

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA EDUCATION BOARD, VULNERABLE LEARNERS SUB GROUP

Minutes – 28th April 2022

Date:	Thursday 28 th April 2022
Time:	1.30pm – 3.30pm
Place:	Microsoft Teams

Membership: Brin Martin, SBC Amanda Champ, SBC Jackie Mullan, St Christophers School Julia Jones, Barons Court Lisa Clark, Hamstel Infants School Lesley Yelland, Early Years, SBC Cathy Braun, Access and Inclusion, SBC Vacancy Vacancy Mark Aspel, Parallel Learning Trust Sue Walsh– Safeguarding Manager SEEC Helen Rudman – Early Help Team, SBC Steve Cornwall – SBC Social Care Sarah Greaves, Virtual Headteacher, SBC Gary Bloom, Head of SEND, SBC Julie Hollingsworth, SEND, SBC Richard Warren, Operational Performance and Intelligence Team Wendy Hackett – Youth and Connexions Taz Sayed – Chair of the Clinical Group	Representation Director of Learning School Improvement Education Board Education Board Education Board Early Years Access and Inclusion Secondary Special/AP Academy Trust Post 16 Youth Offending Social Care Virtual School SEND SEND Data Team Youth and Connexions CCG	Other attendees: Jana Kenton (PA to Director of Learning)
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APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies were received by Wendy Hackett, Sue Walsh, Taz Sayed and Debbie Butcher. All members were welcomed to the meeting which was held virtually by Teams.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting on 03.02.22 were agreed and approved and any outstanding actions are included on the agenda.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

- AC and TS to meet outside of the meeting to discuss further progression of the offer.** Amanda confirmed to all members that this meeting has been implemented following the previous VLSG meeting in February 2022.
- JK to send out future invitations to meetings to Helen Rudman (Early Help Team).** This has been actioned and Helen was in attendance at the meeting.
- AC will liaise with LM separately regarding the placement of children with specific needs through the SEND consultation process and a meeting to b established with BM, GB and Headteachers –** It was confirmed to members that this meeting had been implemented following the previous VLSG meeting in February 2022.
- CB and BM would investigate secondary school representation at the VLSG and provide feedback of membership to the VLSG –** It was confirmed that an initial request for secondary school presentation has been made and BM is awaiting confirmation of membership.
- Inclusion Update -** BM advised members that conversations with Headteachers were starting on the 6th May at the Directors Briefing and colleagues attending would have the opportunity to discuss inclusion. BM will be inviting schools to advise of requirements and plans with regards to the start of the journey to support learners with additional needs in mainstream schools across the Local Authority and beyond and the opportunities for support available to schools and the services and facilities which are required. It was outlined that findings from the meeting will be taken to Education Board with proposals and that further updates would be provided to members at subsequent meetings.
- Update on Green Paper –** This reported on the minutes below.

ACCESS AND INCLUSION – VULNERABLE LEARNERS UPDATE

Focus Area of Discussion	Including Previous Actions from 03.02.22
Post 16	a) Verbal Report of current Post 16 matters provided by WH and VLSG members – AC presented on behalf of WH and the presentation provided was shared and discussed at the meeting. NEET/NK for March indicated that the combined NEET and Not Known figure was 3.2% which was the same as last month's figure. It sees Southend remain in the 2nd Quintile for this measure. This month's figure is below the national average of 4.5% and below the statistical neighbour average of 5.2%. This low comparable figure is

