning a system which:

- Holds the records of every child or young person accessing funded education in Early Years Provision, Maintained Schools and Academies;
- records and reports on the Council's statutory duties such as Special Educational Needs and Disability Interventions, Assessment and Reviews;
- enables back-office functions such as Early Years funding.
- Manages and processes school admissions, census checks and maximising Pupil Premium,

the proposed system will ensure that the Council meets the above duty and other ancillary education duties.

4.3.3 The proposed contracting arrangements in this are permitted under the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 The main impact on CO2 emissions arises from Data Centre processing. There are only a handful of suppliers in the market sphere, and as such

we would not expect there to be a significant change in carbon footprint. We will review climate implications at the point of tendering with the replacement third party.

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 None.

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 **Do nothing.**

The Council requires an education system to deliver statutory services. Do nothing is not a viable option – the council must have an education system in place to execute its duties.

5.2 **Develop our own system.**

This would be a significant undertaking, requiring skills and resources that the Council does not have access to. Those resources would have to be retained for future updates and functional changes as statutory requirements and business needs changed.

The Council would also have to consider storage and retention of data. Security and role-based access would need to be managed.

5.3 **Repurpose an existing system (eg for Case Management).**

While we have a Social Care Case Management System, this does not meet the requirements for an Education System.

It does not hold schools' data or modules for the many Services that use an Education System. This would require significant development and manual "workarounds" to deliver a suboptimal solution, if that were possible.

For this reason, the supplier of our Social Care System has a separate Education System in its portfolio.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 This commissioning decision enables the Council to commence active market engagement and begin planning for its requirements in 2025 and beyond.

6.2 This commission will also ensure:

- The continuance of the Council's key Line of Business System for Education;
- the Council meets its statutory duties;
- back-office functions can continue.

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Part A

Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal name

Capita One Replacement Project

Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve

Following the conclusion of the Capita Partnership in 2021, the Council put in place contractual arrangements to ensure it was still able to access various key systems previously provided under the Partnership. The Council currently has a single contract in place with Capita Business Services Ltd for the joint delivery of four core IT systems, one of which is Capita One Education, an education services system used by 30 teams and 500 users in Education Services. Capita One's contract will expire on 30 June 2025, at which point the Council will be required to enter into a new agreement with an external supplier for the provision an education system. There is no provision within the existing contract to extend Capita One separately, meaning that the Council must procure an education system with its own contractual terms and conditions.

Proposal type

Budget non-Budget

If Budget, is it Entered on Q Tier?

Yes No

If yes what is the Q Tier reference

Year of proposal (s)

23/24 24/25 25/26 26/27 other

Decision Type

- Committee (e.g. Health Committee)
- Leader
- Executive Director/Director
- Officer Decisions (Non-Key)
- Council (e.g. Budget and Housing Revenue Account)
- Regulatory Committees (e.g. Licensing Committee)

Lead Committee Member

Cllr Dawn Dale

Lead Director for Proposal

Andrew Jones

Person filling in this EIA form

Jonny Pearce

EIA start date

06/09/2023

Equality Lead Officer

- Adele Robinson
- Bashir Khan
- Beverley Law
- Ed Sexton
- Louise Nunn
- Rabena Sharif
- Richard Bartlett

Lead Equality Objective

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Understanding Communities | <input type="radio"/> Workforce Diversity | <input type="radio"/> Leading the city in celebrating & promoting inclusion | <input type="radio"/> Break the cycle and improve life chances |
|---|---|---|--|

Portfolio, Service and Team

Lead Portfolio

Education Services

Is this Cross-Portfolio?

- Yes
- No

Is the EIA joint with another organisation (eg NHS)?

- Yes
- No

Please specify

Consultation

Is consultation required?

- Yes
- No

If consultation is not required please state why

The current education system manages back-office functions for teams across Educations Services. There are some public facing portals used by parents and schools, where user experience and accessibility considerations will be required as part of the project's development.

Whilst large scale consultation to change a back-office system would not be typical, the project team will liaise appropriately with stakeholders about potential change impacts relating to accessibility, user experience and general customer experience.

As part of any procurement exercise, the preferred supplier must adhere to a range of non-functional requirements and standards relating accessibility and compatibility with assisted technology. We will also adopt ethical procurement standards in our tendering process.

Are Staff who may be affected by these proposals aware of them?

- Yes
- No

Are Customers who may be affected by these proposals aware of them?

- Yes
- No

If you have said no to either please say why

The project is in initiation stage. Some staff are likely aware of the service need to renew Capita One from a user experience and/or contractual position. Customers that use the public facing portals will not be aware of the potential change – their requirements and user experience should not be adversely affected by a change in supplier.

As part of the project's development, we will test user experience before the system go-live, to ensure the system is accessible. The project team will explore modifications if issues arise. We will also ensure that other channels remain available, such as physical applications, so that parents/customers that do not feel comfortable using online channels can still access education services. Whilst this is an IT project, we need to ensure that changes made do not result in users being prevented from accessing services.

Initial Impact

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) we have to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

For a range of people who share protected characteristics, more information is available on the [Council website](#) including the [Community Knowledge Profiles](#).

Identify Impacts

Identify which characteristic the proposal has an impact on tick all that apply

<input type="radio"/> Health	<input type="radio"/> Transgender
<input type="radio"/> Age	<input type="radio"/> Carers
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Disability	<input type="radio"/> Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
<input type="radio"/> Pregnancy/Maternity	<input type="radio"/> Partners
<input type="radio"/> Race	<input type="radio"/> Cohesion
<input type="radio"/> Religion/Belief	<input type="radio"/> Poverty & Financial Inclusion
<input type="radio"/> Sex	<input type="radio"/> Armed Forces
<input type="radio"/> Sexual Orientation	<input type="radio"/> Other

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact?

- Yes No

<input type="radio"/> Year on Year	<input type="radio"/> Across a Community of Identity/Interest
<input type="radio"/> Geographical Area	<input type="radio"/> Other

If yes, details of impact

For our own staff, it is important that software remains accessible and accommodates system users with specific requirements. This should be a continuation (and hopefully enhancement) of current standards.

It is important that a comprehensive training package is offered to staff to ensure they can effectively use the system. The project team will listen to feedback during user acceptance testing, and seek to address user experience issues should they be raised. We shall also seek to provide additional/tailored training to users with specific system issues when required.

For the public, it is also not envisaged that there would or should be significant customer facing changes because of switching system. We would expect to make user experience improvements if anything.

Does the proposal have a geographical impact across Sheffield?

- Yes No

If Yes, details of geographical impact across Sheffield

Local Area Committee Area(s) impacted

- All Specific

If Specific, name of Local Committee Area(s) impacted

Initial Impact Overview

Based on the information about the proposal what will the overall equality impact?

Accessibility is the focal aspect of this systems project, and we must ensure that during requirements gathering, development, testing and training this is considered regardless of whether existing users require accessibility compatible software or not.

This EIA will be maintained as a live document and should characteristics come into scope as more detail is uncovered about the project, the document will be updated and mitigating action proposed accordingly.

Is a Full impact Assessment required at this stage? Yes No

If the impact is more than minor, in that it will impact on a particular protected characteristic you must complete a full impact assessment below.

Initial Impact Sign Off

EIAs must be agreed and signed off by an Equality lead Officer. Has this been signed off?

Yes No

Date agreed

Name of EIA lead officer

Part B

Full Impact Assessment

Health

Does the Proposal have a significant impact on health and well-being (including effects on the wider determinants of health)?

Yes No *if Yes, complete section below*

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment being completed

Yes No

Please attach health impact assessment as a supporting document below.

Public Health Leads has signed off the health impact(s) of this EIA

Yes No

**Name of Health
Lead Officer**

Age

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Disability

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Pregnancy/Maternity

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Race

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Religion/Belief

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Sex

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Sexual Orientation

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Gender Reassignment (Transgender)

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Carers

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Voluntary, Community & Faith sectors

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Partners

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Cohesion

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Please explain the impact

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Other

Please specify

Impact on Staff

Yes No

Impact on Customers

Yes No

Details of impact

Action Plan and Supporting Evidence

What actions do you need to take following this EIA?

What evidence have you used to support the info in the EIA?

Detail any changes made as a result of the EIA

Following mitigation is there still significant risk of impact on a protected characteristic. Yes No

If yes, the EIA will need corporate escalation? Please explain below

Sign Off

EIAs must be agreed and signed off by an Equality lead Officer. Has this been signed off?

Yes

No

Date agreed

DD/MM/YYYY

Name of EIA lead officer

Review Date

DD/MM/YYYY

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Initial Assessment

Category	Impact
Buildings and Infrastructure	Construction
	Use
	Land use in development

Transport	Demand Reduction
	Decarbonisation of Transport
	Public Transport
	Increasing Active Travel

Energy	Decarbonisation of Fuel
	Demand Reduction/Efficiency Improvements
	Increasing infrastructure for renewables generation

Economy	Development of low carbon businesses
	Increase in low carbon skills/training
	Improved business sustainability

Influence	Awareness Raising
	Climate Leadership

Working with Stakeholders

Resource Use	Water Use
	Food and Drink
	Products
	Services

Waste	Waste Reduction
	Waste Hierarchy
	Circular Economy

Nature/Land Use	Biodiversity
	Carbon Storage
	Flood Management

Adaptation	Exposure to climate change impacts
	Vulnerable Groups
	Just Transition

Description of Project Impact
N/A
N/A
N/A

N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A

N/A
It is envisaged that the system replacement will result in some efficiencies in terms of ways of working. Overall this could have a minor impact efficiency - i.e. more work done for less resource. This is likely to be realized in the way that some of things
N/A

--

It is possible that more service use will be pushed online through self-serve channels. We still currently receive physical application forms for some service areas.

The current product is hosted by Capita. The company has committed to be net zero by 2035 https://www.capita.com/PPN-06-21/carbon-reduction-plans . There are only a handful of suppliers in a somewhat monopolistic market sphere, and as such would not expect

Score
NA
NA
NA
NA
NA
NA
NA
NA
7
NA

10	The project will significantly increase the amount of CO2e released compared to before.
9	The project will increase the amount of CO2e released compared to before.
8	The project will maintain similar levels of CO2e emissions compared to before.
7	
6	The project will achieve a moderate decrease in CO2e emissions compared to before.
5	
4	
3	The project will achieve a significant decrease in CO2e emissions compared to before.
2	
1	
0	The project can be considered to achieve net zero CO2e emissions.
Carbon Negative	The project is actively removing CO2e from the atmosphere.

NA
NA
NA

NA
NA

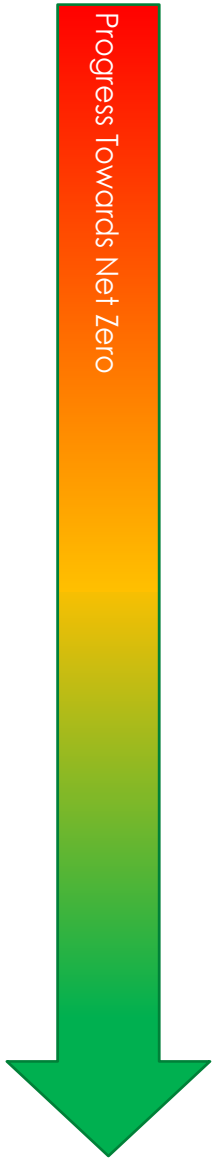
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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Marie McGreavy
Strategic Commissioning Manager Early Years and Early Help

Tel: 0114 205 3931

Report of: Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning

Report to: Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 27th September 2023

Subject: Sheffield’s Early Years Strategy “Start for Life Sheffield” 2023 - 2028

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2306				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:				
Purpose of Report:				
To share the New Sheffield Early Years Strategy “Start for Life Sheffield”2023 – 2028 with the Education, Children and Families Committee for consideration and approval.				

Recommendations:
It is recommended that the Education Children and Families Policy Committee consider “Start for Life Sheffield 2023 – 2028” (attached at Appendix 1) and agree its adoption as Sheffield’s Early Years Strategy for the next 5 years.

Background Papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Final Strategy Document (and Appendices A to D to the Strategy)

Lead Officer to complete: -	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: Kayliegh Inman
	Legal: Nadine Wynter
	Equalities & Consultation. Ed Sexton EIA number 2306
	Climate: N/A - climate impacts have been considered by the Early Years and Early Help Commissioning Team
h	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	SLB member who approved submission: Meredith Dixon Teasdale
3	Committee Chair consulted: Dawn Dale Shared at member briefing at consultation stage and final version stage on 1 st August 23 and shared at ECF Committee Pre-Meet September 23.
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Marie McGreavy</i>
	Job Title: <i>Strategic Commissioning Manager</i>
	Date: 04-09-2023

1. PROPOSAL / UPDATE

- 1.1 Sheffield families face difficulties as a result of the impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis which may impact negatively on the health and wellbeing of our youngest citizens. It is important that we revisit our priorities and approaches to supporting children in their early years and families by developing a new 2023 – 2028 strategy that will continue to drive improved outcomes for Sheffield’s children.
- 1.2 This Strategy sets out a high-level overview of how we need to work together to achieve our ambitions. There are new developments around early years both in place now and planned for the coming years, for example, changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the introduction of Family Hubs and the Start for Life Offer, a new Infant Mental Health Pathway for the city, and Maternal Cultural Safety developments all of which aim to improve the life chances of young children and their families. We need to factor the impact all of these developments within the ambitions in our new strategy.
- 1.3 There are many other strategies, plans and programmes of work which we will take account of and align to when implementing this strategy and many of the actions contained within those plans will impact positively on our ambitions. (Information provided in Appendix B to the Strategy.) As such we need to draw the extensive activity and ambition for Sheffield’s early years children and their families into one vision:

Children’s experiences during their early years are likely to shape the rest of their lives, whether it is their attainment at school and in turn their future job prospects, through to their long-term health outcomes.

Sheffield’s Strategy for Early years is to work together, through city wide sector engagement in all early year’s initiatives and strategies to support parents to provide children with the best possible start to their life. Our overarching ambition is to ensure our children have happy, healthy, childhoods leading to improved outcomes for Sheffield’s future adult population.

- 1.4 The strategy covers children and their families from pregnancy to 5 years. Getting a good start in life and throughout childhood, building resilience and getting maximum benefit from education are important markers for good health and wellbeing throughout life. (*Evidence into action: opportunities to protect and improve the nation’s health and NHS Five Year Forward View*). Good health, wellbeing and resilience are vital for all our children now and for the future of society.
- 1.5 The strategy has been led by Early Years and Early Help Commissioning Team and has engaged parents, carers, and partners from across the Early Years system including, childcare providers and health partners. The process of developing the strategy has built upon the existing recognised strengths of

the Early years partnerships in the city to identify priorities and those areas where we could collectively improve outcomes.

- 1.6 Following consultation, stakeholder involvement remains a priority in terms of development and oversight of the strategy via a governance structure which aligns Family Hubs and Start for life within the overarching governance structure for children and young people. The strategy will be managed via the Family Hubs Programme Board and will be monitored by the Early Help Partnership Board. A data dashboard will be provided quarterly, along with a quarterly update report which will be presented to the Early Help Partnership Board and provided to the Children and Young Peoples Delivery Group. Annual progress reports will be provided to relevant groups and networks including the Early Years Provider Network and the Inclusion Task force.
- 1.7 Data related to the above success criteria along with regular feedback and evaluation information will be used to demonstrate progress towards our ambitions. We will ensure that when looking at data across the areas included in the strategy, we will include collection and analysis of appropriate equality monitoring to measure progress and impact.
- 1.8 The key Ambitions of the Strategy are:
 - **Ambition 1.** Children and their families achieve their potential with support from an Early Years system that is connected to Communities, understands the needs of Sheffield Families, and responds to needs and themes by working together across organisations.
 - **Ambition 2.** We work in collaboration with Early Years childcare and education providers to meet the Government's 2023 promise of 30 hours of free childcare per week for eligible working parents with children aged nine months to three years by September 2025
 - **Ambition 3.** We mitigate the effects of inequality, poverty and disadvantage on babies and children's safety, health and development and we support families to be healthy and maintain good health.
 - **Ambition 4** Families of and Children with SEND or Complex Health Needs are well supported from the earliest point and receive seamless support throughout all transitions in early life.
 - **Ambition 5** Parents are supported and enabled to provide the best possible start in life for their children.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 The need to continuously develop the maturity of our Early Years System supports the Corporate Delivery Plan, namely.
 - **Happy young people who have the start they need for the future they want** – by working together with Parents an Early Years system under the umbrella of a new Early Years Strategy, we can build on the strengths of partnerships, knowledge, and skills in the city to provide the best possible start for Early Years Children and their families.

- **Fair, inclusive, and empowered communities** – the partnership networks we are expanding as part of the Family Hub Transformation and the governance routes within Family Hubs will support in ensuring Sheffield Families and Early Years practitioners are able to contribute to and shape the issues that matter to them in their communities.
- **Strong and connected neighbourhoods** – we are improving the connectivity between voluntary and community sector activity, family networks and Early Years activity through building capacity in communities and harnessing the talent of parents, carers, and young people with lived experience to help one another.
- **Healthy lives and wellbeing for all** – we strive to ensure that families say they know how to navigate local services and that the help they have received addressed their problems and they are better connected to their own support network and local community.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 Consultation launched at the Early Years Event held in October 2022, where 96 city-wide early year’s practitioners, partners, and professionals gathered to have their say, share successes, and begin to shape the strategy through collaborative co-production.
- 3.2 At the Early Year’s consultation event, it was agreed that there should be a name change for the new 2023 Early Years Strategy, the name agreed was “Start for Life Sheffield”, The *Start for Life* Sheffield Early Years Strategy is reflective of our city and our families, informed though cross sector consultation with parents / carers, state, private, voluntary and the community sector.
- 3.3 Following the Early Years Event, the on-line consultation survey was launched for both parent/ carers, professionals, and community partners. The survey questions focussed on what is working well and where improvements could be made.
- 3.4 133 parents /carers responses were received, and in addition 30 responses from early years professionals.
- 3.5 In addition, seven consultation focus groups were held gathering the voice of 30 further respondents engaged from a cross sector audience including early years providers, FIS (Family Intervention Service), Social Care, Access and Inclusion, Parenting, Infant Feeding and Doula team staff, Empowering parents/empowering communities (EPEC) volunteers, Infant feeding volunteers, Parent/carers forum focus group including employed staff with lived experience, the voluntary and community sector.
- 3.6 Consultation on the draft completed Strategy took place in July and August 2023 and feedback from this final consultation has resulted in additional content which has been incorporated into the final version.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications:

4.1.1 The Council as a public sector organisation is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED - Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). It also applies to services and functions that we contract with who are carrying functions on our behalf. Decisions need to consider the requirements of the PSED. The General Duty notes that we must pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not

4.1.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership (discrimination only); pregnancy and maternity (employment only); race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. There are also other equality implications outside of the Equality Act that the Council has committed to responding within our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process such as socio-economic disadvantage and carers.

4.1.3 Understanding intersectionality is also vital component part of practicing inclusion, promoting equality, and reducing discrimination. Intersectionality identifies how different facets of one's identity contribute to a unique perspective as well as the ways in which different layers of one's identity overlap with one another. Everyone has some of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act, but it is also worth noting that although people share characteristics, people's experiences are not the same and there can be conflicting views between and within protected characteristics. The Race Equality Commission Report noted the varied experiences of different ethnicities specifically and the need to not use the put all groups together under the one label as this often masks the barriers and experiences of specific groups.

4.1.4 The intention is to use the Early Years strategy to ensure progress on all areas of inequality within early years including the outcomes referred to in SCCs response to the Race Equality Commission. In addition, all other plans/proposals will be subject to their own EIAs and as such specific actions will be included them.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this strategy development. The strategy describes working together to effectively ensure progress in all aspects of Early Years development and as such any financial implications would be related to the individual strategies and services that contribute to Early Years developments rather than from the strategy itself.

4.3 Legal Implications

This Strategy will help the Council to fulfil its duties under the Childcare Act 2006, which requires local authorities to improve the well-being of young children, reduce inequalities, and work with their relevant partners. The strategy will also support the Council to meet its duties under Section 10 of the Children Act 2004, which requires each local authority to make arrangements to promote cooperation between the authority, each of the authority's relevant partners and such other persons or bodies working with children in the local authority's area as the authority considers appropriate.

4.4 Climate Implications

Where services will be delivered by external partners and providers, we will aim to work with providers who align with our ambition to be a Net Zero city by 2030, through the procurement process. We will encourage partners to think about the climate impacts of delivering the service, such as use of office space, staff and client travel, energy and resource use, and opportunities to increase awareness of positive climate action, and take appropriate steps to reduce their impacts in the delivery of the service.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The current Early Years Strategy that ended in March 2023 could have been refreshed. However, the level of change locally both locally and nationally in terms of the issues facing families, the impact of the pandemic and the national developments around EYFS and Family Hubs presented an opportunity to consult and co-produce a new Early Years Strategy that can positively impact on the lives of children and young people.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Sheffield is a great place to grow up and the new Early Years Strategy “Start for Life Sheffield” sets out how we will work together across the Early Years workforce to give all Sheffield children the start for life that they deserve. Setting out our ambitions from pre- birth to school life will support all children to have equality of opportunity to be healthy, happy, and safe. As such it is important for the Education Children and Families Committee members to have contributed to the development of the Strategy and provide final approval for its use as the city’s Early Years Strategy.

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Give your child a great start in life

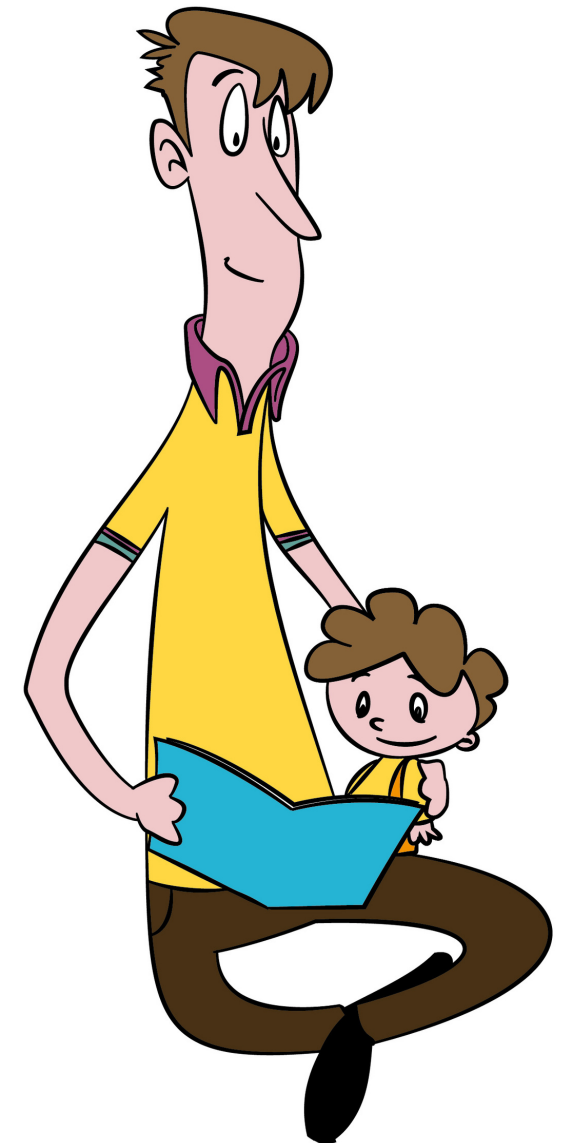


“The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid in early childhood. What happens during these early years (starting in the womb) has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status.”

Michael Marmot, Fair Society, Healthy Lives, 2010

“Poverty is the lead driver of inequalities... leading to worse physical and mental health outcomes, educational attainment, and lower lifelong economic productivity. The COVID-19 pandemic has made this situation worse.”

Pickett K., Taylor-Robinson D., et al, 2021, The Child of the North: Building a fairer future after COVID-19, the Northern Health Science Alliance and N8 Research Partnership



Executive Summary

Sheffield is a great place to grow up and our new Early Years Strategy, “Start for Life Sheffield”, sets out how we will work together across the Early Years workforce to give all Sheffield children the start for life that they deserve. Setting out our ambitions from pre- birth to school life will support all children to have equality of opportunity to be healthy, happy and safe.

As the future adults and parents of Sheffield, we will strive to make a positive difference to children’s lives in the city and support them to reach their potential. The “Our Sheffield Delivery Plan” (2022/23) has a vision for Children and Young people:

“Every young person in our city deserves the opportunity to be happy, safe and to have the opportunities to lead a fulfilling life and reach their potential in a rapidly changing world. A high-quality education (starting from Early Years and going through to apprenticeships and further and higher education) is a critical element of this and working hand in hand with schools and colleges, we want to make sure that every young person gets the education that they need to help them succeed. But it’s about more than education – it’s about making sure that young people are safe and happy.”

Our new Start for Life Sheffield Early Years Strategy launches at an exciting time for the city, with the introduction of our Family Hubs and Start for Life offer which will further strengthen and enhance support and services in the Early Years. We are committed to the delivery of high-quality Early Years services, early identification of need and the right support at the right time.

Events of recent years including the Covid-19 Pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis continue to impact on children and families in the city. Early research tells us of the potential for negative impact on child development and whole family outcomes, however the full impact is yet to be known. This adds to the importance of ensuring good quality Early Years services, support and resources are available to families in Sheffield, with equality of access for those needing help and advice.

The 2023 to 2028 Start for Life Sheffield Early Years Strategy has been developed following extensive data and intelligence gathering, and discussions with parents and carers, professionals from the health and education sector, and also care providers working across the Early Years landscape. We have listened and ensured that what we have heard has helped us to develop our strategic ambitions.

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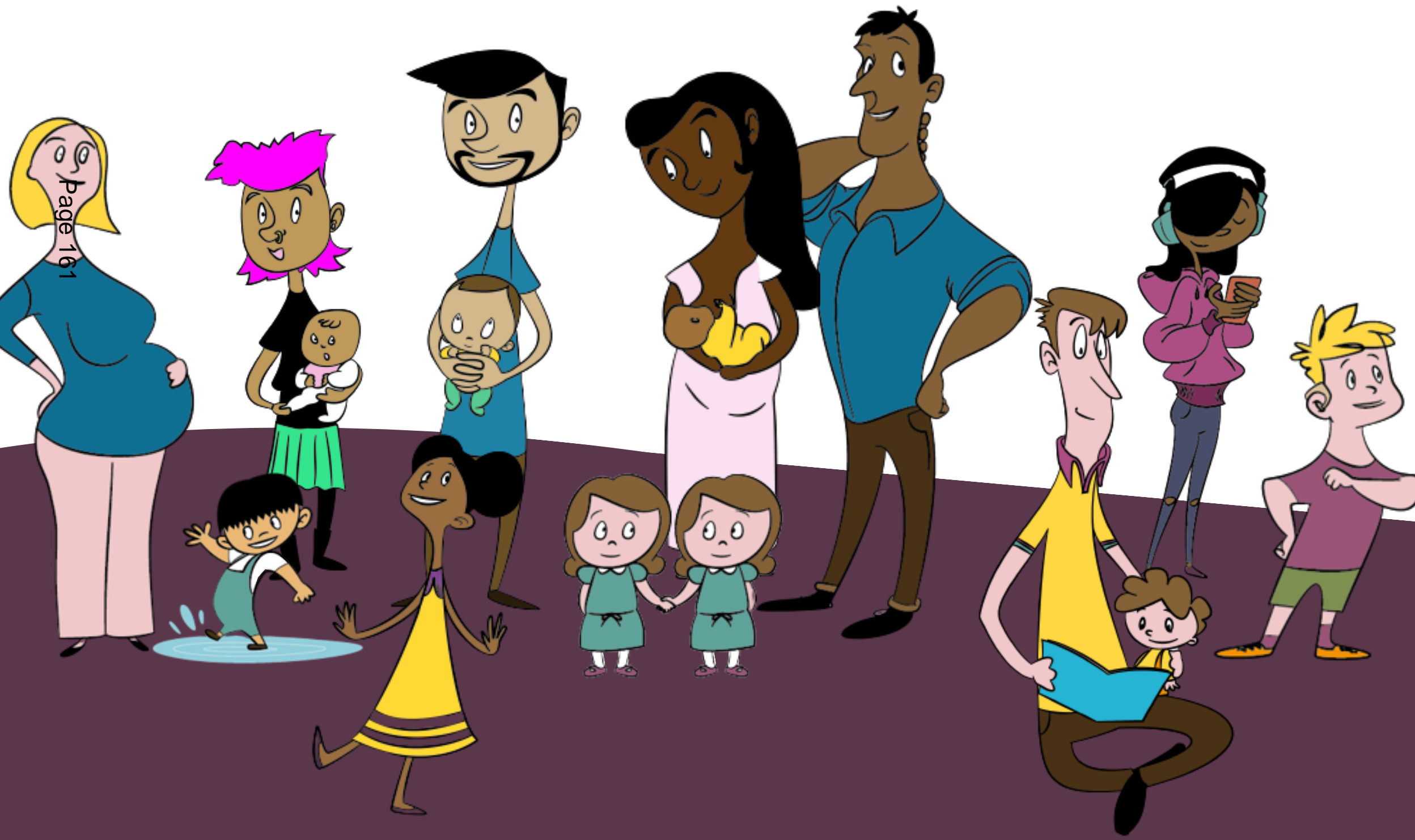
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SECTION A: The Purpose of the Strategy



A.1 Why We Have An Early Years Strategy in Sheffield

Sheffield families face difficulties as a result of the impact of the Covid Pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis which may impact negatively on the health and wellbeing of our youngest citizens. It is important that we revisit our priorities and approaches to supporting Early Years Children and Families by developing an entirely new 2023 – 2028 strategy for the Early Years that will continue to drive improved outcomes for Sheffield’s children.

This Strategy sets out a high-level overview of how we need to work together to achieve our ambitions. There are new developments around Early Years both in place now, and planned for the coming years. For example, changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the introduction of Family Hubs and the Start for Life Offer, a new Infant Mental Health Pathway for the city, and Maternal Cultural Safety developments all of which aim to improve the life chances of young families in our city. We need to factor in the impact of all of these developments on the ambitions in our new strategy. There are many other strategies, plans and programmes of work which we will take account of and align to when implementing this strategy, and many of the actions contained within those plans will impact positively on our ambitions. As such we need to draw the extensive activity and ambition for Sheffield’s Early Years children and their families into one vision:

Children’s experiences during their early years are likely to shape the rest of their lives, whether it is their attainment at school and in turn their future job prospects, through to their long-term health outcomes.

Sheffield’s Strategy for Early Years is to work together, through city wide sector engagement in all early years initiatives and strategies to support parents to provide Early Years children with the best possible start to their life. Our overarching ambition is to ensure our Early Years children have happy, healthy, childhoods leading to improved outcomes for Sheffield’s future adult population.

The strategy will support us to ensure that the importance of Early Years and our vision for our youngest citizens acts as a golden thread throughout our planning, policy making and good practice development for children and their families in Sheffield.

The strategy covers children and their families from pregnancy through to 5 years of age. Getting a good start in life and throughout childhood, building resilience and getting maximum benefit from education are important markers for good health and wellbeing throughout life (Evidence into action: opportunities to protect and improve the nation’s health and NHS Five Year Forward View). Good health, wellbeing and resilience are vital for all our children now and for the future of society.

