



County Offices
Newland
Lincoln
LN1 1YL

5 January 2023

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Friday, 13 January 2023 at 10.00 am in The Council Chamber, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL** for the transaction of the business set out on the attached Agenda.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Debbie Barnes'.

Debbie Barnes OBE
Chief Executive

Membership of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
(11 Members of the Council and 3 Added Members)

Councillors R J Kendrick (Chairman), W H Gray (Vice-Chairman), S A J Blackburn, R J Cleaver, Mrs J E Killey, C Matthews, N Sear, T J N Smith, J Tyrrell, M A Whittington and R A Wright

Added Members

Church Representative: Martin Kyle

Parent Governor Representatives: Mrs M R Machin and 1 Parent Governor Vacancy

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA
FRIDAY, 13 JANUARY 2023**

Item	Title	Pages
1	Apologies for Absence / Replacement Members	
2	Declarations of Members' Interest	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting held 2 December 2022	5 - 16
4	Announcements by the Chairman, Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement and Chief Officers	
5	Children's Services Budget Proposals 2023/24 <i>(To receive a report from Mark Popplewell, Strategic Finance Lead – Children's Services, which invites the Committee to consider the Council's budget proposals for the next financial year 2023, and the implications for the Council's Children's Services activities)</i>	17 - 28
6	Attendance in Schools, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education Annual Report 2021/22 <i>(To receive a report by Jill Chandar-Nair, Inclusion and Attendance Manager, which invites the Committee to review and endorse the School Attendance, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education Annual Report for the 2021/22 academic year)</i>	29 - 42
7	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme <i>(To receive a report from Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer, which enables the Committee to consider and comment on the contents of its work programme to ensure that its scrutiny activity is focused where it can be of greatest benefit)</i>	43 - 50
8	CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION In accordance with Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the following agenda item has not been circulated to the press and public on the grounds that it is considered to contain exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. The press and public may be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of this item of business.	
9	Recommissioning of Children with Disabilities Services <i>(To receive an exempt report from Rosemary Akrill, Senior Commissioning Officer, which invites the Committee to consider a report which is being presented to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement for the decision between 20-27 January 2023)</i>	51 - 114

10 Expansion of Branston Community Academy

115 - 130

(To receive an exempt report from Neal Kathel, Project Team Leader – Corporate Property, which invites the Committee to consider a report which is being presented to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement for decision between 23-27 January 2023)

Democratic Services Officer Contact Details

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Please note: for more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting

- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements

Contact details set out above.

Please note: This meeting will be broadcast live on the internet and access can be sought by accessing [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Friday, 13th January, 2023, 10.00 am \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

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**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
2 DECEMBER 2022**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R J KENDRICK (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors W H Gray (Vice-Chairman), R J Cleaver, Mrs J E Killey, N Sear, T J N Smith, J Tyrrell, T R Ashton and A M Hall

Added Members

Councillors: P Bradwell and S Roe were also in attendance.

Officers in attendance:

Andy Cook (Service Manager - Future4Me), Linda Dennett (Assistant Director - Children's Health and Commissioning), Nicky Myers (Interim Head of Service Early Years & Childcare Support), Tony Pryce (Joint Diversionary Panel Co-Ordinator), Heather Sandy (Executive Director of Children's Services), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Jo Kavanagh (Assistant Director of Early Help), Geraldine O'Neill (Lead Consultant - Early Years Entitlement) and Lynn Wilkinson (Lead Nurse for Children's Health 0-19)

9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Tyrrell, C Matthews and R Wright.

It was reported that, under Regulation 13 of the Local Government Committee and Political Groups) Regulation 1990, Councillor T Ashton was replacing Councillor R Wright and Councillor A Hall was replacing Councillor C Matthews for this meeting only.

10 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this point in proceedings.

11 MINUTES OF THE RECONVENED MEETING (09/09/2022) HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the reconvened meeting held on 21 October 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2022

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2 DECEMBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 October 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

13 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROCUREMENT AND CHIEF OFFICERS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Democratic Services had held an election for a new Parent Governor Representative to replace Miss Alex Sayer on the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. Unfortunately, no nominations were received, and Democratic Services were looking to hold a further election in the new year.
- Democratic Services had been advised by the Diocese of Lincoln that Reverend Philip Johnson was no longer the Church Representative on the Committee. Reverend Johnson was appointed as the Church Representative in November 2017. On behalf of the Committee, he gave thanks to Reverend Johnson for his time and commitment over the last five years. A replacement was now being identified by the Diocese of Lincoln.

Councillor Mrs P Bradwell OBE, Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement advised the Committee that a youth offending service inspection was happening in the new year, and the results would be brought back to the Committee in due course.

14 JOINT DIVERSIONARY PANEL - UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN EVALUATION

The Committee received a report from Andy Cook, Head of Service – Future4Me and Youth Offending, and Tony Pryce, Joint Diversionary Panel (JDP) Coordinator which updated the Committee on the progress made against the recommendations following the evaluation undertaken of the JDP by the University of Lincoln, which was presented to the Committee in November 2021. Chairman welcomed Detective Chief Inspector Dave McKean from Lincolnshire Police who was also in attendance for this item. It was reported that:

- The JDP was an out-of-court process which worked with young people in Lincolnshire in collaboration with Lincolnshire Police
- Evaluations were positive, and key areas of focus were built upon recommendations received, such as engagement, strategy, victim participation, data analysis, communication and sharing success stories.
- Diversionary approaches were flexible and differed across the country which allowed the JDP to be responsive in responding to evaluations and improving the service.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2 DECEMBER 2022**

- Centring the voice of the young people was a focus and the JDP had updated to ensure all visits were done in person. Physical visits were beneficial in communicating with the young person about their offence and ensuring intervention was specific to the child's needs.
- Further changes had been made to centre the voice of the victims during the panel process, and responses were restorative; meetings were held between the offending Young Person and victims which proved a powerful experience for both parties.
- Support to victims continued after the Panel in accordance with the Victim's Code and the Victim's Charter.

During consideration of the report, the following was noted:

- Ensuring young people did not reoffend was a core part of the work undertaken by the JDP, and the restorative element of the Panel had decreased reoffending figures. Engagement with victims provided valuable insights that challenged the young people about their behaviour and discouraged them from reoffending. This was tracked closely, and reoffending rates were ten points below the statutory work from the Court system.
- The Executive Director of Children's Services highlighted the difference between the reoffending rates tracked by the JDP and the information which was received by the Committee on reoffending rates. The latter applied to more serious convictions where young people were more entrenched in their behaviour. This pertained to a minority of cases, and support was provided to these children.
- An inspection of the Youth Offending Service was due to take place in the new year and its outcome would capture information on how Lincolnshire's JDP benchmarked against other local authorities. Work was ongoing with the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Education on how to improve the service.
- Members suggested that further quantitative data and analysis would be useful to provide further perspective, and the Head of Service highlighted that the data provided in the report mostly related to demographic information and offence type as the recommendations were the focus of the report. He assured the Committee that further data was available and this was provided to the Youth Offending Service Strategic Management Board.
- Good practice was being promoted in District Councils and their Chief Executives through meetings, and the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement and the Executive Director of Children's Services agreed to share information about the JDP and its success to all Members of the Council
- It was requested that Officers visit East Lindsey District Council to share the successes of the Panel.

RESOLVED

That the Committee reviewed the report and was satisfied with the progress made against the recommendations contained within the evaluation and the on-going development of the Joint Diversionary Panel.

