

Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

5 September 2018

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny

Venue Committee Room 3 - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

Membership

Chair Cllr Peter O'Neill (Lab)

Vice-chair Cllr Udey Singh (Con)

Labour

Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur
Cllr Obaida Ahmed
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Celia Hibbert
Cllr Asha Mattu
Cllr Beverley Momenabadi
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Clare Simm

Conservative

Cllr Simon Bennett

Quorum for this meeting is four Voting Members.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

Contact Earl Piggott-Smith

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Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting (20 June 2018)** (Pages 3 - 8)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record]
- 4 **Matters arising**
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes]

PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

[To give pre-decision scrutiny to the report]

- 5 **Draft School Accessibility Strategy** (Pages 9 - 26)
[Adrian Leach, Head of SEND, to present draft report]

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 6 **Elective Home Education** (Pages 27 - 44)
[Rachel King, Head of Service Specialist Support, to present report]
- 7 **Future of Old Fallings Adventure Playground - Briefing Paper** (Pages 45 - 46)
[Andrew Wolverson, Head of Service People, to present briefing paper]
- 8 **Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel - Draft Work Programme**
(Pages 47 - 48)
[Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, to present report]

Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item No: 3

Minutes - 20 June 2018

Attendance

Members of the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Peter O'Neill (Chair)
Cllr Udey Singh (Vice-Chair)
Cyril Randles
Cllr Obaida Ahmed
Cllr Simon Bennett
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Celia Hibbert
Cllr Asha Mattu
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Clare Simm

Employees

Earl Piggott-Smith
Emma Bennett,
Bill Hague
Stephanie Knight

Scrutiny Officer
Director for Children's Service
Head of School Organisation
School Organisation Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies**
Apologies were received from the following members of the panel:

John Dovey
Cllr Beverley Momenabadi
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest recorded.
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting (11 April 2018)**
That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 4 **Matters arising**
Minute 5 – Head Start Phase 3 – Progress and Impact Update

Scrutiny Officer advised that further to the panel discussion details of the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children's Trust Board were sent to panel members.

Scrutiny Officer advised the panel that Emma Cleary, Headstart Programme Manager, would present an update on the findings of the sustainability plan to the panel in April 2019. The panel work programme would be updated.

5 Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel - draft work programme

Scrutiny Officer presented the draft panel work programme and invited members to comment. The panel discussed items on Forward Plan – July 2018 and it was agreed that the following items would be added to the panel work programme

- Youth Justice Plan 2018-2019 - action plan
- Care Leavers Local Offer – suggestion that this could be a joint meeting

The Director of Children's Services advised the panel that the report on Family Drug and Alcohol Court will not be progressed at this time.

Bill Hague, suggested that progress report on plans for school expansion could be presented to the panel for scrutiny.

The panel discussed concerns about young people not meeting the apprenticeship educational requirements for english and mathematics. Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation, agreed to discuss the matter further with Meredith Teasdale, Director of Education. The Director of Education leads on apprenticeships and will be asked to report back to a future meeting.

The panel queried the use of pupil premium. The Head of School Organisation, commented that the subject had been scrutinised previously and that use of the fund varies between schools. It was agreed that the previous paper be shared with Councillor Potter.

The panel discussed the issue of help available for students with special educational needs. The Director for Children's Services agreed that this would benefit from scrutiny. The Director advised the panel that the SEN service is due to externally inspected and the council will receive a self-assessment report which will inform future work in this area.

Resolved:

The panel suggested the following topics be added to the panel work programme:

- The provision of SEN at post 16 and presentation self-assessment report on current provision
- Youth Justice Plan 2018-2019 – action plan
- Care Leavers Local Offer
- Apprenticeship educational requirements
- Progress report on school's expansion

6 Children and Young People's Improvement Plan: 2017-2018

Emma Bennett, Director for Children's Service, introduced the report and outlined progress on the delivery of the Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan 2017-2018.

The Director advised the panel that the plan incorporates the recommendations detailed in the Ofsted action plan. The implementation of the plan is monitored monthly. The Director for Children's Service advised the panel of the aim to create a more strategic plan to show the impact and performance of the work being done to improve outcomes for children.

The panel queried issues about the retention and recruitment of social workers and current turnover. The Director for Children's Service commented on the ripple effect of impact of changes in the senior management and the planned service restructuring to address the recruitment and retention of experienced social work staff. The Director for Children's Service added that meetings have been held with staff and issues about management support and casework load has been highlighted as concern. The issue of the lack of career progression pathways and confusion about management roles and responsibilities was also highlighted. These issues are being considered as part for the proposed restructure of the service – consultation with staff starts in July 2018.

The Director for Children's Service advised the panel Wolverhampton was in the top quartile nationally and is working to improve the offer of education, training and employment to care leavers. The Director for Children's Service advised the panel about the range of work undertaken to support looked after children and gave examples of job placement opportunities being created in waste services – four care leavers are working in the service and two carer leavers have work placements elsewhere with an insurance company.

The panel queried the outstanding actions in the Ofsted Action Plan which had been not been completed. The Director for Children's Service commented on the challenge to embed practice in the areas and the Ofsted judgement that work was not judged as being done consistently. The issue is being discussed with the regional link Ofsted Inspector for social care. The Council must submit an annual self-assessment to evidence that progress is being made to deliver the required service improvements.

The panel discussed the issue of the recruitment and retention of social work staff and its impact on service users. The Director for Children's Services commented that retaining experienced social workers is one of the biggest challenges facing the Council. The Council has a rolling recruitment process and recently recruited 16 newly qualified social workers who have protected caseloads to help manage the demands on them and support their development.

The Director for Children's Services commented on the challenge in responding to the better levels of pay offered by agencies across the region. The local authorities in the region has signed a memorandum of understanding to cap the level of pay for agency staff to help efforts to maintain workforce levels.

The panel queried the idea of using contact centres to generate income for the Council. The Director for Children's Services explained that some local authorities do not have supervised contact centre services and the idea being considered is that facilities in Wolverhampton could be offered to other Local Authorities.

The panel thanked the Director for Children's Services for the presentation.

Resolved:

1. The panel comments on the 2018-19 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan to be considered.
2. The panel support the progress made to implement Ofsted recommendations.
3. The panel agreed to receive a further progress report on the implementation of the 2018-19 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan on 16 January 2019.

7

The Vision for School Organisation in Wolverhampton 2018-2020

Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation, presented a report on the vision and plans for school organisation for pre-decision scrutiny. The Head of School Organisation gave an overview of the results of the public consultation and the work done to respond to demographic changes in schools and the demand for places at secondary schools in Wolverhampton. The Head of School Organisation advised the panel that most of secondary schools are academies and therefore outside of local authority control. The Council will however continue working with academies and the Regional Schools Commissioner. The Head of School Organisation advised the panel that previously that there would be separate plans for primary and secondary schools place planning, but a decision was taken to combine the plans into a single document.

The Head of School Organisation explained the impact of changes in secondary school surplus provision from 6% to 5%, school reorganisation and the need to increase the number of places. The Head of School Organisation advised the panel of the need for sustained investment to create sufficient number of school places in the future and the work being done to get a more accurate assessment of pupil numbers. The Head of School Organisation commented on the challenges in predicting numbers following the increase in the number of new free schools which are not opening in areas where demand is considered to be greatest which is adding to the problem of parents finding sufficient secondary school places in the areas needed.