The Strategy has been led by Early Years and Early Help Commissioning and has engaged parents, carers and partners from across the Early Years system, including Early Years Childcare providers and Health partners. The process of developing the strategy has built upon the existing recognised strengths of the Early Years partnerships in the city to identify priorities and those areas where we could collectively improve outcomes.

Following consultation, stakeholder involvement remains a priority in terms of development and oversight of the strategy via a governance structure which aligns Family Hubs and Start for life within the overarching governance structure for children and young people.

A.2 The Commissioning Approach

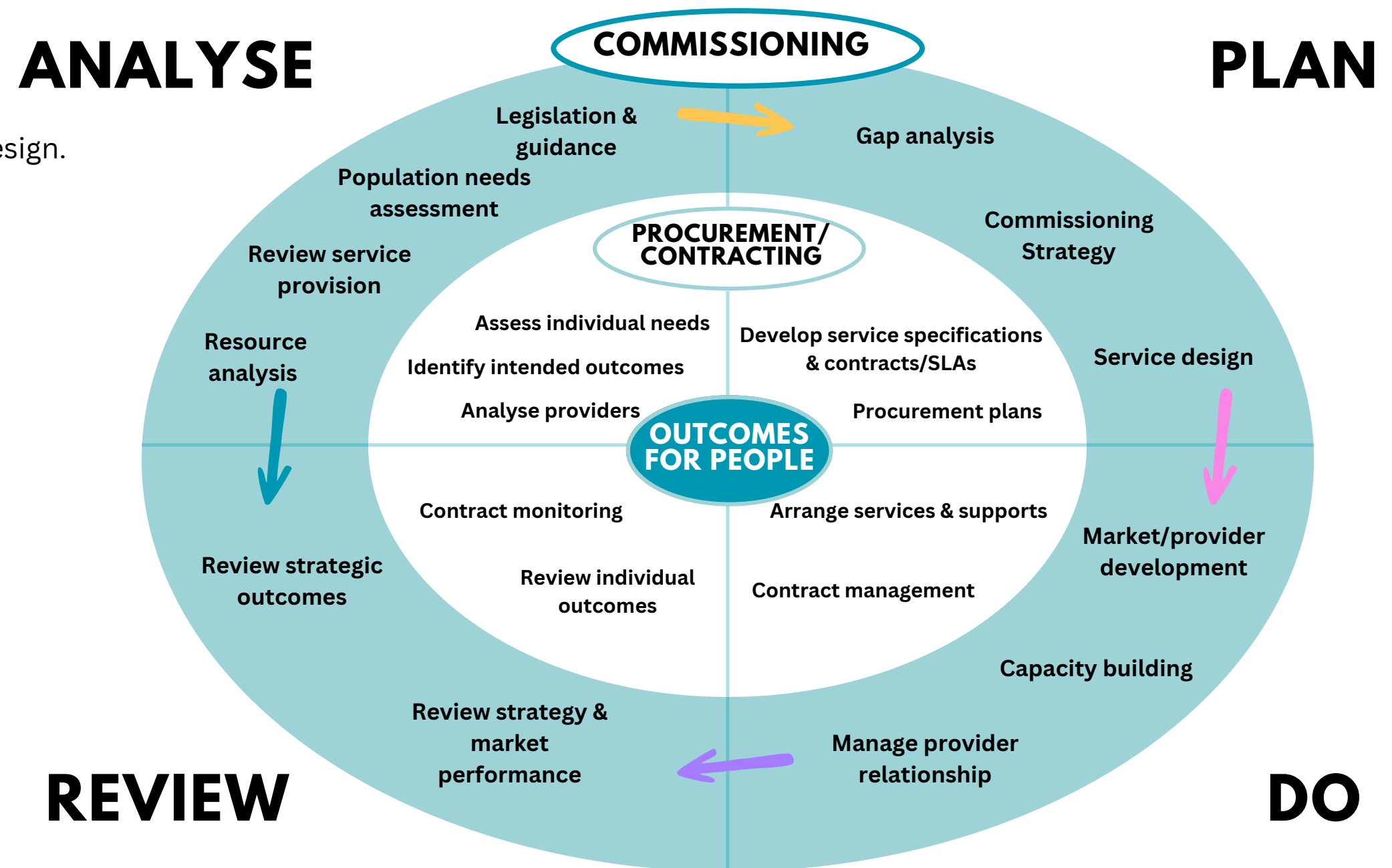
This document sets out the current needs in Sheffield and describes links with the overall strategic direction in the city. It has been produced in partnership with families and those working in the Early Years sector.

The strategy provides a context for our aims and ambitions for pregnant mothers, babies and children and their families. It also clearly links joint commissioning and delivery across Education, Health and Care and is central to the Early Help ambitions in the city.

In Sheffield we follow a commissioning cycle consisting of:

- Analyse: activity and resource assessment.
- Plan: gap analysis, commissioning strategies and service design.
- Do: service delivery and provider working.
- Review: outcome and performance analysis.

This cycle is summarised in this diagram:



A.3 Achievements In The Great Start In Life Strategy 2019 – 2023

In the March 2020 Great Start in Life Strategy we identified a number of areas for development. These were:

- Implement further action across all sectors including childminders to assess early developmental delay and effectively support children identified with additional needs
- Use area intelligence and available data to ensure Family Centre activity meets area needs in terms of school readiness and Speech and Language
- Develop family centre activity and links to ensure the offer encompasses all ages and supports the needs of vulnerable families
- Engage in activity to increase the take up of 2-year Free Early Learning (FEL) in areas of the city where take up is low
- Actively promote the benefits of integrated 2-year-old reviews with all partners and gain commitment from all partners to improve Sheffield's performance in this area
- Increase referrals from PVI sector into the Partnership Process and Family Intervention Service (FIS)
- Review the process of allocation of Early Years SEND support funding to settings to enable full take up of FEL provision entitlement for children with SEND
- Identify and deliver on priorities for developing high quality speech and language services in early years' settings
- Standardise transition processes at key points for children most notably when starting reception
- Work towards ensuring every private provider is equipped to deliver high quality Special Education Needs provision through the support of an in- house SENCO with a nationally recognised professional qualification by September 2019
- Develop closer links between Family Centres and Libraries to enable activity to promote sharing books.
- Add capacity to the workforce trained in Baby Incredible Years
- Review city wide workforce needs in training on areas that impact on school readiness.

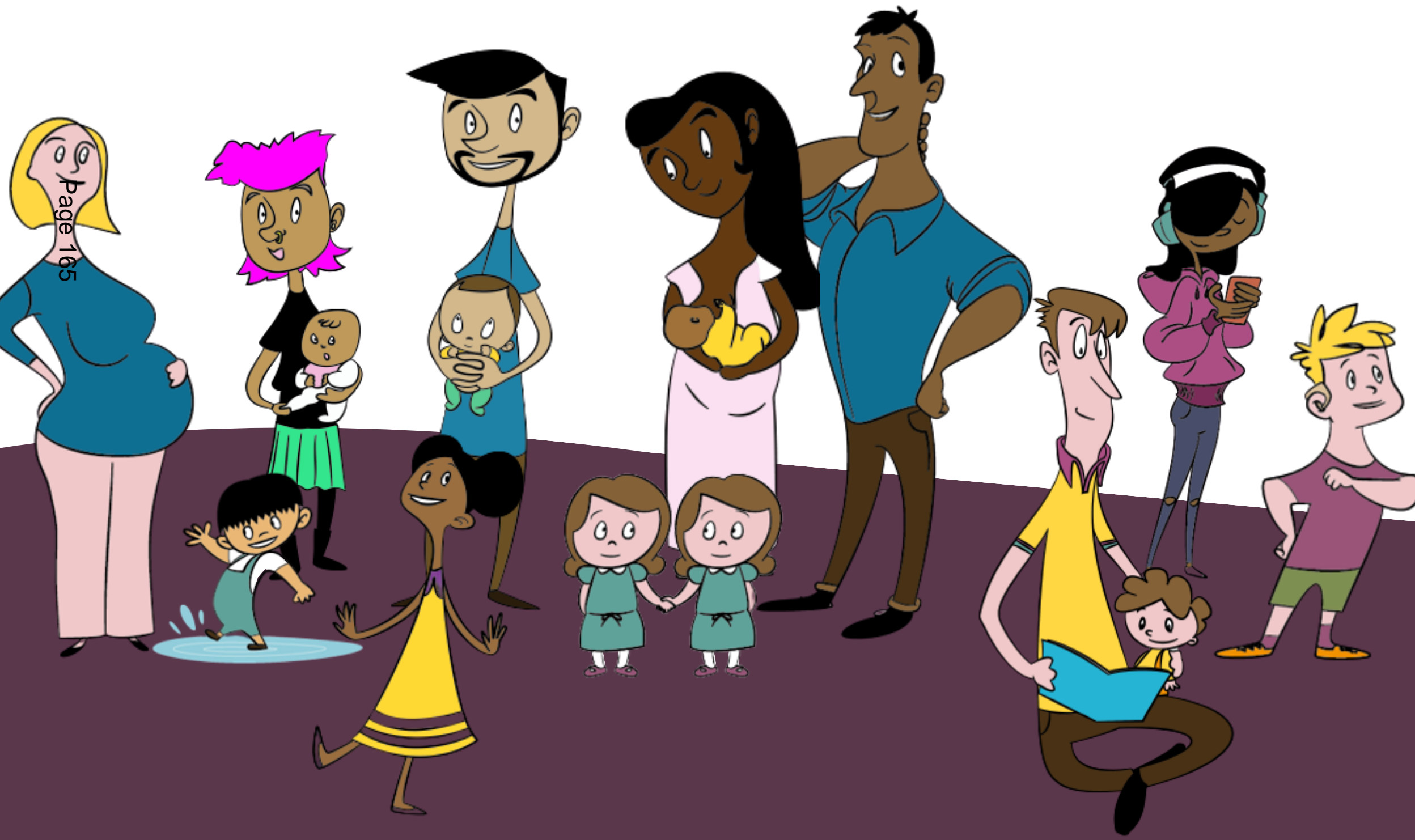


We achieved much that we can be proud of.

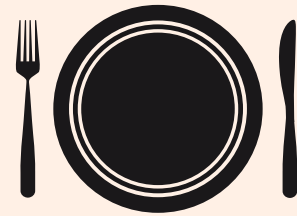
Of 63 actions within the action plan, we were able to partially or fully deliver on 71%.

The achievements are detailed on Appendix A.

SECTION B: Context



B.1 The City Picture



Sheffield has a high proportion of nursery and primary children claiming Free School Meals. Whilst rates of eligible children have increased regionally, nationally and for our statistical neighbours, Sheffield has consistently had the highest percentage of primary aged children, eligible and claiming for Free School Meals, since 2013.

Primary pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Sheffield in 2022 was measured at 32.40% which compared to 25.10% in the Yorkshire and Humber region, 28.26% in statistical neighbours and 23.10% in England as a national average. This placed Sheffield's ranking as 125th in local authorities (2).



Teenage pregnancies in Sheffield were counted at 50 during the measurement period of 2021/2022, this gave an average of 0.9% of the qualifying population, the national average for England was determined to be 0.6%. Sheffield's teenage pregnancy rate was higher than the national average (1).

Teenage births can result in health consequences; children are more likely to be born pre-term, have lower birth weight, and higher neonatal risk, while mothers can experience greater rates of post-partum depression and are less likely to initiate breastfeeding (Chen X.K et al. teenage pregnancy and adverse birth outcomes: a large population based retrospective cohort study. Int J Epidemiol. 2007) (Kingston D, et al. Comparison of adolescent, young adult, and adult women's maternity experiences and practices. Paediatrics. 2012).

Teenage mothers are more likely to live in poverty and have children who frequently experience health and developmental problems (Hoffman SD, Maynard R. Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs & Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy, 2008).



Oral health in Sheffield is poor compared to national averages. Each year around 340 children (0-5 years) in Sheffield are admitted to hospital because of tooth decay. This is high compared to the national averages of 220. This was worked out by crude rate per 100,000 (aged 0 to 5) for three financial years ending 2021 (5).



93% of 3 & 4-year-olds are benefiting from funded early education in Ofsted rated good and outstanding placements (2).



There are 32,212 children under the age of 5 in the city (6). Of these around 25.1% are classified as disadvantaged, higher than the national average of 18.7% (7).



25% of the population in the district are from black and minority ethnic communities (9).



In Sheffield, 1715 2-year-olds are in funded early education (2).

B.1 The City Picture

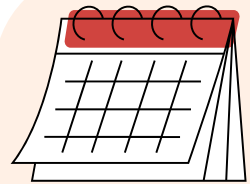


Sheffield has the highest breastfeeding rate, in Yorkshire and Humber (11). As a city we have worked hard to offer support to women who want to breastfeed. In the Sheffield Health Profile published in March, 2023 it shows 68.3% of new-born's born in 2021 received breast milk as their first feed. By 6 to 8 weeks after birth, 54.0% of mothers are still breastfeeding (5).

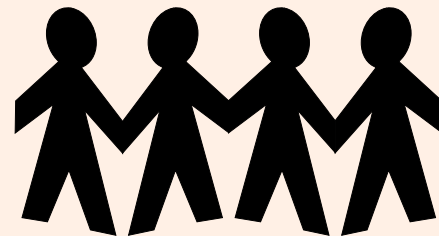


Sheffield has a higher-than-average number of children with low birth weight. Although there is a broad range of growth, health, and developmental outcomes across the cohort, as a group they generally have higher rates of growth concerns, illnesses, and neurodevelopmental problems. These problems increase as the child's birth weight decreases. With the exception of a small minority of low-birth-weight children with significant disability, the developmental outcomes for most low-birth-weight infants include mild problems in cognition, attention, and neuromotor functioning. Long-term follow-up studies conducted on children born in the 1960s indicated that the adverse consequences of being born low birth weight were still apparent in adolescence and adulthood. Adverse sociodemographic factors negatively affect developmental outcomes across the continuum of low birth weight and appear to have far greater effects on long-term cognitive outcomes than most of the biological risk factors (Hack, M, Klein, NK & Taylor HG, 1995, Long-term developmental outcomes of low-birth-weight infants).

In 2021/2022, the smoking status at the time of delivery was counted in Sheffield at 499, which equated to 9.4% and compared to an average in England of 9.1% (1).



A baby born in Sheffield today would live on average 78.6 years (male) or 82.4 years (female) (4). For males this is 1.2 years less and 0.7 years less for females than the national average values. The national average is 79.4 years for males and 83.1 years for females (5). Within the city, there is significant variation in terms of health inequality.



The looked after rate in Sheffield in 2022 was 59 per 10,000. This has increased from 53 in 2020 and 57 in 2021. Despite the increase, Sheffield still remained below the regional and national average with their averages being 81 and 70 per 10,000 respectively. Both regional and national averages also increased between 2020 and 2022 (2).

Sheffield currently has 656 Looked After Children, this has decreased from 666 in 2022, and again from 674 in 2021.



6509 children were referred to children's social care in Sheffield in 2022. This is 1075 more than in 2021 (2). The number of referrals and demand on social care is

rising every year. Comparatively, our statistical neighbours only received 4358 referrals on average, although this had also increased from the year previously.



39.6% of children in Year 6 are classified as overweight or obese in Sheffield (2022). This is worse than the average for England which stands at 37.8% in the same year. Regional and statistical neighbours have a rate of 39.2% and 39.34% respectively (2).

B.1 The City Picture



In 2020/21, there was an increase in family homelessness; evidence shows that children experiencing homelessness are more likely to have poor mental health and poorer social and language skills than their peers with secure housing.

During this time frame, 692 homeless presentations in Sheffield were cited as being due to domestic abuse and 58% of these had dependant children.



The price of food and non-alcoholic beverages rose by 17.4% in the year to June 2023. [Food and energy price inflation, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

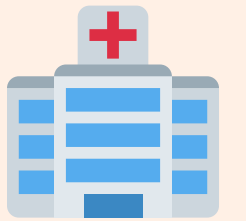


Sheffield is the 57th most deprived district out of 317 in England with over a quarter of children living in poverty (3).

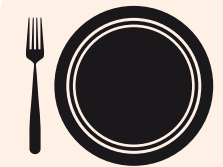


Sheffield has a higher proportion of children under 16 living in relative poverty than the national and regional. In 2020/2021, there were 24,060 under 16's in Sheffield in absolute low-income families which comprised 22.7% of the measured population. This is compared to the 15.1% national average for England. During the same measurement period, the number of children under 16 recorded as in relative low-income families was 28,029, equating to 26.4% of the population which measured against an average for England of 18.5% (1).

The number of children (aged 0-14) living in Sheffield and admitted to hospital because of an unintentional or deliberately injury is 62.7 per 10,000 (2021). Since 2013, Sheffield has consistently seen lower rates per 10,000 than in comparison to the regional and national averages and also our statistical neighbours (2).



The most deprived fifth of the population would need to spend 50% of their disposable income on food to meet the cost of the Govt's recommended healthy diet. [The Broken Plate | Food Foundation](#)



21% of households with children reported that children were directly experiencing food insecurity [Food and You 2 | Food Standards Agency](#)



97% of snacks marketed at babies and toddlers feature a health claim on the front of the packaging despite often being high in sugar. [Bite Back 2030](#)



Evidence shows children who experience domestic abuse in their families are more likely to go on to develop poor mental health and have behavioural difficulties. The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) introduced into law that when domestic abuse is happening in a family, children should be regarded as victims of the abuse in their own right. In 2019 -2023 12,710 children were accommodated in refuges nationally. Out of the total 692 homeless presentations as a result of domestic abuse 42% received support following their application. The Sheffield Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment Data estimate that there would have been between 25,973 and 28,334 children affected by domestic abuse in Sheffield in the last year (8).

B.2 National and Local Context

See Appendix B for detail

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021)

Childcare Act 2006.

Early Years SEND Developments

Sheffield Childrens NHSFT Clinical Strategy

Delivery Plan (Maternity and Neonatal) 22/23

Children Act 2004

Tackling Inequalities in Early Childhood

Sheffield's Health and Care Partnership (HCP)

Maternal Cultural Safety Developments

Sheffield's Childrens Early Help Review

Family Hubs and the Start for Life Offer (2022)

The Sheffield HCP Children and Young People's Wellbeing Delivery Group

Sheffield Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Early Years Strategic Plan

Tobacco Control Strategy

Children's Early Help Strategy

Speech and Language Review

All Age Mental Health Strategy

The Best Start for Life: A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days

Inclusion Strategy

The Food Strategy

Sheffield City Council Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2023

The new Infant Mental Health Pathway Development (Ongoing from April 2022)

Sheffield's Early Years School Readiness Ambitions (2022 Review)

Maternity Health and Wellbeing

Sheffield Parenting Hub

The Single Delivery Plan (Maternity) 2023

Early Years: a crisis in affordability and sustainability

Pre-Birth Pathway

Sheffield Tackling Poverty Framework 2020 - 2030

Oral Health Strategy

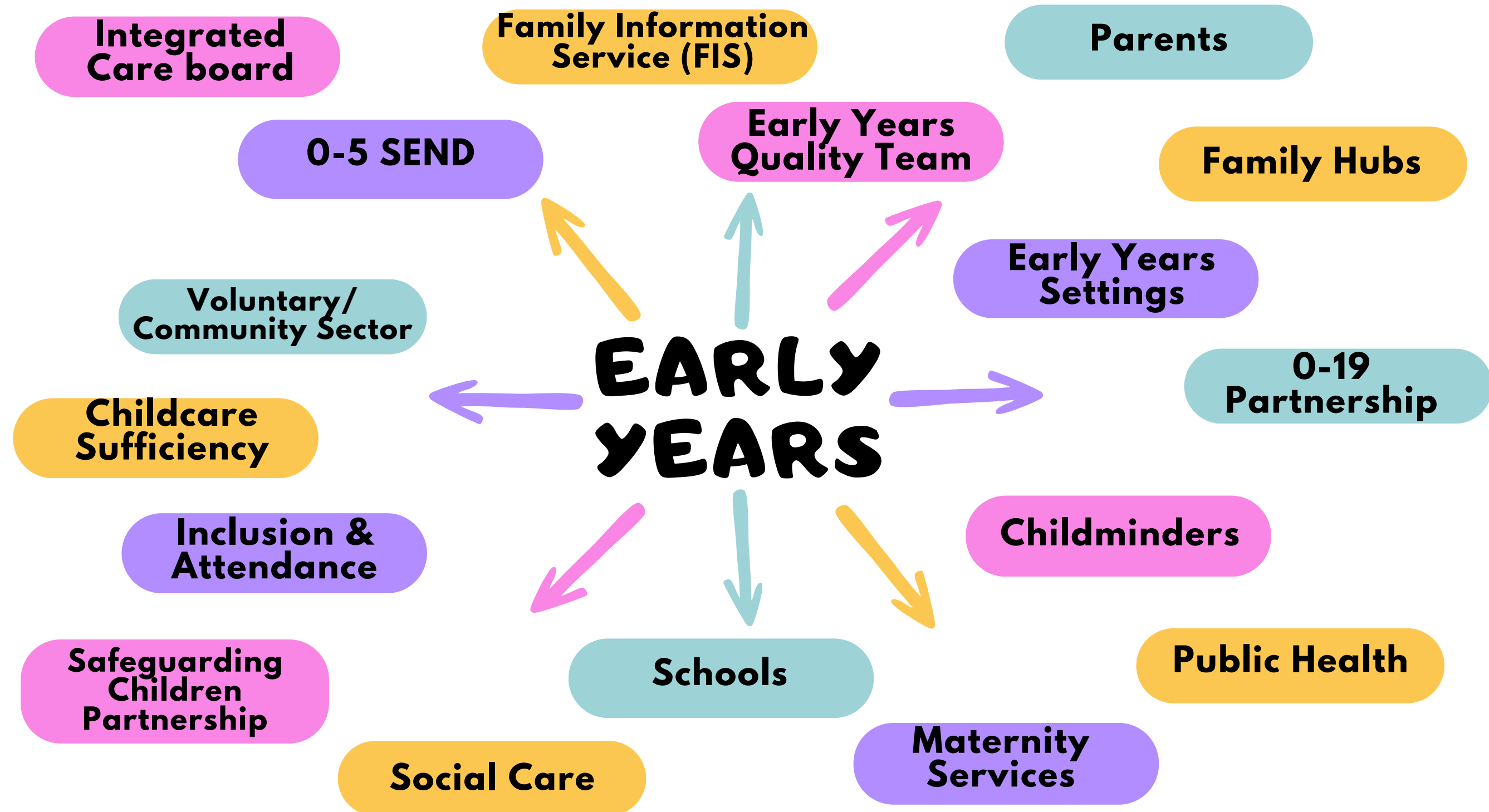
Healthy Child Programme

Infant Mortality Strategy

Sheffield All Age Autism Strategy 2023 to 2026.

B.3 Sheffield Early Years System

Throughout this Strategy we talk about the Early Years System. By system we mean parents, children and everyone who works with Early Years children and families, either in an employed or voluntary capacity. Parents and their children are the most important part of this system and how we support parents can have a significant impact on the whole life chances of our youngest children. Parents and carers are important partners in the design, planning or development of services for Maternity and Early Years. Other people and organisations who are part of the system include:



B.3 Sheffield Early Years System

There are organisations groups and individuals in the city who do not work directly in Early Years and childcare but who work with or on behalf of families and have an interest in children having a good start in life. For example the Police, The Youth Offending Service and employers along with Sheffield's Elected Members because with a long-term view, there is a significant incentive to invest in the Early Years. Working together across the Early Years System to support the health and learning of young children is a critical economic and educational development strategy. The UK economy depends on having a pipeline of talented, educated employees with the skills needed in today's work environment .

Whilst we cannot ignore the current financial pressures both locally and nationally, by working together, adapting our approaches, further developing joint commissioning, coproduction and joint planning, we can maximise efficiency of resources available in the city. We want to use this strategy to describe the ways that everyone who works in the Early Years System can work more effectively together to support and better meet the needs of families.



Sheffield City Council has specific legal responsibilities within the Early Years System:

- Ensure there is sufficient childcare available in Sheffield
- Ensure that there are Family Hubs that are accessible to all families with young children providing targeted evidence based interventions for those families in greatest need of support
- Provide information, advice, and assistance to families.
- Secure information, advice, guidance, and training for childcare providers
- Support improvement in the quality of childcare
- Ensure that all children have access to up to six terms of high-quality nursery provision, as reflected in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, from the term after their third birthday
- Ensure sufficient and high-quality childcare is available for all 2-year-olds eligible for 'Free Early Education Entitlement funding' and will need to be extended to meet the requirements of the Government announcement in March 2023 regarding an increase in Funded Early Learning for children from 9 months
- Meet the childcare needs of families with children over the age of five through out of school care and provision for children and young people up to the age of 14 (or to 25 for children with disabilities)
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of all children throughout all aspects of the work of Early Years and Childcare with specific regard to ensuring that Early Years and Childcare providers understand their responsibilities and are accountable for their practice
- Ensure that all providers delivering funded early education places meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Participate in the identification and planning for the needs of children with SEND, including coordinating joint commissioning arrangements across Education, Health and Social Care and in other legal duties related to Education, Health and Care Plans and Preparing for adulthood



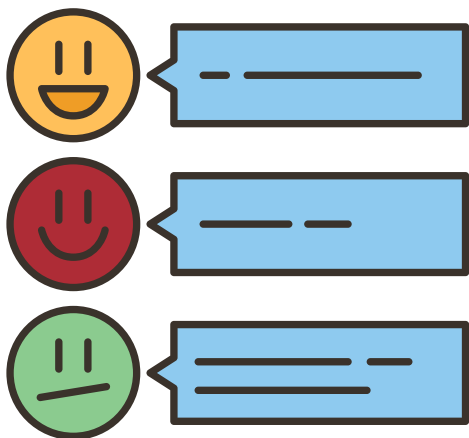
B.4 What Do People Tell Us About The Sheffield Early Years System?

Please see Appendix C & D for the detailed feedback from both Parent and Professional's Consultations

The Early Years consultation was undertaken over a 6-month period and launched at the Early Years Event held in October 2022. 96 city-wide Early Years practitioners, partners, and professionals gathered to have their say, share successes, and begin to shape future Early Years Strategy through collaborative co-production.

At the Early Years consultation event, it was agreed, via a democratic process, that there should be a name change for the new 2023 Early Years Strategy, the name agreed was "Start for Life Sheffield", The Start for Life Sheffield Early Years Strategy is reflective of our city and our families, informed though cross sector consultation with parents, carers, state, private, voluntary and the community sector.

Following the Early Years Event, the on-line consultation survey was launched for both parents/carers, professionals, and community partners. Paper versions were made available, and we worked with local partners to share the survey via key sites providing ease of access and inclusivity.



Start for Life



C.1 Our Ambitions

Our ambitions have been identified as a response to what the data tells us, and the feedback received from parents and partners. This information has told us what needs to improve in the city in terms of our support for children and families in the Early Years.

Our success as an Early Years system in reaching our ambitions is reliant on the progress of related strategies and plans as detailed in Section B2.



Ambition 1

Children and their families achieve their potential with support from an Early Years system that is connected to Communities, understands the needs of Sheffield Families and responds to needs and themes by working together across organisations.



Ambition 2

We work in collaboration with Early Years childcare and education providers to meet the Government's 2023 promise of 30 hours of free childcare per week for eligible working parents with children aged nine months to three years by September 2025.



Ambition 3

We mitigate the effects of inequality, poverty and disadvantage on babies' and children's Safety, Health and Development and we support parents and families to be healthy and maintain good health.



Ambition 4

Families of and Children with SEND or Complex Health Needs are well supported from the earliest point and receive seamless support throughout all transitions in early life.



Ambition 5

Parents are supported and enabled to provide the best possible start in life for their children

C.2 Our Ambitions in Detail



Ambition 1

Children and their families achieve their potential with support from an Early Years system that is connected to communities, understands the needs of Sheffield Families and responds to needs and themes by working together across organisations.

What we want to see:	What we need everyone to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All partners have shared ownership of this Strategy and will commit to the advancement of its ambitions. • All partners and parents are respected for their contribution and feel that their voice is heard. • The development of the Early Help System is enhanced through locality delivery. • Coproduction, collaboration and joint planning are used to ensure we are achieving the maximum value from all resources and are providing services which meet the needs of children and families. • Our Early Years ambitions are achieved through planned high quality workforce development across the Early Years System. • The training and development offer to the Early Years workforce is joined up and coordinated between the different agencies. • Workforce development demonstrates a positive impact, which is measured by improved outcomes for children and positive inspection outcomes across Health and early education provision. • Good communication exists across the Early Years System to share good practice, and update on development. • An Early Years response that is equitable and meets the needs of the diverse communities in Sheffield. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All partners in the Early Years System to recognise their role in the success of the strategy ambitions and sign up to this Strategy. • All partners to understand the role of others and to actively seek out opportunities to work together, to identify and support families in need of help or advice. • All partners to recognise, value and actively seek the contribution of parents and partners in making all of our Early Years services the best that they can be. • All partners to promote each other's Early Years Services to ensure parents have full knowledge of the help and support available. Particularly with regard to services which are accessible within local communities. • Practitioners to be enabled to engage in workforce development opportunities not only within their own professional field but across the wider Early Help and Early Years System to develop further understanding of the roles of other agencies and to further understand the help and support available. • All Early Years practitioners to create and take advantage of networking opportunities and promote and share their own good practice.

Related strategies/plans and activity:

Sheffield Inclusion strategy

0 -5 SEND development

Speech and Language Review

The Sheffield City Council Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2023

The Food Strategy

Early Years: a crisis in affordability and sustainability

The Single Delivery Plan (Maternity) 2023

Delivery Plan (Maternity and Neonatal) 22/23

Healthy Child Programme

Early Years SEND

Sheffield SEND Plan

Early Years Strategic Plan

The Pre-Birth pathway

Sheffield All Age Autism Strategy 2023 to 2026

All Age Mental Health Strategy

Sheffield's Early Years School Readiness Ambitions

Tackling inequalities in Early Childhood

Family Hubs and the Start for Life Offer (2022)

Maternity Health and Wellbeing: National Maternity Transformation Programme

Sheffield Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Best Start for Life: A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days

Sheffield Parenting Hub

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021)

Sheffield Childrens NHSFT Clinical Strategy

C.2 Our Ambitions in Detail



Ambition 2 We work in collaboration with Early Years childcare and education providers to meet the Government's 2023 promise of 30 hours of free childcare per week for eligible working parents with children aged nine months to three years by September 2025.

What we want to see:	What we need everyone to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are sufficient Early Years places in settings and childminding to meet the needs of working parents and those wanting to access funded entitlements. • All settings are inclusive and capable of meeting the diverse needs of all children and means that children can attend their parents preferred setting. • We effectively support Early Years childcare providers to maintain good quality provision and provide higher levels of support to those needing to make improvements in quality. • We provide effective support to settings to manage the impacts of the cost of living crisis and in post pandemic recovery. • Parents have the information they need to help them to find the right childcare and education setting for their child and they know where to go to get the advice they need. • More families, especially those within vulnerable groups, are accessing Funded Early Learning (FEL) for their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work with providers to support increases in access to Funded Early Learning places in areas of the city which are oversubscribed. • To work together as an Early Years System to support the sector to address the issues arising from the Covid pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis by raising the profile of the issues facing the sector with Elected Members, Leaders and National Government and collectively seeking out innovative solutions to impact positively on the issues. • See all our promotional activity and resources from the point of view of parents to ensure that we are using all media and means to reach families within all communities. • Ensure access for families with communication difficulties, where English is not the households first language, and where access to digital information is not accessible. • Increase the uptake of Disability Access Funding to support settings to accommodate and improve access for children with SEND. • Work together to ensure that 0 – 5 SEND support funding is accessible and proportionate to need. • Raise the profile of Funded Early Learning (FEL) opportunities across the city, providing quality information on suitable early education.