15 COVID IMPACT AND RESPONSE TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES

Nicky Myers, the Interim Head of Service for Early Years and Childcare Support, and Lynn Wilkinson, Lead Nurse for Children's Health 0-19, delivered a report on the impact of the pandemic on young children's learning and development. Linda Dennett, Assistant Director for Children's Health and Commissioning was also in attendance for this item. It was reported that:

- OFSTED had concluded the pandemic had affected verbal skills of children. Providers subsequently ensured children were learning in language-based environments to encourage better communication and vocabulary.
- The Early Year Foundation Stage compiled a validated data set which highlighted a national drop in outcomes for 'good' levels of development; Lincolnshire's performance was 64.2%, 1% below the national average of 65.2% whereas the previous data set from 2019 had illustrated a 2.2% difference.
- Lincolnshire's outcomes were above national and regional averages in most goals, particularly in the prime areas of learning but were below average in Self-Regulation, Writing and both Mathematical goals.
- Data-sharing with the Teaching School Hub enabled the delivery of bespoke support for children in reception classes.
- The Early Years Recovery Programme had been announced by Government to offer further support for child development.
- LCC was working with parents to ensure they have an awareness of entitlement for funded places to benefit social and behavioral outcomes of children. Levels of families eligible for the 2-year-old entitlement had reduced nationally, however the number of children accessing provision in Lincolnshire was maintained.
- Attendance at children's centers had increased since the Pandemic.
- The government had selected Lincolnshire as one of the authorities to benefit from the Family Hub Programme.
- The provision of some health services became virtual due to COVID restrictions and was exacerbated by a national workforce shortage for nurses and health visitors. Visits were now conducted physically.
- The pandemic highlighted parental demands on the service in terms of parental mental health, conflict, growth, language, and behavioral concerns on a regional and national scale.
- There was an increase of non-attendance at appointments, for example 246.25 hours were lost in June 2022. This was now being monitored monthly by a Working Group.

- 8-12 month contact by family health workers was received well since its introduction in October 2022.

During consideration of the report, the following was noted:

- Members considered the long-term impact of the pandemic on speech and communication, and the Interim Head of Service informed the Committee that speech and language referrals to the service had increased by 10% nationally. The Early Language Indication Measure (ELIM) had also been introduced as a tool to identify children who are likely to experience speech problems, and all partners in the early years sector were working on pathways to ensure children receive the earliest possible support.
- The National Family Hub programme contributed all funding to early years and catch-up strategies which alleviated some pressure from schools.
- Student health visitors had been hired to help provision and performance return to pre-pandemic levels; the benefits of which would be identifiable in 2023. The Executive Director for Children's Health and Commissioning highlighted Lincolnshire's performance had benchmarked above other authorities throughout the pandemic.
- 'Self-regulation' regarding GLD goals alluded to behavioral regulation of children in Lincolnshire.
- It was questioned whether the service would still perform at full capacity, i.e., if non-attendance rates were 0. The Assistant Director for Children's Health and Commissioning assured additional staff would support in completing key tasks. Results from the Working Group were anticipated to identify reasons why people were not attending; text reminders had already led to a decrease of non-attendance.
- Attendance at children's centres was 62.72% although registration was 100%, but strategies were in place and attendance had returned to pre-pandemic levels. Children were registered through the school readiness offer.
- Immunisation of children was reported to be below the required 95% for herd immunity. The Assistant Director for Children's Health and Commissioning explained this was under the remit of general practitioners and practice nurses; she was in attendance of immunisation committees and had information to identify surgeries where immunisation was lower.
- Lincolnshire had adopted specific strategies and consequently was performing differently to other and catch-up strategies were particularly beneficial in Boston and South Holland. This performance was exacerbated by there being no reduction of service during the pandemic.
- Individual caseloads had increased since the pandemic and were consistently monitored.
- The student Health Visitor recruitment strategy was praised by members, and the Committee requested further updates on non-attendance.

RESOLVED

1. That the report and comments be noted.
2. That the approaches used by the Early Years and Health Visiting services to support improved outcomes for children in Lincolnshire be supported by the Committee.

16 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE REPORTING AGAINST THE SUCCESS FRAMEWORK
2022-23 - QUARTER 2

Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director for Early Help, delivered a report which summarised the Service Level Performance against the Success Framework 2022-23 for Quarter 2.

It was reported that:

- Three measures had exceeded targets, two targets were met, two targets were not met, and one measure could not be reported on.
- The Joint Diversionary Panel had the most profound impact on keeping children out of the judicial system; there were 106 in 100,000 young people who had received a police caution or were convicted or sentenced following court attendance.
- Lincolnshire positively benchmarked on the amount of time taken to find children an adoptive family. The number of children in care had also increased but this figure also benchmarked well nationally.
- There was an increase of 16- to 17-year-old young people in care who were participating in education.
- The rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan was below target due to the impact of the pandemic on families and services.
- The average time taken to move a child from care to an adoptive family was also below target and this was attributed to court delays. Time scales were also longer as efforts were made to ensure children were placed for adoption where possible, and many children were initially placed with foster carers before they were adopted which also impacted time scales.
- The juvenile rate of reoffending could not be reported on due to a delay in the production of the Re-offending data published by the Ministry of Justice.

During consideration of the report, the following was noted:

- Members questioned whether court delays were the primary factor impacting adoption time scales; the Assistant Director for Early Help highlighted that extensive work was done to ensure children were adopted under the right circumstances which contributed towards longer time scales.

- The Executive Director for Children’s Services highlighted that Lincolnshire had received many arrivals of young asylum-seekers through the National Transfer Scheme and these individuals would have to make 0.1% of the population for Lincolnshire to have reached capacity. The Executive Councillor for Children’s Services, Community Safety and Procurement clarified that there were 48 asylum-seeking children in the county, with four being under the age of 16.
- The impacts of the cost-of-living crisis were being closely monitored by the performance team and senior managers, but the potential effect on the care system was still unknown.
- It was reported that children who were incarcerated were categorised as being in suitable education, employment, or training however it was clarified this was a national measure.
- Child Protection Plans were monitored closely; despite statistics fluctuating throughout Covid, the early help provisions available in Lincolnshire were exceptional. If Lincolnshire was to move closer to its statistical neighbours, The Executive Director for Children’s Services acknowledged it would have an impact on finances.
- The quality of conferences was impacted during the pandemic as they were required to be held virtually. Changes had been implemented to ensure all key members were physically present which benefitted both the child and their families.
- The Committee requested an update on the recruitment campaigns for foster parents. Lincolnshire was reported to benchmark well, but there was a need for increased foster, adoptive and respite care.
- The recent John Lewis advertisement had promoted foster caring, with Lincolnshire having received 11 enquiries since the advert’s introduction.
- Officers commended the consistent hard work of foster parents.

RESOLVED

That the Committee reviewed the report and was satisfied with the performance of the measure that were either above or below the target range.

17 HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD PROGRAMME (HAF) SUMMER 2022 UPDATE

Nicky Myers, Interim Head of Service for Early Years and Childcare Support, and Denise Hornsey, Senior Project Manager delivered a report which provided an update on the delivery of the HAF Programme during Summer 2022 to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. It was reported that:

- Overall, HAF was successful during Summer 2022. 3752 children had engaged with HAF provision which demonstrated an increase compared to Easter 2022 and Summer 2021.

- Around 500 children did not attend, and this was being mitigated before Christmas.
- Providing additional HAF for SEND and secondary school children was a priority in the future.
- Improvements were being made ahead of Christmas 2022, such as changes to the booking system and increasing the number of providers providers to 64 over 162 sites. Additionally, HAF would offer provision to a range of ages and would offer bespoke packages for refugee children.
- There would be 25,000 sessions available during the Christmas period, and funds had been reserved to expand the HAF Programme if demand exceeded provision.
- HAF had delivered to a wider geographical area and had offered extra support to the east coast of Lincolnshire
- Materials were provided to families to support them during the cost of living crisis such as recipe books and health and wellbeing packs.
- There were efforts to maintain a gendered approach to HAF, with girls being encouraged to engage in physical activity.