The Head of School Organisation commented on the work being done to support post 16 agenda and encouraging schools to work together to combine class sizes where numbers are low so that they can offer efficient A Level courses - the Council is concerned with improving the teaching environment for this age group.

The panel queried the issue of increase in the number of school appeals work done to increase capacity in the more popular schools. The Head of School Organisation acknowledged the issue of demand for places for popular schools and the work being done to raise standards at other schools to offer parents alternatives. The Head of School Organisation commented on work done to help underperforming schools to improve and discussions with the Regional Schools Commissioner who is aware of the work being done and improvements in the performance among Wolverhampton schools.

The panel queried if funding went with the child that moves schools or is expelled. The Head of School Planning confirmed that the funds will follow the child but may take time depending on when they move between schools.

The panel queried the reasons for the low public response from schools and the public to the consultation document and expressed concern that this does not give a

reliable picture of the situation. The panel queried options for increasing the numbers of responses. The Head of School Organisation commented on the work done since 2012 to increase the number of responses, but with limited success. The Head of School Organisation advised the panel that Stephanie Knight, School Organisation Officer, would be looking at ideas for improving responses to future consultations.

The panel discussed the provision available to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN. The Head of School Organisation advised the panel how medical evidence submitted by parents or carers in support of school application is considered when deciding levels of priority. The Head of School Organisation advised the panel that highest priority in the allocation on places is given to looked after children or previously looked after children.

The panel discussed the funding of school expansion. The Head of School Organisation advised that panel that an annual capital settlement is received from the Dept of Education for the purposes of meeting the Council's basic need duties, but the grant received does not cover the full cost of school expansions as the funding model only provides increase in school places to be done in a piecemeal approach. The Council wants to avoid unnecessary disruption to the education of children caused by a rolling programme of building work and want instead for the work to be done in a more strategic and less disruptive way.

The Head of School Organisation advised the panel that a report on funding for school's capital programme will be presented to Cabinet in September 2018 which will detail plans for financing the increase in school places. The panel agreed to receive a report about the outcome of this discussion at the meeting on 14 November 2018.

Resolved:

1. The panel comments on the vision for school's organisations 2018-20 to be included in the report to Cabinet.
2. The Head of School Organisation to report about the outcome of discussion about future school expansions at the panel meeting on 14 November 2018.

The meeting ended 7.05 pm

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Briefing Note

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL
Agenda Item No: 5

Title: School Accessibility Strategy

Prepared by: Adrian Leach
Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability

Date: 24 August 2018

Intended audience: Internal ☐ Partner organisation ☐ Public ☒ Confidential ☐

Recommendation(s)

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to consider and comment on City of Wolverhampton Council's proposed Schools Accessibility Strategy.

The Scrutiny Panel is asked to note the following:

1. This item is being considered as pre-decision scrutiny and will therefore not be available to call-in once a decision is made by the Executive.
2. The panel's comments on the school accessibility strategy document will be included as an appendix in the report to Cabinet on 17.10.18.

Overview

The strategy contained in Appendix 1 of the attached report should, once finalised and approved, be used by schools to inform their Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plans.

The panel are asked to comment on the document.

Background and context

The City of Wolverhampton Council (the Council) is required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility strategy in which it promotes better access in school for pupils with disabilities.

Adrian Leach
Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability
Tel. Office: 01902 553927

<p>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</p>	<p>Cabinet 17 October 2018</p>
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Report title	School Accessibility Strategy
Decision designation	AMBER
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Lynn Moran
Corporate Plan priority	People - Stronger Communities
Key decision	Yes
In forward plan	Yes
Wards affected	All
Accountable Director	Meredith Teasdale, Education
Originating service	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
Accountable employee	Adrian Leach Tel Email Head of SEND 01902 553927 Adrian.leach@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	

Recommendation for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the School Accessibility Strategy.

Recommendation for noting:

The Cabinet is asked to:

2. Note the summary of consultation responses listed as Appendix 3.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the rationale for City of Wolverhampton Council's proposed Accessibility Strategy.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council (the Council) is required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility strategy in which it promotes better access in school for pupils with disabilities.
- 2.2 The strategy contained in Appendix 1 should, once finalised and approved, be used by schools to inform their Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan. These plans should show how, over time, access to education for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will be improved. Schools must publish their Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility plan with links to their Special Educational Needs (SEN) information report that are available on the Local Offer.
- 2.3 During the consultation period, more than letters and consultation documents were distributed to stakeholders and consultation was advertised through various social media channels and newsletters. Stakeholders included the Governing Boards of Wolverhampton schools, members of staff at Wolverhampton Schools, parents/carers of pupils attending Wolverhampton Schools. A complete list of stakeholders who were consulted can be found at Appendix 2.
- 2.4 During the Consultation period, 23 written responses were received by the City of Wolverhampton Council as summarised in Appendix 3, a full copy of consultation responses is available on request. These were completed by a range of stakeholders including members of Wolverhampton staff (5 Responses), parents/carers (13 responses), members of Wolverhampton School's Governing Boards (1 response), Educational Professionals (3 responses) and a sixth form pupil (1 response) N.B. Some respondents fulfil more than one role.
- 2.5 A copy of the consultation form disseminated can be found as Appendix 4.

3.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 3.1 The only alternative option available would be not to produce a School Accessibility Strategy, resulting in the City of Wolverhampton Council not meeting its statutory duty, this option is therefore not recommended.

4.0 Reasons for decision:

- 4.1 To enable schools to further develop robust and effective Disability Equality Schemes and Accessibility Plans.
- 4.2 To ensure compliance with statutory regulations.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 The SEN and Disability act 2001 amended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) by introducing new duties on local authorities (LA) and schools in relation to disabled pupils and prospective pupils. From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the DDA, however the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply. The LA is required to have an accessibility strategy under the planning duty in the Equality Act 2010, Part 6, Section 88 (Schedule 10). RB/24082018/B

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 Following consultation an Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out, which concluded that the Accessibility Strategy would have a positive impact on children and young people with disabilities and a neutral impact in relation to other areas covered by the Equalities Act.

8.0 Environmental implications

8.1 There are no environmental implications resulting from this report.

9.0 Human resources implications

9.1 There are no human resources implications resulting from this report.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

10.1 Corporate Landlord will support Education in ensuring pupils with disabilities are able to access school premises through the improvement of the physical environment.

10.2 Corporate Landlord will monitor, evaluate and review any physical adaptations included within the Accessibility Strategy Action Plan.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

11.1 The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE advice: May 2014):
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

11.2 SEN Code of Practice
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

12.0 Appendices

12.1 Appendix 1: School Accessibility Strategy

12.2 Appendix 2: List of Consultees

12.3 Appendix 3: Consultation Summary

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City of Wolverhampton Council Schools Accessibility Strategy

1. Introduction

Educational performance is greatly improved in the City of Wolverhampton. We are incredibly proud of the achievements of the children and young people of our City. Effective education provision is viewed as a key factor in ensuring that Wolverhampton grows and thrives as a City at the heart of the West Midlands.