Related strategies/plans and activity:

Sheffield Delivery Plan
22/23

Early Years Strategic
Plan

Sheffield SEND Plan

Early Years SEND

Sheffield's Early Years School
Readiness Ambitions

Sheffield All Age Autism Strategy
2023 to 2026

Early Years: a crisis in
affordability and sustainability

Sheffield Inclusion
Strategy

C.2 Our Ambitions in Detail



Ambition 3 We mitigate the effects of inequality, poverty and disadvantage on babies' and children's Safety, Health and Development and we support parents and families to be healthy and maintain good health.

What we want to see:	What we need everyone to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are providing leadership in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, especially for those children in care. • A strengthened focus on earliest identification of need with timely and targeted interventions. This includes supporting vulnerable families to stay together and preventing children from going into care. • Those working with parents from the antenatal period onwards are skilled and have the confidence to have culturally competent conversations with parents about how the family is impacted with regard to economic and social disadvantage. Joined-up action is taken by all partners including communities to ensure these needs can be addressed • We are all able to provide support, signposting and help to families in need through our understanding of the help available to Sheffield Families who are struggling in the current economic climate. • Parents know that there is help available and where to find it. • The services, help and support available to families is accessible to all including families with protected Characteristics and at no financial detriment to the family. • We use data and intelligence to inform where service is delivered to ensure a proportionate offer and services are targeted at those most in need. • Improved parent and infant relationships. Expectant parents, especially those with complex social needs or multiple vulnerabilities, are supported prior to conception, throughout pregnancy and during the early years with a focus on perinatal and infant mental health. • The early years workforce is confident and competent to delivery key oral health messages to parents to support a reduction the prevalence and severity of tooth decay in Sheffield children. • Children have access to physical play opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together to ensure all children, including those who are Looked After, have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), eligible for free school meals, or have English an additional language, achieve a good level of development. • Further improve our links across agencies and organisations to ensure all those supporting families are knowledgeable in terms of where to go for economic help, support and advice including access to foodbanks, benefits advice, and employment support. • Work together to ensure the provision of fully accessible and inclusive high-quality offer delivered at the earliest opportunity that is both with and of the communities served. • To expect the best and go the extra mile to support every child and young person, especially those who are in care. • Further develop our information sharing arrangements around themes arising in areas to fully understand demand and where services should be targeted. • Ensure planning and delivery of services is considerate of community and cultural needs and is engaging to local families. • Champion maternal and infant mental health to support the secure attachments needed to thrive. • Role model practical parenting skills and support. • Ensure key oral health messages and signposting to dental health services are part of conversations with parents. • Access appropriate oral health training opportunities. • Increase our awareness across health, care and education staff about ways to support and encourage healthy living and physical activity.

Related strategies/plans and activity:

- Children's Early Help Strategy
- The Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- Delivery Plan (Maternity and Neonatal) 22/23
- Sheffield Tackling Poverty Framework 2020 - 2030
- All Age Mental Health Strategy
- Sheffield Childrens NHSFT Clinical Strategy
- Sheffield Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- The Sheffield City Council Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2023
- The Best Start for Life: A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days
- The Pre-Birth pathway
- The Food Strategy
- Oral Health Strategy
- Sheffield Parenting Hub
- Sheffield's Health and Care Partnership (HCP)
- Family Hubs and the Start for Life Offer (2022)
- Tackling inequalities in Early Childhood
- Sheffield Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies
- Early Years: a crisis in affordability and sustainability
- Sheffield's Children Early Help Review
- Healthy Child Programme
- The Single Delivery Plan (Maternity) 2023
- Sheffield All Age Autism Strategy 2023 to 2026
- Infant Mortality Strategy

C.2 Our Ambitions in Detail



Ambition 4 Families of and Children with SEND or Complex Health Needs are well supported from the earliest point and receive seamless support throughout all transitions in early life.

What we want to see:	What we need everyone to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition across the system is well managed, contributed to by a high level of trust between partners and there is professional respect across all sectors of the Early Years System. • Parents are recognised as key contributors to their child’s development, and their concerns are listened to and acted upon. • There is clear and up to date information on support for SEND which is accessible to parents. • Support for babies and children with SEND is accessible and provided in a timely way. • Early Years professionals discuss concerns regarding children’s development with parents and with 0–19 services. • Integrated Health and Education reviews take place for those children whose development or health is of concern. • Earliest identification of Families and Babies with the potential to have complex health needs. • Families who may need support to access services such as annual health checks, mandated reviews, developmental assessments or activity groups have the help that they need. • Seamless and well-informed transitions for those children starting school, especially those who have complex needs or multiple disadvantages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop our partnerships to improve parental access to good quality advice and support in health and SEND. • Provide targeted activity to identified groups who are most in need of support. • Ensure of planning and delivery of services and support for SEND is considerate community and cultural needs and is engaging to local families. • We need everyone who works with babies and Early Years children to be alert to those who may need extra support and to ensure that those children are able to access the extra support that is available. • We need Early Years professionals who feel a child may need additional help to talk with parents about their concerns. • Actively listen to parental concerns regarding their child's development and needs. • Continue to support and promote community healthy living and physical opportunities, activity groups and facilities to be accessible for parents and children including those with a learning or physical disability, severe mental illness or autism.

Related strategies/plans and activity:



C.2 Our Ambitions in Detail



Ambition 5

Parents are supported and enabled to provide the best possible start in life for their children.

What we want to see:	What we need everyone to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternity Services and partners work together to ensure the needs of women and birthing partners who have complex social factors are identified and they have improved access to the care and support they need. • Parent are enabled to recognise their children’s developmental milestones so that if they feel that their child may have a developmental need they know what to do, who to turn to. • Parents understand the help that is available, how they can access it and they experience good, joined up responses from agencies. • Parents feel that they have contributed to the development of Early Years services through coproduction, consultation and engagement. • Parents are supported to be resilient and have strong networks of support. • Parents can access a good range of support advice and help in their local communities. • Parents feel empowered and have high expectations for their children and the future. • All staff are fully trained to understand the impact of complex social needs in the perinatal period and how to communicate with parents sensitively. • Parents have the confidence to ask for support with their relationships and have access to a range of provision from Early Years Services trained in positive relational practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek out opportunities to deliver help support and services in localities to improve accessibility and increase contacts with seldom heard communities. . • Actively seek out opportunities to link activity and support to VCF sector organisations to enable families to access help via familiar people in familiar environments. • All services and organisations to consider how we can further empower parents to feel confident to seek out help and support and consider how we can make this as easy as possible for parents. • To consider how we can better use the opportunities presented in the day-to-day contacts that settings and VCF sector have with families. • To further develop our Empowering Parents Empowering Communities offer to build supportive parental networks within communities. • Adopt principles of proportionate universalism (delivering services which are proportionate to needs in both scale and intensity) of the to identify and address needs antenatally of those parents at greater risk of poor maternal outcomes because of complex social factors . • Wherever possible ensure parents can access a range of family orientated antenatal/postnatal services in one place include targeted and specialist support. • Create a professional environment where we ask – ‘routine enquiry’ we ask about the relationship between not just the couple, but between the couple and their children, the children, boyfriends, girlfriends, step-children, other adults, we become curious about how ‘people get along’. This is positive relational practice.

Related strategies/plans and activity:



C.3 Shared Values and Principles

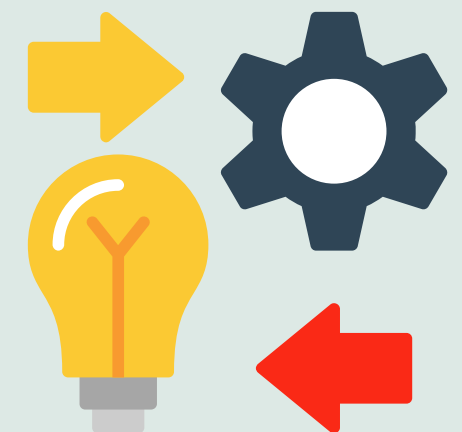
The values and principles below have been co-produced with key Early Help service leaders as part of the Early Help Review that took place 2020-2022, to describe the underlying approach we all commit to take in delivering services to families. Our Early Help and Early Years Strategy Values and Principles are aligned:

- Children and families will be at the centre of what we do
- We will listen to children and families and use their feedback to improve our communication and services where we can
- We will work, where possible, using a whole family approach
- We offer high quality advice and information to enable and empower families, taking a strengths-based approach to enable families to find their own solutions
- Children, young people and families can access consistent and appropriate information to help them make choices
- We will intervene early in life and in the emergence of problems
- We deliver services to children's young people and families within their communities
- We will work together and develop multi-agency integrated services
- We will focus on outcomes and provide value for money
- We will limit the number of professionals' families have to tell their story to
- We will use data to inform service improvements
- We are committed to sharing information with partners to improve services for children



C.4 Implementation

We can see that we have a multitude of interrelated strategies, plans and activity in the city, all striving to improve outcomes for Babies, Children and Families. All of the above have their own implementation plans. With this in mind, the implementation of this strategy is strongly dependent on the agreement of all stakeholders who are supporting and engaging with Early Years children and families in the city to participate, collaborate and contribute to achieving the ambitions of the strategy through working together as an Early Years and Early Help System as described in our detailed aims above.



C.5 Progress Monitoring and Measuring Impact

The Start for Life Sheffield, Early Years Strategy is intended as an overarching strategy which draws together the aims and ambitions of a number of the current related strategies and plans outlined in section B.2. The strategy straddles activity across the Early Years system in Education, Health and Care sectors. As such, there are significant interdependencies related to its progress and rather than produce an additional plan, the priorities and aims of the strategy will progress via the action plan activities of those strategies.

Impact: What does success look like?

By 2028:



The importance of good quality Early Years services and provision is championed and promoted by stakeholders, leaders and Elected Members.



Strategic policy and planning for Sheffield families, children and parents is considered from pre-birth in every case.



Collaborative approaches are further developed, particularly with the voluntary sector, in order to provide locality working and workforce development opportunities.



Working together across agencies has measurable benefits for families with Health and SEND needs and for parents and children with protected characteristics.



The city has sufficient capacity to manage Funded Early Learning statutory requirements.



Developed activity and plans across Early Years support the city response to the cost-of-living crisis.



Parents feel engaged in the development of services for Early Years children, co-production is commonplace and parents feel supported and listened to.



Parents feel that they have access to services which meet their particular needs.



We will see improvements in health and education outcomes, particularly in areas of deprivation where we have significant disparity

Data related to the above success criteria along with regular feedback and evaluation information will be used to demonstrate progress towards our ambitions.

C.6 Governance Arrangements

The strategy will be managed via the Family Hubs Programme Board and will be monitored by the Early Help Partnership Board. A data dashboard will be provided quarterly, along with a quarterly update report which will be presented to the Early Help Partnership Board and provided to the Children and Young Peoples Delivery Group. Annual progress reports will be provided to relevant groups and networks including the Early Years Provider Network and the Inclusion Task force. The voice of parents/carers will be part of the on-going evaluation monitoring and implementation of the strategy.



C.7 Data Sources

The Sheffield picture data sources

- (1) Fingertips
- (2) Local Authority Interactive Tool
- (3) Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 Sheffield LSOA - MHCLG
- (4) Health state life expectancies, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
- (5) Child Health Profiles (phe.org.uk)Age (arcgis.com)
- (6) Children in low-income families, Department for Work and Pensions (2020)
- (7) Sheffield-Safe-Accommodation-Needs-Assessment-2021-FINAL.pdf (sheffielddact.org.uk)
- (8) https://sheffield.communityinsight.org/?indicator=id19_homelessness_20150601#
- (9) E08000019 (phe.org.uk)
- (10) Breast for the best (shorthandstories.com)
- (11) PHE 2019



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Appendix A. Great Start in Life outcomes from next steps.

In the March 2020 Great Start in Life Strategy we identified a number of areas for development. The table below provides a brief overview of the activity undertaken and the outcomes achieved in these areas.

Areas for development	What we did.	What was the impact?
<p>Implement further action across all sectors including childminders to assess early developmental delay and effectively support children identified with additional needs</p>	<p>Free twilight and full day sessions offered for Speak up for Sheffield training.</p> <p>Free Sheffield Support Grids (SSGe) early years exemplification training offered as a twilight and face to face sessions.</p> <p>Free Extended support grid training for early years providers offered as a twilight and face to face sessions.</p> <p>Let's chat about sessions offered (2-year-old / 3–5-year-olds)</p> <p>Further role out of Explore Play and Learn sessions developed with Health 0-19</p> <p>Continue the roll out of 0-5 SEN groups across the city.</p> <p>Family Hubs offer expanding re health-related issues such as incontinence</p>	<p>Early years sector are trained in universal language development, specific local knowledge applied, opportunity to develop learning and attend Speak up for Sheffield Language champions – this incorporates action planning and a QI mentor.</p> <p>Knowledge built on and developed around SSGe and Extended support plans.</p> <p>Referrals including SSGe and use of extended support plans.</p> <p>Increased discussions around child development across the sector</p> <p>Referrals to these groups can be identified. Increase working together with other initiatives and bringing together offer – such as Startwell.</p> <p>Family Centres have begun to work with Voluntary Sector to increase both universal and SEND groups across the city.</p> <p>Increased Ready Stead Go groups to three in the city. (Voluntary Sector send groups).</p> <p>Best Start Community Counts increase baby and toddler groups by 3 in North.</p> <p>Family Hub Early Years Prevention Workers have increase baby and toddler activity across the city</p>
<p>Use area intelligence and available data to ensure Family Centre</p>	<p>Data and local needs assessment ongoing as part</p>	<p>New developments</p>

<p>activity meets area needs in terms of school readiness and Speech and Language</p>	<p>of Family Hub & Start for Life delivery plan.</p> <p>Increased capacity in Performance and Analysis Team</p>	
<p>Develop family centre activity and links to ensure the offer encompasses all ages and supports the needs of vulnerable families.</p> <p>Engage in activity to increase the take up of 2-year Free Early Learning (FEL) in areas of the city where take up is low.</p>	<p>Delivery plan implementation ongoing activity planning now in place – further planning to develop network of family hubs and ways of identifying further links to encompass 0-19 (25)</p> <p>Childcare Planning Team Pilot with Burngreave Family Centre to target families likely to be eligible for 2-year entitlement from DWP data.</p> <p>Recruitment to Community Support Worker roles to increase capacity to work with vulnerable families using the whole family model (all age) to promote significant and sustained success for Supporting families' outcomes</p>	<p>Groups will now be planned within localities using data and evidence around vulnerability and needs led.</p> <p>Promoted on Local Offer 0-5 team also promote and support 2-year FEL applications with parents.</p> <p>New Role March 2023. Impact to be monitored.</p>
<p>Actively promote the benefits of integrated 2-year-old reviews with all partners and gain commitment from all partners to improve Sheffield's performance in this area.</p>	<p>Family Centre teams working pro-actively with Health Visiting and Nursery settings to look at timely referrals to explore play and learn and signpost to other relevant groups and support.</p> <p>Development of process and criteria for Integrated 2-year-old reviews via partnership coproduction.</p>	<p>Evaluation of the EPL pilot identified improved relationships between NHS Practitioners and SCC staff teams.</p> <p>Health referrals to wider family hub /centre activity has increased significantly during the life of the strategy: 2019-2020 = 686 (57% of total referrals) 2020-2021 = 517 (76% of total referrals) 2021-2022 = 599 (81% of total referrals) 2022-2023 = 829 (85% of total referrals)</p> <p>New process from December 2023. Impact to be monitored.</p> <p>Information Sharing Agreements are in the process of being developed.</p>

	<p>Pilot delivered and learning used to inform revised process.</p> <p>Exploration of data sharing specific to Ages and Stages Questionnaires to target for activity and support and potential 2-year-old integrated reviews.</p>	
<p>Increase referrals from PVI sector into the Partnership Process and MAST.</p>	<p>Referral process shared through PVI SENCo briefings and locality network meetings.</p> <p>Work ongoing re data quality looking to produce referral data where possible and improve reporting through LL system.</p> <p>Work on Portal will include communications to all key partners including PVI to raise awareness of what can be accessed via the portal. This includes work on accessibility and simplification of the referral processes</p>	<p>0 – 5 SEND Lead and Early Years Quality Improvement Manager visiting settings and supporting information shared around referrals.</p> <p>Clear process for HV when referring to MAST to link to 0-5. 0 – 5 SEND Lead attends Early Years partnership triage each week to ensure children 0-5 with SEND are supported.</p> <p>New development for 2023.</p>
<p>Review the process of allocation of Early Years SEND support funding to settings to enable full take up of FEL provision entitlement for children with SEND.</p>		<p>Currently being reviewed as part of the SEND funding review</p>
<p>Identify and deliver on priorities for developing high quality speech and language services in early years' settings.</p>	<p>Early Years is included in SALT review. UCAN proposal developed to increase provision (UCAN is Sheffield's Developmental Language Disorder provision for Early Years.)</p>	<p>EYSALT and 0-5 team- attending team meetings. UCAN proposal agreed and recruitment has begun</p>
<p>Standardise transition processes at key points for children most notably when starting reception</p>	<p>Transition document updated in partnership with stakeholders (Local Authority, Private, Voluntary and Independent sector (PVI), Schools, SEND, School Readiness teams) and shared with sector</p>	<p>Document shared and in use.</p> <p>Additional transition sessions being added due to over subscription.</p> <p>Transition forming conversation on Quality Improvement visits.</p>

	<p>thorough communications, networks and briefings.</p> <p>Free transition training for PVI sector re 0-3 / 3-5 / SEND.</p> <p>Transition on agenda for PVI briefings and networks</p>	<p>Transition offer provided to children with SEND- June/ July each year.</p>
<p>Work towards ensuring every private provider is equipped to deliver high quality Special Education Needs provision through the support of an in- house SENCO with a nationally recognised professional qualification by September 2019</p>	<p>2022-23 Signposted to DfE funded Level 3 SENCO award.</p> <p>Up to July 2022 – Local Authority funded Level 3 SENCo Award training offered and completed.</p> <p>2021-2022 – 2 cohorts of Level 4 SENCo award funded by Local Authority delivered and achieved.</p> <p>Half termly PVI SENCo networks</p> <p>Half termly PVI SENCo briefings</p>	<p>44 settings attending the training led by Best Practice Network</p> <p>124 PVI SENCOs achieved Level 3 SENCo Award</p> <p>15 PVI SENCOs achieved Level 4 Award</p> <p>1 Community Early Years Practitioner and 1 Quality Improvement officer achieved Level 4 SENCo award.</p> <p>Networks attended by SENCOs – good practice shared and developed, network opportunities and moderation opportunities.</p> <p>Briefings attended by SENCOs – guest speakers share key messages and city overviews / services shared</p>
<p>Develop closer links between Family Centres and Libraries to enable activity to promote sharing books.</p>	<p>Family Hub supporting libraries to re develop baby and toddler time. Support includes training offer, help with resourcing and support with quality and signposting.</p> <p>Family Hubs booked the library bus to attend all events during school holidays.</p> <p>Re developing the Bookstart corner programme.</p>	<p>Parsons Cross Library Supported</p> <p>Woodhouse library support</p> <p>Southey Library being supported.</p> <p>Families have accessed the programme which incorporates signing up/visit to local library.</p>
<p>Add capacity to the workforce trained in Baby Incredible Years</p>	<p>Rotation of Early Years Prevention Staff to be trained to deliver the programme on rotation with</p>	<p>69 parents accessed the programme since 2021.</p>

	Parenting Specialist lead for IY Baby	4 Early Years Prevention Workers trained and delivering Baby Incredible Years
Review city wide workforce needs in training on areas that impact on school readiness.	<p>Training offer in place for sector to access – both traded and free / statutory</p> <p>QI and QA team support to settings on an individual basis</p> <p>CEYP team parent sessions 'Are you ready ...?'</p>	<p>21 PVI providers accessing traded offer.</p> <p>91 schools accessing traded offer.</p>

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NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

Children Act 2004

The 2004 Act places a duty on local authorities in England to make arrangements to promote co-operation with key partners and local agencies, with a view to improving the well-being of children in the authority's area.

Childcare Act 2006.

It is the first Act to be exclusively concerned with early years and childcare and early childhood services. The Childcare Act 2006 takes forward key commitments from the Ten-Year Childcare Strategy, published in December 2004. The three key drivers of the 2006 Act are:

- **Reduce child poverty:** To support parents to work, and hence the focus on the provision of good quality childcare for working parents.
- **Reduce inequalities between young children:** Focusing on supporting children most at risk of poor outcomes because of deprivation and disadvantage and promoting social mobility.
- **Improve wellbeing for Young Children.** Focussing on the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes of Safety, Health, Wellbeing, enjoy and achieve and making a positive contribution.

Inclusion strategy

- Commitment 1 - Effective early identification of needs with appropriate assessments across Education, Health, and Care.
- Commitment 2 - A wide range of Education, Health and Care services that meets the needs of our young people.
- Commitment 3 - Smooth transition across Education, Health, and Care at every stage of a young person's life and particularly to adult life.
- Commitment 4 - Excellent communication and engagement between young people, families, Education, Health, and Care services including schools.

Sheffield Delivery Plan 22/23

The strategy will align with these particular strategic goals set out in the 22/23 Sheffield Delivery Plan.

- Fair inclusive and empowered communities.
- Strong and connected neighbourhood which people are happy to call home.
- Tackling inequalities and supporting people through the cost-of-living crisis.
- Happy young people who have the start they need for the future they want.
- Healthy lives and wellbeing for all.
- Clean economic growth

Sheffield's Children's Early Help Review

The aims of the Children's Early Help Review are to.

- understand how we can improve the effectiveness and reach of Early Help,
- and identify our return on investment (ROI) for Early Help.

Our **reasons for reviewing Sheffield Early Help provision** are.

1. Families and partner agencies wanted more clarity about the interventions and provision on offer from Early Help Services
2. We wanted to understand better the impact of each intervention so that we know what makes the most positive difference.
3. To streamline referral pathways and the way we use IT to share information.
4. To consider how we can utilise analytical information to target our resources better.
5. To improve our information-sharing agreements to ensure that we can access data from partners.
6. To improve identification of need and timeliness of provision of Early Help Support to prevent escalation of need.

Initial findings of the Children's Early Help Review.

- Most children who receive Early Help do not progress to Statutory Care. However, there is still scope for optimisation, aiming for a 10% improvement to social care avoidance in 23/24.
- There is scope to reach more families with early help that escalate directly to Statutory Care.
- The Service requires accurate and granular reach and effectiveness performance data in near real-time to help drive improvement.

Next Steps for the Children's Early Help Review.

- New strategic KPI's for reach and effectiveness that evidence Early Help's role in demand management.
- Develop a suite of real-time dashboards that combine escalation avoidance metrics with specific outcomes related to the preventive aims of the service/intervention.
- Integrate the new dashboards to build on existing BSF reporting and tie in Family Hubs and Start for Life requirements.
- Work with teams to establish root causes of why some family's needs escalate, deliver improvements in parallel with performance reporting changes.

Children's EH (Early Help) Strategy

We want Sheffield to be an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that all children and their families receive the right support at the right time so that they live a happy and fulfilled life.

The outcomes we want for Children & Young people in Sheffield are.

- **SAFE & NURTURED** – Children & Young People are safe, secure & nurtured within their home.
- **SAFE COMMUNITIES** – Children and young people are safe and supported in their community so that they are not at risk of harm.
- **GOOD HEALTH** - Children and young people have good physical health.
- **EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY** – Children and young people are resilient and emotionally healthy.
- **ENGAGING EDUCATION & ACTIVITIES** – Children and young people access and engage in their education, employment, and their local community.

Sheffield's Health and Care Partnership (HCP)

Primary and community-based services will bring together a wide range of different disciplines from across mental and physical health and social care, together with the voluntary and community sector, working with children and young people, their families, individuals, carers, and communities. (Health and Care in Sheffield 2030 Draft report, Nov. 2021)

The Sheffield HCP Children and Young People's Wellbeing Delivery Group aim to: _

- Improving our approach to how health and care support is provided as children grow into adulthood. To develop a much more seamless and supportive experience (and where necessary, 'transition') of care.
- We aim to develop a different, improved and joined up approach for preschool children and their families: improving wellbeing, joining up information, identifying children at risk of poor outcomes and putting in place support at the earliest opportunity.

Family Hubs and the Start for Life Offer (2022)

Family Hubs are local support centres where families with children and young people aged 0-19 can access a broad and integrated range of early help to overcome difficulties and build stronger relationships. This is often co-located with early years health care and support, such as in Children's Centres. Sheffield is one of 75 Local Authorities chosen to take part in the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme.

Infant Mental Health Pathway development (Ongoing from April 2022)

A significant part of the DFE funding for Family Hubs is ringfenced for Parent and infant Relationships and Perinatal Mental Health peer support development and activity. As such Sheffield is in a good position to develop a supportive and clear pathway for families to access early support in this area.

Infant Mortality Strategy

We have continued to systematically reduce our infant mortality rates in Sheffield, exceeding the target set out in our 10-year strategy and bringing our rates below both the Yorkshire and Humber and England average. However infant mortality is directly associated with poverty and the current cost-of-living crisis brings a direct threat to this positive progress. A review of Sheffield's current strategy has been undertaken which examines the factors most closely associated with infant deaths to identify what additional action is required. The refreshed programme brings together stakeholders from across statutory organisations and the voluntary sector to develop plans designed to meet the needs of communities and disadvantaged population groups experiencing the greatest risks. Areas covered include smoking in pregnancy, healthy weight, infant feeding, teenage conception, safer sleep, recessive genetic conditions, early access to maternity care and poverty.

Maternity Health and Wellbeing

The national maternity transformation programme underlines the importance of maternal health for achieving positive birth outcomes. All local maternity and neonatal systems are required to put in place plans to reduce inequalities in access. and outcomes for the groups that experience the greatest inequalities (Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic groups and those living in the most deprived areas). This work includes a range of preventative programmes designed to help local maternity systems understand their population needs and design action plans which are co-designed with women to help improve equity of access.

Maternal cultural safety developments (ongoing from 2022)

A Maternal Cultural Safety Forum is in place in the city which aims to:

- collaborate on increasing equality in Maternity Service provision, clinical outcomes, and satisfaction for service users from Ethnic Minority backgrounds.
- seek views and experiences from Ethnic Minority communities on Maternity Services in Sheffield and identify ongoing or new concerns to be addressed.
- communicate developments in Cultural Safety initiatives to staff members, stakeholders, and community organisations.

- identify what Sheffield Maternity services could do better to minimise barriers to service access, and ensure they engage and communicate effectively with all the communities we represent and serve.

The objectives of the forum are.

1. Pregnant women in Sheffield receive information in a format they can access and understand.
2. Pregnant women in Sheffield receive care that is culturally sensitive and personally tailored.
3. Pregnant women in Sheffield give feedback about their care.
4. Pregnant women in Sheffield receive tailored communication about the services available.
5. Pregnant women in Sheffield have a personal risk assessment of their health and social circumstances which informs their maternity care pathway.
6. All pregnant women in Sheffield have access to vitamin D supplementation to meet their personal needs.
7. The collection of timely, accurate and complete health and demographic data informs the development of culturally sensitive.

maternity care pathways

The Current Speech and Language Review.

The pandemic has continued to affect children's communication and language development, with many providers and parents noticing delays in their speech and language progress. In Sheffield, a review of Speech and Language services is taking place to consider ways to improve and enhance delivery of Speech, Language and Communication support and therapy in Sheffield including locality based early help offers.

Early Years: a crisis in affordability and sustainability

South Yorkshire Futures and Elected Member led discussions regarding issues facing Early Years Childcare and Education providers related to funding, staff recruitment and retention. Aims to provide a collective voice to influence at national level decision making for the sector.

Early Years Strategic Plan.

The Early Years Strategic plan covers four main areas - **Quality of Provision, Workforce Development, Funding and Business Opportunity**. Areas of focus include a robust support and training programme for the early years sector, to support early years partners with up-to-date training and information, to work with Family Centre hubs and share public health messages contributing to improving the long-term outcomes for 0–5-year-olds and their families by providing effective early years programmes, workshops, and training packages.

Sheffield's Early years School Readiness Ambitions (2022 Review)

- To see positive movement in terms of narrowing the gap between Free School Meals (FSM) and non-FSM outcomes.
- Positive feedback from Parents, Early Years Providers and Schools regarding their experiences on transition and with preparedness for learning.
- Healthy weight at 5.
- Improved oral health in the Early Years.
- Increases in vaccination and immunisation.
- Reduced referrals to Speech and Language Therapy.
- We will see more children arriving at school with their needs identified and plans in place to support them to learn from their very first days.
- Rebalancing and reduction of the proportion of children from BAME communities excluded from school.
- Increased referrals to Early Help and Family Hub activity.

- Increased referrals into Early Years Parenting support.
- Increases in children in receipt of 2-year-old integrated reviews.

Early Years SEND.

The 0-5 SEND service has undergone many recent changes due to increasingly high demand. Our vision is to provide a proactive service to improve early identification and early intervention for early years children with SEND. Multi agency working is imperative to this, and the service continues to develop multi agency working protocols with all Early Help services in Education, Health, and Care.

- Introduce Team around the Early Years and incorporate into the current Sheffield Inclusion model
- Revise the Early Years Inclusion Funding offer to Early Years providers to make it more accessible and transparent, as part of the Sheffield SEND funding review.
- To provide early intervention for children with social communication needs who are accessing FEL (Funded Early Learning) and teach skills and knowledge to parents, through Portage Plus, using the principals of Portage of parents as partners.
- Completion of impact assessment of service, using feedback from parents and partners across Sheffield., part of a wider service delivery review.
- Development of training offer, so that Early Years SEND provision and support for young children with SEND is consistent across Sheffield

Sheffield Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Sheffield has also published its Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2019-24. This covers the entire life course, but relates specifically to SEND in its ambitions around “starting well”:

- Every child achieves a level of development in their Early Years for the best start in life.
- Every child is included in their education and can access their local school.
- Every child and young person have a successful transition to adulthood.

Healthy Child Programme

The Healthy Child Programme offers every family an evidence-base programme of interventions, including screening tests, immunisations, developmental reviews, and information and guidance to support parenting and healthy choices. It also outlines all services that children and families need to receive if they are to achieve their optimum health and wellbeing.

The Healthy Child Programme remains universal in reach continuing to set out a range of public health interventions to build healthy communities for families and children, reducing inequalities and vulnerabilities. It continues to include a schedule of interventions, which range from universal services for all through to intensive support. The updated model emphasises the health visiting and school nursing role as leaders of the Healthy Child Programme, whilst acknowledging the important contribution of a range of delivery partners.