During consideration of the report, the following was noted:

- Members praised the work of the programme, and the Chairman informed the Committee that he had visited a HAF project in his division and was struck by the enthusiasm of staff and the excitement of the children.
- A session was categorised as an activity lasting for a minimum of four hours and a maximum of six hours.
- Non-attendance was attributed to parents forgetting they had registered or parents or children changing their mind, despite being able to cancel in advance.
- Members questioned whether the HAF provision could be extended to other areas in Lincolnshire such as Horncastle. The Senior Project Manager assured the Committee that there was a HAF club in Horncastle but had temporarily withdrawn provision due to construction work at the school where the club was held. Other schools in Horncastle were approached to host HAF programmes, however this was too costly. It was assured that there would be a HAF programme in Horncastle at Christmas.
- A new theatre HAF programme was due to be delivered in the Stamford area.
- A marketing plan and strategy were being implemented to promote the message of HAF around the county, and the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement had written to all businesses who had supported the scheme.

RESOVED:

That the Committee reviewed the report and was satisfied with the HAF Programme delivered for 2022.

18 EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY REPORT

The Committee received a report from Nicky Myers, Interim Head of Service for Early Years and Childcare Support, and Geraldine O'Neill, Sustainability and Development Manager for Children's Education, which provided recommendations to support the development of early years and childcare places in Lincolnshire to meet the statutory childcare sufficiency duty including a request to the Secretary of State to convert trajectory funding into capital. It was reported that:

- The annual survey of childcare providers had been engaged with well; 95% of early years providers had responded, and a 100% response rate from clubs offering before/after school and holiday provision.
- A parent survey was hosted through the Let's Talk Lincolnshire platform which yielded almost 1500 responses. The survey identified a heightened need for after school provision which was now being addressed.
- Work around raising awareness of the Family Service Directory was ongoing with the Engagement Team.
- Sustainability within the childcare sector was being affected by the cost of living, increased insurance premiums for childcare providers and staff wages. Collaborative work was being undertaken alongside the Department for Education and other regional colleagues to offer further support.
- A digital campaign was launched to help improve staff retention by promoting careers in childcare.
- There had been some closures of childcare provisions, but this was monitored closely and the sector was expanding places where possible.

During consideration of the report, the following was noted:

- Members questioned why only 61% of parents felt they had sufficient childcare to meet their childcare needs, and whether there was a challenge to meet demand. Assurance was given that a delivery plan was being developed to identify these gaps in provision, alongside collaborating with schools, the private sector and the voluntary sector.
- There was a growing pressure around costs for providing childcare to SEND children, but there was a comprehensive training package offered to all providers to facilitate SEND children. There was also access to SENCo network training around transfer arrangements, and providers had access to additional inclusion and disability funding.
- There were strong commitments made from pre-existing providers wanting to expand their provision, and the Sustainability and Development Manager for

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Children's Education was going to invite local providers to discuss potential areas of expansion.

RESOLVED

1. That the report and comments be noted.
2. That the recommendation to capitalise £0.780m of Dedicated Schools Grant revenue funding through a Disapplication Request to the Department for Education for Secretary of State approval be supported.

19 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report from Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer, which invited members to consider and comment on the content of its work programme, to ensure that scrutiny activity was focused where it could be of greatest benefit. Members noted the work programme and there were no further suggestions.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be agreed.

20 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that if they were present there could be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

21 LINCOLNSHIRE SECURE CHILDREN'S HOME NEW BUILD BUSINESS CASE

Consideration was given to the exempt report.

The Committee raised a number of questions which were answered by the Officers present.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee support the recommendations to the Leader of the Council as set out in the report.
2. That the Committee's comments be passed on to the Leader of the Council in relation to this item.

The meeting closed at 12.49 pm

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Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Executive Director - Children's Services

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	13 January 2023
Subject:	Council Budget 2023/24

Summary:

This report outlines the Council's budget proposals for the next financial year 2023/24.

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24 was published on the 19 December 2022. We await further budgetary information from the Lincolnshire District Councils so the budget proposals for 2023/24 are therefore estimated at this stage.

The Executive considered the budget proposals at its meeting on 4 January 2023, following which they were open to consultation.

This report specifically looks at the 2023/24 budget implications for the Council's Children's Services activities.

Members of this Committee have the opportunity to scrutinise them and make comment, prior to the Executive meeting on 7 February 2023 when it will make its final budget proposals for 2023/24.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider this report and provide comments on the Children's Services budget proposals for consideration by the Executive at its meeting on 7 February 2023.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Executive is currently consulting on a single year financial plan for revenue and capital budgets. This budget proposal is informed by both the Autumn Statement announced 17 November 2022 and the Provisional Settlement published 19 December 2022.

- 1.2 The Autumn statement reflects a more positive outlook for 2023/24 and 2024/25 than anticipated. The Medium-Term Financial Plan includes a forecast position for 2025/26 and 2026/27 but these need to be read with a note of caution due to the uncertainty beyond 2024/25.
- 1.3 The Government has signaled that public spending will increase at a much slower rate after 2024/25 with priority areas like health, education and defence likely to absorb any increase.
- 1.4 This gives rise to the potential scenario in two years time whereby funding could be maintained or even reduced, set against a cost base which continues to increase. It is essential that financial decisions take into account this financial outlook beyond 2024/25.
- 1.5 The Council wide current position reflects a deficit position in all years. The deficit estimate in 2023/24 is currently estimated to be around £10.3m, subject to any further changes to the cost base, the local taxation position finalising (assumed 2.99% increase) and the Local Government finance settlement.
- 1.6 In closing the gap for 2023/24 and delivering services in a balanced budget, the Council can either utilise available reserves and/or increase council tax, the latter on its own will only partially close the gap.
- 1.7 Children's Services activities are presented through the headings Children's Education and Children's Social Care.

Children's Education

- 1.8 Services and associated proposed 2023/24 budgets include:
 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) (£8.254m)
 - Education Support Services (£0.973m)
 - School Improvement (£0.802m)
 - Statutory Regulatory Duties (£3.090m)
- 1.9 Table A below sets out the revenue 2023/24 financial year budget proposals for Children's Education:

Table A

Change of Previous Years	£'000
Original Budget 2022/23	13,350
<u>Changes for 2023/24</u>	
Pay Inflation	0
Cost pressures	190
Savings	-421
Proposed Budget 2023/24	13,119
Percentage Change	-3.15%

- 1.10 Children's Education service activities are proposing to make savings of £0.421m in 2023/24. Of this sum, £0.370m is proposed in response to the Department for Education (DfE) decision to remove the funding for Local Authorities School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant for school improvement activities supporting maintained schools from 2023/24. The grant reduction of £0.585m represents c.50% of planned spending on School Improvement from core funding.
- 1.11 In late 2021, the Council responded strongly to the DfE consultation opposing such a change, as did councils across the country. The Council raised concerns over the rationale of removing the grant funding; the inequity this will provide when comparing the Regional Schools Commissioner role in supporting academies and the impact this will have on maintained schools including our small schools. The Council considers its investment in the education sector as a strategic priority to enable all children to prosper across all Lincolnshire schools and supports the continuation of the current approach of strategic system leadership and direct work with maintained schools, which is considered a lean school improvement support model. The Council has an important role in driving standards and joined up arrangements in the local area.