Improving access to education and educational achievement for pupils with disabilities is essential to ensure equality of opportunity, full participation in society, greater independence, access to employment opportunities and inclusion within mainstream education.

This accessibility strategy sets out the approach that the Council is taking to increase access to education for children and young people with disabilities, so that they can gain maximum benefit from their time in education. This strategy is also designed to support transitions across providers including in and out of Alternative Provision.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 amended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by introducing new duties on local authorities (LA) and schools in relation to disabled pupils and prospective pupils. From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply. The LA is required to have an accessibility strategy under the planning duty in the Equality Act 2010, Part 6, Section 88 (Schedule 10): <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>.

The Equality Act states that Local Authorities in England and Wales must, in relation to schools for which it is the responsible body, prepare an accessibility strategy and further such strategies at such times as may be prescribed.

The Equality Act requires all providers including Schools, Further Education, Higher Education and Early Years settings to make reasonable adjustments to avoid disadvantaging pupils with disabilities.

In addition to this, any setting constituted as a school have an additional duty to plan for better access for disabled pupils, as detailed below. The reasonable adjustments duty and a wider, more strategic planning approach for schools are intended to complement each other. This strategy therefore only applies only to maintained schools. The strategy is however not exclusive and welcomes alignment by partner academy schools based in the city.

2. The Requirements in Law

The General duty requires schools, when carrying out their functions, to have regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010;
- Eliminate harassment of pupils with disabilities that is related to their disability;
- Promote equality of opportunity between people with disabilities and other people;
- Promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities;

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- Encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life;
- Take steps to take account of individuals' disabilities even where that involves treating people more favourably than other people.

The General Duty applies across all schools, and applies to pupils, staff, parents/carers, and any other users of the school.

There is also a Specific Duty for schools to demonstrate how they are meeting the General Duty. The main requirement is for schools to prepare and publish a disability equality scheme, involving people with disabilities in its development, and to implement the scheme and report on it as required.

The Equality Act requires schools and LAs to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not at a substantial disadvantage and to enable pupils to participate in education and associated services.

When deciding whether a reasonable adjustment is necessary, schools need to consider any potential impacts on pupils with disabilities in terms of time and effort, inconvenience, indignity and discomfort, loss of opportunity and diminished progress.

3. Duties on schools

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to develop and publish an Accessibility Plan that outlines how they will improve the access to education for disabled pupils over time. The school's Accessibility Plan should be published on the school website, and hard copies provided upon request. There should be a link between the school's SEN information and the Accessibility Plan. Wolverhampton's Local Offer website contains links to all school websites and SEN information and this should include their Accessibility plans moving forward.

Key Data

- There are 7,502 pupils resident in the City who receive additional and specialist support
- There are 821 pupils on role in the 8 Special Schools.
- 6,600 pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) are supported in mainstream settings

*source: School Census Spring 2018

Every local area is required to have Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA). Further information on the City's demographics can be found here: <http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/jsna>

4. Scope and key aims of The City of Wolverhampton Accessibility Strategy

Ensuring that pupils with disabilities gain maximum benefit from their time in education is a priority for the Council. This can only be achieved through effective partnerships between all agencies that engage with the City's children and young people and their families.

As outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015:

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...[T]he UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education. The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN should be educated and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for disabled people.

This strategy forms part of a range of strategies and plans being delivered by the City of Wolverhampton Council designed to improve access to mainstream education for children and young people with both visible and invisible disabilities and special educational needs.

Underpinned by the Children and Families Act 2014, this strategy outlines the approach that the council will take when identifying and remediating any issues related to accessibility and participation.

Three key aims have been identified which are intended to maximise the benefits to children and young people with disabilities.

1. Increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum;
2. Ensuring that pupils with disabilities are able to gain maximum benefit from their time in education through improving facilities and services provided or offered by schools.
3. Improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils.

AIM 1: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum

This will be achieved by:

- Providing on-going guidance and training to schools to support them in the effective implementation of Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014
- Collecting and disseminating examples of good practice across the City and the wider educational community
- Providing information to encourage continued professional development in the area of special educational need, disability and inclusion.
- Ensuring continued access to advice and support through centrally maintained specialist services and partner organisations
- Further developing settings, schools and other education providers, as centres of excellence
- Working with schools to ensure that relevant information is readily available to support access on entry to/transfer between schools, and transition in and out of Alternative Provision.
- Ensuring that “inclusivity” is always a main priority whenever any change to curriculum and other policies are proposed.
- Ensuring schools regularly review their accessibility plans
- Ensure that support is available for schools with pupils with SEND who have English as an additional language through specialist CWC services.
- Provide support to pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs through specialist CWC services.

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AIM 2: Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided

This will be achieved by:

- Supporting schools in reviewing the physical access audit of their premises and ensuring they understand their responsibilities, in order to increase the number of children, who's needs are met within the City.
- Ensuring that the Planning Authority monitors all building projects carried out centrally or by schools to address accessibility issues
- Providing schools with advice on disability and accessibility issues
- Creating a climate in which schools always identify "inclusivity" as a main priority whenever any change to the physical environment is proposed.
- External Resources Available to Schools
 - Through various specialist teams and services, the LA provides advice to schools about, for example, improving the acoustic environment for pupils with hearing impairment, the reduction of glare and the improvement of signage for pupils with visual impairment, and reasonable adjustments to the physical environment for pupils with mobility difficulties.
 - Physiotherapists can advise a school about an individual pupil's mobility and physical development. This might include things like co-ordination and ability to sit, stand and walk. They can advise the school on how best to help the child develop physically, to keep the child as mobile as possible and on any appropriate specialist equipment or adaptations to the environment.
 - Occupational Therapists can advise a school about using activity-based therapies to help raise an individual pupil's self-esteem and to encourage them to be as independent as possible. They will also advise on any appropriate specialist equipment or adaptations to the school environment if required.

AIM 3: Improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils

This will be achieved by:

- Creating a culture of Inclusivity, a climate in which schools always identify "inclusivity" as a main priority whenever provision of information is planned. Our vision is also that all children including disabled children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities should be recognised as fully integrated citizens with the ability to contribute to their local community, and that when they need support to do this that the right support is available.
- Continuing to maintain specialist support services. We believe that every child and young person with special educational needs and disabilities from Wolverhampton should expect to receive high quality provision which promotes good health, care and educational progress and achievement. This includes access to universal services as well as specialist support where required.
- Through the [Local Offer](#) which provides information in a single place for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND) and their parents or carers. Provision is available, within Wolverhampton Libraries & Community Hubs as well as City of Wolverhampton Council Civic Centre, to support access to the Local Offer.

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- Though the Wolverhampton Information Advice and Support Service (WIASS) which is the impartial and confidential information, advice and support on matters relating to a child or young person's special educational needs or disability from birth to 25 years within Wolverhampton.
- Provide guidance to schools on how to ensure information is shared with Parents, carers and young people in an accessible format.