Health visitors support families from the antenatal period up to school entry. The service is delivered in a range of settings including families’ own homes, local community, or primary care settings. School nurses offer year-round support for children and young people both in and out of school settings. Health visitors and school nurses provide continuity of care and undertake a ‘navigating role’ to support families through the health and care system. Utilising the right skill set, at the right time, also supports effective signposting to other support and information.

The Best Start for Life: A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days.

‘The best start for life: a vision for the 1,001 critical days’ starts with the needs of the baby and describes 6 action areas designed to help make things easier for busy parents and carers:

- seamless support for families: a coherent joined up Start for Life offer available to all families.
- a welcoming hub for families: family hubs as a place for families to access Start for Life services.
- the information families need when they need it: designing digital, virtual and telephone offers around the needs of the family.
- an empowered Start for Life workforce: developing a modern skilled workforce to meet the changing needs of families.
- continually improving the Start for Life offer: improving data, evaluation, outcomes, and proportionate inspection
- leadership for change: ensuring local and national accountability and building the economic case.

Sheffield Tackling Poverty Framework 2020 - 2030

Our vision is for a Sheffield without poverty. Sheffield in 2030 would be a city where we have confronted that everyday reality of poverty and worked to make it a thing of the past. No-one in the city would be living in poverty and everyone would have access to:

- A great start in life
- A secure income, food, and necessities
- A warm and safe home and local environment
- The best possible health and wellbeing
- Opportunities to achieve their full potential.
- Access to good education, employment, and training throughout life

Tackling inequalities in Early Childhood

Working with the Bloomberg-Harvard City Leadership Collaboration Programme, a team of 8 has been established with representation from public health, service commissioners, the Integrated Care Board, the NHS, the voluntary and community sector, academia, and the Mayor's Office from across South Yorkshire. Using specific tools to identify issues of inequity of outcomes in early childhood, the programme focuses on sleep. The success of the programme will be measured with equity of outcomes in South Yorkshire.

“Every child will have a safe space to sleep, families will be supported by trusted networks and every child will be ready for life (and therefore school).”

The long-term prize is a narrowing of the gap in health inequalities, improvements in overall life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.

Sheffield Integrated Care Pathway (ICP)- Pre-Birth planning: Maternity & Social Care

Young babies are particularly vulnerable to abuse, and early assessment, intervention and support work carried out during the antenatal period can help minimise any potential risk of harm. This procedure sets out how to respond to concerns for unborn babies, with an emphasis on clear and regular communication between professionals working with the woman, the father / partner and the family.

All professionals have a role in identifying and assessing families in need of additional support or where there are safeguarding concerns. In the vast majority of situations during a pregnancy, there will be no safeguarding concerns.

However, in some cases it will be clear that a co-ordinated response by agencies will be required to ensure that the appropriate support is in place during the pregnancy to best protect the baby before and following birth.

The antenatal period provides a window of opportunity for practitioners and families to work together to:

- Form relationships with a focus on the unborn baby;
- Identify risks and vulnerabilities at the earliest stage;
- Understand the impact of risk to the unborn baby when planning for their future;
- Explore and agree safety planning options;
- Assess the family's ability to adequately parent and protect the unborn baby and the baby once born;
- Identify if any assessments or referrals are required before birth; for example, for Early Help involvement or other support organisations;
- Ensure effective communication, liaison and joint working with adult services that are providing on-going care, treatment and support to a parent(s);
- Plan on-going interventions and support required for the child and parent(s);
- Avoid delay for the child where a legal process is likely to be needed such as Pre-proceedings, Care or Supervision Proceedings in line with the Public Law Outline.

A joint [Integrated Care Pathway](#) (Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures) has been devised in Sheffield and agreed through Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership. This integrated Care Pathway lays out a clear timetable of actions required by professionals for their joint assessment and to place for the unborn baby.

Considerations should be given to if the pregnant mother is a Looked After Child or Care Leaver, and use the [Pre Birth Planning for Care Leavers and Looked After Young People Procedure](#) to ensure support is in place.

Sheffield City Council and Partners Corporate Parenting Strategy for Looked after Children and Care Leavers 2021 – 2023

Objective 1. To increase provision of high-quality in city care placements

Objective 2. To support looked after children to catch up with the schooling they have missed

Objective 3. To improve looked after children and care leavers' emotional wellbeing

Objective 4. To support more care leavers to engage in education, employment, and training (EET)

Sheffield Parenting Hub. [Sheffield Parent Hub](#) Run a range of groups that offer practical advice and support with parenting. They have a range of programmes specifically designed for parents and carers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The Domestic Abuse Act [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) Part 1 Section 3. Statutory Guidance [Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Tobacco Strategy [Tobacco Strategy \(smokefreesheffield.org\)](#) Vision ▪ Sheffield people live longer and healthier lives, smokefree ▪ A smokefree generation in Sheffield by 2025 (in line with the ambition of Breathe2025) ▪ Sheffield children will grow up in a city where smoking is unusual ▪ Sheffield will be a smokefree city in which to live, work and play

Sheffield Oral Health Improvement Strategy 2023 - 2027 The oral health vision is for all Sheffield residents to be able to speak, smile and eat with confidence and without pain or discomfort from their teeth or mouths. This will be achieved through improving overall oral

health and reducing oral health inequalities with a particular focus on those children and young people who experience the worst oral health.

Fairer, Healthier, Greener – A Food Strategy for Sheffield (Final Draft July 2023)

In Sheffield, we want everyone to be able to access food all the time that is safe, affordable, culturally appropriate, nutritious and that benefits their health and wellbeing. We also want to ensure that we safeguard this access for future generations by building a food system that is fairer, more resilient to shocks and that does not harm the planet.

Sheffield Childrens NHS Foundation Trust Clinical Strategy helps deliver the guiding purpose of Sheffield Children's and our Caring Together 2020 – 2025 strategy, "Providing a healthier future for children and young people." [Clinical Strategy - Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust \(sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk\)](https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/clinical-strategy)

Single Delivery Plan (maternity and Neonatal) 2023 This plan sets out how the NHS will make maternity and neonatal care safer, more personalised, and more equitable for women, babies, and families.

For the next three years, services are asked to concentrate on four themes:

- Listening to and working with women and families, with compassion
- Growing, retaining, and supporting our workforce
- Developing and sustaining a culture of safety, learning, and support
- Standards and structures that underpin safer, more personalised, and more equitable care.

All Age Mental Health Strategy. 2023 - 2026

[Sheffield All-Age Emotional and Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy FINAL.pdf](#)

Our Vision

1. Mental and emotional health and wellbeing are at the heart of all we do as a city
2. Mental and emotional health and wellbeing is valued the same as physical health
3. Mental wellness, resilience and the prevention of illness are promoted at the earliest opportunity
4. Discrimination and inequalities that lead to poor health and mortality are tackled
5. Children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing is a top priority
6. The right care and support is provided at the right time and as close to home as possible
7. People are recovering from mental illness and are able to live healthy and fulfilled lives

Sheffield All Age Autism Strategy. 2023 – 2026 (Draft) This strategy has been developed based on feedback received from autistic children, young people, adults, and family carers on what our priorities need to be in order to make Sheffield an Autism friendly city.

Themes

1. Helping people to understand autism
2. Helping autistic children and young people at school and into adulthood
3. Helping autistic people to find jobs
4. Making health and care services equal for autistic people
5. Making sure autistic people get the right health and social care help in their communities
6. Help for autistic people in the justice system

These themes match the priorities in the National Autism Strategy 2021 - 2026

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Early Years Consultation

March 2023

Parent and Carer Survey Analysis

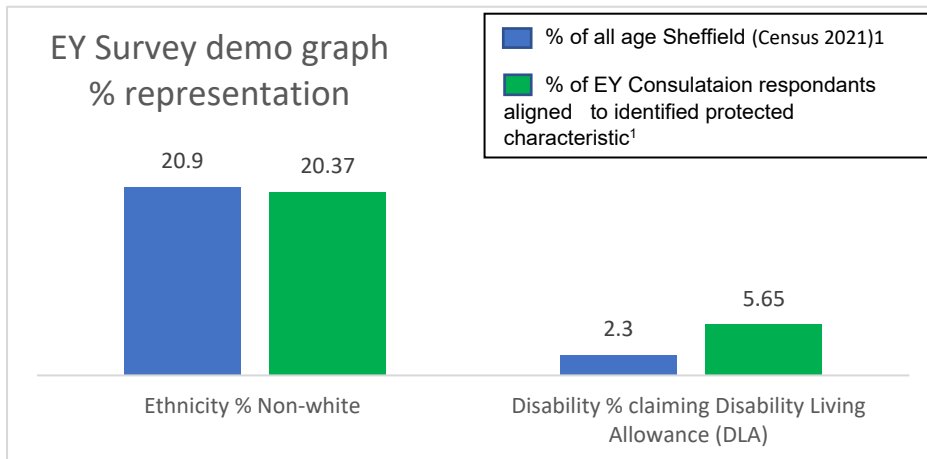
The key aim of the 2023 Parent/carer consultation was to inform the development of the new 2023 Early Years (EY) Strategy, which will be named, “Start for Life Sheffield”, and is due to replace the current EY strategy, ‘A Great Start for Life’, in March 2023.

To ensure the EY new strategy is reflective of our city, and our families, the Early Years and Early Help Commissioning team embarked on delivering a comprehensive across sector Early Years consultation. The findings within this report, detail the voice of Sheffield Parent/carers. Please note, the professional/partners survey and across sector EY consultation focus group findings are recorded in a separate analysis report.

The primary aim of this survey was to understand the experiences of families with care of young children in Sheffield, from a parent and carer perspective. The survey questions focussed on what is working well and where improvements could be made. This report will summarise the responses, capturing the voices of Sheffield families.

A total of 133 parents or carers responded on a wide range of subjects connected to early years experiences.

The demographic population of the Early Years survey respondents



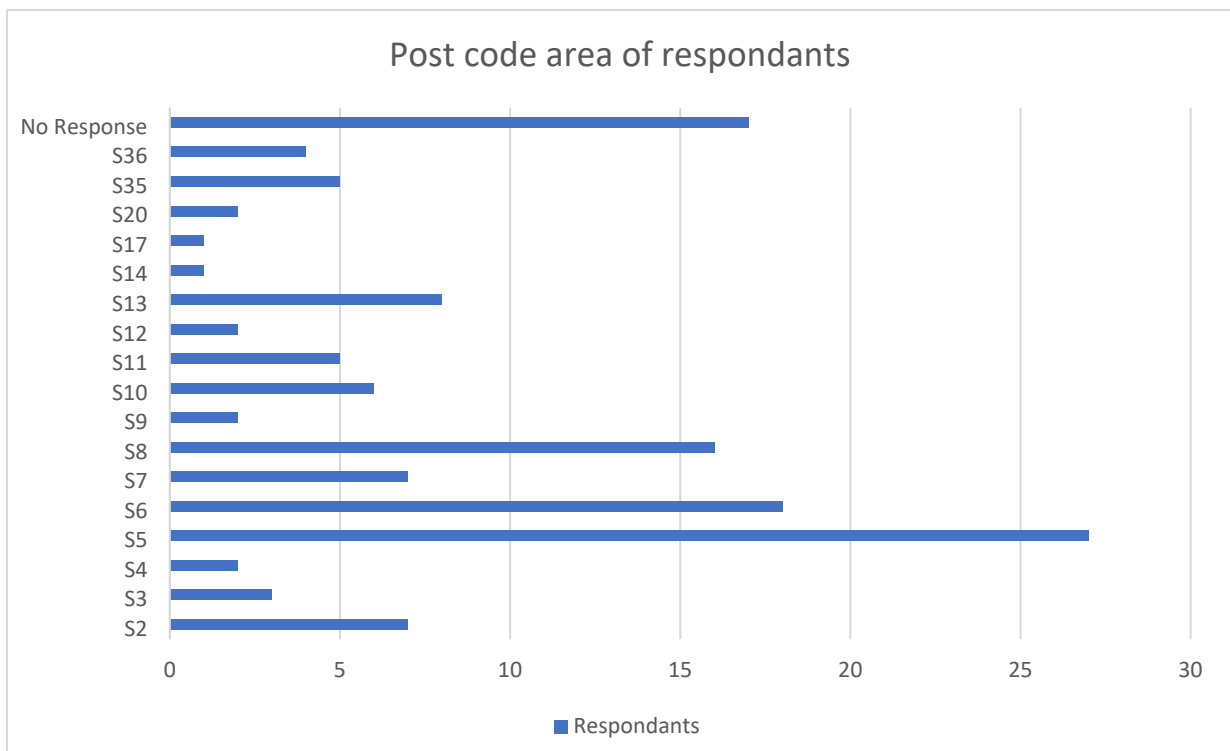
53 parent or carers identified having 2 or more children.
66 parents or carers identified having 1 child.
14 No response.

By Ethnicity

Another ethnic group 3
Asian or Asian British 9
Caribbean 3
Black African, Black British, or Mixed or multiple ethnic groups 7
White 108
Prefer not to say 3.

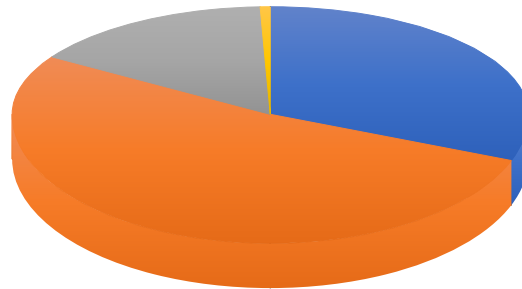
<u>Parents/carers identified as having a disability.</u>	<u>Parents /carers who identified having a child with a disability or additional need.</u>
Yes 7	Yes 13
No 124	No 118
Prefer not to say 1	No response 2
No response 1	
Yes 7	

City wide geographic response



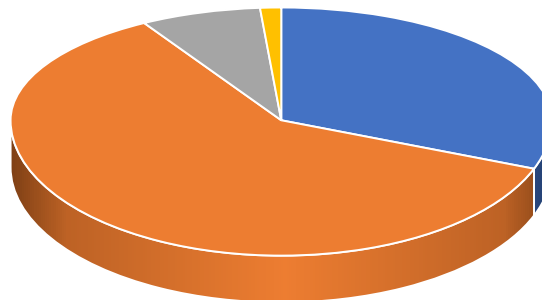
What families told us about support and services for Early Years in Sheffield

It is easy to get advice when I need it



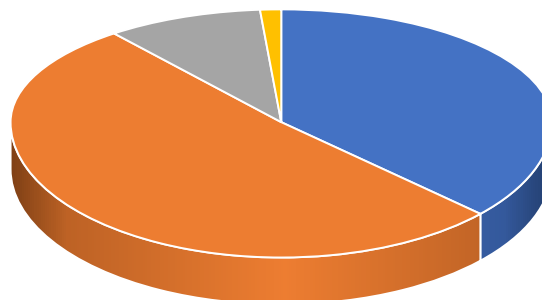
■ Strongly agree 41 ■ Agree 69 ■ Disagree 22 ■ Strongly disagree 1

I know where to go or who to call for support and help if I'm worried about my child



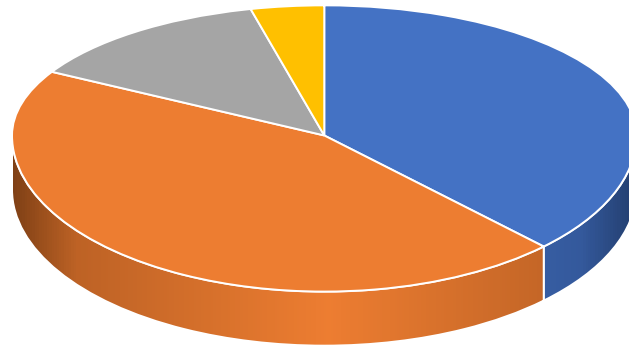
■ Strongly agree 41 ■ Agree 79 ■ Disagree 11 ■ Strongly disagree 2

Services are delivered close enough to where I live and I can access them



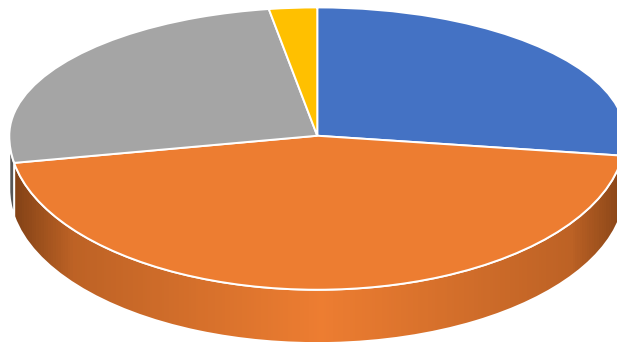
■ Strongly agree 49 ■ Agree 68 ■ Disagree 14 ■ Strongly disagree 2

I attend groups and activities in my local family centre/family hub



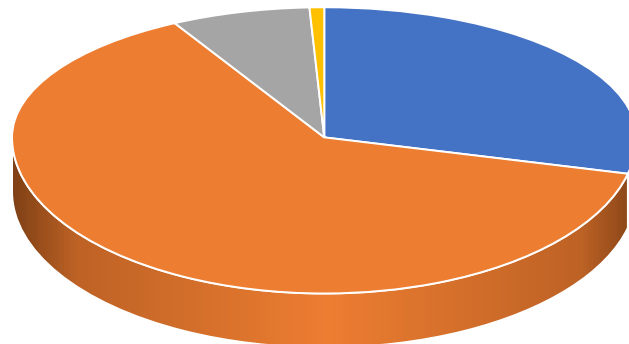
■ Strongly agree 50 ■ Agree 59 ■ Disagree 18 ■ Strongly disagree 6

I attend groups run in my community by voluntary services/local people



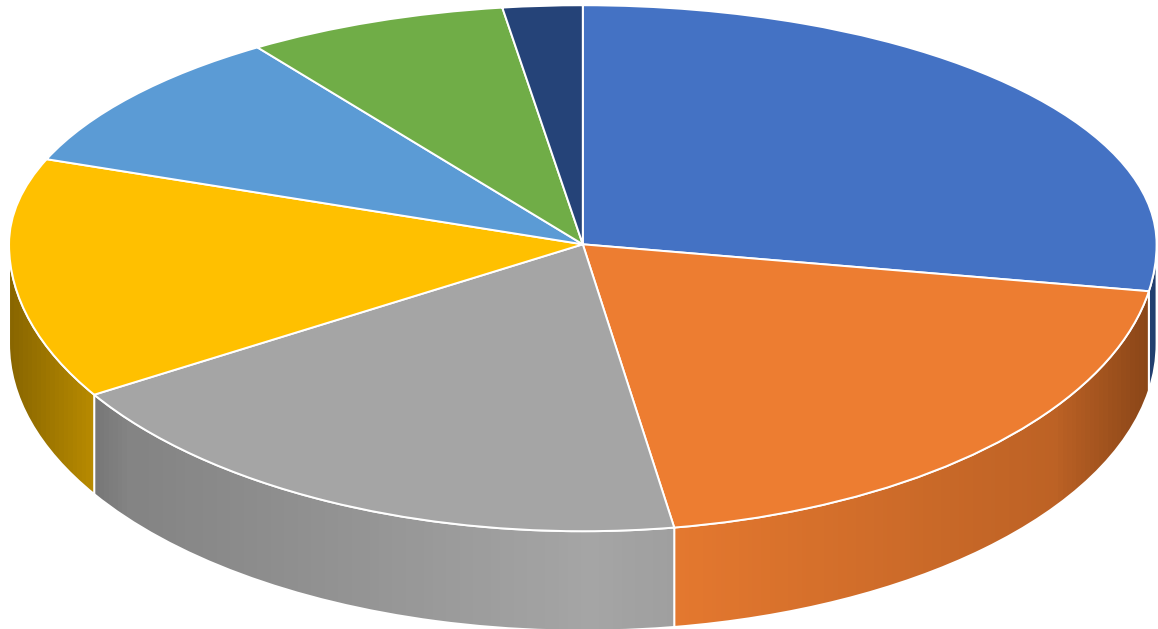
■ Strongly agree 36 ■ Agree 60 ■ Disagree 33 ■ Strongly disagree 4

I feel that professionals listen to my concerns



■ Strongly agree 38 ■ Agree 82 ■ Disagree 11 ■ Strongly disagree 2

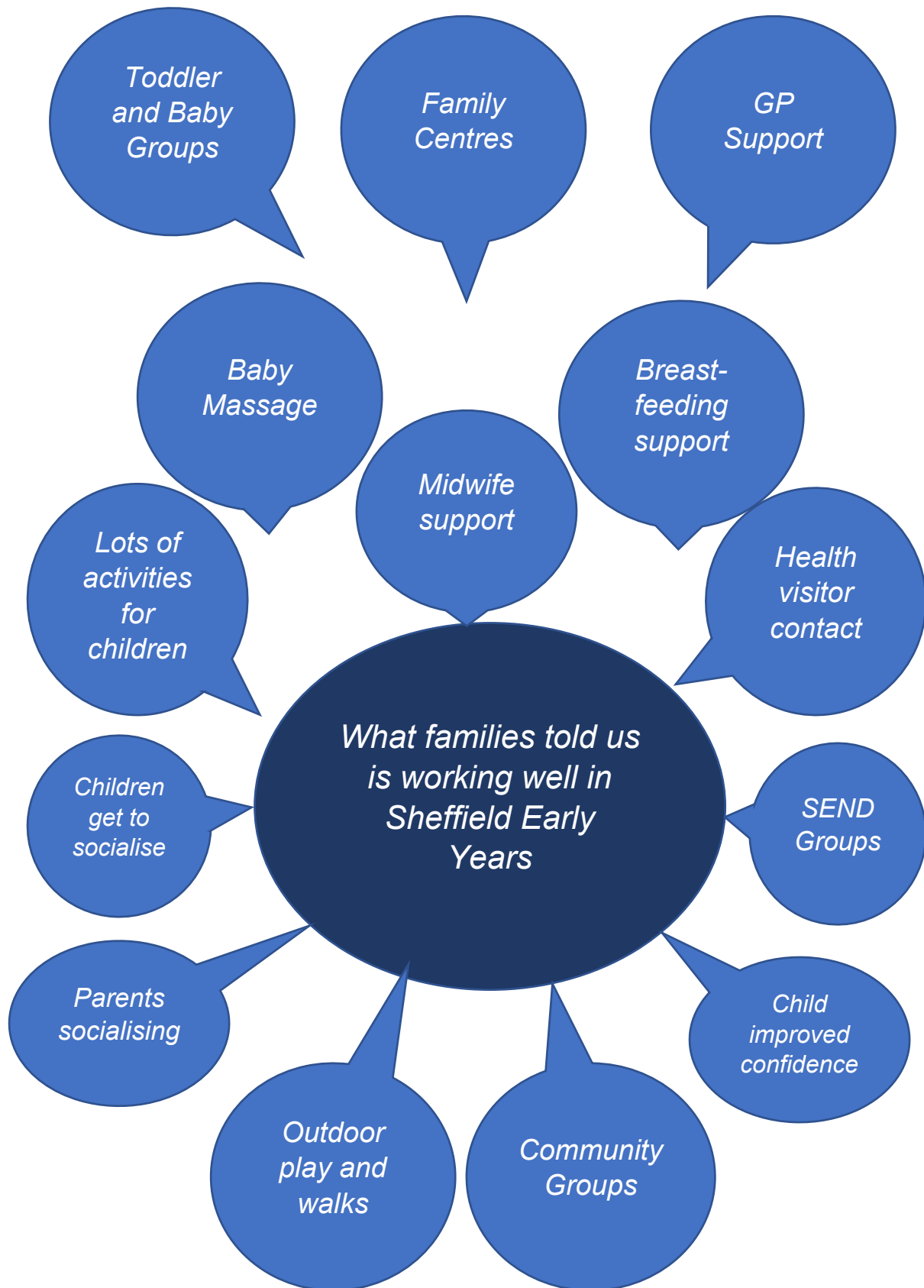
Who families identified as their sources of advice-



- Family & Friends 103
- General Practitioner 74
- Health Visitor 70
- Family Centre/Hub 51
- School or Nursery 34
- Social Media 31
- Other (Personal Research/Internet/Books/NHS Website/Paediatrician) 10

The survey highlighted the ongoing importance of personal networks to parents and carers in Sheffield with 77% identifying family and friends as a source of advice. The survey also identified the importance of General Practitioners in providing advice to young families in Sheffield with 55% of respondents positively identifying them as a route for advice. There was consistency across the survey around the significance of Health Visitors for parents and carers with children in early years; 52% of respondents identified Health Visitors as a route for guidance. Family Centres Hubs were identified by 38% of respondents as somewhere they could seek advice. Schools and Nurseries were identified by 25% as a source of advice but a high proportion of respondents identified having children under 1 which may distort this figure. Social media was identified by 23% of respondents. 10 respondents identified other sources to find advice regarding their children and cited NHS website, personal research, internet, books, paediatrician as sources of advice, this comprised of 7% of all survey respondents.

We asked; **What is working well?** We heard.



What Sheffield Early Years services have meant to parents and carers, in their words.....

.... Breastfeeding group has been really useful. It has been a nice place to come and socialise with mums in the same situation.

...Feel more confident in general as a first-time parent Feel supported (at key times in child development) ...Easy to raise concerns.

*...Baby Groups, being able to get out and socialise is very important....
Feel less isolated, less alone, able to meet people in similar situations.*

... The Family Centres are so valuable – breastfeeding support, toddler playgroup, holiday activities, information seminars eg. Weaning

... Health visitor – easy to access for quick advice, information about local groups and support Have fun Reassurance

... Feel better equipped for second child Enjoyed programmes in school holidays Improved child's confidence

*.... Lots of children and interaction for my child
.... Moved to another area, introduced me to other parents.*

.... Speech and language has given us things to focus on so my son can make progress.

... Had chance to ask questions and get advice and signposting to other services.

*.... Great chance to meet and share concerns with other parents
...Knowledge around SEND, weaning, feeding, sleeping, play, breast-feeding.*

We asked; **What would work better?** We heard.



Parents/ carers expressed their views on challenges around services, the following points were identified.

- 22% considered they had a lack of knowledge about Early Years resources available in Sheffield.
- 8% considered they did not know where their local Family Centre/Hub is or what it could offer.
- 8% considered they did not have easy local access to a local Family Centre/Hub
- 8% considered working families are disadvantaged with lack of access to services in Sheffield.
- 10% considered their Family Centres/Hubs should run more groups, education seminars and have more specialist advice available.
- 29% considered that there was a deficit generally with resources in Sheffield, identifying specifically lengthy waiting lists, struggles accessing medical support, difficulties utilising services due to location or opening times, challenges accessing specialist support.

The parent/carers stated....in their own words.

On information: -

*....Finding out things is tricky, though hopefully it will get easier.
.... Signpost.... Need to learn what's available.
... Confusing information about health providers for young children.
... Need clarity on who to call.
... Not sure who to ask, how to get in touch, how to contact a health visitor.
... Community groups should be advertised more.
...Currently unaware of groups and services.
... Don't know where to find out about Services, assumptions parents know where to find them.*

On Family Centre Hubs: -

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*....Nothing on the weekends, as a working family, it's hard to access.
... Don't know where they are.
Don't know what's available*

On waiting times / accessing key services: -

....On waiting list to see speech and language, worried won't get seen before starts school.
... Waiting list for Ryegate too long ... Hard to get GP's appointments.
... Should be easier to contact health visitor.
... Could only access support because husband drove.
... Problems getting immediate healthcare from NHS.
... Previously Health visitors used to visit Zest, wish they still did.
.... Need easier access as a paediatrician.
... Couldn't find a nursery ... Long waiting times, SEND group helps.
....More Saturday working so children don't miss school.

On services and support: -

....Groups not so much focussed on 3-year-olds.
... Need more for 18 months + Not much in early days.
... Not much on weekends More support for working families.
... Groups need to run on more days of the week.
...Found it hard to get help when son was not sleeping Found process to access sleep support long and gruelling.
... More face-to-face groups ... Time Slots ... More voluntary groups.
... Hard to find baby group when for youngest whilst eldest was in nursery, more slots?

More breast feeding support
More baby weighing

More face to face groups to run groups on different days

		<p><i>Communicate what services are available at pregnancy stage</i></p>
<p><i>More weekend opportunities and support for working parents</i></p>	<p><i>Weaning classes</i> <i>More feeding support</i></p>	<p><i>Evaluate demand for groups and add more places if required</i> <i>More check-ups</i></p>
<p><i>More activities for children on the spectrum</i> <i>Play groups in more areas</i></p>	<p><i>Resource packs for key stages ie. potty training</i> <i>More for 18+ months</i></p>	<p><i>Market exchange for clothes and crafters</i> <i>Toy library</i> <i>Free childcare</i></p>
<p><i>First aid courses</i> <i>More free courses</i> <i>Re-instate parenting courses</i></p>	<p><i>Health visitor toddler groups</i> <i>On line 24/7 Health visitors</i></p>	<p><i>More direct contact numbers for advice</i> <i>One document listing all services</i></p>
<p><i>More sleep support...</i> <i>More affordable childcare</i></p>	<p><i>More activities & groups, more choice of activities</i> <i>On-line support for working parents</i></p>	<p><i>Include advice on what's available at maternity stage</i> <i>Better descriptions for classes</i></p>
<p><i>Talk with pre-school about expert course</i> <i>Address Ryegate waiting lists</i></p>	<p><i>More support for schools/nurseries whilst awaiting specialist support</i></p>	<p><i>Advertise and publicise services more and advise on new groups</i></p>
<p><i>Engage more Dads</i> <i>Services for all backgrounds</i></p>	<p><i>Set up buddying support with experienced and first-time parents</i></p>	<p><i>More parenting style support</i> <i>Block booking for activities</i></p>

In Summary: -

The Early Years consultation incorporated hearing from 133 parents or carers, a successful reach across City-wide postcode geographies was met. *(Note post code respondent detail listed on pg2).* The EY survey was made easily accessible via QR code access and promoted via City wide Family Centre social media pages, through in person promotion across all 7 Family Centre hub sites and via outreach activity. The survey was sent across sector professionals, providers, partners teams as a reminder to all those who participated in the EY consultation focus groups. The survey was made available online and as a paper version across key sites, to support inclusivity.

The Early Years consultation provided a broad overview of feedback, representative of the wider population. This was demonstrated when we consider having engaged a proportionate percentage representation of responses received by ethnic group and responses from families who identified as having a disability or additional need *(Note demographic representation graph detailed on pg. 2).*

In addition to the EY Parent/Carer survey, we held 7 x 1.5/2hr face to face EY focus groups, where parents/carers and parent/carers volunteers were able to provide further detail of their lived experience and insight into what works well in Sheffield and what could work better to support local families and children. Focus sessions included consultation with the Sheffield Parent/ Carers forum, where we were able to hear 1st hand from parent/carers caring for a child/ren with SEND needs, as well as hearing from the local Parent/Carer volunteer champions who deliver the Empowering parent/empowering communities (EPEC) programme as volunteers, Infant Feeding volunteers and the valuable voice of the voluntary sector staff, employed within their communities having lived local experience. *(Note The EY Focus group analysis findings are recorded within the professionals EY Consultation report).*

The survey identified that for those parents and carers engaged in Services in Sheffield, there is a good level of satisfaction. In response to viewing their concerns were listened to by professionals, 90% of respondents expressed satisfaction. Given the elevated levels of engagement with services by respondents, this is a good barometer of the views of parents and carers of Early Years practitioners and Services in Sheffield.