The DfE has reduced the grant by 50% in the current year, which the Council is temporarily managing. The Council's current financial position and the rising costs it is facing in the delivery of services means a permanent solution cannot be secured to offset the grant reduction. The Council has reviewed opportunities for general efficiencies and smarter working through both the strategic system leadership and the Council's statutory responsibilities for maintained schools for implementation from 2023/24. The Council does not agree with the DfE solution of maintained schools bearing an 'additional' financial burden on their schools budgets, particularly at this time, therefore the Council considered it an opportune moment to review

existing de-delegation budgets¹. The Lincolnshire Schools' Forum maintained primary school members agreed at the October 2022 committee meeting to the recommendation of re-purposing existing de-delegation funding to support the direct work with maintained primary schools whilst still achieving our overall objectives for 2023/24.

The Council continues to find that the most impact in schools is from additional expertise being deployed into vulnerable schools (such as the Education Locality leads) to work with leaders to add capacity and address immediate issues. The remaining Council funding will continue to support the strategic system leadership for all schools and statutory responsibilities.

1.12 The remaining sums include: legacy of savings delivered through the Budget 2020 exercise (£0.001m); Corporate savings through Business Support (£0.029m) and lease cars (£0.022m).

1.13 Within this area, the only cost pressure in 2023/24 relates to the impact of the National Living Wage (NLW) rising in April 2023 from £9.50 per hour to £10.42 (9.7% increase). The rise in the NLW / inflation will have a direct impact on the costs for delivering domiciliary care and direct payments in the support for children with disabilities (£0.190m).

1.14 The current year public sector pay award is built within the 2023/24 budgets. Pay award assumptions for 2023/24 are currently excluded from services budgets until the position is clear and the exact budgetary requirements are known. The Council has budgeted for a pay award in the Council's Medium-Term Finance Plan.

Children's Social Care Services

1.15 Services and associated proposed 2023/24 budgets include:

- 0-19 Health Services (£11.238m)
- Early Help Services (£10.308m)
- Family Assessment and Support Team (FAST) (£19.075m)
- Adoption and Fostering Services (£16.174m)
- Residential Homes and Placements (£18.039m)
- Leaving Care Services and Supported Accommodation (£5.348m)
- Targeted Support for Young People and Youth Offending (£4.094m)

1.16 Table B below sets out the revenue 2023/24 financial year budget proposals for Children's Social Care Services:

¹ The DfE allows under the school funding arrangements the de-delegation of some services for maintained schools funded through the maintained sector.

Table B

Change of Previous Years	£'000
Original Budget 2022/23	83,172
<u>Changes for 2023/24</u>	
Pay Inflation	0
Cost pressures	2,013
Savings	-909
Proposed Budget 2023/24	84,276
Percentage Change	1.33%

1.17 Children's Social Care Services are proposing to make savings of £0.909m in 2023/24.

1.18 The Children in Care (CiC) transformation programme is helping to realise our ambition of improving outcomes for children and achieving financial stability. The key strategic aims include providing the right help to the right children and for the right duration; to support families to come to their own solutions by focusing on building networks and providing care locally. CiC transformational savings include the continued strategic management of placements (£1.076m) which is showing as a cost pressure reduction following an increase in funding of £3.013m in 2021/22, and the opening of two new children's homes in 2023 to ensure that more local and high-quality provision is available, which are more cost effective (£0.272m).

1.19 Children's Services carried out a review of its budgets to realise efficiency savings for 2023/24. £0.402m has been proposed through utilisation of Government grants that are continuing into future years, such as the Staying Put Scheme and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children grant, and changes in demand levels for supported childcare. There are no service implications from these budget changes. £0.043m relates to the legacy of savings delivered through the Budget 2020 exercise delivered through the Supported Accommodation Pathway in meeting the needs of 16/17 year olds at risk of homelessness and care leavers, and the remaining sums relate to Corporate savings through Business Support (£0.125m) and lease cars (£0.067m).

1.20 Within this area, there are also proposed cost pressures of £3.089m in 2023/24. Of this, £1.404m is to reflect the cost rises in Children in Care (CiC). Despite the recent growth and the potential for future increase, there continues to be an emphasis on prevention from children coming into care and exit planning from the care system where it can be achieved. Cost rises of £0.794m reflect the potential growth in CiC population rising by 2.0 per 10,000 p.a. from the current rate of 50. Even with the recent increase, the Lincolnshire number of CiC per 10,000 remains significantly below the most recent published figures both nationally and by our statistical

neighbours (67 per 10,000 and 63.4 per 10,000 respectively as of 31 March 2021). Lincolnshire current CiC numbers are at 759. Further cost rises of £0.610m reflect the increased costs across the composition of placement types supporting this vulnerable group. Supporting our highly valued in-house foster carers is a key consideration to this. In addition, unfavourable market conditions for independent external placements including a national demand for placements are also causing cost rises, which is unsustainable. The impact of Covid-19 and the national lockdowns has seen a pressure upon the marketplace and availability and cost of external placements, and the reduction in the availability of in-house foster placements.

- 1.21 It is unsurprising that the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan (403 at December 2022) has increased. There are lasting impacts from the public health pandemic and increased pressures and financial hardship upon families at the current time. Child protection plans create safety, and early intervention with families and effective risk management continues to take place to ensure that only the right children are subject to a child protection plan.
- 1.22 The CiC transformation programme will continue to respond to these challenges including the planned opening of two new children's homes in 2023, which has been supported financially by the Council through the capital programme and DfE match funding.
- 1.23 The Council has a Children's Services system which is working well and a CiC Service which is outstanding, and the Council continues to strive for improved outcomes for children and families. The services benchmark well financially against national averages also, and measures are being taken to secure improved value for money.
- 1.24 A proposed cost pressure of £0.285m relates to Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs). SGOs continue to be seen by the Courts as an important option for permanency for children who need to be removed from their birth parents which is endorsed by officers. The Council is however required to fund SGOs (subject to means testing) until the child reaches the age of 18 years. The expected increases are based on average numbers of SGOs being granted per month based on past trends.
- 1.25 A proposed cost pressure of £1.400m is to reflect the higher than budgeted costs for social care legal costs due to the complexity of cases; reliance on expert advice; the use of counsel and increase in CiC numbers. Children's Services continue to apply the statutory threshold to initiating care proceeding and pre-proceedings. Pre-proceedings are an important process working with the family to reach an agreement about what needs to happen to protect the child.
- 1.26 The current year public sector pay award is built within the 2023/24 budgets. Pay award assumptions for 2023/24 are currently excluded from services budgets until the position is clear and the exact budgetary requirements are known. The Council has budgeted for a pay award in the Council's Medium-Term Finance Plan.

Capital Programme

- 1.27 A ten-year Capital Programme has been compiled in line with the principles set out in our Capital Strategy, including the principle of Affordability.
- 1.28 For Lincolnshire maintained schools, Children's Services manage and maintain a comprehensive annual capital programme of individual school condition and maintenance projects which is overseen by the Children's Services Capital Programme Board. The service continues to receive all capital funding made available by the DfE for schools to enable it to manage critical priority issues.
- 1.29 An estimated grant award for the Schools Condition Allocation is £3.000m for 2023/24 to support Lincolnshire maintained schools. This will be updated based on the number of Local Authority maintained schools on or by 1 April 2023 and the Government's overall funding quantum.
- 1.30 An estimated allocation for Devolved Formula Capital is £0.950m for 2023/24. This is expected to continue at the current funding level per Local Authority maintained school, namely a lump sum of £4,000 and per pupil funding of £11.25 for nursery / primary and £16.88 for secondary. This will be updated based on the number of Local Authority maintained schools on or by 1 April 2023. The Government has announced in December 2022 that a national share of £447m will be allocated through capital funding to schools and sixth forms for improvements in energy efficiency in response to the increased costs from utilities. This funding will equate to £10,000 per school, plus £20.06 per weighted pupil.
- 1.31 An allocation for Provision of Schools Place Basic Need Grant is £1.639m in 2023/24. This will allow the Council to plan strategically to fulfil its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for the children of Lincolnshire. Children's Services priority at this stage is to ensure that all September 2024 school place pressures are accounted for with potential solutions in place. The notification for 2024/25 is a £0 grant allocation. A contributing factor is the reduction in the national allocation for Basic Need from £746m to £195m. The overall funding levels will be reviewed against the latest projections data.
- 1.32 The Building Communities of Specialist Provision; Together in Lincolnshire Strategy is making significant changes to the existing special education provision, creating an integrated and sustainable school system where pupils can attend their nearest special school, confident that their education and health needs can be fully met. The overall programme budget has been increased to £101.845m in response to the market volatility and higher level of inflation being experienced. This increase in budget has been funded by the DfE High Needs Provision capital allocation awarded for the period 2022-24 (£16.826m). The gross expenditure for the programme's individual special school schemes for 2023/24 is planned to be £33.364m reflecting the latest position.