5. Governance

This strategy will be led by the Director of Education through a strategic group which will include members from:

- The SEND Service
- The Corporate Landlord Service
- The Health Service
- Parents/carers
- Children and young people
- Headteachers
- SENCOs

The Accessibility strategy and governance will be aligned to the SEND Partnership and sit within the overall governance structure for delivery of the SEND strategy and align to its priority areas of developing high quality accessible pathways for children and young people with SEND. The SEND Partnership will be responsible for ensuring that the Accessibility Strategy is aligned with and/or inform the following:

- Wolverhampton's Joint Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) 2015 - 2020
- Asset Management Plans
- Schools' Accessibility Plans
- The Early Years Plan
- Children and Young Peoples Plan
- The Council's Vision for Education
- The Council's Strategic Plans

To support schools across the city and ensure that there is a clear and accessible pathway the Council will provide Wolverhampton Schools with an Accessibility Template. The template will assist school's when creating their own Accessibility Strategies so that mirror the overarching strategy of the Council.

Strategy Review

This strategy will be reviewed and revised as necessary in line with the overall review of SEND priorities and delivery.

Evaluation and Monitoring

The Council recognises the need to monitor, evaluate and review the processes within the Local Authority and schools to ensure that accessibility is increased and the best use is made of all of

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the resources. Reports on progress will be published and publicised annually by the strategic group.

The Corporate Landlord Service, drawing on information provided by schools, Academies, settings, support organisations and health colleagues will carry out implementation, review and evaluation of the strategy.

Continuing to maintain specialist support services

We believe that every child and young person with special educational needs and disabilities from Wolverhampton should expect to receive high quality provision which promotes good health, care and educational progress and achievement. This includes access to universal services as well as specialist support where required.

Background Documents

The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE advice: May 2014):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

SEN Code of Practice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

School Accessibility Strategy Consultees

Stakeholder	Number	Type	Distributed
Chair of Governors		Email Attendance at Governors Forum	Sent 18.6.18 12.6.18
Wolverhampton Headteachers		Email	Sent 18.6.18
Wolverhampton SENCOs		Email	Sent 18.6.18
Internal Colleagues	-	Email	Sent 18.6.18
Ward Councillors	60	Email	Sent 18.6.18
ConnectEd	-	Email	Sent 18.6.18 Distributed 18.6.18
Diocesan Authorities	4	Email	Sent 18.6.18
Trade Unions	10	Email	Sent 18.6.18
Public via Modern.gov	N/A	Website	Online 18.6.18
Public via Social Media		Wolverhampton Today post	Online w/c 2.7.18
SEND & Commissioning Partnership Board		Email	Sent 18.6.18
Wolverhampton Challenge Board		Email	Sent 18.6.18
Parent & Carers		WIAS Social Media post	18.6.18
V4P Steering Group		Letter Voice4Parents Facebook Post	11.7.18 18.6.18
Children & Young People			
Wolverhampton Challenge Board		Email	18.6.18
Real Talk Event (YP SEND Event)	40+	Letter	27.6.18
School requested to distribute to pupils		School communication Channels Email	18.6.18 6.7.18
SENCOs at the following schools asked to facilitate Workshop			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aldersley Castlecroft Colton Hills East Park Palmers Cross Springdale 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Matthias • Penn Hall <p>Shared Via Local Offer to allow use of Accessibility Toolbar http://win.wolverhampton.gov.uk/kb5/wolverhampton/directory/advice.page?id=o8IGOkkFYM0</p>		Online	6.7.18
Circulated to member of Youth Council		Email	13.7.18
Citizens Panel		Email	2.7.18

Written Responses Consultation Summary

Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
A) Do you agree with the 3 key aims of this strategy?	23	21	2	0	0

A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposals were also identified during consultation including:

“There needs to be a flexible approach and a commitment to evaluate the needs of the individual with input from all carers.” (Respondent #13 - Carer of an ex-pupil who is no longer in any form of education)

“If your child is able academically but needs support with their disability then there is very little on offer within the Wolverhampton Education System.” (Respondent #15 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton school)

“My son is unable to engage with curriculum because there is no placement for his needs.” (Respondent #15 - Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton school)

“It should be totally inclusive ... for those with a wide range of SEND issues which should not be dependent on whether a child has an EHCP. Staff training needs to be key here.” (Respondent #17 - Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)

“SEMH/ASD/PDA/other learning disabilities – how will the physical environment be more accommodating for these children? There also needs to be training of staff wrote into this strategy (and not simply share good practice).” (Respondent #20 - Parent of a pupil with provision out of city)

Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
B) Do you feel that any further actions are required to achieve the 3 key aims of the strategy?	23	14	6	0	3

A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposals were also identified during consultation including:

1. The need for training of staff

- a. “Training specifically for teachers/TAs that come into contact with the child and also for peer groups – there can be a complete lack of understanding in our experience of children with SEMH.” (Respondent #20 – Parent of a pupil with provision out of city)

- b. "I feel more schools should be trained in the area of learning disability and be more accepting of children that have disabilities." (Respondent #10 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- c. All staff to have more training and a lot more understanding." (Respondent #4 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton school)
- d. "Training for staff in school about non-visible disabilities." (Respondent #1 – Sensory Inclusion Team Member)
- 2. Parental participation
 - a. "Parents are key to building a good relationship with the school, a parent can offer a different perspective of their child." (Respondent #17 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
 - b. "Clear strategy ensuring high parental participation." (Respondent #14 – Member of staff at a Wolverhampton School)
- 3. SENCO Participation
 - a. "A good SENCO presence would need to be felt around this scheme." (Respondent #17 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- 4. Funding
 - a. "If the council was to promote accessibility and inclusivity, then they need to have a clear plan of how they are going to fund this" (Respondent # 15 – Parent/Carer of a pupil in a Wolverhampton School)
 - b. "It is under resourced." (Respondent #12 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- 5. Use of plain English
 - a. "How do you expect the majority of parents to understand the accessibility strategy when it does not use plain English?" (Respondent #15 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton school)

Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
C) Do you agree with the membership of the strategic group that will lead on the strategy and develop the action plan?	23	16	3	0	4

A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposals were also identified during consultation including:

- 1. The need for a wider range of membership to incorporate:
 - I. Headteachers
 - a. "Needs to include school perspective – Headteachers & SENCOs." (CRF #1 – Member of staff at a Wolverhampton school)
 - II. SENCOs
 - III. Children and Young People
 - a. "...perhaps young people should be included too." (Respondent #21 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- 2. How members will be appointed.

a. "Useful to know how representatives will be appointed and how feedback will occur." (Respondent #9 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)

Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
D) Would all children with SEND be able to physically access all areas of your (your child's) school?	23	11	11	0	1

A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposals were also identified during consultation including:

- a) "No lift or ramps, unable to get through door frames. Small gaps in cloakroom to classroom." (Respondent #17 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- b) "Not secure areas, no good for children who run. Steps and equipment in playground that cannot be accessed by physically disabled pupils. Not appropriate toilet facilities for those that need a hoist and/or changing bed." (Respondent #3 – Member of staff at a Wolverhampton school)
- c) Some children i.e. those with sensory disabilities can't sit in a busy looking classroom." (Respondent #4 – Member of staff at a Wolverhampton school)
- d) "Visual signage suitable for all user. All new buildings should have the building acoustics and the use of materials on the floor considered for all users." (Respondent #1 – Member of Sensory Inclusion Team)