90% of parents and carers completing the survey identified that they know how to access support and 82% identified that they find it easy to get advice, indicating a good level of knowledge around Services and resources in Sheffield. This is analysed with the caveat that a high proportion of respondents already access community resources. However, where it was possible to identify areas for improvement, 22% of comments supplied focussed on lack of information and clarity around Early Years services in Sheffield.

The survey identified the prominence of family and friends for parents and carers in Sheffield with 77% responding that they are a source of advice. There was a significant prevalence for parents and carers with advice from General Practitioners being identified by 55% of respondents and Health Visitors were closely followed with 52% identification levels. Family Hubs/Centres were identified as being a

source for advice by 38% of all survey responders with schools and nurseries at 25% and social media 23%, other sources including NHS website and internet were identified by 7% of respondents as a source of advice.

In free commentary sections of the survey, consistent themes emerged of difficulties with waiting times, particularly for specialist resources. The need to improve early years inclusivity for all. There was synergy with respondents identifying a lack of resources for working parents and difficulties with groups being concentrated on specified days of the week. There was also high volume of commentary around lack of awareness around what is available in Sheffield, where and how to access this and this was one of the most significant areas identified for improvement.

The Sheffield City Council Early Years and Early Help Commissioning Team expresses grateful thanks to all those parents and carers who participated in this consultancy for their invaluable contributions.

¹ [Local Insight \(communityinsight.org\)](http://communityinsight.org)

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Early Years Consultation Strategy

3/1/2023

Professional's consultation findings

The key aim of the 2023 professional consultation was to inform the development of the new Early Years (EY) Strategy 'Start for Life Sheffield'. This is due to be published in March 2023 and will replace the previous EY strategy "A Great Start for Life".

To ensure the new EY strategy is reflective of the sector, the EY and Early Help Commissioning team embarked on a wide-scale consultation with early years professionals in Sheffield. The views of EY practitioners and partners were sought on a range of subject areas linked to the provision of services for young families in Sheffield.

The Professionals' consultation was primarily conducted in 3 strands:-

- A consultancy launch, October 2022
- An on-line survey conducted between January and February 2023
- 7 Focus groups held between January and March 2023

The EY consultation focus groups included representation across state, private, voluntary and community sector service and included the local parent/carer forum, local parent champion volunteers, alongside employed community partners with the added benefit of local lived experience.

This document will provide an analysis of the data from the individual research tools utilised to calibrate the findings through identification of any consistently emergent themes. Subsequently, the Report will aim to provide an overview of the views Early Years practitioners, specialists, and partners in Sheffield. A separate report is available that details the specific findings of a parent/carer survey undertaken within the same time frame.

3/1/2023

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Pages	
2 to 10	The EY Launch Consultation Event October 2022
11 to 27	The EY Consultation Survey January to February 2023
28 to 34	The EY consultation Focus Groups January to March 2023
35 to 37	The EY consultation Summary of findings

Analysis - EY consultancy October 2022; Key themes identified by professionals in Early Years (EY).

Parenting & Communities		Health	Learning, Development & SEND	Resource, Workforce & Funding
Across work themes	Children's Centre			
	Inclusivity / Diversity			
	Families at the centre			
	Well-being of families			
	Partnership			
	Sharing practice			
	Respect			
	Consistency			
	Joined up working.			
Parenting & Communities		Health	Learning, Development & SEND	Resource, Workforce & Funding
Parental engagement	Infant feeding	No child left behind	Recruitment & Retention	
Integration	Antenatal support	Nursery-led knowledge	Professional development	
Home learning	Maternity	Speech & Language	Job Security	
Engaging Parents	Perinatal Mental Health	Autism	Increasing salaries	
Families	Antenatal classes	Supporting SEND	Better recruitment	
Support for parents	Well-being of families	SEND	Sharing practice	
Supporting children	Infant mental health	Neurodiversity	Working together to focus on needs	
Value of Early Years	Healthy eating	More funding	Focus on needs	
Families of Sheffield	Sleep	Funding gap	Recruitment Practitioner days	
Engaging Parents	Perinatal Mental Health & Pairs		Prevention training	
Diversity	Emotional health of all		Prevention	
Respecting	Pregnancy		Pay grades for staff	
Connections	Attachment		Respect for EY	
More financial support	Breastfeeding		Multi-agency working	
	Health		Well-being for staff	
	Mental health		Implementation	
	Pre-birth		Practitioner Pay	
			Look outside L.A.'s	
			Recruitment	
			Training	
			Recognition	

QUESTIONS ASKED AT THE CONSULTATION EVENT

What is working well in Early Years (EY) in Sheffield?

Here is what practitioners told us....

Parents appreciate EY settings and their role during covid
Uniquely beneficial services in Sheffield that are not available in other local authorities
Safeguarding is safer within Sheffield
Community groups filling gaps in Services
Networking with SALT, Early Years Providers, SEND, Multi agency support teams
Communities supporting families through holidays providing healthy meals – only funded through holidays
E-Learning - Learn Sheffield - Virtual College - In-house training.

What issues are important?

Here is what practitioners told us....

Mental Health - Child and adult
Financial - Lack of free activities, parents have less spare money, lunch boxes affected
Stigma on Families
Access to services in local areas – Long waiting times, who supports in interim?
Empower families within Early Years - safety planning after support, building life skills
Social Isolation – family, children, and adult
Lack of motivation to engage in the community.

What challenges/issues are Sheffield families facing?

Here is what practitioners told us....

*Financial
difficulties*

*Not eligible for 2-year FEL
funding, therefore, cannot
access childcare due to
financial constraints*

*FEL funding is not increasing
in line with the cost of paying
staff and other operational
costs*

*Long waiting times for
specialist support for children
with SEND and/or
SLCN (Speech language &
communication needs).*

*Not able to offer the 1:1
support children need due to
staffing constraints/ funding
staff*

*Schools not accepting
children with very complex
needs who then need to
remain in the PVI setting*

*The number of children with
very complex needs and an
increase in the complexity of
those needs*

*Children with needs “slipping
through the net”, during Covid
then presenting at EY settings
with unrecognised needs*

Name Change

At the EY consultation event, it was agreed, on the day, via a democratic process, that there should be a name change for the new 2023 Early Years Strategy, the name agreed was “Start for Life Sheffield”, the current version, “A Great Start in Life”, is due to be replaced in March 2023. The Start for Life Sheffield Early Years strategy will be reflective of our city and our families, informed through cross sector consultation with parents / carers, state, private, voluntary and the community sector.

What are the main considerations regarding Early Years Strategy?

Here is what practitioners told us....

Access/inclusion



Parent partnership.



Infant feeding team & Doula.



Information to be linked at pre-natal stage.



Talk about access to services in schools in years 10/11 so children are aware of this.



Look at venues for infant feeding and other NHS services – more community based, undertake exercise to explore available venues.



NHS Data sharing is improved in some areas but still some challenges facing nurseries with information-sharing unless the person calling is the initial referrer.



Engagement works well – both online & in person.



Child centred approach – individual for each child. Flexible, across services working together to support and gather information.



Include strategy challenges



Professionals working in Early Years/across all multi-agency practice – based in communities.



Help available – communication across teams and how to get that information across to parents.

Early Years Providers



Funding in nurseries – PVI (Private, voluntary, and independent) How do voluntary/charity sector embed this approach without additional expectations on nurseries, which can't be met due to funding issues?

Health and well-being



Energy crisis – support.

SEND



Procedures within strategy around SEND needs to be led by people who know the child best. Process must respect and consider parental choice/nursery provider. Nurseries need access in line with what schools offer, including referrals.



Access to alternative provision when relevant.



Ryegate/Sheffield Children's Hospital – integrate resources.



Need families to know they can access services and will have a cohesive approach with collaborative working to provide accurate advice across all services.

WORKFORCE



Flexible workforce,



Mental health, upskilling staff.



Going forward – Parenting Infant Mental Health – CAHMS needs more services, more staff, high criteria (miss children and families).



Workforce training element – signposting across services for professionals around mental health.



Domestic abuse – safeguarding, more training for practitioners.



Community practitioners going into EY settings to support parents was stopped – should be re-commenced, building upon trusted relationships.

What would work better/improve services?

Here is what practitioners told us....

Financial
Staggered approach available to all families
Access to information/support around benefits for all families
Clothing banks accessible, in a supportive way, whole family need
More information on how to access food banks, warm spaces, and accessible support
Community Fridges

Partnership
Forming partnerships with parents
Parents to attend EY settings groups and take up services and support offered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents understand the importance of early intervention and understand what it is, • Crossing barriers with parents, forming trusted relationships.

Early Years Providers
Change the title of EY provision from childcare to something which better reflects the quality experiences EY children are receiving and the ever-widening roles that EY practitioners are undertaking – improve recognition of this career.
Offer a clear support route for parents and providers with clear contact details, referral pathways etc. Consider how providers can still have a voice and stay involved if they are not physically able to attend EY strategy meetings.
More services being able to offer drop-in sessions in the EY setting where parents can feel comfortable. <i>Building on trusted relationships</i> i.e., MAST as parents may be reluctant to access certain services due to the perception of services.
Parental discussion to be more inclusive and planned termly? Where parents can stay and play, to build on trusted relationships.
More staff being able to attend training – released from settings. Bitesize accessible training.
Transparency of service offers for parents/carers/professionals.
Impact of training accessed.
Gaps in EY services: Connections within communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family hubs / Early Years settings Early Years settings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of available services in Sheffield, who offers what? Upskilling parents with EY foundation stage expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality activities in the home

Inclusion; access to the right information at the right time

Information on warm spaces

Better communicating between services such as Health Visitors with EY settings

Contact information to always be available

Visual prompt indicator (ie. dementia friendly)

Encourage face to face engagement

Relaunch local offer

- What is the aim?
- Needs to be clear! i.e., Just SEND or expanded for Local Offer?

Honest, open and have clear expectations on settings/parents/families and with services.

Develop independence not dependence.

EAL services and connecting communities together.

Not duplicating services within areas.

SEND

Adequate funding to support children with complex needs especially pre-diagnosis or assessment.

Missed opportunities for early identification through less professional face to face contacts with children.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Is training effective, having an impact?

What have you learnt today re the current Early Years focussed, activity in the City and the aims of the activity?

Here is what practitioners told us....

<i>Not enough support, more for whole household needed from conception.</i>
<i>Trauma informed approach needs to be trained and embedded in all practice.</i>
<i>Outdoor provision is needed – green city, outdoor city – use it!</i>
<i>Workforce development (upskill everyone, key messages need to be the same).</i>
<i>Low level mental health support – families and children.</i>
<i>Develop community for early (earliest help – pre-birth, peri natal support).</i>
<i>Post covid support (socialising, developing community, transitions for children).</i>
<i>Paperwork support (EHCPs etc) for parents and carers (digital knowledge and access). Understanding what is needed on forms and what will happen after diagnosis, how will it help... develop trust.</i>

The Early Years Consultation Survey

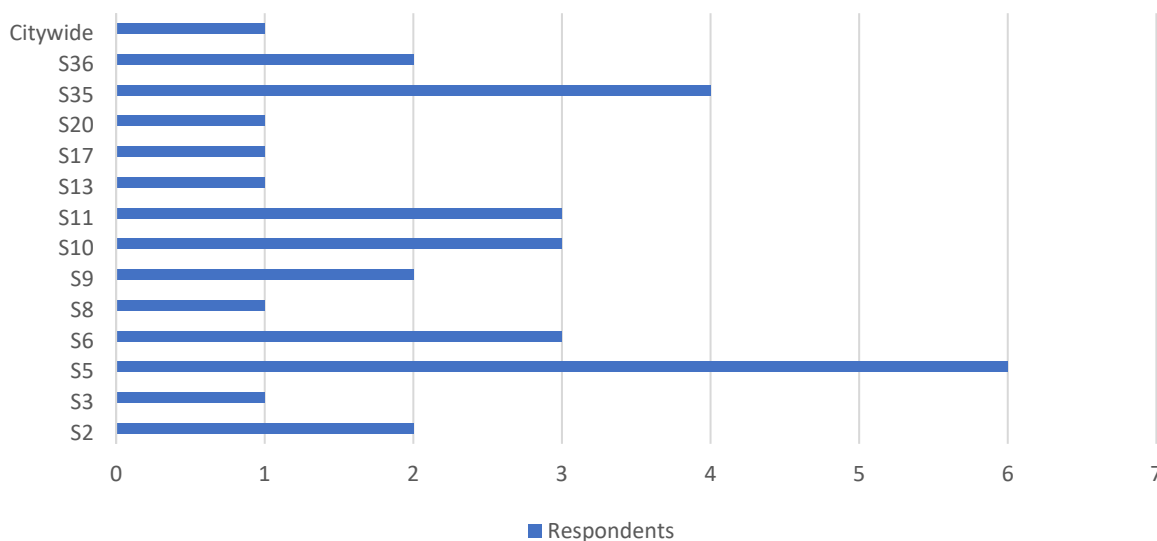
The survey was conducted on-line with practitioners working in Early Years between January and February 2023

Survey respondents identified their profession's as follows: -

7 Nursery Nurses 1 Health Visitor 1 Childminder
15 Others comprised of 1 occupational therapist, 1 playworker, 1 infant feeding worker, 3 midwives, 1 teacher, 1 volunteer, 1 pre-school manager, 4 nursery managers, 2 x other specialists.

The average length of time respondents had been employed in the Early years sector was 19 years.

Work-based post code area of respondents



The survey asked professionals in the Early Years sector for their views in a range of areas impacting the industry: -

- What is working well in the Early Years sector in Sheffield?
- Key issues in SEND and what can be improved?
- Key issues in family life (economic and social well-being) and what can be improved?
- Key issues in physical health (child and adult) and what can be improved?
- Key issues in mental health (child and adult) and what can be improved?
- Key issues in child development and what can be improved?
- The view on availability and access of services in Sheffield was sought via a scoring tool,
- Overall suggestions for improvement.



What Sheffield Early Years professionals said about what works well... in their words...

.... Speech and language support is good
...Having the family centres to be able to ask for signposting.

... Continuous professional development for practitioners is broad
... The breastfeeding service is great.

... There is lots of support, through nurseries, school, child minders and children's centres.

...The support from inclusion for those children needing an EHCP has been crucial to our setting and so helpful.

... We have some excellent early years providers
...Quality improvement team are very supportive and approachable.

... Family Centres offer feeding support and parenting programmes
...In certain postcodes Family Centres support pre-school well with activities.

.... Co location of Family Centre/community centre – with midwives alongside community resources; free internet, adult social groups, youth provision is great.

.... Wide range of groups and support available for families.
...Early Years team is encouraging and supportive.

...Being able to refer to MAST with early help form is good and calling for advice
...Support from services, inclusion, speech & language, early years good.

.... Training available to staff for them to help children in their care
...Well qualified workforce with teams who can provide support early on.

.... I feel that when workers are involved with families, then there is good team working ...universal family and children offer is good.

Questions asked in the Survey.

What are the key issues in SEND and what can be improved?

Here is what practitioners told us....

Long waiting lists

Early identification difficulties

Lack of resources / funding

Over one third of respondents identified lengthy waiting lists as a key issue in SEND.

Issues resulting from delayed diagnosis were perceived to be: -

- Children not receiving intervention prior to commencing school,
- Funding implications with settings being unable to provide 1:1 support,
- Over-subscription for providers who can accommodate SEND children,
- Families experiencing isolation and challenges getting to appointments,
- Families without support, struggling with child behavioural issues,
- Respondents identified a lack of funding and capacity in SEND, comments included that demand surpasses resources available in Sheffield.

The lack of interim support available for families awaiting diagnosis was also identified as a key challenge facing Sheffield families.

One respondent commented that practitioners experience trepidation in identifying issues with a child's behaviour in voluntary services, for example at playgroups.

It was commented that less face-to-face contact with some professionals may reduce opportunities for early identification, particularly in instances when families do not have SEND awareness.

Another respondent viewed that EHCPs are written with an emphasis on mainstream education which is not always viable for the child.

Professional's suggestions for improvement of SEND services: -

<p><i>More support available to families awaiting assessment</i></p> <p><i>Access to support routes made clear</i></p>	<p><i>More professionals with appropriate training and with lived experience</i></p>	<p><i>Visit children in settings</i></p> <p><i>Increase face to face support</i></p>
<p><i>More investment/funding</i></p> <p><i>More SEND support groups</i></p>	<p><i>Specialists working more closely with child-minders, recognition given and visits within the setting</i></p>	<p><i>See children 2/3yrs more regularly for earlier identification</i></p> <p><i>More support for practitioners</i></p>
<p><i>Earlier 2 FEL entitlement for children with disabilities</i></p>	<p><i>PVI & LA Nurseries - training / workforce development re extended support plans & EHCPs</i></p>	<p><i>Increase support to families with children 5 – 11 yrs. with a disability</i></p>
<p><i>Support access to appointments & isolation by providing places to go with suitable play equipment & bathroom facilities.</i></p>	<p><i>Advice hub for professionals to share strategies, gain advice & share good practice.</i></p>	<p><i>Workforce development/ training re adult & child mental health</i></p>
<p><i>SEND streamlined across services, info made accessible to all families</i></p>	<p><i>More availability to speech & language services</i></p>	<p><i>Additional funding for children who require 1:1 without a EHCP plan</i></p>
<p><i>Workforce development/ training around inclusivity of SEND children</i></p>	<p><i>More groups for parents with SEND expertise made available</i></p>	<p><i>Reduce waiting times across Education Psychology, Speech & Language and Ryegate supporting school readiness</i></p>
<p><i>Raise awareness, increase inclusion of SEND across delivery</i></p>	<p><i>Clear referral routes including self-referral pathway</i></p> <p><i>Joined up working not duplication</i></p>	<p><i>Financial support for children who do not have an EHCP</i></p>

What are the key issues in family life (economic and social wellbeing) and what can be improved?

Here is what practitioners told us....

Cost of living crisis

Difficulty accessing resources.

Nearly one third of respondents identified the cost-of-living crisis as having a detrimental impact on Sheffield families at this time with 60% of respondents making generic reference to financial support needed for families. Some of the key commentary in this area included: -

- Concerns children are attending school hungry and without adequate clothing,
- families struggling to provide the essentials for everyday quality of life,
- families struggling in this crisis with food, fuel, bills etc.
- families struggling with the current economy and their mental health.

Professionals also identified difficulties in utilising resources including: -

- Accessing a general practitioner,
- poor public transport provision,
- practical day to day support,
- appropriate places to access with equipment,
- long delays for families who require support,
- parent/carers in some areas do not have easy access to family centres.

Professional's suggestions for improvement to improve family life (economic and social well-being): -

<i>Family centre staff to understand the community and provide a friendly approach</i>	<i>Empowering Families Learning opportunities for parents e.g., cooking on a budget</i>	<i>Improve staff knowledge on cost-of-living support e.g., emergency funds, white goods, damp etc.</i>
<i>Reduce childcare costs for families. More help for working families</i>	<i>Local Parent peer coffee mornings, play groups & drop ins to support well-being & reduce isolation.</i>	<i>Support for nurseries to provide healthy snacks (e.g. free fruit)</i>
<i>To increase early years reach be present at community groups, libraries, playgroups etc</i>	<i>Better links with community groups Prevention not reaction</i>	<i>Services to better understand the challenges specific to the communities they work in</i>
<i>Support parents including Dads from conception and beyond.....Clear guidance outlining services available to families from pregnancy</i>	<i>Community sessions/groups and or drop ins - peer support & access to parenting, healthy living, debt advice, mental health, and cost of living support.</i>	<i>Socialising groups for both parents and baby. Include Dads</i>
<i>Professionals to understand the barriers for parents accessing services</i>	<i>Sessions on budgeting tips for families</i>	<i>Free School meals made available to under 5s via Early Years settings</i>
<i>More information on access to food banks, clothes and basics support for the whole family</i>	<i>More job fares to network with others</i>	<i>Subsidised transport for practitioners' apprentice and college students</i>
<i>Increase the number of intervention workers</i>	<i>Training for staff on issues families face ie. domestic abuse, access to benefits / DLA & money management.</i>	<i>Early Help & Family centres deliver more activity for 5 – 11 yr. olds Play & stay for 5 – 11 yr. olds</i>

What are the key issues in physical health (child and adult) and what can be improved?

Here is what practitioners told us....

Access to Services

Parental awareness

From a professional's perspective, there were synergies in views around the impact of the economic challenges infiltrating every aspect of family life. In respect of physical health, practitioners identified a lack of access to services is impacting families as follows: -

- Problems in accessing dentists,
- long delays in hospital treatment,
- difficulties accessing GP appointments,
- costs of living causing barriers to physical activities, for example swimming,
- long waiting lists when specialists' referrals are made.

Professionals also identified that a lack of parental awareness is impacting in areas such as obesity and dental hygiene.

Practitioners viewed that there is a lack of awareness within families around healthy eating, including portion sizing and current guidance around oral hygiene with parent education being highlighted as key to successfully addressing these issues. The need for consistent messages from conception, birth and beyond, consistent current best practice guidance relayed across services was identified as key to improving lives.

Professionals' suggestions for improvement for physical health (child and adult):

Free sessions for children gymnastics/dance consider 'Every child a mover' model	Build relationships with parents Infant feeding workers to support midwifery clinics	Check children are registered with a Doctor & Dentist
Better links with community groups and organisations to relay consistent health messages	Support around physical health for all families including working parents	Services work together to ensure families can attend health appointments
Health Visitor & Midwifery clinics linked to Family Centre venue & offer	Workshops on healthy lifestyles & healthy eating Encourage families to walk not drive	Professionals to do more home visiting More availability re SALT
Sheffield Children's Hospital to run clinics in Family Centres	Leaflets produced for families on healthy lifestyles	Provide no cost/low-cost parent and child fitness sessions
More emphasis on outdoor activities beyond early years 0-19 (25) yrs	Toddler groups, baby meets for walking and swimming etc	Physical activities better subsidised for Early Years
Better equipped parks and in more areas of Sheffield, for all communities	Lower costs to families for using leisure facilities	Manual handling training for staff
Better links between organisations and community groups to understand communities' need	Access to dentists improved	Portion size awareness

What are the key issues in mental health and what can be improved?

Here is what practitioners told us....

Waiting lists / accessibility

***Parental confidence /
information***

Professionals highlighted loneliness and isolation as key issues affecting families in Sheffield. New mums were identified as sometimes being particularly vulnerable to isolation.

It was stated that some families do not know where to go to access support for difficulties with mental health.

Professionals consistently highlighted throughout the Survey that the waiting lists affecting a range of family services in Sheffield is problematic and the mental health sector is part of the wider capacity challenges.

It was identified that the waiting list difficulties can lead to deepening crisis for families who are not able to access support.

One professional commented that father's, particularly those who are single, often feel marginalised with services typically being accessed by female parents or carers.

It was identified that attending IAPT appointments can present challenges to some parents if they do not have childcare support.

Professionals identified the presence of parental anxiety that might be compounded by outdated, limited or inconsistent information around childcare. It was viewed that this detracts from parental confidence in a range of areas including developing healthy sleep routines, eating habits, and weaning skills.

Social media, whilst a good source of information, was identified as a pertinent source of conflicting advice at times. It was acknowledged that the internet is not a chosen or accessible route of information for all families.

It was commented that working parents might experience different pressures, with complexities of juggling work and family life. One practitioner commenting a parent told them "*They want me to work like I don't have children and raise my children as if I don't work*" and She felt she was failing at both.

One practitioner commented that staff 'burn-out' has also been a significant issue with a '*gruelling few years*' in this sector.

Professionals' suggestions for improvement for mental health (child and adult):

<i>Workshops on trauma informed approaches</i>	<i>Parenting groups to support in recognising child emotions ie. not naughty</i>	<i>Support parents to attend groups and 1:1 sessions</i>
<i>More groups aimed at inclusivity for fathers including single fathers</i>	<i>Employ Occupational Therapist to support families</i>	<i>Build more links with health for families who are struggling</i>
<i>Regular well-being sessions for practitioners</i>	<i>Evening support groups for working parents</i>	<i>Enhance knowledge in settings in how to support with mental health</i>
<i>More opportunities for conversations for parents ie. drop ins, coffee mornings</i>	<i>Contact all new parents in family centre areas to advise what is on offer in centres.</i>	<i>More support for staff with their own mental well-being</i>
<i>Afterschool mindful arts and crafts for parents & children</i>	<i>Teach children from an early age its okay to ask for help</i>	<i>More groups to create more opportunities for parents to meet up</i>
<i>More signposting for families Easier self-referral for parents</i>	<i>More training for EY providers Appropriate training on delivering different news to families</i>	<i>Offer different opportunities to meet individual family need</i>
<i>Childcare support for parents accessing IAPT appointments</i>	<i>Promote Parenting courses and baby massage across partners</i>	<i>Earlier access to mental health nurses or doctors, earlier recognition</i>

What are the key issues in child development and what can be improved?

Here is what practitioners told us....

***Resources – investment /
funding***

Recognition

Respondent's views included that there is a lack of qualified professionals with high-level competencies in child development.

It was suggested that there are geographical disparities in intervention for children with SEND which then has implications for peer pupils in education.

There were also concerns raised that there is divergence with FEL and staff resourcing costs which is creating significant challenges for the sector around staff retention.

There were some concerns shared in the Survey that Early Year's providers are not categorised as educational facilities and do not cultivate reputational value and worth comparable to mainstream educational settings. It was suggesting that this can lead to staff inequality with feeling de-valued which may consequently lead to staff retention difficulties.

Professionals identified the continued negative impact of Covid 19 cascading through all factors of family life and highlighted that children have lost vital learning.

Speech and language development was highlighted as a concern by professionals in this Survey.

Professional's suggestions for improvement for child development:

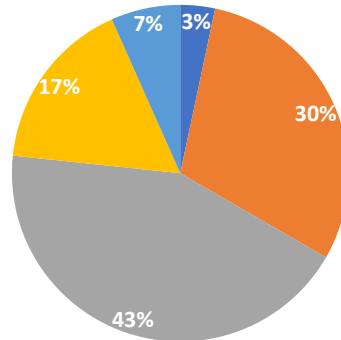
<i>Workshops for expectant parents on brain development, attachment & attunement</i>	<i>Training tailored to PVI (remains school focused)</i>	<i>Localised community access to Family Centre offer</i>
<i>Subsidised closure for settings to enable staff training</i>	<i>Help for families who do not qualify for free childcare</i>	<i>Better access to Health Visitors</i>
<i>More groups in family centres. Increase free weekly play groups</i>	<i>Prevention; Build upon the school readiness programme from 6mth</i>	<i>More awareness of the current support available to families and training to support educating parents in effective home learning</i>
<i>Advertise to nurseries when any classes/workshops for parents are running</i>	<i>Employ mental health occupational therapist & psychologists</i>	<i>Better geographical spread of services to support families</i>
<i>Holistic approach between Services</i>	<i>Training across all settings re SEND and child development</i>	<i>Increase Nursery funding to support employment & retention of qualified/experienced EY staff</i>
<i>Continue with traded service package & ensure workshops reflect child development</i>	<i>Early support to families re home learning / child development include grandparents</i>	<i>Toilet training made available</i>
<i>Better communication</i>	<i>Training around how to best engage with parents who demonstrate challenges</i>	<i>More access to speech and language services</i>

Professionals were asked to score early years systems in Sheffield.

Each question was scored 1 to 5, 1 is categorised as poor and 5 is excellent.

THE ABILITY TO SHARE INFORMATION RELATING TO INDIVIDUAL FAMILY NEEDS

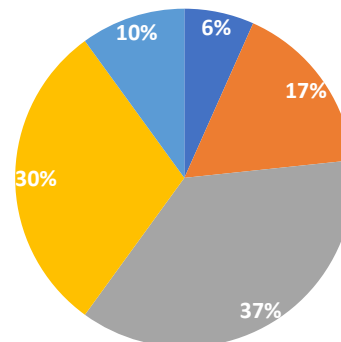
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24% of respondents indicated a good or excellent ability to share information on individual family need.

SHARING INFORMATION ON EARLY YEARS ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES

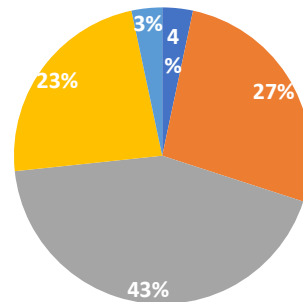
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40% of respondents indicated a good or excellent in relation to sharing information on EY activities and issues.

UNDERSTANDING OF REFERRAL ROUTES AND HOW TO ACCESS SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

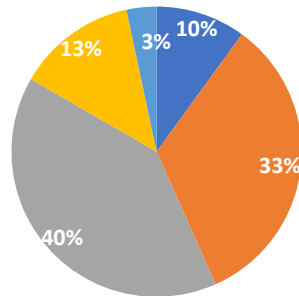
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26% of respondents indicated good or excellent understanding of referral routes & how to access support for families.

NETWORKING AND CO-PRODUCTION OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES

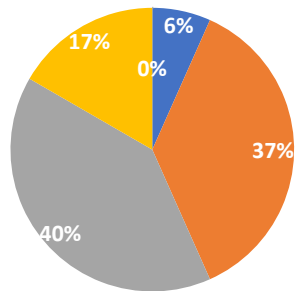
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16% of respondents indicated good or excellent network or co-production opportunities in the development of services.

UNDERSTANDING OF ROLES AND REMIT WITHIN THE EARLY YEARS SYSTEM

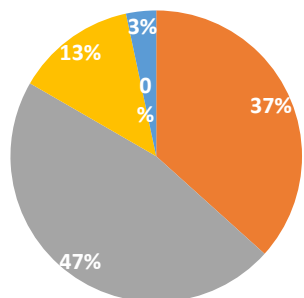
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24% of respondents indicated good to excellent understanding of roles and remits within the EYs system.

WHERE TO GO FOR ADVICE ON SPECIALIST AND UNIVERSAL ACTIVITY

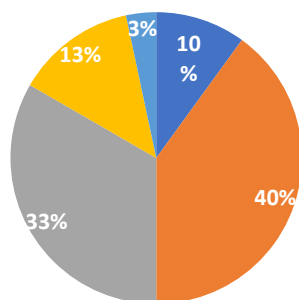
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16% of respondents indicated good to excellent where to go for advice on specialist and universal activity

HOW TO ACCESS FREE EARLY HELP PRACTITIONER TRAINING OFFER

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5



16% of respondents indicated good or excellent knowledge on how to access free early help training

In summary of this scored section: - The overall finding across all areas predominantly saw an average rating across all questions. Workforce development, training, awareness and a commitment to share the right information with families at the right time are identified as a need across services. Alongside a commitment across services to access and engage in Early Help training and further develop the strategic steer to achieve change through co- production.

In Summary: -

The survey was completed by 30 Early Years Professionals who had an average of 19 years working in this sector, indicating high levels of insight and experience.

Respondents generated over 150 improvement ideas, many of which are detailed in this document.

In the scoring of understanding of processes and systems in Sheffield, professionals identified average levels of awareness with very few practitioners scoring excellent or poor knowledge in all categories.