- 1.33 New Schools capital: the Council through its school place planning has forecast within the ten-year capital programme a requirement for new mainstream schools.
- 1.34 The CiC transformation programme: two new children's homes are planned to be open in 2023 in the locations of Lincoln and Louth, which has been supported financially by the Council through the capital programme and DfE match funding. The schemes have been impacted by inflation, however mitigations / solutions have been put in place through value engineering to reduce costs, and new capital contributions through Council and DfE funding.

Schools Budget

- 1.35 The Schools Budget is funded via the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). In 2023/24, the DSG will continue to comprise of four blocks: Schools, Central School Services, High Needs, and Early Years. Each of the four blocks of the DSG is determined by a separate national funding formula.
- 1.36 Lincolnshire's indicative DSG allocation for 2023/24 is £725.869m and will be used to support all schools in Lincolnshire including Local Authority schools and academies. Lincolnshire Schools block value is £550.838m. Over half of Lincolnshire pupils attend academy schools; therefore, the DSG figure for the Schools block will be revised down for the academy schools budget share allocations. The DSG is a ring-fenced grant and the actual split between Local Authority schools and academies has no financial risk to the Council from the DSG schools delegated budget perspective.
- 1.37 The Government implemented a National Funding Formula (NFF) in 2018/19 to ensure a fairer settlement for each mainstream school. The Council agreed to adopt the NFF due to the improved financial settlement for Lincolnshire schools and has continued to replicate the NFF each year since then. In 2022/23, Lincolnshire replicated the monetary values of the NFF factors, however due to the significant increase in Free School Meals (FSMs) recorded on the October 2021 census resulting from the pandemic, of which Local Authorities were expected to finance this increase through its Schools block allocation, the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) had to be applied at +0.5% (within the MFG range) to support the formula being affordable.
- 1.38 The sector and Lincolnshire Schools' Forum have supported the decision for Lincolnshire to replicate the NFF due to the increased per pupil funding levels being seen in all mainstream schools. The Local Authority (LA) still does however consider local flexibility and decision-making powers important to best respond to local needs and demands on a timely basis within reasonable DfE parameters.
- 1.39 The fundamentals principles of the NFF are not changing for 2023/24, and funding levels represent the Government's department spending increases over the settlement period. In accordance with the 20 January 2021 Executive Councillor decision and sector support through the consultation exercise, the Council plans to

continue replicating the NFF in 2023/24, which will include the modest changes. This will of course be subject to affordability of the Schools block due to the Government's application of lagged funding arrangement for Local Authorities Schools block funding. The determination of all Lincolnshire schools budgets using the October 2022 schools census released to councils in late December will be carried out in January, including the assessment of affordability. The Council is required to submit the determination of schools budgets through the Authority Proforma Tool to the DfE by the 20 January 2023 for compliance purposes. This therefore leaves limited time for engagement with the sector on the impact of specific measures to address affordability, if necessary. Schools responses have previously been mixed on affordability matters, however MFG and the ceilings cap have been the preferred solutions, in that order. In 2022/23, the Council decision was to alter the MFG (to the lower range of +0.5%) along with considering the use of other DSG funding streams. The Council would favour adopting the same approach and principles, if affordability issues arose for 2023/24. The affordability position will be shared with the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum in the January committee meeting including the mitigating measures to address this and the school impact.

- 1.40 As part of the spending review the Government announced in 2021, the total core schools budget had planned to increase to £56.8 billion by 2024/25. This included the £4bn funding increase in the current year (including the supplementary grant) to £53.8bn compared to 2021/22 levels. The 2023/24 funding levels would rise by £1.5bn to £55.3bn or a 1.9% increase in per pupil funding. The Autumn 2022 statement announced a further £2bn increase in funding in each of 2023/24 and 2024/25 to respond to increasing costs faced by schools, particularly through staff pay awards and utilities. For Lincolnshire mainstream schools, this new grant equates to an additional 3.4% increase in per pupil funding, or a total grant allocation of £18.897m for the sector. A share of the £2bn additional grant allocation (£400m) will be directed through Local Authorities High Needs block allocations, which includes conditions of use. For Lincolnshire's High Needs block, this represents £5.008m.
- 1.41 The Government is continually moving to a basis for distributing funding to Local Authorities for children and young people with high needs, taking into account an up-to-date assessment of the level of need in each area as opposed to funding on the basis of historic spending. Local Authorities will be protected under the formula by seeing a minimum increase of 5% per head in 2023/24 compared to their 2022/23 High Need block allocation. The High Needs block allocation is £121.409m for 2023/24. This includes the additional £5.008m through the additional £2bn funding announcement. The SEND Green paper acknowledged the unsustainable SEND system and considers ways to address this. The outcomes of the consultation will likely have an impact on high needs funding allocated to Local Authorities and schools.
- 1.42 There continues to be a growing trend nationally, and this growth is being experienced in Lincolnshire with more young people requiring specialist support which is having a material financial impact on the High Needs block. This remains a

financial challenge. In Lincolnshire, transformational work is considered fundamental to securing further improved outcomes for young people with SEND through a truly integrated approach, whilst also securing an offer for Lincolnshire that is financially sustainable within the central Government allocation. The SEND Transformation Board is governing the transformational process and its key work streams, including monitoring of progress against our ambitions.

- 1.43 Lincolnshire's special schools funding formula is robust and is underpinned by key cost drivers and their costs based on theoretical school models. The underlying principles and formula factors will remain in place for 2023/24 but the formula will respond to the inflationary costs rises facing the sector. The funding requirements will be considered in the context of overall high needs spending priorities.
- 1.44 Lincolnshire indicative Early Years block funding is £43.833m in 2023/24. This is determined through the Government hourly rates for Lincolnshire of £4.87 for 3 and 4 year old funding (a rise of £0.23 per hour), and £5.63 for disadvantaged 2 year olds (a rise of £0.06 per hour). These funding rates are used to fund providers' hourly rates of delivery of entitlement and early years support services. The underlying principles and formula factors will remain in place for 2023/24, and the increased hourly rate funding from Government will be considered in the context of this and its agreed distribution. The Council will seek agreement for the centrally retained budgets for early years support services from the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum on 19 January 2023.

Further Consultation

- 1.45 The budget proposals will be publicised on the Council's website together with the opportunity for the public to comment.
- 1.46 All consultation comments and responses will be available to be considered when the Executive makes its final budget proposals on 7 February 2023.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 These budget proposals reflect the level of Government funding available to the Council and a proposal to increase Council Tax in 2023/24.
- 2.2 A thorough review of Council services was carried out during this year's budget process. Unavoidable cost pressures as well as savings have been identified, and the Capital Programme has been reviewed. The budget proposals aim to reflect the Council's priorities whilst operating with the resources available to it.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed for the proposed increase in Council Tax. This will be reported to the Executive at its meeting on 7 February 2023.