Concerns were also raised regarding non-physical access:

- a) "There is hardly any quiet space for children on the autistic spectrum. It's not all about physical disability." (Respondent #12 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- b) "We have a lot of facilities e.g. disabled toilets, rise/fall bed, hoist all on one floor level however we don't have therapy rooms or space available for 'time out' safely for anger issues etc." (CRF #1 – Member of staff at a Wolverhampton school)
- c) "My son has SEN and the behaviour strategy in his school and the school's inability to understand his needs means he only attends on a modified timetable resulting in him being unable to participate in many activities in school." (Respondent #5 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)

Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
E) Does your (your child's) school provide information about school activities and how to access them?	23	14	8	0	1

A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposals were also identified during consultation including:

- a) "There is a real lack of after school activities for children with SEND both in my child's school & across the city ... strategy needs to address how the gap in provision for children with SEND can be addressed" (Respondent #21 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- b) "My child attends a special school. There are no activities outside of core hours because staff ratios needed means it is not financially viable to run them – hardly inclusive." (Respondent #15 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- c) "Many of the schools I work in do not offer suitable out of school activities for children with a sensory impairment or know where to sign post parents to." (Respondent #1 – Member of Sensory Inclusion Team)

Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
F) Are all children with SEND able to access all information provided from your (your child's) school?	23	12	10	0	1

A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposals were also identified during consultation including:

- a) "A system for schools to share information with each other and with parents should be considered." (Respondent #21 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- b) "This has not been properly investigated but I assume that there is some way to go to make all information accessible to ALL pupils. A dyslexia friendly approach across the city would help here." (Respondent #14 – Member of staff at a Wolverhampton School)
- c) "If the scheme is inclusive then sign language should be taught or other forms of communication should be promoted along with all letters to be printed on yellow paper if requested or blue." (Respondent 17 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)

Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
G) Are all children at your (your child's) school given the opportunity to be involved in decision making?	23	13	9	0	1

A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposals were also identified during consultation including:

a) "Not all children would be able to participate due to their disability." (Respondent #21 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School) b) "Some are given the opportunity others are deemed too naughty or irresponsible" (Respondent #17 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School) c) "Not if they have complex needs" (Respondent #13 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)					
Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
H) Are all children with SEND able to take part in all activities in your (your child's) school?	23	9	13	0	1
A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposals were also identified during consultation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. "...Some children in mainstream schools are unable to access things like music and sport in schools due to their SEND needs and this needs to be addressed." (Respondent #21 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School) b. "I don't believe that excursions should only be offered to an elite few as a reward is inclusivity – I find it discriminatory." (Respondent #20 – Parent/Carer of a pupil with provision out of City) c. "... the school cannot afford to pay for anything outside the core school hours." (Respondent #15 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School) d. "My son wasn't allowed to take part in in classroom lessons along with other children ... he wasn't allowed to go on school tris either." (Respondent #10 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School) e. "Clubs that cannot cater for children who need 1:1 support." (Respondent #3 – Member of staff at a Wolverhampton School) f. "Some activities are not always suitable as additional staff or resources are needed and there is not always funding for this." (Respondent #1 – Member of Sensory Inclusion Team) 					
Consultation Question	Number of Responses Received	Yes	No	Don't Know	Abstained
I) Do you have any further comments or suggestions that you would like to make regarding the strategy?	11	12	0	0	0

A number of positive comments regarding the strategy were also received during consultation including:

- a) "I truly hope that this has a positive impact on the children I support in the years to come." (Respondent #1 – Member of the Sensory Inclusion Team)
- b) "It is a step in the right direction." (Respondent #18 – Parent of a child being home schooled)
- c) "... there is an opportunity for Wolverhampton to stand up to do the right thing for children with Special Educational Needs and to be an exemplar for other authorities." (Respondent #9 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)

A number of suggestions regarding the strategy were also received during consultation including:

- a) "I think PRUs should be included." (Respondent #4 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- b) "It should have been co-produced with parents/schools." (Respondent #21 – Parent/Carer of a pupil at a Wolverhampton School)
- c) "Children that are out of borough have little chance to access any form of society and have little chance of a true friend group that are local. By failing them in access to a local school, they are also failed on a social level too." (Respondent #20 – Parent of a pupil with provision out of city)



Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

5 September 2018

Report title	Elective Home Education	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paul Sweet	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Director	
Originating service	Children and Young People	
Accountable employee(s)	Ruby Hothi	Manager of Vulnerable Young Persons Team
	Tel	01902 550621
	Email	Ruby.hothi@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	People Leadership Team 13 August 2018 Strategic Executive Board 21 August 2018	

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The scrutiny panel is recommended to:

1. Promote an understanding across the city of the current Elective Home Education (EHE) legislation and its limitations for the Council in monitoring the quality of home education children are receiving.

The Scrutiny panel is asked to note:

1. The Council's response to the recent EHE consultation, aimed at increasing the powers of the Council to register and monitor EHE provision.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an outline of the current legislation surrounding Elective Home Education (EHE) and an overview of the local trends within Wolverhampton.
- 1.2 To provide information regarding the recent Government consultation around EHE and provide a summary of Wolverhampton's response. The Department for Education (DfE) called for evidence to consider whether the current arrangements for oversight of EHE are adequate to fulfil the government's aspiration that all children should receive a good education. It also seeks views on the proposed updating of departmental guidance on current arrangements for EHE including the introduction of a compulsory registration system. The consultation started on 10 April 2018 and ended on 2 July 2018.
- 1.3 To provide a summary of the response from the Council to the consultation document published by the Department for Education on proposed changes to the oversight of EHE.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Parents are ultimately responsible for ensuring that their children receive an education. They can decide to provide an education "**otherwise than at school**". All parents have the legal right to home educate and the council cannot refuse. On occasion, this can mean that vulnerable children may be removed for home education. Therefore, it is critical that there are robust monitoring arrangements in place. However, current legislation is limited in providing this safeguard.
- 2.2 The current Government's home education guidelines ([Elective Home Education: Guidelines for Local Authorities, Nov 2007](#)) states that the parent is not required to provide any particular type of education and is under no obligation to:
 - teach the National Curriculum
 - provide a broad and balanced education
 - have a timetable
 - have premises equipped to any particular standard
 - set hours during which education will take place
 - have any specific qualifications
 - make detailed plans in advance
 - observe school hours, days or terms
 - give formal lessons
 - mark work done by their child
 - formally assess progress or set development objectives
 - reproduce school type peer group socialisation
 - match school-based, age-specific standards.
 - to engage with the EHE Officer.

- 2.3 Local authorities have no statutory duties in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis. However, under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, local authorities shall intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education. However, there is no definition of what is deemed 'suitable education' and this therefore makes it challenging to gather evidence and intervene. This section states that:

"If it appears to a local authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they shall serve a notice in writing on the parent requiring him to satisfy them, within the period specified in the notice, that the child is receiving such education."