There were key emergent themes across the survey: -

- Waiting times are identified as a key issue and this was particularly evident when respondents commented on SEND alongside the need for earlier identification.
- Inclusivity; of Dads, new single mums, Grandparents, access for all from conception and beyond, an inclusive offer, able to link with those most in need, including vulnerable parent/carers, those with protected characteristics and seldom heard groups.
- Staff retention and concerns around the profile of Early Years practitioners was highlighted as a concern. Alongside, funding and investment in the Early Years sector which appeared as a key theme in practitioners' commentary.

- Information sharing was recorded as a significant area for improvement both in connection with services for families but also for practitioners. Knowing what services are available and how to access them.
- Access to local support, more groups for families across all subject areas, building on local trusted relationships, including accessible play spaces for children with SEND.
- Continued workforce development and sector training, a need to communicate effectively across teams, to deliver consistent best practice messages across services and to families.
- The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and the cost-of-living increases were identified by professionals as being of continued detriment to the families of Sheffield.

The focus groups.

As part of this Early Years consultation with parents, carers, community champion volunteers, a range of Early Years professionals and community partners with local lived experience, we facilitated 7 Early Years consultation focus groups, between January and March 2023. We successfully heard from practitioners across state, private, voluntary and the community sector.

The EY consultation focus groups including representatives from: -

- City wide - Early Years Providers x 2 sessions
- MAST / Social Care / Access & Inclusion – School Readiness / Parenting team / Doula staff
- Empowering parents/empowering communities (EPEC) volunteers
- Infant feeding volunteers
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Parent/Carer forum

The focus groups encouraged open dialogue around the Early Years services in Sheffield across a wide range of subjects. There were consistent themes around the key issues identified by practitioners across the focus groups. There were also over 50 improvement ideas generated, some of which were replicated across the focus groups indicating synergies in the views across the sector.

Key issues consistently identified across the focus groups.

SEND

Issues identified: -

Professionals have a general lack of understanding of how to refer into SEND

Administrative processes have changed with parents now required to book appointments in, not all are parents are pro-active with this

Parents have limited knowledge of the SEND system including the timeframes for assessments and intervention

There may be missed opportunities for early identification with not all children having 2-year check-ups with Health Visitors

Long waiting lists delay diagnosis and intervention, resulting in children falling further behind their milestones

Parents are struggling with SEND process, they are unsure where to go for advice and support.

Resources are insufficient generally which then has implications for diagnosis and intervention

Lack of early support

Ideas for improvement: -

More training for professionals on the help that is available and how to access it

Professionals to be trained on key messaging (how to benefit families)

Steps need to be made clear regarding referral, support, and diagnosis to both parents and professionals

Professionals need to manage parents' expectations and be realistic about time limits

Step down from social care for children with SEND to include clear guidance of support available to families

MENTAL HEALTH

Issues identified: -

Parents are not always aware of the mental health support available or how to access it

Child with mental health issues and EHCP with objectives around this may currently have a long wait for diagnosis and intervention

Ideas for improvement: -

Need more mental health support to be available and signposting to families of where and how to access this

Simply checking in with parents '*how are you*' can help as opposed to focussing solely on a specific task with them

FAMILY CENTRES/HUBS

Issues identified: -

Parents voiced being referred to Family Centre Hubs via Health to access post-natal mental health / low mood support to be informed by staff that it is not available in Family Centre and directed to GP's

Different types of support required for those in diverse communities i.e., stigma around mental health raised by some professionals who have high levels of cultural awareness

Expectant parents are not typically linked into Family Centres/Hubs

Oversubscribed groups can result in frustration for parents

On-line booking was identified as problematic for parents who do not typically use the internet and are subsequently excluded as a result

Professionals are unclear what is available at Family Centres/Hubs

Community Partners who refer into Family Centre Hubs/ Early Help do not routinely receive feedback on whether the families have accessed them

Location of Family Centres/Hubs is identified as a barrier for some families to attending due to transport or other issues

Lack of collaboration between Nurseries and Family Centre Hubs

Not all centres are in pram-pushing distance which was identified as an excluding factor for some families

Questions asked whether those families in less deprived areas feel excluded from Family Centre Hubs through viewing they are not aimed at them

Compressing Family Centres to 7 Hub locations across the city has excluded families who previously accessed them, offsite offer voiced as unknown or no longer in area

Some parents not hearing current health messages around nutrition, oral health, or access to perinatal peer support via Family Centres

Ideas for improvement: -

Access via trusted partners in local venues where parents already feel confident

Promotion of family centres could be undertaken via stalls, festivals, pop ups and any events that families typically attend, building upon trusted community relationships

Advertising of family centre offer in GP surgeries, schools and nurseries could be beneficial, given they are likely to be routinely accessed by families

Family centres could offer speech and language drop-ins for children under 5 whilst awaiting assessment – supporting home learning

Dad's baby massage on-line could improve inclusivity for fathers

Need to ensure all families view Family Centre Hubs are for them irrespective of their socio-economic background, particularly with high cost of living challenges

Informal peer support groups for expectant parents to include Dads, providing an opportunity to meet other parents in the local community, share ideas and access a clear overview of services available to families

Reception staff aware of the family centre offer, able to relay clear and consistent messages, providing helpful, warm welcome as front of house advocates.

Issues identified: -

Identified that the pandemic stopped groups and activity, some children are struggling with socialisation as a result

Missed opportunities due to covid to identify issues with child development and view that increasingly children are not 'school ready'

Lack of provision continues to be intrinsically linked to covid but highlighted that resource challenges pre-date the pandemic

Child development issues are being noticed by nursery staff who are actively supporting with issues around toilet training, sitting at a table etc

INCLUSIVITY**Issues identified: -**

Limited support for fathers

Language used is not always inclusive ie. for single parents and fathers etc.

Some stigmas around the language used e.g., 'parenting courses' a term that may impact upon engagement. Lack of awareness that there is a universal offer of parenting courses

Lack of understanding of different cultures and taboos within communities

Concerns raised that the language used in marketing services could be a barrier to some families

ROMA community/EAL seldom heard

Seeing older mothers more in Services and some struggling with parenthood

Ideas for improvement: -

Involve fathers, recognise their anxieties regarding expectations

Use language that is inclusive for everyone

Use common language with consistency across Services

Offer a dad's baby massage on-line

Need to give more consideration to seldom heard groups

Build upon the trusted relationships parents have with community partners, including those who can speak the same language and the community groups families with protected characteristics feel is their go to welcoming space.

Need to understand map of communities; '*some families will not cross over the road to another community*'

Building trust through collaboration with health professionals and partners working in diverse communities may be key to engagement

Settings having access to language line would be beneficial with increasing number of EAL accessing services

Parenting courses need to be made available in different languages.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Issues identified: -
Challenges with childhood obesity
Lack of parental awareness of healthy nutritional food
Difficulties with child oral health
Ideas for improvement: -
Educate families around nutritional elements of certain foods (some misleading ie. yoghurts and smoothies that may be saturated with sugars and highly calorific)
Educate families around dummies and bottles
Early access to support for tackling childhood obesity
Parental awareness of value of the food process; shopping, preparing, eating as a family etc.
Toothbrushing clubs and teaching about importance of oral hygiene linking parents to easy home learning around key health messages, consistent current languages across services
Promote healthy lunches, including parents in healthy cooking on a budget sessions
Free/ low-cost outdoor exercise classes in parks including parent/ baby/ child sessions, a valuable resource across all age ranges

INFORMATION AVAILABILITY
Issues identified: -
Sheffield Children's Hospital has a lot of good information on their website; however, this might not be well known amongst parents and carers. Including key myth busting messages.
Services on offer are good but there is no effective communication and collective understanding of what is available between providers
Families who do not use social media or the internet may be excluded through lack of awareness of services available and have a barrier to booking sessions when booking is accessed online only
Sometimes there is information overload for professionals who learn of different initiatives through different services simultaneously
Information sometimes inadvertently discovered on what is available because a network such as another parent, service or professional is aware of a resource. Positive that personal recommendations work but need more uniformity in accessibility of information.
First time parents often unsure what support is available in their local community
Parent/carers not knowing what support is available to them, how or where to access
Ideas for improvement: -
Services to know what is available across the city and to ensure wide-spread delivery of information
Pop-ups via local community partners could be utilised to inform parents of activity/service offer

Parents need to be informed of services available in advance, not when they are awaiting a diagnosis in a specific area
Parenting courses to be added to the red book
Identify one key person who is central link for identifying activity and updating notice boards (including GP surgeries, Jessops, libraries, MAST offices, community venues, nurseries). Displays to have clear overview of services available.
Make informative leaflets and posters which draw families in with interesting facts that are supported and promote the activities available for parents and carers to undertake with their children
Links with GP surgeries could result in using TV screens to market the local offer
Build awareness of ' <i>right support at right time</i> '
Utilise family centred activities to promote services across the city ie. HAF, fun days
Social Care to provide an overview of services available to families when they close cases
Access to book onto family centre groups in additional to the current online booking system via eventbrite i.e., drop ins, telephone bookings

SERVICES/RESOURCES

Issues identified: -

Some difficulties for male parents and carers in accessing some support groups operating in services for women only

Inconsistent messaging from services and no common language used

Too reliant on specific staff groups to advise on family issues; a reliance develops with certain services based on relationships built and will be dependent on quality of those links when all workstreams should be joined up

Sometimes too many initiatives running simultaneously can create confusion for professionals who are systematically informed by different services

Some families are unaware of their financial entitlement

Not much local outreach resource for pregnant teenagers who may be harder to reach

Ideas for improvement: -

Peri-natal peer support and information drop in ask, accessible via local community venues

Infant feeding workers ideally placed to relay information about a child's development at initial stages due to early engagement with their services

Local authority in another area offered free activities in park including post-natal aerobics and yoga classes

Drop-in services for advice and support with issues including cost of living challenges

Early referrals for children would support in improving outcomes for the child

Whole city partnership working with a clear vision of work strands

Commitment to introduce help at the earliest opportunity ie. before baby born

Clear ethos with better multi-agency working as opposed to operating in silos would be beneficial

Have a clearly defined strategy around what is a successful outcome for a 5-year-old. i.e., happy child and enjoys spending time with people
Provide consistent school readiness messaging
Partnership forum could bring Early Years providers together, including an email distribution list for follow-up points
Local outreach across communities is needed, ' <i>some families do not move beyond their area</i> '
Develop links with primary and secondary schools

WORKFORCE

Issues identified: -

Nurseries struggling financially due to the increased cost of heating and low-level government FEL funding

Not all professionals feel confident to highlight child development issues with parents and carers

Staff resourcing issues due to financial challenges can impact on nursery capacity to take FEL

FEL financial calculations does not factor in that high deprivation areas typically more likely to have families subject to social care intervention, subsequently creating more challenges to resources already stretched with additional meetings and paperwork

Concerns regarding staff recruitment and retention in nurseries

Nurseries no longer have capacity to undertake home visiting which offered valuable insight and built relationships with families

Ideas for improvement: -

Professionals to have easy access and knowledge about services to share with parents

Train staff on local offer including employees working in GP's surgeries

More recognition for Early Years staff, raise the profile to attract people into this profession

Trauma training would be welcomed but Early Years staffing ratios would restrict engagement, bite-size training could be accommodated

Summary of consultation findings

The Early Years consultation was undertaken over a 6-month period launched at the Early Years event held in October 2022, where 96 city-wide early year's practitioners, partners, and professionals gathered to have their say, share successes, and begin to shape future early years strategy through collaborative co-production.

The EY launch event was followed by an EY survey consultation which incorporated hearing from 133 parents or carers and an additional 30 Early Years professionals. Alongside hosting 7 early years consultation face to face focus groups which engaged a further 30 respondents, actively hearing from a cross sector audience including City wide - Early Years Providers, MAST, Social Care, Access & Inclusion, Parenting, Infant feeding and Doula team staff, Empowering parents/empowering communities (EPEC) volunteers, Infant feeding volunteers, Parent/carers forum focus group, voluntary and community Sector partners, consultation and partners and volunteers with local lived experience.

The Sheffield Early Years consultation 2022/23 resulted in over 150 across sector responses. Collectively respondents generated over two hundred improvement ideas. Together, providing a wealth of knowledge and specialist expertise, insights garnered across numerous themes connected to early years. There was a high level of synergies in views from contributors across the different research strands. The depth and wealth of qualitative data provided a reliable source that confidently captures the voice of Parents and carers alongside local community champion volunteers, professionals, community partners and providers, all of whom are immersed in the Early Years sector, working closely, and often intensively, with the families of Sheffield.

The consultancy did facilitate opportunities to highlight what is working well, what could work better, provided time to share ideas, to hear and understand. There was identification of issues specific to the providers, however predominantly, there was unity across the consultancy with high congruence around key issues and areas for improvement.

Waiting lists were identified as particularly problematic for Sheffield families with significant emphasis on excessive delays in SEND being viewed as inimical to a child's development; there were several concerns expressed about the lack of support and access to intervention able to support the children & families who are awaiting diagnosis. In addition, concerns also centred around the difficulties this creates for families dealing with challenging behaviour in the home environment, which can, in some instances, lead to parental decline. Several contributors identified that there are also challenges with early identification of SEND, it being clear that the pandemic has played a pivotal role in missed opportunities due to reduced personal contact with child and health practitioners.

We heard from local Parent/Carers and community volunteers who expressed not being aware of the support / services available to families in Sheffield, having

discovered service availability at the point of volunteering or following SEND diagnosis. Parent/Carers explained that they hadn't had awareness of parenting courses, support around transitions, inclusive play groups, peer SEND support groups, access to Perinatal mental health support and/or access to early help including support around finances and cost of living support.

Professionals consistently highlighted difficulties in information availability pertinent to activities, referral routes and support available to families in Sheffield. Gaps in information were cited as problematic for both practitioners and families and some professionals viewed that often knowledge is derived through links with other families or providers as opposed to a uniform approach with central co-ordination and connectivity. Generally, it was viewed there needs to be a robust mechanism for information exchange between all networks and services to cascade information to families. Independently to this, it was viewed that there needs to be more wide-spread promotion with families with intelligent marketing including targeting family centred information sharing community events, community pop ups, use of local display boards and newsletters. It was identified that the promotional strategy should incorporate plans to capture those families who do not typically access social media or the internet.

Access to services was identified by several contributors; the issues were wide-ranging with identification that the 7 Family Centre Hub Centres across the City left some communities with no local access point, except via a bus journey, leaving vulnerable families including young teenage parents unable to attend centres due to proximity issues.

There was much commentary on the importance of a more inclusive approach to fathers, single parents, teenage parents, parent/ carers from diverse communities, those with English as a second language and working parents and it was viewed, that further professional cultural insights and awareness was needed to support engagement across diverse communities. Factored into this, there were suggestions that there needs to be a common and consistent language across all services with inclusivity underpinning carefully crafted messaging, alongside myth busting messages i.e., around mental health.

There was a general perception that groups in Family Centre Hubs are viewed favourably however the full-service offer remained unclear. There was an ask for more groups due to over-subscription issues. It was also viewed that the offer could be expanded with more emphasis on such areas as perinatal support, local community peer support groups inclusive of Dads able to provide an overview of support and information antenatally. Outreach support was identified as key to engaging harder to reach families, or those unable to access services, building upon the trusted relationships EY providers and community partners have within localities.

There was a collective view across the research strands that there needs to be more investment and funding across all early year's sector. Contributors consistently identified that nurseries are experiencing significant staffing recruitment and retention challenges. It was suggested that the industry would welcome fundamental changes to elevate the profile of nursery workers to improve its appeal and viability. EY

providers expressed that such issues as FEL funding and lack of additional funds for undiagnosed SEND children have implications for the workload demands of practitioners working within nursery settings. Offering practitioners greater financial incentive is viewed to be untenable given the financial challenges nurseries face and there were concerns that costs may be ultimately absorbed by working families. Releasing staff to undertake valuable training opportunities is also presenting difficulties. However, practitioners identified they would welcome support with training in a range of areas including trauma-informed practice, SEND, domestic violence, financial issues and any other issues families might be facing.

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic was referenced throughout the practitioner consultancy with several references to evidence of continued delayed child development issues, predominantly, but not exclusively, around speech and language. It was viewed that the cost-of-living challenges are intrinsic to poorer quality of life for Sheffield families. Professionals identified a need to have a greater awareness of support available for families in financial difficulty.

Concerns were raised around childhood obesity, healthy eating and oral hygiene, the need to intervene earlier in addressing these issues with families was highlighted. Parental awareness at the earliest point from the antenatal period was viewed to be integral to tackling these issues, participant ideas included, healthy lifestyle seminars, cooking and baking on a budget courses.

To surmise, the consultation outlined several systemic, complex, and wide-ranging issues facing the early years sector, some of which have been exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic, rapidly succeeded by acute cost of living challenges. However, as outlined in this document, the creativity, investment, and commitment of Early Years practitioners remains a key strength and in the pursuit of collaborative resolutions to the issues outlined in this document.

The Sheffield City Council Early Years and Early Help Commissioning Team expresses grateful thanks to all those practitioners who participated in this consultancy for their invaluable contributions.



Briefing to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Sam Taylor

Report of:	Meredith Teasdale-Dixon, Strategic Director Children's Services
Report to:	Education, Children and Families Policy Committee
Date of Decision:	27 th September 2023
Subject:	Youth Justice Overview Report

1. GOVERNANCE

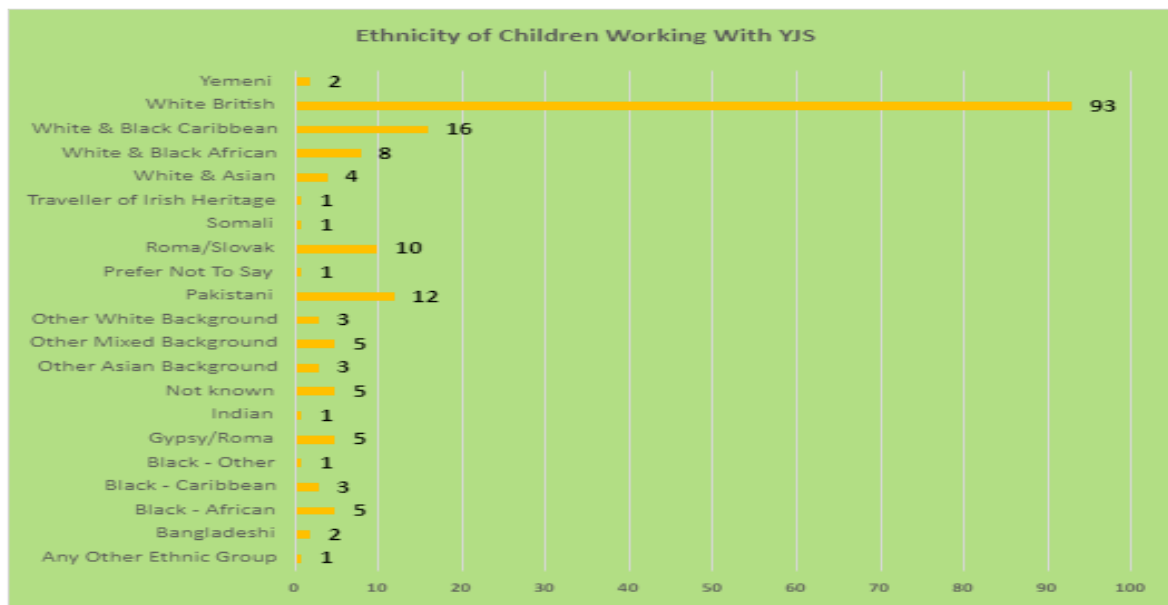
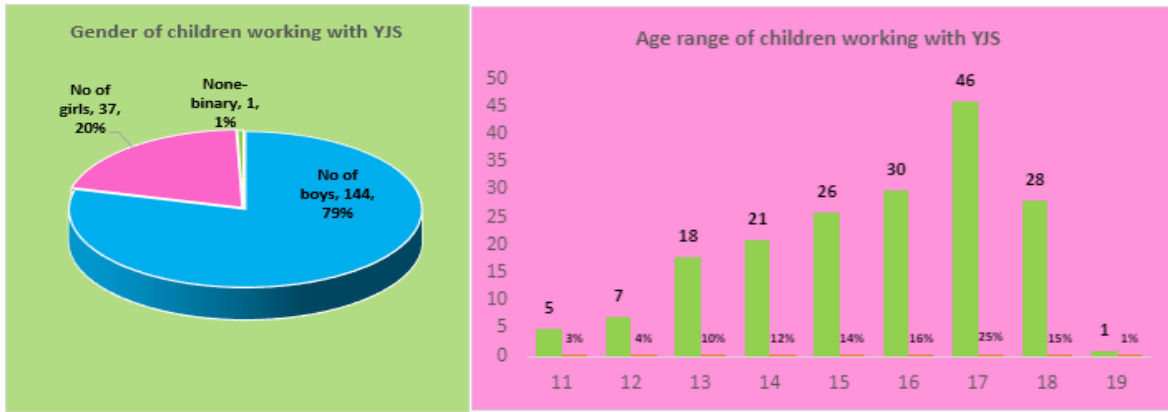
1.1 Section 39 (1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the co-operation of the named statutory partners to form a Youth Offending Service (YOS). Section 38 (1,2) identifies the statutory partners and places upon them a duty to co-operate to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. These statutory partners are:

- The Local Authority
- Police
- The Probation Service
- Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

1.2 The primary responsibility for Local Authorities is to ensure that a range of Youth Justice Service are delivered through YOS. The Youth Justice Board (JYB) is the executive non-departmental public body that oversees the YJS in England and Wales.

1.3 Who are the children we work with?

On 31 July 2023 we were working with 182 children. 35% of the children had been to court whilst we were working 65% of the children who were pre court



2. FINANCE

2.1 The table below shows the partner contributions for 2023/24. The total available funding is £2,242,494.

Agency	Staffing costs	Payments in kind revenue	Other – delegated funds	Total
Local Authority		-	£616,300	£616,300
National Probation Service	£43,730	-	£5000	£48,730
Health Service	£54,000	-	£114,635	£168,635
Police and Crime Commissioner	£172,800	-	£233,000	£405,800
YJB Good Practice Grant	-	-	£1,003,029	£1,003,029
Total	£270,530	-	£1,971,964	£2,242,494

Note: YJB grant based on 2022/23 funding contribution.

3. ANNUAL PLAN

- 3.1 A condition of the YJB grant is to produce an annual Youth Justice Plan outlining how Youth Justice Services will be delivered locally. This outlines National Key Performance Indicators set by the Ministry of Justice and Locally Agreed Priorities identified through staff consultation.
- 3.2 The following KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) are new KPIs for Youth Offending Teams. We will be reporting performance against these KPIs in August 2023, for children with orders ending during the quarter, commencing quarter 1 2023/24.
- 3.3 The new KPIs ensure that we capture the breadth and success of all our work so they will apply to all children who we carry out an intervention with and not just those on the statutory caseload who have been convicted by the courts.
- 3.4 At a recent event I was able to hear Alan Webster, Deputy Director for Youth Justice Policy for the MoJ advise Heads of Service that the revised KPIs should not be considered YOT KPIs, but Local Area KPIs as they cannot be achieved by a YOT alone.
- 3.5 The data from the KPIs will provide the transparency and accountability to help YOT Management Boards, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and the Ministry of Justice to recognise progress and successes as well as to focus attention and support where there are challenges. The aim is that this evidence can prompt conversations and enable local partners to work together to minimise the barriers to children's success, prevent offending and protect the public. Centrally, the data will be used to identify themes which present barriers for reducing reoffending.
- 3.6 The 10 new KPIs are:
- a) **Accommodation:** % of children in the community and being released from custody with suitable accommodation arrangements
 - b) **Education, training and employment (ETE):** % of children in the community and being released from custody attending a suitable ETE arrangement.
 - c) **SEND/Additional Learning Needs:** % of children who have an identified SEND need (or Additional Learning Need in Wales), are in suitable ETE and have a formal learning plan in place for the current academic year
 - d) **Mental healthcare and emotional wellbeing:** % of children in the community and being released from custody with a screened OR identified need for an intervention to improve mental health or emotional wellbeing; and of that the % of planned/offered interventions; of that % of children attending interventions
 - e) **Substance misuse:** % of children with a screened OR identified need for specialist treatment intervention to address substance misuse; and of that

the % of children with planned or offered intervention/treatment; and of that the % number of children attending intervention/treatment

- f) **Out of court disposals (OOCs):** % of OOC disposal interventions that are completed/not completed
- g) **Management Board attendance:** monitoring senior partner representation at management boards, and monitoring if partners contribute data from their individual services that identify areas of racial and ethnic disproportionality.
- h) **Wider Services:** % children who are currently on either an Early Help (EH) plan; on a child protection (CP) plan or classified as Child in need (CiN) or a looked after child (LAC). For Wales only, children who are classified as Children in Need of Care and Support
- i) **Serious youth violence (SYV):** rates of children convicted for SYV on the YOT caseload
- j) **Victims:** number of victims who consent to be contact by the YOT, and of those, the number of victims: engaged with about Restorative Justice opportunities; asked their view prior to OOC decision-making and planning for statutory court orders; provided information about the progress of the child's case (when requested) and provided with information on appropriate services that support victims (when requested)

3.7 In addition to the 10 new KPIs listed above, we will continue to be required to capture data on the 4 current KPIs as they provide a helpful overview of how the youth justice system is delivering against the principle statutory aim of preventing (re)offending by children.

- First Time Entrants
- Reoffending binary rate
- Reoffending frequency rate
- Number of children in custody

3.8 Locally Agreed Principles for Sheffield YJS are –

- Effective Case Management
- Reducing Overrepresentation
- Staff Welfare
- Transitions



Agenda Item 14

Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Mark Storf, Assistant Director / Sam Taylor, Service Manager – Youth Justice Service

Tel: 0114 205 3831

Report of: Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning / Mark Storf, Assistant Director

Report to: Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 27 September 2023

Subject: Youth Justice Service – Appropriate Adult Service

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Yes No

If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? **2196**

Has appropriate consultation taken place? Yes No

Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

*“The (**report/appendix**) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (**insert relevant paragraph number**) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”*

Purpose of Report:

To set out the statutory duties, provide an overview and seek approval for the recommission of the sub-regional Appropriate Adult Service for Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster Youth Justice Services. This service will be managed and monitored by Sheffield Children’s Commissioning Services on behalf of the sub-region.

The service is currently being delivered by a Service Provider since April 2021 which ends 31st March 2024. The current service provider provides the service for Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster Youth Justice Services.

Recommendations:

That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee approves the commission of a external provider to deliver an Appropriate Adult Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster Youth Justice Services with an estimated cost of £351,540 to Sheffield City Council over a period of 4 years, as set out in this report.

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Kayleigh Inman Commercial Services: Glen Swaby
		Legal: <i>Richard Marik, Janusz Siodmiak</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate: Jessica Rick
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Mark Storf</i>	Job Title: <i>Assistant Director, Children & Families</i>
	Date: 7 September 2023	

1 PROPOSAL

The proposal is to commission an external provider to deliver an Appropriate Adult Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster Youth Justice Services. The estimated cost of the commission is £351,540 to Sheffield City Council over a period of 4 years. The total value of the commission (including contributions from other local authorities) is £610,680.

It is proposed that the Council will act as lead partner of the arrangement and shall manage and monitor the service on behalf of the local authorities.

Introduction and background

- 1.1 Sheffield Youth Justice Service currently jointly commissions the Appropriate Adult Service with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Barnsley Metropolitan Council and the City of Doncaster Council across South Yorkshire to children and vulnerable adults.
- 1.2 This arrangement allows Sheffield City Council's Youth Justice Service to work alongside partners, to work together to support children and vulnerable adults engaged by Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster's Youth Justice Services.
- 1.3 Sheffield's Youth Justice Plan 2022-2025 outlines a range of strategies to redress the multiple disadvantages children who encounter the criminal justice system face to reduce the likelihood of re-offending and improve life chances. The plan also defines the necessary actions to meet statutory duties as below.
- 1.4 The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 requires that children aged 10 – 17 years (inclusive) and vulnerable adults aged 18 years and over, must have an 'Appropriate Adult' with them (unless exceptional circumstances apply) when they are interviewed by Police Officers about their suspected involvement in a criminal offence.
- 1.5 The Council runs Youth Justice Services in line with its statutory duty, which comes with a range of requirements, including to provide support to a child aged 10-17 years (inclusive) or 'mentally vulnerable' adult (aged 18 years and over) who is being detained by police or is being interviewed voluntarily. 'Mental vulnerability' includes conditions such as mental illness, autistic spectrum disorders and learning disabilities. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and all custody officers in South Yorkshire have received training to use screening tools to identify the need for an Appropriate Adult.
- 1.6 The role of an Appropriate Adult is to ensure that the child or vulnerable adult understands their rights and what is happening to them, and to help

with communication between them, the police and others involved in custody proceedings.

- 1.7 Most of the time, a family member, friend, or other supporter will act as an Appropriate Adult. However, sometimes there is nobody suitable who can do this, and in this situation an Independent Appropriate Adult will be called in.
- 1.8 In South Yorkshire our independent Appropriate Adults are all volunteers who have been recruited, trained, and supported by the current Service Provider in delivering this service to youth justice services.
- 1.9 This Service has been provided by the current Service Provider since April 2021. The current Service Provider is one of the lead organisations in the country in delivery of this service to youth justice services and their own quality assurance procedures, the quarterly contract review meetings and the monthly meetings between the manager and the senior managers within the Youth Justice Service to ensure that high standards of performance and quality assurance are maintained.
- 1.10 As of 1st April 2023, there are currently 39 Volunteers. Volunteer recruitment packs with application forms are regularly dispatched throughout the year. Interviews are held and if successful, the volunteers attend preparatory training courses. The training sessions are held regularly at different locations throughout the country.
- 1.11 Overall, the current provision represents value for money and the Council is satisfied with what is being provided.
- 1.12 During financial year (2022-2023) the following data was collected for the sub-regional Authorities, data for the previous year during the Covid pandemic has not been included as it will not give us a true reflection:

<u>SHEFFIELD</u>	Young People	Vulnerable Adults	Total
Number of Requests	440	828	1268
Cancelled before volunteer arrived	21	41	62
Cancelled after volunteer arrived	9	31	40
Total accepted (No. requested minus NVAs)	440	826	1266
Accepted within 45 minutes	436	820	1256

<u>ROTHERHAM</u>	Young People	Vulnerable Adults	Total
Number of Requests	118	240	358
Cancelled before volunteer arrived	4	7	11
Cancelled after volunteer arrived	2	6	8
Total accepted (No. requested minus NVAs)	118	240	358
Accepted within 45 minutes	118	239	357

<u>BARN斯LEY</u>	Young People	Vulnerable Adults	Total
Number of Requests	111	277	388
Cancelled before volunteer arrived	4	3	7
Cancelled after volunteer arrived	1	7	8
Total accepted (No. requested minus NVAs)	110	276	386
Accepted within 45 minutes	110	276	386

<u>DONCASTER</u>	Young People	Vulnerable Adults	Total
Number of Requests	249	432	681
Cancelled before volunteer arrived	5	13	18
Cancelled after volunteer arrived	7	15	22
Total accepted (No. requested minus NVAs)	248	431	679
Accepted within 45 minutes	246	426	672

- 1.13 The contract with the current Service Provider ends on 31st March 2024. It is therefore proposed that the Council commission an external provider to deliver an Appropriate Adult Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster Youth Justice Services with an estimated value of £610,680 over 4 years. The Council's contribution for this commission will be £351,540. This contract will be managed and monitored by Sheffield Children's Commissioning Services on behalf of the sub-region.
- 1.14 We currently do not have the capacity or resources to deliver this service in-house, Sheffield's share of this is £351,540 which would not give us sufficient management/staffing capacity but has a combined resource across the region we get economies of scale.
- 1.15 By adopting a sub-regional approach to tackling youth offending issues, learning and best practice can be applied across all four authorities and solutions can be adopted that ensure positive outcomes for children and victims impacted by the offence.
- 1.16 By this commission, the Council also hopes to achieve the following:
- To reduce offending and re-offending of children and vulnerable adults in Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster through several complementary services, strategies both locally and nationally, and in accordance with National Standards.
 - To deliver an Appropriate Adult Service to children and vulnerable adults, within the requirements of the National Standards for Youth Justice Services 2019.
 - To ensure that each Police Station in Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster has access to a pool of trained Appropriate Adults with the ability to meet the diverse needs of all

- To ensure that the Appropriate Adults are identified and able to attend within a maximum of one hour of being requested by the Police to attend.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 This service will link into several elements of the corporate plan.