Further Risk and Impact Assessments will need to be undertaken on a service by service basis.

4. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Council Budget 2023 (Executive: 4 January 2023)	Agenda for Executive on Wednesday, 4th January, 2023, 10.30 am (moderngov.co.uk)

This report was written by Mark Popplewell, Strategic Finance Lead, Children's Services who can be contacted on 01522 553326 or mark.popplewell@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

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Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Executive Director – Children’s Services

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	13 January 2023
Subject:	Attendance in Schools, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education Annual Report 2021/22

Summary:

This report presents the annual report for the 2021/22 academic year on School Attendance, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is invited to review and endorse the School Attendance, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education Annual Report for 2021/22.

1. Background

This report provides data and information on the attendance of children in schools or educated otherwise. It also reports on children who are missing education i.e. they are not on a school roll, children not attending school regularly and those who are receiving a reduced timetable.

The local authority has a duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to have processes in place to identify children who are not receiving a full-time suitable education. Schools have a duty to inform the local authority of children who are removed from the roll of a school by parents to be electively home educated.

The key points are:

- The launch of the new Department for Education (DfE) guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (May 2022) introduces the concept that attendance is everyone’s business. This guidance is currently being implemented and will be fully embedded by September 2023.
- The attendance of school children in Lincolnshire has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels but continues to improve. The implementation of the guidance above will provide opportunities for closer scrutiny of absences and actions being taken to address them.

2. Conclusion

The Committee is invited to review and endorse the annual report on School Attendance, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education for 2021/22 attached at Appendix A.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not Applicable

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Attendance in Schools, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education Annual Report 2021/22

5. Background Papers

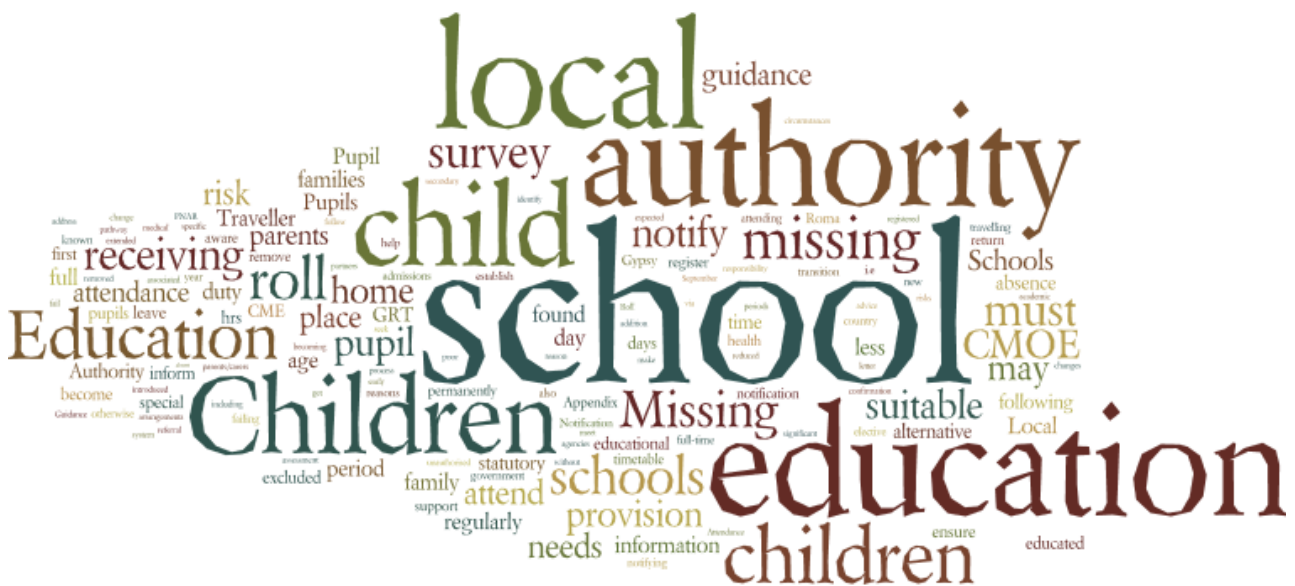
The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
DfE: Working together to improve school attendance (May 2022)	Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

This report was written by Jill Chandar-Nair, who can be contacted on 07717 320089 or jill.chandar-nair@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

Attendance in Schools, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education

Annual Report 2021/22



Author: Jill Chandar-Nair, Inclusion and Attendance Team Manager

Service Area: Inclusion and Attendance, Education Support

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1. Background

The local authority has a statutory duty to arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age at school or otherwise. This education must be suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they might have. The local authority has a duty under **section 436A of the Education Act 1996** to make arrangements to establish the identities of children in their area who are not receiving a suitable full-time education, as described. This report provides the latest Lincolnshire school attendance/absence data (Autumn 2021/Spring 2022).

A parent has a right to home educate their child as an alternative to sending them to school. The education provided must be full time, efficient and suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs. This report provides data on the children who have been electively home educated through the 2021/22 academic year.

Whilst most children attend school regularly or are being provided a suitable education elsewhere, there are some who, for many reasons are not receiving a full-time education or are unable to attend. The groups of children who are referred to in this report are:

- **Children missing education (CME)**
children who are not on roll of a school
- **Children not attending regularly**
pupils who have not attended school for a period of 10 consecutive school days and their absences have been unauthorised (**PNAR**)
pupils for whom a fixed penalty notice (**FPN**) has been issued due to persistent absence/unauthorised holiday
pupils whose parents are being prosecuted due to their child's poor attendance
- **Pupils on reduced timetables**
pupils who are not receiving a full-time education due to e.g. medical needs

2. Working Together to Improve School Attendance

In March 2022, the DfE introduced a new document [Working Together to Improve Attendance](#). The guidance outlines a broader multi-agency approach stressing that improving school attendance is everyone's business. It emphasises that non-attendance is a symptom of some other issue that is presenting a barrier to a child attending full-time. The guidance clearly outlines the responsibilities

of parents, schools and the local authority in partnership with other agencies and the wider community to improve attendance across all schools including academies and independent schools. Anything below 95% attendance is considered not good enough and requires some action.

The guidance applies from September 2022 with potential for being statutory in September 2023. Lincolnshire is actively working on a strategy which will be fully implemented by September 2023.

Key areas to be included in the strategy are:

- Creation of a new Attendance Team (as required by the DfE) within the current Inclusion and Attendance service area
- Regular conversations with all schools (389), three times a year to discuss attendance, specifically of those children whose attendance is below expected.
- Further development of a multi-agency approach to addressing attendance ensuring that all service areas recognise non-attendance as a cause for concern when considering their support criteria and training needs.
- Ensure that cohorts of children, such as children with a social worker, children within the criminal justice system, children who attend special schools etc, that are nationally and locally recognised as having lower than expected attendance, are identified and supported to address the specific barriers that impact on their school attendance.
- Promotion of the importance of good attendance across the local authority; raising the awareness of the impact of poor attendance on a child's education, wellbeing and employability.

3. School attendance/absences

Lincolnshire has seen many children return to school following the pandemic, however, as expected, there continues to be a gap between pre-Covid and post-Covid attendance. The most current data available as a comparison is Autumn 2021 - Spring 2022 when overall absence was 7.9% and persistent absence was 24.7% compared with national rates of 7.4% and 22.3%. The implementation of the new strategy will ensure that children will continue to be supported back to school impacting positively on the rate of attendance and returning to, and subsequently improving on, the pre-covid rates.