	<p>a reflection of sustained good work from Connexions but is a decline on last year where the 2021 March figure was 2.9%. NEET for March 2022 remained at 1.9%. This level is below the national average of 2.7% and below the statistical neighbour average of 3.1%, we have remained in the 2nd Quintile in this measure. NK for March has decreased to 1.2%. This March figure is below the national average of 1.8% and is below the statistical neighbour average of 2.1%.. We have remained in the 3rd Quintile in this measure. There is also a 0.2% decline on last years position for March 2021. Participation-For March the participation figure is 95.3% of young people in Southend aged 16-17 in some form of education and training. There is a slight decrease on March 2021 where participation was at 95.9%. This is still above the national (92.9%) and our statistical neighbour (90.7%) averages. Southend has ranking this month of 39.</p>																																																															
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cathy Braun to provide an update following the previous meeting on 'How attendance across all schools be improved as a collective strategy. <p>CB provided an update to members on the school attendance strategy. Based on Census Data within the national Autumn Term return Southend is identified with 5.9% absence rate which is an increase from last year by 1.6% - 0.1% higher than national. The consensus is to encourage attendance of all pupils, even with cold symptoms and for schools to encourage parents to send children to school if they are well enough, which across the Local Authority hopes to see an improvement within the Summer Term. It was outlined that there are currently 13 primary schools with higher than national average absence and the team will be meeting with each school to evaluate strategies to enhance attendance for pupils. A discussion between members took place to discuss the attendance of vulnerable learners. To aid this strategic discussion:</p> <p>SG – Presented further on the agenda focusing on LAC attendance and vulnerable cohorts.</p> <p>LC – Expressed concerns regarding lack of immunity in children in relation to young children illnesses due to lockdowns and social distancing.</p> <p>It was recognised that advice from Health and working with Public Health was desirable, especially regarding support which can be provided for children who did not attend inoculations and the rise in dental issues post lockdown. It was also advised that medical appointments are also affecting attendance figures. It was also outlined to members that schools have different strategies to approaching authorisation of holidays and it was recognised that this was down to the discretion of Headteachers and therefore further impact on attendance figures were affected across schools.</p> <p>CB presented to the VLSG members the secondary attendance figures - absence published as 7.8%, with persistent absence at 28.6%. It was outlined that this was an increase from last year, but lower than national. There has been an overall improvement of attendance within 8 out of the 11 secondary schools. Special schools absence rates were also shared with members which identifies 1.9% lower than national. From Autumn two schools have been higher than national average and again the team will be meeting with leaders of these schools in the near future. CB advised the group that all schools have been advised not to use code X unless the whole class has been closed following the advice of public health advisors. It was also outlined to members that there is a significant focus by the DfE on attendance to ensure that robust systems are in place within all schools with strategic monitoring by the Local Authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care representatives to provide feedback to members on the risk assessment process for all children identified as CIN or CP regarding school attendance. <p>CB provided an update to members on the school attendance partnership strategy. The group were informed that a 'How to' guide has been written when Social workers are working with children of school age to enhance the working partnerships. The team have revised the policy, guidance and a revised offer went to schools last September which has been shared with schools across the Local Authority.</p> <p>Future Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive further updates on the impact of strategies implemented for supported schools to enhance attendance. 																																																															
EHE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GB to provide a breakdown for EHE with an EHCP and the reason and category of need. Although GB was not in attendance at the meeting, subsequent information was requested by the Chair and is included in the minutes. There are currently 11 EHE students supported by an EHCP with the Category of Need and Year Group highlighted below. <table border="1" data-bbox="312 1525 1283 1921"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year Group</th> <th>ASD</th> <th>PD</th> <th>SEMH</th> <th>SLCN</th> <th>SLD</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>5</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>11</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A further verbal Report of current EHE matters was provided by CB to all members where highlights were provided on the key sharing of information across all agencies following the EHE process.</p>	Year Group	ASD	PD	SEMH	SLCN	SLD	Total	1		1				1	2	1	1				2	5	1					1	7	1			1	1	3	9			1			1	10	1					1	11	1		1			2	Total	5	2	2	1	1	11
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Disadvantaged Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive feedback from Helen Rudman regarding the EHfSA documentation as a multi-agency referral form for a wider range of agency support. 																																																															