Communities and Neighbourhoods

The expected reduction in offending will go towards ensuring that people feel safer in their own homes and within the neighbourhood. Less vandalism will make local amenities feel safer to visit and encourage services to invest in the area.

Education, health and care

We want all people in Sheffield to feel safe, happy, healthy and independent: to love living here. We want them to have access to a wide range of educational opportunities to achieve their full potential.

Children and vulnerable adults moving through this service will be encouraged to improve and reach their full potential. A number will progress into education or employment.

2.2 Outcome and Sustainability

Anticipated outcomes from the Service that will be funded will be:

- Ensure children and vulnerable adults are treated fairly with respect for their rights and entitlements.
- Support, advise and assist children and vulnerable adults when they are asked to provide information or participate in any procedure relating to their detention.
- Ensure that children and vulnerable adults can participate effectively in procedures and processes related to their detention and investigation.
- Ensure the well-being of children and vulnerable adults is promoted including mental health, emotional wellbeing, personal dignity and freedom from abusive practices.
- Ensure evidence gathering is more consistent and efficient with a better quality of evidence leading to less failed investigations and miscarriage of justice for children and vulnerable adults.

- Work in partnership with Youth Justice Services in Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster to ensure the following minimum Youth Justice Service Targets are achieved:
- This project will assist in helping children to make amends for their actions, directly to the people and the communities their offence has affected.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 There is no direct provision in place to gather the childrens or vulnerable adults' views specifically when they have accessed the AA service. It has been unsuccessfully attempted in the past with the main reason that the children and vulnerable adults were resistant to spend any more time than they already had in the custody environment to engage in any activity of this nature.
- 3.2 However, each Youth Justice Service undertake activity to ascertain the child's views at the beginning, middle and end of each order of intervention and could adapt this to include feedback on their specific experience of the AA service they received.
- 3.3 The positive aspect of this would be that it would be at a more emotionally appropriate time, be in a more conducive environment, would allow the child time to reflect on their experience, be conducted with people that they knew and had formed a relationship with and be undertaken by the YJS so would offer a degree of independence from the provider collating their own feedback.
- 3.4 It is our intention when revising the new service to include a specific requirement for any Appropriate Adult service provider to always attempt to ascertain the views of children and vulnerable adults accessing their service.
- 3.5 The responses would then be collated including instances and where possible reasons where a child or vulnerable adult refused to contribute and will inform any changes to variations and service delivery of the contract outcomes.
- 3.6 There has been no direct consultation with the market and potential providers as this is a very small specialist market, the delivery is directed by statutory requirements.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 Ethnic minority children are over-represented in all stages of the YJS compared to the general population. The 2017 Lammy Review highlights

that some ethnic minority groups have less trust in the police and/or the criminal justice system and emphasises the significant role this has in driving their over-representation later in the system.

- 4.1.2 HM Inspectorate of Probation's October 2021 thematic report on the experiences of Black and mixed heritage boys in the YJS, released in October 2021, states that "[YOTs] must be careful to ensure that concerns about building trust with Black and mixed heritage boys do not become a barrier or an explanation for engagement difficulties."

- 4.1.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken (EIA ref. no. 2196 refers) and approved by our Equalities Officer and will be maintained throughout the life of any Contract.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 Financial

Annual funding has been agreed by each Authority in which Sheffield will lead the project:

Sheffield	£87,885
Rotherham	£18,060
Barnsley	£19,635
Doncaster	£27,090

Total Annual Contract value is **£152,670** = **£ 610,680** (4 years)

- 4.2.2 Funding for Sheffield's annual contribution to the contract is included within the current budget. However, in the event of a loss of funding there is a break clause built into the contract at the end of each year.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 Under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 the Council has a statutory duty to take reasonable steps designed to encourage children not to commit offences. The provision of an Appropriate Adult Service will contribute towards meeting that duty.

- 4.3.2 The Council have the power to cooperate with other local authorities under s27 Children Act 1989.

- 4.3.3 The contracting arrangements proposed in this report are facilitated by the Local Government (Contract) Act 1997.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 Where a service will be delivered by external partners and providers, we will aim to work with providers who align with our ambition to be a Net Zero

city by 2030, through the procurement process. We will encourage providers to think about the climate impacts of delivering the service, such as use of office space, staff and client travel, energy and resource use, and opportunities to increase awareness of positive climate action, and take appropriate steps to reduce their impacts in the delivery of the service.

4.5 TUPE

4.5.1 TUPE implications shall be assessed, and the incumbent provider has been asked to advise on any potentially TUPE affected staff. This dynamic shall be taken into consideration through the procurement process. Any TUPE implications should only affect the incumbent existing and new provider, and because the service is not being brought back in-house there are no TUPE implications upon the Council other than ensuring that the Provider's comply with their obligations.

4.5.2 The current Service Provider has been advised to take their own legal advice on this dynamic and will be required to provide information on the Workers they believe are eligible for TUPE in the event they are unsuccessful in continuing to provide the service. This information will be made available to prospective Tenderers to allow them to accurately price their tender submission.

4.6 Other Implications

4.6.1 There are no other implications known.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Do nothing - which we cannot as the provision of this Service is a statutory duty, therefore, we have to deliver it.

5.2 Deliver the service in-house – we currently do not have the expertise or capacity to deliver the service in-house, for the reasons stated above it is not economically viable for us to get the same resource level if we deliver the service in-house.

5.3 Do our own tender - which would be a collective collaboratively procured approach on the open market, through an open tender, as this would maximise the interest and competition and thereby return the most economically advantageous tender.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To support the development of a consistent service delivery and key services across the sub-region that supports the statutory requirements of the youth justice teams. By the four regional youth justices services joining together in a single contract (as joint contracting parties each being solely

responsible for their respective service areas) for the appropriate adult service we are ensuring best value for money and cost effectiveness, and will be better able to achieve a higher standard of service throughout the region which is consistent with each YJS regions delivery plan as well as the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan. There is a statutory requirement set out within the national standards for the delivery of youth justice services which are subject to an inspection and audit regime for the provision of an Appropriate Adult Service, and these are as set out within the contract.



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Mark Storf, Assistant Director / Sam Taylor,
Service Manager – Youth Justice Service

Tel: 0114 205 3831

Report of: Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning / Mark Storf, Assistant Director

Report to: Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 27 September 2023

Subject: Youth Justice Service – Reparation & Unpaid Work Services

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Yes No

If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? **2188**

Has appropriate consultation taken place? Yes No

Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

*“The (**report/appendix**) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (**insert relevant paragraph number**) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”*

Purpose of Report:

To set out the statutory duties, provide an overview and seek approval for the recommission of the sub-regional Reparation and Unpaid Work Service for Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley Youth Justice Services. This service will be managed and monitored by Sheffield Children’s Commissioning Service on behalf of the sub-region.

The service is currently being delivered by a Service Provider since April 2021 which ends 31st March 2024. The current service provider provides the service for Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley Youth Justice Services.

Recommendations:

That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee approves the commission of an external provider to deliver a Reparation and Unpaid Work Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham and Barnsley Youth Justice Services, with an estimated value of £256,200 to Sheffield City Council over a period of 4 years, as set out in this report.

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Kayleigh Inman Commercial Services: Glen Swaby
		Legal: <i>Richard Marik, Janusz Siodmiak</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate: Jessica Rick
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Mark Storf</i>	Job Title: <i>Assistant Director, Children & families</i>
	Date: 7 September 2023	

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to commission an external provider to deliver a Reparation and Unpaid Work Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham and Barnsley Youth Justice Services. The estimated cost of the commission is £256,200 over 4 years for the Council. The total value of the commission (including contributions from other local authorities) is £464,100.

It is proposed that the Council will act as lead partner of the arrangement and shall manage and monitor the service on behalf of the local authorities.

Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This arrangement allows Sheffield City Council's Youth Justice Service (YJS) to work with a specialist Provider and regional partners to support children who are engaged with Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley's Youth Justice Services. The partnership commissioning model ensures that resources are optimised, and learning is shared to achieve best practice and better outcomes for children across the region.
- 1.2 The Council runs the Youth Justice Service in line with its statutory duty, which comes with a range of requirements, including providing support to children who have committed an offence, rehabilitation and tackling the underlying causes of offending behaviour. The Youth Justice Service provides a range services and specialist interventions that give children the support they need to break the cycle of offending and build productive and fulfilling lives.
- 1.3 Sheffield's Youth Justice Plan 2022-2025 outlines a range of strategies to redress the multiple disadvantages children who encounter the criminal youth justice system face in order to reduce the likelihood of re-offending and improve life chances and understanding the consequences of offending is part of the Sheffield's approach.
- 1.4 'Making it Right' hours (formerly referred to as Reparation) is a practical way to pay back harm caused by the offence, either by directly repairing the harm or through constructive work to help the local community. This helps children understand the consequences of offending and take responsibility for their behaviour, in order to make amends for the harm caused by the offence. '
- 1.5 Reparation helps children to create anchors in their community and is seen as enrichment rather than punishment. Making it Right is a strength-based approach to a constructive use of time using trauma informed, child first approaches to engage children in activities from which the public can see and feel positive change.
- 1.6 'Making it Right' hours include a variety of enrichment activities to 'pay back' benefits to the community whilst also engaging the child in activities that are meaningful and productive. Children are provided with opportunities to access work experience and interests, sometimes supported by accreditation which could lead them away from offending behaviour. The commissioned Provider works with a range of external partners to deliver these placements including organisations that are not for profit, neighbourhood and community groups, registered charities, local authority departments, and companies limited by

guarantee. Individuals and communities have benefited enormously from these projects, a lot of time without publicity or praise.

- 1.7 This Service has been provided by the current Service Provider since April 2021. The current Service Provider is one of the lead organisations in the country in delivery of this service to youth justice services and their own quality assurance procedures.
- 1.8 The current service provision is responsive to the changing needs of the children and the requirements of the Youth Justice Service. There is agreed flexibility in the service which allows for creativity and innovation from all parties to be implemented as part of a dynamic and responsive process which improves outcomes for young people and those affected by the crimes young people commit.
- 1.9 Overall, the current provision represents value for money and the Council is satisfied with what is being provided. During financial year (2022-2023) the following data was collected for the sub-regional Authorities, data for the previous year during the Covid pandemic has not been included as it will not give us a true reflection:

‘Making it Right’ (Reparation) delivered 2022-23	Sheffield	Rotherham	Barnsley
Number of children requiring reparation	165	65	103
Hours of Reparation organised	1302.5	467	927
Hours attended	1026.5	413	786
Total number of hours used for 2022-23	1303.5 (81%)	410 (51%)	900.3 (112.5%)

- 1.10 The arrangement with the current Service Provider ends on 31st March 2024. It is therefore proposed that the Council commission an external provider to deliver a Reparation and Unpaid Work Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham and Barnsley Youth Justice Services with an estimated value of £464,100 over 4 years. This service will be managed and monitored by Sheffield Children’s Commissioning Service on behalf of the sub-region.
- 1.11 We currently do not have the capacity or resources to deliver this service in-house. Sheffield’s share of this 4-year contract is £256,200 which would not give us sufficient management/staffing capacity but has a combined resource across the region we get economies of scale.
- 1.12 By adopting a sub-regional approach to tackling youth offending issues, learning and best practice can be applied across both Rotherham and Barnsley authorities and solutions can be adopted that ensure positive outcomes for children and victims impacted by the offence.
- 1.13 By this commission, the Council also hopes to achieve the following:

- To reduce offending and re-offending of children in Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley through several complementary services, strategies both locally and nationally, and in accordance with National Standards.
- To deliver a Reparation and Unpaid Work Service to children, within the requirements of the National Standards for Youth Justice Services 2019.
- Putting things right and healing relationships, thereby giving high satisfaction to victims, and reducing re-offending.
- Ensuring that those directly affected by crime are involved in the process and that their wishes are given careful consideration.
- Achieving positive outcomes for the victim, community, and the child.
- Reparation is an important part of the work Youth Justice Services undertake with a child and plays a leading role in their rehabilitation process.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 This service will link into several elements of the corporate plan.

Communities and Neighbourhoods

The expected reduction in offending will go towards ensuring that people feel safer in their own homes and within the neighbourhood. Less vandalism will make local amenities feel safer to visit and encourage services to invest in the area.

Education, Health, and Care

We want all people in Sheffield to feel safe, happy, healthy, and independent: to love living here. We want them to have access to a wide range of educational opportunities to achieve their full potential.

Children moving through this service will be encouraged to improve and reach their full potential. A number will progress into education or employment. Many of the reparation placements that have previously been delivered, have resulted in some children being given apprenticeship opportunities.

2.2 Outcome and Sustainability

Anticipated outcomes from the Service that will be funded will be:

- Help to prevent/reduce the number of children who have committed an offence and are re-offending.
- Reduce the number of first-time entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice Services in Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley.
- Confront children who have committed an offence with the consequences of their behaviour.
- Reduce the risks associated with youth crime.
- Encourage the participation of victims.
- Promote parental responsibility.
- Ensure prompt sentencing.
- Help ensure that children are dealt with proportionately.
- Increases the collective capacity to evaluate data across local authority boundaries.
- This project will assist in helping children to make amends for their actions, directly to the people and the communities their offence has affected.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 Throughout the course of this contract the Service Provider have shared positive feedback from children, families, victims, and reparation placements much of which can be seen on their Twitter account, Feedback is also inspected during on-site contract compliance visits.
- 3.2 Feedback questions included “how was the placement today”, “what you enjoyed about it” “Were the tasks explained well” - majority of the children, felt that the Reparation sessions that they had completed was enjoyable and rewarding, fully explained and well worthwhile.
- 3.3 There has been no direct consultation with the market and potential providers as this is a very small specialist market, the delivery is directed by statutory requirements.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 Ethnic minority children are over-represented in all stages of the YJS compared to the general population. The 2017 Lammy Review highlights that some ethnic minority groups have less trust in the police and/or the criminal justice system and emphasises the significant role this has in driving their over-representation later in the system.
- 4.1.2 HM Inspectorate of Probation’s October 2021 thematic report on the experiences of Black and mixed heritage boys in the YJS, released in October 2021, states that “[YOTs] must be careful to ensure that concerns about building trust with

Black and mixed heritage boys do not become a barrier or an explanation for engagement difficulties.”

- 4.1.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and approved by our Equalities Officer and will be maintained throughout the life of any Contract.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 Financial

Annual funding has been agreed by each Authority in which Sheffield will lead the project:

Sheffield	£64,050	= (1600 hours)
Rotherham	£19,950	= (500 hours)
Barnsley	£32,025	= (800 hours)

Total Annual Contract value = **£116,025** = **£ 464,100** (4 years)

- 4.2.2 Funding for Sheffield’s annual contribution to the contract is included within the current budget. However, in the event of a loss of funding there is a break clause built into the contract at the end of each year.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 Under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 the Council has a statutory duty to take reasonable steps designed to encourage children not to commit offences. The provision of Reparation and Unpaid Work Service will contribute towards meeting that duty.

- 4.3.2 The Council have the power to cooperate with other local authorities under s27 Children Act 1989.

- 4.3.3 The contracting arrangements proposed in this report are facilitated by the Local Government (Contract) Act 1997.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 Where a service will be delivered by external partners and providers, we will aim to work with providers who align with our ambition to be a Net Zero city by 2030, through the procurement process. We will encourage providers to think about the climate impacts of delivering the service, such as use of office space, staff and client travel, energy and resource use, and opportunities to increase awareness of positive climate action, and take appropriate steps to reduce their impacts in the delivery of the service.

4.5 TUPE

- 4.5.1 TUPE implications shall be assessed, and the incumbent provider has been asked to advise on any potentially TUPE affected staff. This dynamic shall be taken into consideration through the procurement process. Any TUPE implications should only affect the incumbent existing and new provider, and

because the service is not being brought back in-house there are no TUPE implications upon the Council other than ensuring that the Provider's comply with their obligations.

- 4.5.2 The current Service Provider has been advised to take their own legal advice on this dynamic and will be required to provide information on the Workers they believe are eligible for TUPE in the event they are unsuccessful in continuing to provide the service. This information will be made available to prospective Tenderers to allow them to accurately price their tender submission.

4.6 Other Implications

- 4.6.1 There are no other implications known.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Do nothing – which we cannot, as the provision of this Service is a statutory duty, therefore, we have to deliver it.
- 5.2 Deliver the service in-house – we currently do not have the expertise or capacity to deliver the service in-house, for the reasons stated above, it is not economically viable for us to get the same resource level if we deliver the service in-house.
- 5.3 Do our own tender – which would be a collective collaboratively procured approach on the open market, through an open tender, as this would maximise the interest and competition and thereby return the most economically advantageous tender.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 To support the development of a consistent service delivery and key services across the sub-region that supports the statutory requirements of the youth justice teams. By the three regional youth justices services joining together in a single contract (as joint contracting parties each being solely responsible for their respective service areas) for the reparation service we are ensuring best value for money and cost effectiveness, and will be better able to achieve a higher standard of service throughout the region which is consistent with each YJS regions delivery plan as well as the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan. There is a statutory requirement set out within the national standards for the delivery of youth justice services which are subject to an inspection and audit regime for the provision of restorative justice and unpaid work, and these are as set out within the contract.



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Mark Storf, Assistant Director / Sam Taylor, Service Manager - Youth Justice Service

Tel: 0114 205 3831

Report of: Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning / Mark Storf, Assistant Director

Report to: Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 27 September 2023

Subject: Youth Justice Service – Victim Engagement & Support Service Contract

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2195				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>				

Purpose of Report:

To set out the statutory duties, provide an overview and seek approval for the recommissioning of the sub-regional Victim Engagement Service for Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley Youth Justice Services. This service will be managed and monitored by Sheffield Children’s Commissioning Services on behalf of the sub-region.

The service is currently being delivered by a Service Provider since April 2021 which ends 31st March 2024. The current service provider provides the service for Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley Youth Justice Services.

Recommendations:

That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee approves the commission of an external provider to deliver a Victim Engagement Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham and Barnsley Youth Justice Services with an estimated cost of £277,200 to Sheffield City Council over a period of 4 years, as set out in this report.

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: Kayleigh Inman Commercial Services: Glen Swaby Legal: <i>Richard Marik, Janusz Siodmiak</i>
	Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
	Climate: Jessica Rick
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission: <i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted: <i>Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Mark Storf</i>
	Job Title: <i>Assistant Director, Children & families</i>
Date: 7 September 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

The proposal is to commission an external provider to deliver a Victim Engagement Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham and Barnsley's Youth Justice Services. The estimated cost of the commission is £277,200 to Sheffield City Council over a period of 4 years. The total value of the commission (including contributions from other local authorities) is £537,600.

It is proposed that the Council will act as lead partner of the arrangement and shall manage and monitor the service on behalf of the local authorities.

Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Council runs Youth Justice Services in line with its statutory duty, which comes with a range of requirements to help children break the cycle of offending behaviours. Sheffield's Youth Justice Plan 2022-2025 outlines a range of strategies to redress the multiple disadvantages children who encounter the criminal justice system face in order to reduce the likelihood of re-offending and improve life chances.
- 1.2 Restorative Justice is one of these initiatives and provides opportunities for those directly affected by an offence (victim, offender, and members of the community) to communicate through a restorative process and agree how to deal with the offence and its consequences.
- 1.3 Sheffield Youth Justice Service has dedicated victim workers seconded from the Service Provider who contact victims of crime to offer them the opportunity to participate in a restorative process or even just to keep them informed of the child's progress.
- 1.4 Specialist dedicated victim practitioners ensure that the voice of the victim is heard during assessment, planning and through the work with children who have committed offences. The wishes and feelings of victims are empowered in deciding to what extent they want to be involved in direct or indirect contact.
- 1.5 This service has been provided by the current Service Provider since April 2021. The current Service Provider is one of the lead organisations in the country in delivery of this service to youth justice services and they have their own quality assurance procedures.
- 1.6 Overall, the current provision represents value for money and the Council is satisfied with what is being provided.
- 1.7 During financial year (2022-23) the following data was collected for the Sub-regional Authorities (Rotherham and Barnsley), data for the previous year during the Covid pandemic has not been included as it will not give us a true reflection:

Victim Support delivered 2022-23	Sheffield	Rotherham	Barnsley
Number of victims contacted	253	110	142
% Engagement	87%	84%	81%

- 1.8 The arrangement with the current Service Provider ends on 31st March 2024. It is therefore proposed that the Council commission an external provider to deliver a Victim Engagement Service as part of a joint commission with Rotherham and Barnsley Youth Justice Services with an estimated value of £537,600 over 4 years. The Council's contribution for this commission will be £277,200. This service will be managed and monitored by Sheffield Children's Commissioning Services on behalf of the sub-region.
- 1.9 We currently do not have the capacity or resources to deliver this service in-house, Sheffield's share of this is £277,200 for 4 years, which would not give us sufficient management/staffing capacity but has a combined resource across the region we get economies of scale.
- 1.10 By adopting a sub-regional approach to tackling youth offending issues, learning and best practice can be applied across both Rotherham and Barnsley authorities and solutions can be adopted that ensure positive outcomes for children and victims impacted by the offence.
- 1.11 The category of victim for the purposes of this Contract, falls within two areas, these being recognised as corporate victims (i.e., local businesses, services affected by Youth Crime), and personal victims (i.e., individuals and/or families affected by youth crime).
- 1.12 By this commission, the Council hopes to achieve the following:
- Putting things right and healing relationships, thereby giving high satisfaction to victims, and reducing re-offending.
 - Ensuring that those directly affected by crime are involved in the process and that their wishes are given careful consideration.
 - Achieving positive outcomes for the victim, community, and the child.
 - Victim Engagement and Support Service is an important part of the work Youth Justice Services undertake with a child and plays a leading role in their rehabilitation process.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 This service will link into several elements of the corporate plan.

Communities and Neighbourhoods

The expected reduction in offending will go towards ensuring that people feel safer in their own homes and within the neighbourhood. Less vandalism will make local amenities feel safer to visit and encourage services to invest in the area.

Education, health, and care

We want all people in Sheffield to feel safe, happy, healthy, and independent: to love living here. We want them to have access to a wide range of educational opportunities to achieve their full potential.

Children moving through this service will be encouraged to improve and reach their full potential. A number will progress into education and employment.

2.2 Outcome and Sustainability

Anticipated outcomes from the Service that will be funded will be:

- Ensure that all services meet the requirements for working with victims as stated within the Victims Code of Practice.
- Share information and resources to meet the needs of identified Victims of youth offending.
- Ensure that victim orientated systems and services are managed in accordance with the Youth Justice Service's (YJS) performance targets as specified within the National Standards for Youth Justice Services 2019, Sheffield City Council, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Data Management and Information policies and all relevant statues relating to the storage of personal information.
- Provide an advocacy and support service for identified victims of youth crime and ensure that they are offered the opportunity to become involved in interventions where appropriate.
- Work in partnership with Youth Justice Services in Rotherham and Barnsley to ensure the following minimum Youth Justice Service Targets are achieved:
 - Victim's details are kept secure.

- Victims are enabled to make informed choice about whether to participate in restorative justice processes.
 - Victims are informed of progress in respect of the restorative justice interventions undertaken where appropriate.
- This project will assist in helping children to make amends for their actions, directly to the people and the communities their offence has affected.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 The current Service Provider gains feedback from all the victims they work with, and this is part of what is inspected during on-site contract compliance visits. Throughout the course of the contract, they have shared positive feedback, examples of which are given below:

“The incident was quite typical of what we face as police officers. It was beneficial to have the opportunity to speak with the girl and it made me happy that she seems to have taken all the advice/ support on board and made positive changes in her behaviour. Refreshing to receive an honest apology.”

“I hope the offender has learnt from this and we have helped him to make better decisions in the future”.

“This has improved my knowledge of the Criminal Justice System and I would like him to pay something back to the community they have affected”.

- 3.2 There has been no direct consultation with the market and potential providers as this is a very small specialist market, the delivery is directed by statutory requirements.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 Ethnic minority children are over-represented in all stages of the YJS compared to the general population. The 2017 Lammy Review highlights that some ethnic minority groups have less trust in the police and/or the criminal justice system and emphasises the significant role this has in driving their over-representation later in the system.

- 4.1.2 HM Inspectorate of Probation’s October 2021 thematic report on the experiences of Black and mixed heritage boys in the YJS, released in October 2021, states that “[YOTs] must be careful to ensure that concerns about building trust with Black and mixed heritage boys do not become a barrier or an explanation for engagement difficulties.”

- 4.1.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken (EIA ref. 2195 refers) and approved by our Equalities Officer and will be maintained throughout the life of any Contract.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 Financial

Annual funding has been agreed by each Authority in which Sheffield will lead the project:

Sheffield	£69,300
Rotherham	£31,500
Barnsley	£33,600

Total Annual Contract value = **£134,400** = **£537,600** (4 years)

4.2.2 Funding for Sheffield's annual contribution to the contract is included within the current budget. However, in the event of a loss of funding there is a break clause built into the contract at the end of each year.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 Under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 the Council has a statutory duty to take reasonable steps designed to encourage children and young person's not to commit offences. The provision of a Victim Engagement Support Service will contribute towards meeting that duty.

4.3.2 The Council have the power to cooperate with other local authorities under s27 Children Act 1989.

4.3.3 The contracting arrangements proposed in this report are facilitated by the Local Government (Contract) Act 1997.

Climate Implications

4.4.1 Where a service will be delivered by external partners and providers, we will aim to work with providers who align with our ambition to be a Net Zero city by 2030, through the procurement process. We will encourage providers to think about the climate impacts of delivering the service, such as use of office space, staff and client travel, energy and resource use, and opportunities to increase awareness of positive climate action, and take appropriate steps to reduce their impacts in the delivery of the service.

4.5 TUPE

4.5.1 TUPE implications shall be assessed, and the incumbent provider has been asked to advise on any potentially TUPE affected staff. This dynamic shall be taken into consideration through the procurement process. Any TUPE implications should only affect the incumbent existing and new provider, and because the service is not being brought back in-house there are no TUPE implications upon the Council other than ensuring that the Provider's comply with their obligations.

4.5.2 The current Service Provider has been advised to take their own legal advice on this dynamic and will be required to provide information on the Workers they believe are eligible for TUPE in the event they are unsuccessful in continuing to provide the service. This information will be made available to prospective Tenderers to allow them to accurately price their tender submission.

4.6 Other Implications

4.6.1 There are no other implications known.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Do nothing – which we cannot as the provision of this Service is a statutory duty; therefore, we must deliver it.

5.2 Deliver the service in-house – we currently do not have the expertise or capacity to deliver the service in-house, for the reasons stated above, it is not economically viable for us to get the same resource level if we deliver the service in-house.

5.3 Do our own tender – which would be a collective collaboratively procured approach on the open market, through an open tender, as this would maximise the interest and competition and thereby return the most economically advantageous tender.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To support the development of a consistent service delivery and key services across the sub-region that supports the statutory requirements of the youth justice teams. By the three regional youth justices services joining together in a single contract (as joint contracting parties each being solely responsible for their respective service areas) for the victim engagement service we are ensuring best value for money and cost effectiveness, and will be better able to achieve a higher standard of service throughout the region which is consistent with each YJS regions delivery plan as well as the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan. There is a statutory requirement set out within the national standards for the delivery of youth justice services

which are subject to an inspection and audit regime for the provision of restorative justice and victim services, and these are as set out within the contract.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Philip Gregory,
Director of Finance and Commercial Services

Tel: +44 114 474 1438

Report of: *Philip Gregory, Director of Finance & Commercial Services*

Report to: *Education, Children & Families Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: *27th September 2023*

Subject: *2023-24 Q1 Budget Monitoring Report*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

This report brings the Committee up to date with the Council's outturn position for Q1 2023/24 General Fund revenue position.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to note the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the Q1 2023/24 Revenue Budget Outturn as described in this report.

Background Papers:
[2023/24 Revenue Budget](#)

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Philip Gregory, <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>
		Legal: Sarah Bennett, <i>Assistant Director, Legal and Governance</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: Adele Robinson, <i>Equalities and Engagement Manager, Policy, and Performance.</i>
		Climate: n/a
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Philip Gregory, Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Zahira Naz, Chair of the Finance Committee</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Philip Gregory</i> <i>Jane Wilby</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i> <i>Head of Accounting</i>
	Date: 31 st August 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the current outturn position for Sheffield City Council's revenue budget for 2023/24.

2023-24 Q1 Financial Position by Directorate

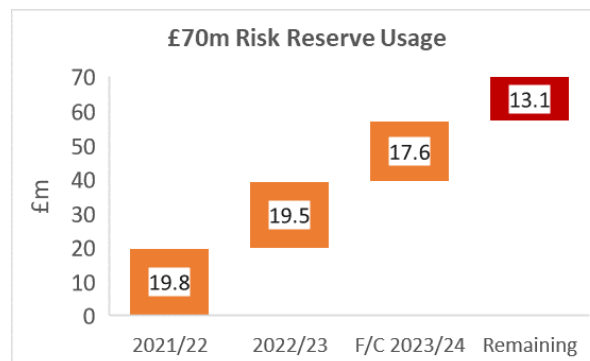
- 1.2. At the end of the first quarter of 2023-24, the Council's revenue budget shows a forecast overspend of £17.6m.

Full Year £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
Neighbourhood Services	138.2	135.0	3.2
Adults	138.3	134.8	3.5
Children's	124.0	115.3	8.7
Strategic Support	52.4	47.7	4.7
City Futures	44.0	43.4	0.6
Public Health & Integrated Commissioning	10.7	10.9	(0.2)
Corporate	(490.1)	(487.1)	(3.0)
Total	17.6	(0.0)	17.6

- 1.3. This overspend is due to a combination of factors. Agreed Budget Improvement Plans ("BIPs") are not forecast to fully deliver within the year. There are underlying cost and demand pressures faced by services that are partially offset by one-off items. These "one-offs" consist of grant income, draws from specific reserves or provisions and income from central government or external sources.