- 2.4 Over recent years there has been a significant increase in the number of young people being home educated. The number of pupils being home educated at a rate per 10,000 has increased from 55 in 2015-2016 to 86 in 2017-2018. **Figure 1** indicates EHE pupils by ages and **Figure 2** indicates the top four reasons families provide for opting to home educate. This shows the main reason is for lifestyle/cultural/philosophical reasons. However, there are a number of families who also opt to home educate due to not getting their first school preference or because of emotional and behavioural issues. The local authority scrutinises the reasons to home educate to ensure schools in the city are not recommending this to parents.

Figure 1 - Number of Compulsory School Aged EHE Pupils - At the start of each academic year and as of July 2018.

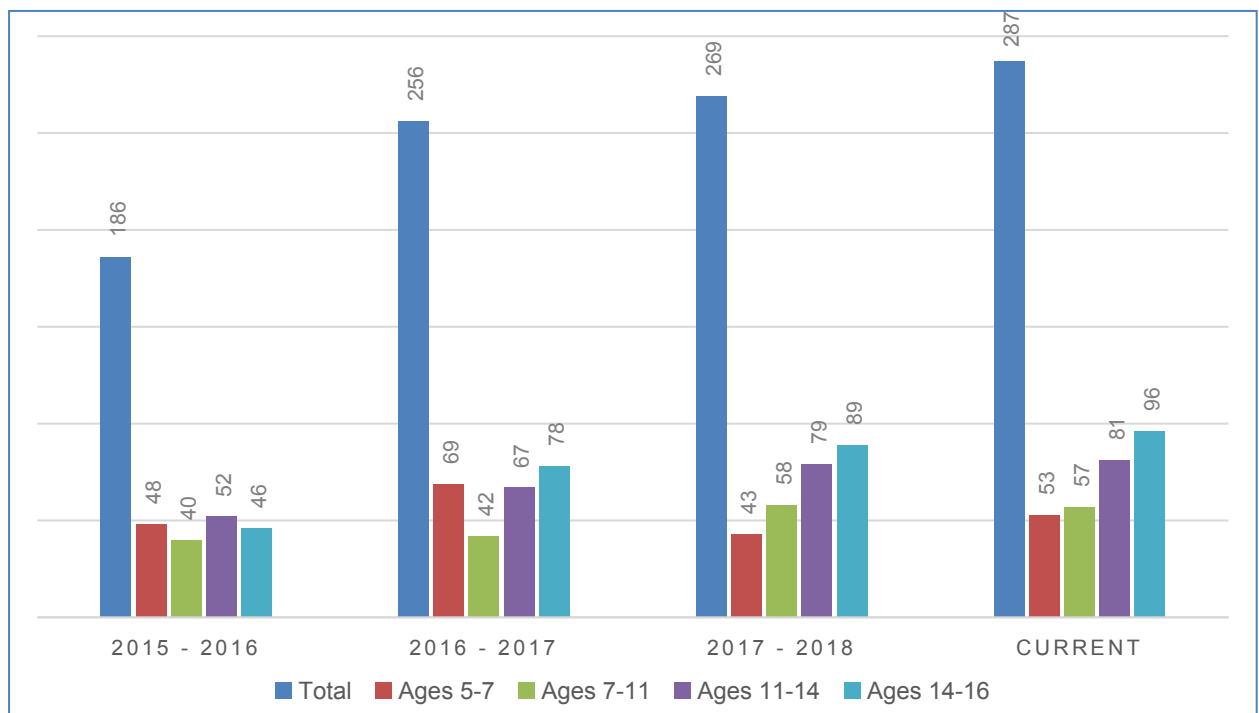
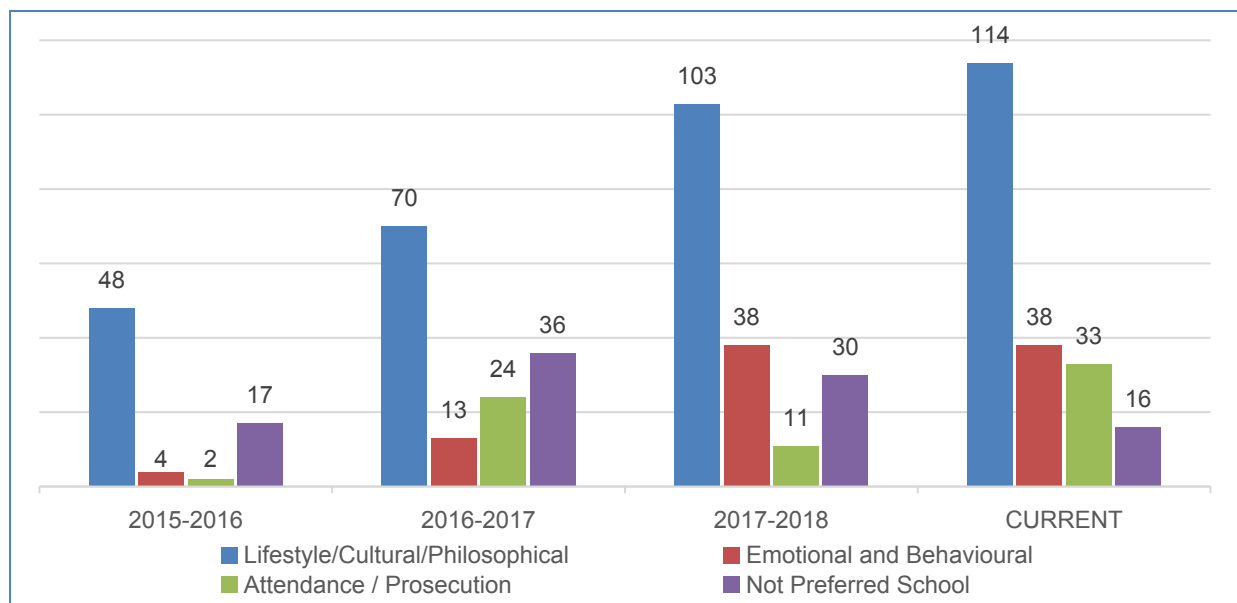


Figure 2 – Top four reasons given for opting to home educate – At the start of each academic year and as of July 2018.



- 2.5 In Wolverhampton there is a dedicated officer responsible for monitoring home education. The role of the EHE Officer is to attempt to ensure that families are fully aware of the magnitude of the commitment they are making and then to support and guide those families to provide the best education for their children. The role also offers the opportunity to have some oversight of the quality of provision offered, to respond and support appropriately and to safeguard against the risk of a poor education.
- 2.6 The EHE Officer seeks to ensure that children are receiving a broad balanced curriculum suitable to their age and stage, leading to progress at a similar rate to that of their peers in school. The EHE Officer is located within the Specialist Support Service.
- 2.7 Families are not required by law to notify a local authority of their status as EHE. Thus, if a family move into city and do not register their children with the Education Directorate, they may be unknown. Occasionally a child may get missed should a family not make a school application at the point the child is due to join reception class. In order to prevent this occurring, a process has been developed whereby health data at birth, is imported into the local authority's Capita ONE education database. The School Admissions Team will directly notify the Specialist Support Service of any children where a school application has not been made, or a school allocation has been refused. All cases of this nature are followed up to establish where the child is being educated.
- 2.7.1 When a parent withdraws a child from a school the local authority is notified either by the parent in advance of the notification to school, or by the school upon receipt of the notification. Legally schools must take a pupil off their school roll once a parent withdraws to EHE. At this point an offer of a visit is made to the family by the EHE Officer to ensure that families are fully aware of the commitment that they are taking on and to make the offer of on-going support visits. The EHE Officer makes an initial visit usually within two weeks. A standard letter would be sent in advance inviting the parent to contact the service to arrange a convenient date for a home visit (see Appendix 1).