	<p>HR provided an update to members on the EHFSAs documentation. It was outlined that this is a multi-agency referral form and that work has started on the assessment and the referral form evaluation following outcomes from the previous VLSG meeting. Last week confirmation was received for the Family Funding and the multi-agency group will work on the assessment and form with initial drafts currently being underway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive and discuss the Alternative Provision reports - MA shared all reports to members of the group. It was advised that due to the complex needs of pupils the service is aiming to get earlier intervention to schools. Attendance is reasonable and higher than national average and is currently identified at 96%. It was outlined that the NEET current cohort are predicted to achieve well in exams and robust systems of tracking are embedded across the provision. It is predicted that 78% of students will achieve 9-4 within their GCSEs. The recent OFSTED inspection identified the lack of phonics system and MA outlined measures which are currently being implemented to address this area. • To receive and discuss the Alternative Provision reports - CB updated members on the reports sent by the Inclusion Team concerning Interim Tuition. It was outlined that options for appraisal for the service area and recommendations would be presented to the Education Board. Any comments and feedback on the reports received were requested to be forwarded to CB which will support the end paper that will be submitted to VLSG at the next meeting. <p>A question was raised regarding the safeguarding self-evaluation audit (Section 175) as the last one completed by schools was in February 2020 and that schools have not received any further correspondence. Feedback was provided by LY who outlined that discussions are currently being implemented and that schools would receive further information by June 2022.</p> <p>Future Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive further feedback from HR on the work being undertaken on the EHFSAs as a multi-agency referral process. • To receive feedback following the presentation at the Education Board.
SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive a verbal report on current SEND matters provided by GB, JH, BM and VLSG Members - JH advised members that the SENCO meeting took place on the 27th April 2022 with the majority of schools from Southend attending. Follow up meetings are scheduled with SENCOs interested in develop further effective transitional work which will be shared at the next VLSG meeting. <p>A question was raised regarding the EHC Hub and the contribution of health to Annual Reviews – it was agreed by members that LM will provide an overview of the multi-agency approach and impact for students and families at the next VLSG meeting.</p> <p>Future Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive a report from the SEND Team on the contributions from external contributions at the Annual Review meetings through multi-agency working on the EHC Hub.
CLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG to evaluate attendance of LAC pupils and provide an update at the meeting. • SG to share at the meeting the half academic year review for discussion. • SG to provide further information on the Anglia and Ruskin University mentoring session, • To receive the Virtual School Report for sharing and discussion at the meeting. <p>SG shared the Virtual School presentation and the outcomes for KPIs to all members and questions for discussion were invited from the group.</p> <p>LC requested clarification on LAC pupils attending good and outstanding schools and this was confirmed in relation to Southend LAC whether they are placed in Southend or out of Borough schools as 81%. SG advised members that the Virtual School actively place children in good and outstanding schools and although there are some schools that are attended by LAC pupils that might not fall into these categories the team fully evaluate the need of the child and the individual circumstances. BM is fully supportive of this approach and view where LAC find themselves in less than a good school.</p> <p>SG shared the Report re LAC pupil attendance – which indicated there has been a year on year 3 year improvement with attendance now at 96% with the team trying to bring this in line with national benchmarking for all pupils. Attendance since September 2021 for all LAC students is between 91-93% and currently the Virtual School is not able to present up to date information to compare with the statistical neighbour as the SFR information has not released – no data info from DfE, however it was reported that all absence data is better than national and the statistical neighbour.</p> <p>A breakdown for primary and secondary absence was shared with the group and it was highlighted that impacting factors are identified as absconding, missing, episodes, issue re reunification, fixed term inclusions and medical appointments. Persistent absence is in line with national and better than statistical neighbour, however it is recognised that there are still concerns regarding attendance of LAC pupils. There are currently 17 CIN pupils and that there continues to be concerns regarding the attendance of CP pupils. The Virtual School is currently reviewing expectations to review the absence through banding in 5% increments so that there is a clear line of escalation. The Virtual School are also looking at different structures as predominantly secondary school support is needed. It was agreed that this proposed change to structure would be shared at the next VLSG meeting.</p> <p>A question was raised regarding whether social workers were given advice on attendance following contact with welfare call - how quickly does it get flagged up? SG outlined that daily accessing of welfare call information was implemented and as soon as they are aware that a LAC is not attending school this information is provided to ensure that support can be provided if necessary and the Social Worker is advised and the Foster Carer contacted.</p> <p>It was agreed that questions in the PowerPoint will be sent round to members and any questions and feedback will be provided to SG and be put on the agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p>Future Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss questions raised by VLSG members regarding the Virtual School Presentation.

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no further items.

Next meeting 23rd June 2022 at 1.30pm