Full Year Variance £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
Neighbourhood Services	(4.1)	2.5	4.8	3.2
Adults	(9.9)	3.9	9.5	3.5
Children's	(3.9)	3.7	8.9	8.7
Strategic Support	0.0	0.0	4.7	4.7
City Futures	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.6
Public Health & Integrated Commissioning	0.0	0.0	(0.2)	(0.2)
Corporate	0.0	0.0	(3.0)	(3.0)
Total	(17.9)	10.6	25.0	17.6

- 1.4. In 2021/22, the Council set aside £70m of reserves to manage the financial risks associated with delivering a balanced budget position. Overspends against budgets in 2021/22 and 2022/23 have meant we have drawn almost £40m from this reserve already leaving just over £30m to manage any future budget deficits. If we overspent by £17.6m as this current forecast outturn position suggests, just £13m would be left to mitigate future budget pressures.



1.5. 2023-24 Q1 Financial Position by Committee

1.5.1. The major budget risk areas are in Childrens & Adults Social Care and in Homelessness services

Full Year £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
Adult Health & Social Care	146.9	143.7	3.2
Education, Children & Families	124.7	115.8	8.9
Housing	10.2	7.0	3.2
Transport, Regeneration & Climate	39.6	40.0	(0.4)
Economic Development & Skills	9.5	9.4	0.1
Waste & Street Scene	63.5	64.2	(0.8)
Communities Parks and Leisure	41.7	41.3	0.3
Strategy & Resources	(418.4)	(421.5)	3.1
Total	17.6	(0.0)	17.6

1.5.2. In 22/23, the Council's forecast overspend improved by over £14m from the first quarter's forecasts to final outturn. This was mainly due to additional income received rather than underlying improvements in budgets and cost reductions. A big contributor to this was the Government's £500m discharge fund announced in November 2022, the sustainability of this income source and other mitigations from the last financial year are still unclear and cannot be relied upon.

Many underlying budget issues in social care services still remain and this is reflected in the current forecast position.

1.5.3. Most of the overspend is due to underlying cost and demand pressures in services. We estimate that £25m is embedded in the baseline costs but is somewhat mitigated by one-off income:

Full Year Variance £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
Adult Health & Social Care	(9.9)	3.9	9.1	3.2
Education, Children & Families	(3.9)	3.7	9.1	8.9
Housing	(1.7)	0.2	4.7	3.2
Transport, Regen & Climate	0.0	0.1	(0.5)	(0.4)
Economic Development & Skills	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Waste & Street Scene	(0.5)	0.2	(0.4)	(0.8)
Communities Parks and Leisure	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.3
Strategy & Resources	(1.8)	2.2	2.7	3.1
Total	(17.9)	10.6	25.0	17.6

1.5.4. Balancing the General Fund 2023/24 budget was only possible because the Council identified £47.7m of savings:

General Fund Budget Improvement Plans (in £m)

Committee	Total Savings	Financial Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap	Financial Savings Deliverable Next Year	Undeliverable Savings
Adult Health & Social Care	31.6	27.6	3.9	2.3	1.6
Communities, Parks & Leisure	2.0	1.9	0.2		0.2
Economic Devt & Skills	0.5	0.5	0.0		0.0
Education, Children & Families	6.9	3.2	3.7	0.3	3.4
Housing	0.6	0.5	0.2		0.2

Strategy & Resources	4.1	1.9	2.2	2.2	0.1
Transport, Regen & Climate	0.8	0.7	0.1		0.1
Waste & Street Scene	1.1	0.9	0.2		0.2
Total	47.7	37.1	10.6	4.8	5.7

The current forecasts show £10.6m savings plans are undeliverable this year. This represents a delivery rate of 78% against target. In 22/23, less than 65% of savings targets were delivered. Whilst we are improving upon overall delivery performance, we are still falling short of targets meaning further draws could be required from our reserves to meet these overspends if they are not managed and mitigated. Delivering in year budgets must be a key focus for all services for the Council to retain financial sustainability.

- 1.5.5. Whilst inflation is beginning to fall, costs incurred are very unlikely to fall significantly resulting in these increased costs now being embedded in our cost base. There is an increased demand for services alongside cost pressures in social care, home to school transport and homelessness services.

1.6. **Key Committee Overspends:**

- 1.6.1. **Adult Health and Social Care are forecast to overspend by £3.2m** The high cost of packages of care put in place during covid increased our baseline costs and this carries into 23/24. A huge amount of work has been done as part of an investment plan to tackle the underlying issues. One off funding has mitigated the position this year leaving a £0.7m overspend in the purchasing budgets. Work continues on the package reviews to reduce the baseline costs for the future. Recovery work is underway including establishment of Task & Finish groups and the development of business cases around invest to saves including focus on enablement, day services, reviewing high cost 1 to 1 support and maximising income. The main area of overspend in the service now sits in staffing budgets. Service improvements in the Short -Term Intervention Team (STIT) are underway to deliver a stable position.

- 1.6.2. **Education, Children and Families are forecast to overspend by £8.9m** The key overspends in the service relate to placements with external residential placements a particular issue which are forecast to exceed the previous year's costs by £4.8m. This sits alongside undelivered targets from the previous year of £2m. The average placement cost is £5,400 per week. However due to a limited number of places in the city, placements for the most complex children can cost a great deal more. Actions are being taken to ensure that the right costs for placements are being met by all elements including education and where possible health. High-cost placements are also being reviewed.

The savings proposal for £1.6m to increase fostering placements this year is forecast to not be delivered. Marketing is taking place, but our number of foster carers remains static. Nationally this has been an issue since the pandemic as older foster carers decided to exit the market and there has not been the like for like recruitment to new foster carers.

Further demand in home to school transport costs are forecast to create a £3m overspend against budgets this year. This has the potential to increase in October when we know exactly how many children require transportation to school. An overarching review of this area will commence in 2024.

-
- 1.6.3. **Homelessness support in temporary and exempt accommodation is forecast to cost the Council £8.4m** The Government does not fully subsidise all housing benefit payments made by the Council even though it sets the rules that determine the amount the Council has to pay. In 2022/23, the Council incurred a loss of £5.9m as a result of the legislation relating to temporary homelessness and supported accommodation. The Council is essentially bridging the gap between the amount the accommodation costs to procure and the amount we are able to recover via housing benefits.

In 2023-24, this is forecast to cost the Council £4.9m for temporary accommodation and £3.5m for supported accommodation. The shortfalls are split between the Housing General Fund and Strategy and Resources budgets respectively.

The Budget Implementation Group

-
- 1.6.4. **A subgroup has been set up to drive improvements in Budget delivery** A senior officer working group has been established to help drive delivery of the budget. The purpose of the Budget Improvement Group (BIG) is to improve the delivery of the Council's annual Revenue Budget (both General Fund and Housing Revenue Account) and in particular the delivery of the Budget Improvement Plans (BIPs). It will look to facilitate Council wide learning. The group is jointly chaired by the Director of Finance and Commercial Services and the Chief Operating Officer. The group has a nominated core member from each Directorate: Adults, Children's, City Futures, Neighbourhoods and Strategic Support Services.

Transformation Funding

-
- 1.6.5. **We identified £4m to support transformation activity** As part of 2023-24 budget setting, the Council identified a £4m fund that would be used to support programmes of change in the organisation, expedite the delivery of savings plans or support where delivery of savings has become "stuck". The "BIG" group has provided advice, challenge, and recommendations for allocation of the transformation funding to the Council's Performance and Delivery Board.

In August 2023, the Performance & Delivery board approved bids to support delivery of programmes in Adult Social Care, Housing, Children's services, ICT, HR, and Organisational Strategy to build upon the Future Sheffield programme. These key projects will help stabilise the organisation and bring budgets back to a steady footing for the future. Each programme of work will be monitored, and progress reported to the Council's Performance & Delivery board to ensure activity remains on track. Overall performance will be reported to S&R committee and finance committee as part of in-year budget monitoring, with relevant policy committees overseeing progress on programmes in their areas.

Medium Term Financial Analysis (MTFA)

- 1.6.6. **The MTFA presented to S&R Committee on 7th September detailed committee budget savings targets** An updated medium term financial analysis was presented to the Strategy & Resources committee on 7th September to give members an early view of the forecast financial position for the Council for the next 4 years and to set the financial constraints within which the budgeting and business planning process will need to work to achieve a balanced budget position over the medium term. The analysis forecasts a budget gap of £18m for 24/25 that will need to be bridged by services in order to set a balanced budget for 2024/25.

- 1.6.7. The below table outlines the proposed committee savings targets following an equitable application of funds resulting in a deliverable outcome for all Committees:

Committee	Original Pressures	Remaining Income Allocations					Target to Find	Savings Identified	Sales, Fees and Charges Income	New Pressures	Adjusted Target To Find
		Pay award Funded	ASC Precept	Social Care Grant	Significant RPIX contracts and Housing Benefits	Other Funding (split based on NRB)					
Adult Health & Social Care	27.0	(1.9)	(5.4)	(10.9)		(0.9)	7.8	(4.6)	(4.5)	2.7	1.5
Education, Children & Families	12.4	(2.7)		(5.0)		(0.7)	4.1	0.0	(0.2)	4.4	8.3
Housing General Fund	3.6	(0.4)			(2.5)	(0.0)	0.7	0.0	(0.0)	2.9	3.5
Transport, Regeneration & Climate	1.0	(0.4)				(0.2)	0.5	0.0	(0.1)	(0.1)	0.3
Economic Development & Skills	0.9	(0.2)				(0.1)	0.7	0.0	(0.0)	0.1	0.7
Waste & Street Scene	9.8	(0.6)			(6.4)	(0.4)	2.5	0.0	(0.5)	0.5	2.5
Communities Parks and Leisure	1.5	(1.2)				(0.2)	0.0	0.0	(0.2)	0.5	0.4
Strategy & Resources (Corporate)	9.9	0.0			(3.0)	0.0	6.9	(6.2)	0.0	0.0	0.7
Strategy & Resources (Committee)	4.7	(2.7)			(0.8)	(0.4)	0.8	(0.4)	(0.1)	(0.0)	0.3
Total	70.8	(10.0)	(5.4)	(15.9)	(12.7)	(2.9)	23.9	(11.1)	(5.6)	11.0	18.1

Key points to note:

- The proposal will cover the anticipated 2024/25 pay awards for all Committees.
- The Adult Social Care Precept is applied to the AHSC Committee.
- The Social Care grant is split between Adult Social Care & Education, Children & Families based on their relative shares of the original social care pressures for 2024/25.
- £7.2m has been allocated towards contract inflation pressures which are out of the control of the relevant committee. Examples include the waste contract, highways, and Microsoft licencing.
- £5.5m has also been set aside to cover the significant increase in Housing Benefit subsidy losses for Exempt Properties (S&R £3m) and £2.5m contribution to support the large increase in Homelessness accommodation costs around housing benefits support.

- 1.6.8. Services are required to develop solutions to bridge the budget gap for 2024/25 and bring forward proposals to the November policy committee meetings. At the same time working hard to bring the in-year overspend down through ongoing work on recovery plans and additional support to deliver budget implementation plans (BIPs).

This current forecast in-year overspend must be urgently managed and mitigated to avoid the risk that the Council has to look to our available Budget Contingency Reserve (£30m) to balance at year end. Maintenance of a prudent level of contingency reserves is critical to ensure stability and sustainability for 2024/25 onwards.

1.7. Education, Children & Families Committee - £8.9m overspend

1.7.1.	The Education, Children & Families General Fund is overspent by £8.9m	Full Year £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
	Children & Families Education & Skills (Access and Inclusion; Business Support; Operational and Portfolio Wide Budgets; School Budgets; Schools and Learning; SEN, EMTAS)		109.6	104.4	5.3
	Integrated Commissioning (Commissioning; Children's Public Health; Early Help and Prevention)		13.6	10.1	3.5
			1.5	1.3	0.1
	Total		124.7	115.8	8.9

1.7.2.	The 2023/24 settlement provided additional "one-off" funding for social care	Full Year Variance £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
	Children & Families Education & Skills (Access and Inclusion; Business Support; Operational and Portfolio Wide Budgets; School Budgets; Schools and Learning; SEN, EMTAS)		(3.9)	3.3	5.9	5.3
	Integrated Commissioning		0.0	0.4	3.1	3.5
			0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
	Total		(3.9)	3.7	9.1	8.9

In February 2023 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) approved the 2023/24 settlement for Local Government. Included within the Settlement were some funding and taxation commitments for 2024/25. These included details of Council Tax thresholds and additional funding for social care.

Beyond 2024/25 the picture is less clear. However, there is a general acknowledgement that due to fiscal constraints, there will be very little, if any, increase in public sector spending in unprotected services such as Local Authorities over the remaining period of the Medium-Term Financial Analysis. This settlement has been treated as "one-off" in year due to future uncertainty.

1.7.3. Budget Savings (BIPs) £m

Service	Financial RAG	Total Savings	Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap	Savings Deliverable Next Year	Undeliverable Savings
CHILDREN & FAMILIES	Red	4.3	1.3	3.1	0.3	2.7
	Amber	0.2		0.2		0.2
	Green	1.4	1.4	0.0		0.0
CHILDREN & FAMILIES Total		6.0	2.7	3.3	0.3	3.0

EDUCATION & SKILLS	Red	0.4		0.4	0.4
	Amber	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
	Green	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0
EDUCATION & SKILLS Total		0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4
INTEGRATED COMMISSIONING	Green	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
INTEGRATED COMMISSIONING Total		0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
Grand Total		6.9	3.2	3.7	0.3

Of the committee's £6.9m Budget Implementation Plans (BIP) are forecast to fall short by £3.7m representing a 46% delivery rate.

1.7.4. Details of the BIPs set to fall short of the target are shown below:

Financial RAG	Description	Total Savings	Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap	Savings Deliverable Next Year	Undeliverable Savings
Red	A targeted campaign to increase numbers of fostering places available by 40 by OCT 2023	1.6		1.6		1.6
	Engage with partner to more cost effective way of working	0.3		0.3		0.3
	Edge of Care Staffing	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1
	On-call service review	0.3		0.3		0.3
	Rebase the MAST budget	1.2	1.1	0.1	0.1	-0.0
	Review care leaver offer to ensure access to support continues post 21	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	-0.0
	Sufficiency and Placement Mix - identify and transition 18 year-old Care expedite transfer to Council / Social Housing	0.5		0.5		0.5
Children & Families Total		4.3	1.3	3.1	0.3	2.7
Red	Max opportunities across TS, C&F and SENDSARS for collaboration work to drive efficiencies in Home to School transport	0.4		0.4		0.4
Education & Skills Total		0.4		0.4		0.4
Total		4.7	1.3	3.4	0.3	3.1

1.7.5. **Placement costs continue to create overspends for the service** The key overspends in the service relate to placements with external residential a particular issue. These are forecast to exceed the previous year's costs by £4.8m. This sits alongside undelivered targets from the previous year of £2m.

The average placement is £5,400 per week. However, due to a limited number of places in the city, the most complex children can cost a great deal more. Actions are being taken to ensure that the right costs for placements are being met by

all elements including education and where possible health. High-cost placements are also being reviewed.

1.7.6. **The number of children in care is fairly stable** Even though there is an increase in demand at the front door, we are maintaining our number of children in care that is with a backdrop of increased Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children. The number of looked after children has reduced from 674 (2021), to 666 (2022) to 653 (2023). This is low in contrast to comparators. This impacts on the cost of placements given the cases tend to be more complex and therefore more expensive.

1.7.7. **We are struggling to recruit foster carers** The savings proposal for £1.6m to increase fostering placements this year is also forecast to not be delivered. Marketing is taking place, but our number of foster carers is remains static. Nationally this has been an issue since the pandemic as older foster carers decided to exit the market and there is not the like for like recruitment to new foster carers.

Foster placements has dropped from 71.0%to 65.1%, this has caused the major rise to the number of children placed in children’s homes, secure units, and hostels (including semi-independent living) from 19.0% to 25.1%, which is largely higher than comparators (range 12%to 16%).

This needs to be seen in the changes to our placement mix- more young people who we look after are young asylum-seeking children – who historically have been less likely to be placed within family-based care. A project is underway to increase Supported Lodgings – which should impact the use of semi-independent living. Whilst we want to increase the offer across the city, we are specifically working to target communities who have expressed an interest in supporting young people from asylum seeking backgrounds and who we have not historically reached effectively.

1.7.8. **Home to school transport is set to cause a £3m overspend this year** Further demand in home to school transport costs are forecast to create a £3m overspend against budgets this year. This has the potential to increase further in October when we know exactly how many children require transportation to school. An overarching review of this area will commence in 2024.

1.7.9. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is forecast to overspend by £0.3m	DSG Full Year Forecast £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
	Children & Families	6.9	6.9	(0.0)
	Education & Skills	231.9	231.8	0.1
	Integrated Commissioning	3.5	3.3	0.2
	Total	242.2	242.0	0.3

The main cause of overspend in Education & Skills is due to £0.1m increase in Early Years EHCP plans.

The integrated commissioning overspend relates to back dated costs of increased Medical Services contract with Nexus.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 The recommendations in this report are that the committee notes their 2023/24 budget forecast position and takes action on overspends.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 There has been no consultation on this report, however, it is anticipated that the budget process itself will involve significant consultation as the Policy Committees develop their budget proposals

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will use equality impact analyses as a basis for the development of their budget proposals in due course.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The primary purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the City Council's revenue, capital, treasury, and collection fund budget monitoring position for 2023/24.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 Under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer of an authority is required to report on the following matters:

- the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of determining its budget requirement for the forthcoming year; and
- the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

- 4.3.2 There is also a requirement for the authority to have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer when making decisions on its budget requirement and level of financial reserves.

- 4.3.3 By the law, the Council must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions which shows how income will equal spend over the short- and medium-term. This can take into account deliverable cost savings and/or local income growth strategies as well as useable reserves. However, a budget will not be balanced where it reduces reserves to unacceptably low levels and regard must be had to any report of the Chief Finance Officer on the required level of reserves under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, which sets obligations of adequacy on controlled reserves.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no direct climate implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will consider climate implications as they develop their budget proposals in due course.

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 No direct implication

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To record formally changes to the Revenue Budget.

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:**

Meredith Dixon-Teasdale

Tel: *(Insert contact number of author)*

Report of: Meredith Teasdale-Dixon

Report to: Education, Children and Families Committee

Date of Decision: 27th September 2023

Subject: Update report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

The paper provides a Strategic Director's update on the performance and governance of Children's services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children's Services) accountabilities and delivering on our statutory requirements. It also provides an update regarding progress in relation to the Council's Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Education Children and Families Policy Committee:

1. Notes the Strategic Director of Children's Services report and agrees key activity for the coming months.

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

1. Background Papers:
 - a) Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Liz Gough</i>
		Legal: <i>Nadine Wynter</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i>
		Climate: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Meredith Teasdale Dixon</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Councillor Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Meredith Teasdale-Dixon</i>	Job Title: <i>Strategic Director of Children's Services</i>
	Date: <i>(18/09.23)</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 This report starts with recognition and gratitude for all those working in children's and education system, who continue to work together to ensure our children and young people are safe, healthy, attaining and moving towards an independent adulthood.

1.2 Leadership and Partnership

Over the last two months I have been working to ensure that I have spoken to key leaders across the system who work with and or influence the work for children and young people. This includes South Yorkshire Police, the Integrated Care Board, Sheffield Children's Hospital, leaders in the Voluntary and Community Sector, including On Board and Sharrow Community Forum, Learn Sheffield, Government Departments and Education Leaders. I have co-chaired the Children's Delivery Group which is a sub-set of the ICB in Sheffield. The meeting focused on the many challenges in the system at present and the possibilities of improvement as we work together. This has focused on a Belonging Framework where we create a common vision and language to talk about how our children and young people belong in a loving family, in a local school that supports them, in a community that listens to and respects them and in a city that champions them.

I have met with Headteachers to discuss the challenges in schools, particularly around our Special Educational Needs and Disability system and possible changes that will support better opportunities for our children and young people.

My meetings with Learn Sheffield as a conduit for all schools in Sheffield have been fruitful and will, I am sure, mean that we are sharing the same vision and working to the same goals over the coming months and years. We have also focused on how we support more diverse governing bodies and the recruitment of teachers and leaders of colour from our local communities.

I have met with a number of leaders of colour and aspirant leaders and am working with them and Learn Sheffield to create a group where we can focus on this work.

Over the coming months

I will continue to develop these relationships and work to ensure that we have a common vision and plan for the children and young people in our city linked to the Our City Goals work.

I will also continue to be a key advocate for all our children and young people.

1.3 Safeguarding

This continues to be a key focus. The overarching Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Board is well attended and creates a focus in this area across the city. A review of the profile and importance of Safeguarding in the City is currently taking place which will ensure we are in a strong position in the future. A key focus for me is ensuring that the profile of Safeguarding is high in the Council and also the City. This will include ensuring that the profile of the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) is high and understood across all organisations that work with children and in the city.

Sheffield is doing well. Even though there is an increase in demand at the front door we are maintaining our number of children in care that is with a backdrop of increased Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children in the city (UASC).

Number of Children Looked After at 31st of March has continued with a slight drop from 674 (2021), to 666 (2022) to 653 (2023). Rate per 10k at 57.2, 56.3 and 55.2 respectively, remained low comparing to our comparators range 70.0 to 81.0.

Over the last 2 – 3 years there has been a stark increase in the costs of placements. The average placement is £5400 per week. However due to a limited number of places and profiteering within the independent care market, the most complex children can cost a

great deal more. Whilst we have maintained our numbers, as we have stated costs have increased and there is a gap between the money received for UASC Care leavers and actual costs which is contributing pressure to a £2m overspend in the placement budget. We also have more costs for Special Guardianship Orders and kinship care with children and young people staying in their extended family. This is a positive shift as it provides greater security and opportunities.

We are working closely with Integrated Commissioning on ensuring that we regularly monitor, and quality assure all our contracted care and support provision including onsite visits to all providers, robust contract management, financial governance and care quality assurance. The last year has seen a particular focus on placements in scope of the National Review and on ensuring we have a grip on the welcome forthcoming changes that will extend regulation to include Supported Accommodation for young people aged 16-18 years. This includes working with existing providers to support them to become registered and working with the wider market to encourage a diverse and high-quality offer of appropriate registered care provision for Sheffield children who need it. This work has progressed well, and we are confident that we will be able to mitigate any risks to continuity of care for our children.

The National Review Phase 2 has also been completed and we are about to undertake a further round of visits to our remaining three placements that are in scope. This collaborative approach with colleagues from social care and health has been positively received by providers with action plans being delivered where providers have needed to make improvements and more effective relationships with providers who have recognised the value of our support and challenge approach to the review. We are looking to build on the success and learning of this work beyond the scope of the National Review and will provide further updates on this work in future DCS updates.

We have been looking at increasing the number of foster carers. This marketing is taking place now but at present our number of foster carers is remaining quite static. Nationally this has been an issue since the pandemic as older foster carers decide to exit the market and there is not the like for like recruitment to new foster carers. In the last few weeks, we have however begun to see greater interest from potential foster carers.

Foster placements have dropped from **71.0%** to **65.1%**, this has caused the major rise to the number of children placed in **children's homes, secure units and hostels (including semi-independent living)** from **19.0%** to **25.1%**, which is largely higher compared to our comparators. It is important that we continue to increase our special guardianship order and kinship care placements, increase our number of foster carers as well as review our residential home provision.

Over the next few months

We will be reviewing the makeup of our placements for children coming into care as well as all our early intervention and prevention activity both within Children's Services but more broadly across the Council. Our focus will be to ensure all activity is having the required impact in stopping the escalation of need and being proactive to address issues with children, young people, families, and schools at the earliest opportunity.

1.4 Vetting and barring scheme

The lead members for each party for the Education, Children and Families Committee have asked me to work with Democratic Services and Legal to ensure that the right DBS checks are in place for all Elected Members especially as all Members are Corporate Parents. I will keep Committee updated on progress around this, acknowledging that it is also central to the current safeguarding review being undertaken.

1.5 Vulnerable children and young people

We know that nationally our system and process for both assessing need for our children

with special educational needs and disabilities and providing the right support is, at best, difficult. This picture is reflected in Sheffield with a high level of complaints and tribunals in this space. There is an urgent need to look at how we do things to ensure that where children and young people have special needs there are interventions that help them address these issues and for all our children to have the same opportunities as their peers.

A review into our SEND process is coming to fruition and this will feed into work we are looking to undertake with IMPOWER to transform how we work in this space. This has very exciting possibilities and I will keep committee updated.

The SEND Accelerated Progress Plan has progressed well and was signed off by DfE and NHS England last month following a review that recognised the accelerated progress we had made on SEND Multi Agency Transitions to adulthood. Despite this 'sign off', we recognise as a system that the improvements for children and their families and carers requires further collaborative effort to embed so that every child and family experiences the benefits of improved multi agency working and able to achieve better outcomes as they move into adulthood. This focus will be continued as we retain the multi-agency approach in our response to the new SEND Inspection Framework and embed the outcomes framework developed through the SEN APP process.

We have recently commissioned Sheffield Inclusion Centre to accommodate more young people excluded from school. They are starting this term with around 220 pupils. We know that last year over 150 young people were permanently excluded from their school. Unless we are working together as a system to address these issues, we will not have the required places to meet the educational needs of excluded children. The Belonging Framework, which Joe Horobin (Director of Integrated Commissioning) and Andrew Jones (Director of Education and Skills) are leading on for the City, is an opportunity for us across this system to have a different conversation about alternative curriculums, how we support schools to address issues of anxiety, how we ensure our neurodiverse young people can succeed in school, and how we are providing the right support for our children and young people who have social, emotional and mental health needs.

We are also focusing on how we support all our children and young people to be in school every day. That they see it not only as a place to learn, but also to socialise and gain greater opportunities. This needs a shift that the whole of Sheffield is embracing. We have been too long at the bottom of the table for our children and young people's attendance at school. Currently around 28% of our school age children and young people – 5-16 are not in full time education.

Over the coming months

We will draft and share the Belonging Framework which will be a coproduced framework with key partners and stakeholders across the education, Health and VCS sector ensuring children and families voices are at the heart of it. We will focus across Sheffield on children attending school. We will look to get the right building blocks in place to transform our special educational needs and disability system ensuring as well that resources are in the right place to support this.

1.6 Fair access to services

As higher numbers of children move from primary into secondary, we are looking to have a targeted focus on admissions to support parents to make the most informed decisions about the right place for their child in a system that has little space at present. This pressure will ease as the higher number of children move through the school system. We are beginning to see more space in our primary sector whilst still seeing pressure in the secondary sector.

Through this process we are also looking to ensure that families from different parts of the community are not impacted more than others. We are developing our renewed race equality action plan which we will share with committee this term.

Over coming months

Draft and share the renewed Race Equality Plan for children and young people.

Provide the right support at the right time for admissions to school at primary and secondary.

1.7 Educational excellence

Early results as reported by schools indicate that Sheffield school pupils GCSE results have improved compared to 2019 (the last comparable year due to pandemic changes).

Currently 60% of schools have provided information and the key headlines are as follows:

- a) Attainment 8 – the average points score comprised from eight qualifying subjects
 - o Sheffield has improved from 44.9 in 2019 to 46.4 in 2023, in comparison National performance in 2019 was 46.7.
- b) English and Maths grade 4+ - the proportion of pupils achieving a pass at grade 4 or better in both subjects
 - o Sheffield has improved from 59.5% in 2019 to 64.4% in 2023, in comparison National performance in 2019 was 64.6%.
- c) English grade 4+ - the proportion of pupils achieving a pass at grade 4 or better in English
 - o Sheffield has improved from 70.8% in 2019 to 74.5% in 2023, in comparison National performance in 2023 is 74.2%.
- d) Maths grade 4+ - the proportion of pupils achieving a pass at grade 4 or better in Maths
 - o Sheffield has improved from 65.2% in 2019 to 69.1% in 2023, in comparison National performance in 2023 is 72.3%.

Please note that as only 60% of schools have currently provided information these figures are likely to change and from experience, we would anticipate a small drop in the provisional 2023 figures.

For information, grade 4 is equivalent to previous grade C and is used as the pass mark. Young people who do not achieve a grade 4 in either English or Maths are required to re-sit the qualification.

Over the coming months

We will be undertaking a full review and working with Learn Sheffield and schools to assess how we continue to improve attainment and opportunities.

1.7.1 Quality of provision in schools

In relation to the quality of provision in Schools we continue to see an overall improving trend. In relation to comparative data the proportion of schools with good or better judgments is above average compared to all schools nationally, all schools in core cities and all schools in local authorities which are statistical neighbours.

% Of All Schools Good Or Outstanding in Sheffield - at 31/07/2023				
Area	Primary	Secondary	Special	All Schools
Core cities	91.5	76.4	86.4	88.3
National	90	81.4	89.2	88.7
Sheffield	93.2	76.7	81.8	89.3
Stat. neighbours	88.2	72.3	88	85.7

1.8 Early Years

We continue to maintain an overview of the quality of provision both for the Early Years and Schools sectors. Clearly, funding to the sectors is a key factor which underpins quality of provision.

1.8.1 Quality of provision in the early years

The Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) is a move towards greater fairness, from Sheffield's perspective it appears that we continue to be underfunded compared to other local authorities. In 23/24 financial year, we received a 4-6% increase in funding settlement for early years. We believe that the increase being offered nationally is insufficient to meet the increasing costs due to the cost-of-living crisis and increases to the National Living Wage.

The inflationary pressure and insufficient increase in income will impact on our providers, in particular those in deprived areas and parents are already having to subsidise the increasing costs. Providers in Sheffield are faced with financial sustainability issues across the childcare sector, and this is starting to translate into closures, which in turn will seriously impact our ability to provide sufficient FEL and childcare places for parents in the city.

National government has recently launched an expansion of early years provision for working parents and as part of this initiative funding for under 3 has been increased by 31% from £5.63 an hour to £7.36 an hour. Further work/analysis is required to establish if the increase offered is sufficient to cover inflationary pressures and cost of delivery.

This table sets out a summary of the quality of provision in Early Years settings:

Provider Overview (As of September 2023)	New registered	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Childminders: Total - 207	15	0	2	150	12
	Met - 26	Not Met - 2			
Group Care: Total – 122 settings including 2 maintained	8	2	4	86	23
Schools: total – 132 (*No data for school EYFS Ofsted gradings unless notified by LA that EYFS have entered a category)	NA	(EYFS Inadequate) 1	(EYFS Requires Improvement) 4	--	--

Our Early Years quality team continues to work with individual settings to focus on improving the quality of provision.

For the 12 month period to August 2023, 5 settings closed with funding and staffing being a main factor. We have also had 2 re-registrations of settings and a new setting open. We also had 25 childminders leave the profession, but we have also had 5 new registrations.

Overall, Sheffield providers are doing well. In Sheffield 98% of our childminders are achieving Good or better gradings and 95% of our PVI providers area achieving

Good or better gradings.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

2.1 This gives line of sight to committee members about activity being undertaken in children Services, specifically the work being undertaken by the DCS and priorities for the next period between committees.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update in relation to Children Services.

3.2 Consultation is undertaken during the development of proposals for the budget and implementation of proposals for the budget as appropriate.

3.3 An overall approach to coproduction and involvement is also a key element of the delivery plan, ensuring that the voice of our children and Young People is heard and young people are happy who have the start they need for the future they want

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 Reducing risk of committee members not being aware of the activity undertaken in children Services. Providing clarity and purpose and ensuring assurance whilst highlighting any risks

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 No financial and Commercial implications

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 No legal implications as no formal policy and proposals

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 No Climate implications

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 There are no specific other implications for this report

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Not applicable – no decision or change is being proposed

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 This report provides an update regards Children's Services activities for Members.

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