A Elective Home Education Planning Questionnaire would also be completed by the EHE Officer (see Appendix 2).

After this point, visits are made with the agreement of the family, after approximately three months, to assess initial progress. Following this visit, further visits will be made at six monthly intervals although families can request more frequent visits.

- 2.8 Where progress is poor, visits are more frequent to promote and support an effective education. **The EHE Officer makes visits to families only with their agreement, and by prior arrangement, it is rare that the visits are not welcomed by families or that support is refused.** There are a number of families in the City whose work is of an excellent standard; these families have annual visits. Some families do not consent to visits but do submit evidence of work; this leaves only a small number of families who do not engage at all.
- 2.9 **There are currently 28 families who have not submitted evidence of work and have refused a visit from the EHE Officer.** These cases are reviewed regularly, however, current legislation restricts any direct involvement unless there are safeguarding concerns raised or, there is evidence of a suitable education not being provided. Gathering evidence of this nature can be challenging within the constraints of the existing legislation as families do not have to engage with the local authority, do not have to follow a set curriculum or provide evidence of progress. Ultimately where evidence can be gathered the local authority has powers to issue a School Attendance Order which names a school the child must attend within Wolverhampton. Over the last 5 years the local authority has started the School Attendance Order process in five cases. In these cases, the matter was resolved prior to the issuing of the Order, as one secured a school place, two provided evidence of work, one agreed to a meeting and the other went into custody.

3.0 Discussion

- 3.1 It is evident that the current EHE legislation has a number of weaknesses and limitations; identifying EHE pupils, gathering evidence of the education being provided, families not having to engage with the local authority and no need for them to follow the national curriculum.
- 3.2 In April 2018 the Department for Education (DfE) launched an EHE consultation document for local authorities, parents, young people, schools and organisations supporting EHE families. Responses were required by July 2018 and results will be published later in 2018. The overarching themes within the consultation centre on whether the statutory guidance should be reviewed and strengthened. This would ensure more effective monitoring of EHE, and whether it should be compulsory for EHE pupils to register as such. The consultation seeks comments, evidence and suggestions in relation to these two main areas.
- 3.3 Key questions posed within the consultation include:

- How effective is local authority monitoring of provision for children educated at home and what changes should be put in place to ensure that monitoring of suitability is proportionate?
- Should there be specific duties on parents to comply with the local authority and what sanctions could be put in place for non-compliance?
- Is it necessary to see the child and/or educational setting in order to assess fully the suitability of education?
- How effective are the current voluntary registration schemes that are run by some local authorities?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of using settings which are not registered, independent or state schools, to supplement home education?

City of Wolverhampton Council submitted a response to the consultation questions and a summary of the response is detailed in subsequent points below.

- 3.4 To ensure effective monitoring of provision, it would be essential to have in place a set curriculum or age specific targets for families to follow. This would provide clarity for both families and the local authority. Alongside this, guidance should be updated to include basic targets for Maths and English. This could be referred to when determining if the education is efficient. Such targets could also be used to measure pupil progress.
- 3.5 It is felt that parents should be expected to engage with the local authority, and there should be statutory timescales outlined in the guidance regarding frequency of contact. Contact should be in the form of a face to face visit within the education setting to ensure suitability of the learning environment. This would also provide an opportunity to gain the views and feelings of young people about home education. Where families do not engage there should be a clear escalation process. Responses to non-engagement should not only include the securing of educational provision, but also consider any safeguarding concerns.
- 3.6 City of Wolverhampton Council currently works closely with schools and partners to ensure EHE pupils are identified. However, there is a potential risk to young people being missed. If compulsory registration was introduced, this would reduce this risk and enable more effective tracking of young people when they move between authorities.
- 3.7 Families who opt to EHE can also access alternative provision to supplement home education. Within Wolverhampton this is not common practice amongst the EHE community. However, should families wish to use provisions that are not registered with Ofsted, there needs to be monitoring arrangements in place to ensure the provision is not operating illegally. If the provision fits the criteria to register with Ofsted this should be enforced and for smaller provisions that cannot register with Ofsted, quality assurance oversight needs to be in place.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 City of Wolverhampton Council is in full support of the EHE statutory guidance being strengthened. The timeline for the outcome is not yet known. However, it has already started to be progressed through the House of Lords.

- 4.2 While the outcome of this consultation is awaited, the EHE Officer will continue to engage with families, and link with professionals to ensure that suitable education is provided for young people who are being educated at home. The local authority will also continue to follow local procedures to ensure EHE pupils are identified.

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 The costs of the EHE Officer are funded from within the Specialist Intensive Support Service.
- 5.2 There are no other direct financial implications as a result of this report.
[NM/11072018/C]

6.0 Legal implications

- 6.1 The legal issues arising from this matter are set out in the body of the report.
[RB/13072018/Z]

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 This report to Scrutiny is not presently one for decision and therefore an equalities analysis is not required at this stage.
- 7.2 The Government will be required to support any upcoming policy with an equalities analysis prior to its approval.

8.0 Environmental implications

- 8.1 There are no environmental implications within this report

9.0 Human resources implications

- 9.1 There are no HR implications within this report.
[HR/RK/JF/066]

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications within this report.

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Parent/Carer of xxxxxx
Wolverhampton
WV

Date: XX 2018

Dear XX,

As the Elective Home Education Officer, I aim to develop a positive and supportive relationship with parents who choose to home educate, and Wolverhampton LA has a policy of offering information and guidance to home educating families.

To enable me to provide support, advice and to explain the monitoring process carried out by the LA, I would like to offer you the opportunity to book an initial, informal meeting with myself.

If you could please contact me, on the details below, to confirm if you would like to book an appointment. I would be most grateful if you could let me know by XXXX.

In addition, I would very much appreciate receiving some additional information from you for our records, I have included with this letter our Elective Home Education information paperwork.

I hope you and your child find home education a rewarding and enjoyable experience and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Hannah Finch
Elective Home Education Officer
Direct: 01902 550621
Email: Hannah.Finch@wolverhampton.gov.uk

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Education Planning

Questionnaire

Elective Home Education

Child/Young Person Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Last School attended: _____

Date Home education commenced: _____

Home Address: _____

Contact telephone number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
C O U N C I L

Elective Home Education Planning Questionnaire

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. The City of Wolverhampton Council respects your legal choice to educate your child at home.

This information is requested by the Elective Home Education Officer to help you as a parent or carer to demonstrate that you are planning to provide your child *with “efficient, full – time education suitable to his or her age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs”*

You are welcome to provide information about your child’s education using an alternative appropriate method, such as a written statement or a third party testimonial if you prefer.