4. Notification of children who are missing out on education (CMOE)

All schools must notify the local authority of children who are, or may be at risk of, missing education. The introduction and use of the Synergy System in 2018 allowed the local authority to improve the processing of the leaver/joiner files. Most school management information system's (MIS) providers have now built the use of these files into their system and schools can therefore more easily provide the local authority with the data it requires. Once received, the system matches leavers and joiners; when a child is not matched, further enquiries are made with schools, to ensure that they have used the notification survey as required. If the child's whereabouts cannot be confirmed, the child is considered as missing education and the search for this child is supported through the child missing education process.

5. Children Missing Education

All schools must use the notification survey to report a child as missing education. Other authorities that wish to report a child missing education refer directly to the CME team. There were 1829 children logged as CME in 2021/22, a 20% increase compared with a 27% increase the previous year.

Boston has a higher share of the reported CME due to the high number of families who may have returned to their home country and not notified the school (21%). There are various reasons why a child ends up as not receiving an education. 129 children were, for example, previously electively home educated and parents had failed to provide a suitable education. At this point, the children would be returned to school either by parental will or, if necessary, using a School Attendance Order.

6. Pupils not attending regularly: 10 consecutive days unauthorised absence

The [Children Missing Education guidance](#) September 2016 stated that schools should agree with the local authority, an interval at which they will inform the local authority of a pupil that fails to attend regularly. To support this, a notification survey was designed that allows schools to notify the local authority of any child who has been absent from school without permission for more than 10 consecutive school days. For the academic year 2021/22, 829 children were reported as having 10 consecutive unauthorised days absence with 111 children being reported more than 3 times. It is likely that these children will come under the categories of either 'at risk of severe absence' or 'at severe absence' and will therefore be discussed at the future planned targeted school meetings held with schools. Our new draft strategy uses the following definitions:

Bounday	Description
95-100%	As expected
91-94%	At risk of persistent absence
80-90%	Persistent absence
51-79%	At risk of severe absence
<=50%	Severe absence

7. Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)

When a child has unauthorised absence of more than 4.5 days over a six-week period, schools are permitted to request that the local authority issue a penalty notice. There were 1760 FPN's issues in 2021/22 an increase of 284% on the previous year but still only 57% of that in the year prior to the pandemic (2018/19). 91% of the fines are issued due to holidays in school time. Whilst an FPN can be issued for persistent absence, it is not seen as a successful strategy for returning the child to school long-term.

Lincolnshire is required to complete an annual return to the DFE as part of the Parental Responsibilities - Attendance data collection.

8. Prosecutions for non-school attendance

Prosecutions have risen this year by 161% compared to last year, 60% of these are unpaid FPN fines. Proportionally, the number of prosecutions due to non-payment of fine has decreased which reflects the increase in payment of FPN's within the timescales. Likewise, the introduction of the new DfE guidance emphasising that a legal prosecution for non-attendance should only be considered when all other strategies have failed, has impacted on this. This has been built into our new approach predicting that the current low number of prosecutions due to persistent absence will remain.

9. Children on Reduced Timetables

The legislation states that all children have a right to a full-time education which was previously defined by Ofsted as 25 hours per week. From September 2023 the DfE expect schools to provide a school week of at least 32.5 hours. If at any point in a child's education, it is deemed that they are not capable of doing a full-time education, principally due to medical needs, the school must inform the local authority. The school must indicate why the reduced hours timetable is in place and for how long; this should be for no longer than 6 weeks and agreed with the parents.

The Reduced Timetable protocol is available to schools and the local authority monitor the use of the notification survey, principally looking at children who are subject to several periods of reduced timetables and schools who frequently use this approach.

Some children who have emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) will not be attending school at all but will be receiving support from the school to continue their education and begin to break down the barriers to going to school. These children should be recorded as 0 hours on the reduced timetable survey with a plan of increasing this over time. There is also an expectation that these children are on the Local authority EBSA pathway to continually review the plan and refer to the EBSA panel if there is insufficient progress.

For the academic year 2021-22, the local authority was informed of 950 children receiving a reduced timetable, with 189 children being entered more than 3 times. This was a 50% increase mainly as it is a full year compared with 9 months recorded last year. There is also an increase in the number of

schools using the notification survey. These children will be among the cohorts that are discussed at the future termly attendance meetings which will allow the local authority to question the frequency of individual children on reduced timetables.

10. Children who are electively home educated (EHE)

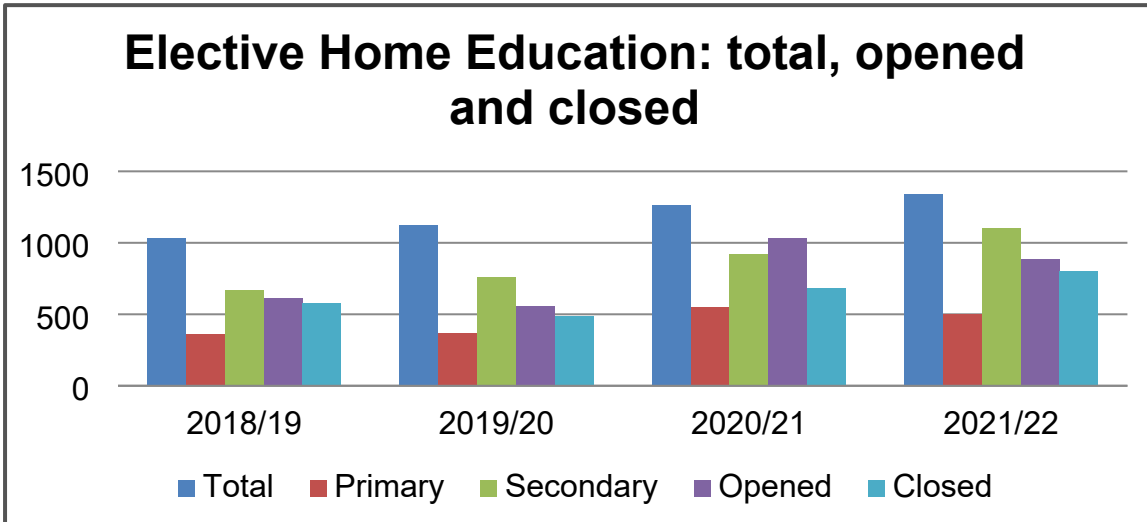
The local authority maintains a register of children who are home educated. Schools are legally required to inform the local authority when a parent decides to remove their child from school, to home educate. Other children, who have never entered the education system, are often identified by other agencies. At the end of the academic year there were 1605 EHE children known to the local authority. This is a 27% increase which is a significant increase compared to the previous two years.

The DfE has introduced the collection of EHE and CME data from the local authority. This data is provided three times per year. It is currently a voluntary submission and will continue as such until Parliament legislates to create a statutory framework for local authority 'Children Not in School' registers.

For most families, EHE is a lifestyle choice; most families were able to show that they were providing a suitable education for their children at home, with a significant amount of the unsuitable provision being due to failed visits. Home visits have not resumed, however, if a parent is unable or unwilling to provide suitable or sufficient evidence, the case is passed to a Safeguarding and Education Welfare Officer who is able to visit the family if required. All advisors are trained to identify safeguarding concerns and respond appropriately. The number of children in Child in Need or those with Education, Health and Care Plans remains steady and these children continue to be prioritised for visits if required. Whilst there is no indication that children are at increased risk due to being home educated, the reduction in home visiting means that children are unlikely to be seen and may not be seen by any other agency.