- 1. Are you a member of, of planning to join, a Home Educators group, e.g. “ Education Otherwise” (Please circle one)**

Yes

No

If Yes, please give further details:

- 2. Who will be the main adults responsible for planning and providing your child's education? Please give details of any particular strengths or specialisms they have which will benefit your child.**

Names of adults and relationship to child:

- 3. Do you follow a particular philosophy of education?**

Yes

No

If Yes, please give further details:

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4. How will you organise your days and weeks? Please indicate the amount of time you child will spend regularly on each area of study. Please attach any timetables or schemes of work you intend to use.

5. What plans have you made to ensure your child progresses in Literacy and Numeracy?

- 6. What other key subjects, topics or projects will your child be following and/or what skills do you expect them to gain in the year ahead?**

- 7. What records will you keep and what methods will you use to assess your child's progress?**

8. What resources will your child be using to support their learning?
Please give *specific* examples of textbooks, reference books, CDs and websites you intend to use. e.g “Collins Maths Frameworking Y7, Book 3” or www.bbc.co.uk/education/mathsfile

9. What opportunities will your child have to develop socially and emotionally, e.g through faith groups, sport, drama, clubs?

10. If your child has any particular gifts, talents or special needs, please describe how the education you are providing will help to address these.

11. What trips, visits or other educational activities do you intend your child to take part in during the year ahead? Describe how your child's education will benefit from these.

12. What are the key targets/objectives (academic or personal) that you hope your child will achieve during the next academic year?

Please feel free to attach any other information about your child's education that you feel is relevant.

Thank you once again for completing this questionnaire. Your cooperation with our enquiries is appreciated.

Personal Information Policy

Wolverhampton City Council (the ('Council')) respects your privacy rights and is committed to ensuring that it protects your details, the information about your dealings with the Council and any other information about you available to the Council ('your information'). In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Council will use your information for the purpose of establishing details about your child's education at home, to (a) deal with your requests and administer its departmental functions; (b) meet its statutory obligations; and (c) to ensure the welfare of your child.

Briefing Note

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL
Agenda Item No: 7

Title: Future of Old Fallings Adventure Playground

Prepared by: Julia Nock, Head of Assets & Andrew
Wolverson, Head of People

Date: 24/08/18

Intended audience: Internal ☐ Partner organisation ☐ Public ☒ Confidential ☐

Purpose or recommendation

To seek the views of scrutiny on declaring Old Fallings Adventure Playground surplus to Council requirements and recommend the site be developed for housing by Wolverhampton Homes (HRA), subject to public consultation and Cabinet (Resources) Panel approval.

Overview

Old Fallings Adventure Playground was managed by the Play Service until recently and over the last few years and more recently in the last four months has been subjected to extensive vandalism. This has resulted in the Play Service ceasing their operation and delivering their service in an outreach manner. The building is therefore vacant and as this building has become a health and safety risk (due to vandalism) and would require significant investment, it is recommended to declare the asset surplus and develop for housing.

Background and context

The Old Fallings Adventure Playground (consists of two buildings) managed by the Play Service has been subjected to extensive vandalism over several years. This has left the older Peach Tree building unusable and the newest building in a state of disrepair. The buildings were previously rented to various groups, however, now stand empty.

The new building was vandalised on 25 February 2018 and at present is unusable. All groups have been cancelled and the building has been securely boarded. Corporate Landlord have assessed the damage and have determined it would require extensive repairs.

The outdoor climbing equipment has been removed due to health and safety risks and the two buildings are currently costing Corporate Landlord c£15,000 per annum to run.

Play Service

It is the intention of the Early Intervention service to continue to offer a 'play provision', as data demonstrates that it is a service that engages well with many young people and children across the City by way of offering play opportunities in open spaces. During the period April 2016 – April 2017 the Play Service engaged with approximately 15,000 young people and children. The Play service has always targeted the most deprived areas of the city and will continue to offer access to play experiences.

Retaining two full time playworkers to complete outreach play work across the city would have a positive impact for all wards. This was demonstrated in Ashmore Park where play workers engaged with young people in the evenings in a local park. The impact was immediate and a request for more sessions has been made. It is the aim of the Early Intervention service to mirror this across the city depending upon need. Staff will be based within a Strengthening Families Hub. The full time

playworkers continue to engage with young people across the city despite the closure of the Old Fallings adventure playground.

Groups based at Old Fallings Adventure Playground

The main user of the site outside of the Play team activities was a voluntary group who supported families of children with additional needs. During the period of closure, the group have relocated their activity to other venues in and outside of Wolverhampton. The group have met with council officers and expressed a desire to retain their service delivery within the Wolverhampton area. This has led to officers facilitating meetings of the group with a well-established disability charity within Wolverhampton, Include Me Too. This group are currently seeking premises within the city to develop a bespoke offering to children with disabilities and the two groups aims a closely aligned. Agreement has therefore been agreed that the groups will work to achieve the desired aims and the council would support this where required e.g. support with finding suitable premises.

Proposal

A number of options have been considered including making good the two buildings in order to attract income generation through room rental. However, the rental income would not cover the investment expenditure and running costs of the building.

Community Asset Transfer has also been considered but community groups have been disconcerted by the level of vandalism and the maintenance requirements for the two buildings and grounds.

It is therefore proposed to declare the Old Fallings Adventure Playground surplus to Council requirements. It is proposed to appropriate to Wolverhampton Homes / HRA for housing development (subject to further cost and viability investigations). This proposal is subject to public consultation which is due to take place mid-September 2018.

The site has a minimal value due to condition and location of the site. The two buildings require demolition, there is pond requiring remediation and access would need to be via the HRA Garage site for any new housing development. It is therefore understood that the most appropriate use for this site is for affordable housing through appropriation.

Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel – Draft Work Programme

Agenda Item No: 8

The Panel will have responsibility for scrutiny functions as they relate to: -

- Children in need/child protection
- Looked after children,
- Early Help 0-5,
- Early Help 5-18,
- Youth offending,
- Children's commissioning,
- School planning and resources and Standards and vulnerable pupils.

Date of Meeting	Item Description	Lead Report Author	Specific Questions for Scrutiny to consider
14.11.2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vision for School Organisation 2018-2020: City of Wolverhampton Education Place Planning - Update 	Bill Hague, Head of School Planning	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children and Adults Board Annual Report 	Dawn Williams, Head of Safeguarding/ Linda Sanders	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of SEN at post 16 and presentation self-assessment report on current provision 	Adrian Leach, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress report on the implementation of the 2018-19 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan on 16 January 2019 	Emma Bennett, Director for Children's Service	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Troubled Families Report 	Kate Lees - Strengthening Families Partnership Manager	
16.01.2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan 2018-19 – update 	Emma Bennett, Director for Children's Service	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Vision for School Organisation and School Expansion 	Stephanie Knight, School Organisation Officer	
27.03.2019	TBC		

Long list of topics - dates for presentation and method of scrutiny to be agreed

1. Supporting Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children
2. Mental Health Issues/CAMHS (Emma Bennett/CCG)
3. Unregistered independent schools and out of school settings
4. Youth Justice Plan 2018-2019 – action plan
5. Apprenticeship educational requirements
6. Progress report on school's expansion
7. Early Help Strategy 2018-2022
8. Children's Trust Board – briefing paper