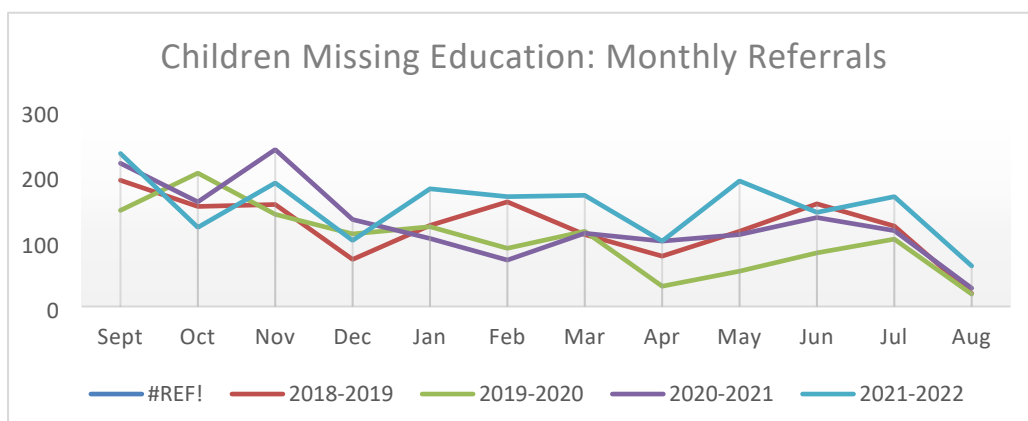
Appendix 1 – Key messages

Elective Home Education



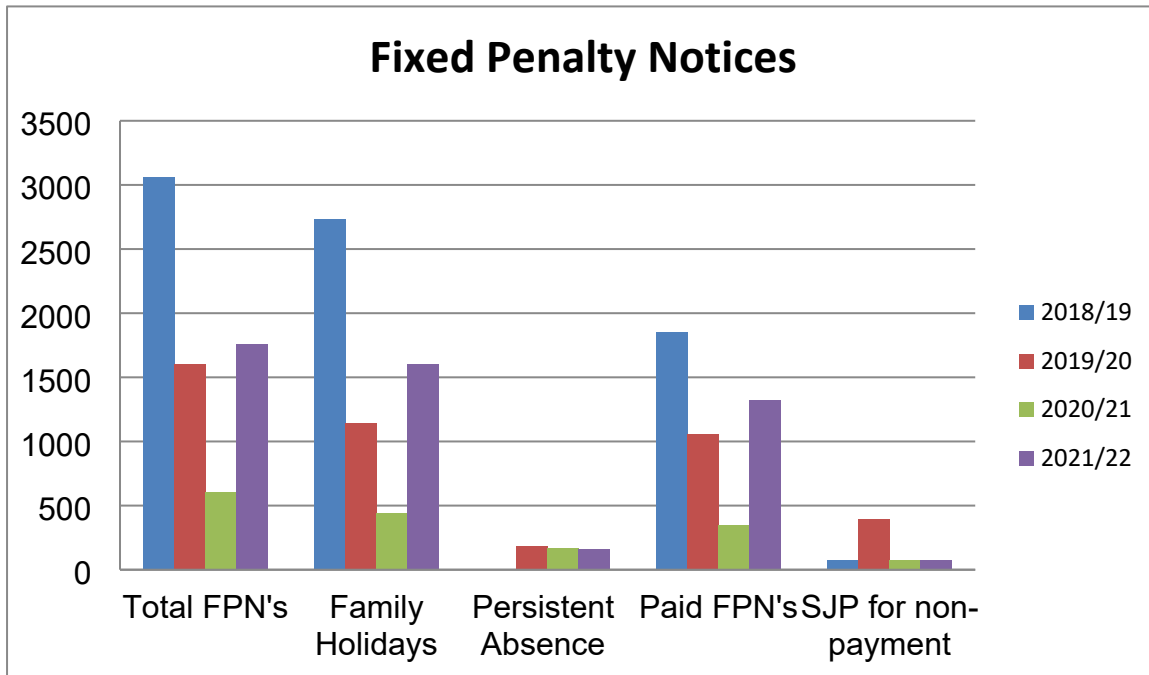
Key Messages: Number of children who are electively home educated is rising. The increase is mainly in the secondary sector.

Children Missing Education



Key Messages: Numbers of children continue to rise which may reflect better reporting of children by schools as well as increased mobility.

Children not attending regularly



Key Messages: Number of FPN's have increased significantly as schools are more prepared to use this strategy to address absences during term time. Payments have increased resulting in progress to Single Justice Process (SJP) decreasing.



Open Report on behalf of Andrew Crookham, Executive Director - Resources

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	13 January 2023
Subject:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Summary:

This item enables the Committee to consider and comment on the content of its work programme to ensure that its scrutiny activity is focused where it can be of greatest benefit. The Committee is encouraged to highlight items that could be included for consideration in the work programme.

Actions Required:

- (1) To review and agree the Committee's work programme as set out in this report.
- (2) To highlight for discussion any additional scrutiny activity which could be considered for inclusion in the work programme.

1. Background

Current Items

For reference, the Committee's items for this meeting are set out below: -

13 January 2023			
Item	Contributor	Purpose	
1.	Council Budget 2023/24	Heather Sandy, Executive Director – Children’s Services Mark Popplewell, Strategic Finance Lead – Children’s Services	Budget Scrutiny

13 January 2023			
Item		Contributor	Purpose
2.	Attendance in Schools, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education Annual Report 2021/22	Jill Chandar-Nair, Inclusion and Attendance Manager	Annual Report
3.	Recommissioning of Children with Disabilities Services (EXEMPT)	Rosemary Akrill, Senior Commissioning Officer Charlotte Gray, Head of Service – Strategic Commissioning Mark Rainey, Strategic Commissioning Manager	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Executive Councillor decision between 20 – 27 January 2023)
4.	Expansion of Branston Community Academy (EXEMPT)	Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development, Corporate Property Neal Kathel, Project Team Leader, Corporate Property	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader decision between 23 – 27 January 2023)

Planned Items

The Committee's planned items are listed below:

3 March 2023			
Item		Contributor	Purpose
1.	Proposal for Fulstow Community Primary School to become a voluntary controlled church school (Final Decision)	Matthew Clayton, Interim Head of Capital Reform and Education Sufficiency	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Executive Councillor Decision on 10 March 2023)
2.	Lincolnshire Local Authority School Performance 2021 - 22	Martin Smith, Assistant Director - Education	Performance Scrutiny

3 March 2023			
Item	Contributor	Purpose	
3.	Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2022-23 – Quarter 3	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help	Performance Scrutiny

21 April 2023			
Item	Contributor	Purpose	
1.	Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Annual Update	Chris Cook, Chair of LSCP Stacey Waller, LSCP Manager	Yearly Update
2.	Update on Community Response to High Level Mental Health Needs	Charlotte Gray, Head of Service – Strategic Commissioning	Policy Review

16 June 2023			
Item	Contributor	Purpose	
1.	Lincoln St Francis School - Refurbishment and External Works as part of the SEND Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy (EXEMPT)	Eileen McMorrow, Programme Manager SEND Strategy Teri Marshall, Senior Project Manager – Corporate Property	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader Decision between 26 and 30 June 2023)
2.	Gosberton House Academy - New Block Extension and External Works as part of the SEND Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy (EXEMPT)	Eileen McMorrow, Programme Manager SEND Strategy Teri Marshall, Senior Project Manager – Corporate Property	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader Decision between 26 and 30 June 2023)

21 July 2023			
Item		Contributor	Purpose
1.	Holbeach William Stukeley School (To be confirmed)	Alison Toyne, Project Manager, Corporate Property	Pre-Decision Scrutiny
2.	Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2022-23 – Quarter 4	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help	Performance Scrutiny

08 September 2023			
Item		Contributor	Purpose
1.	Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2023-24 – Quarter 1	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help	Performance Scrutiny

20 October 2023			
Item		Contributor	Purpose
1.	Update on the Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy	Sheridan Dodsworth, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability Eileen McMorrow, Programme Manager, Special Schools Strategy Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development	Policy Review (Yearly Update)
2.	Children's Services Annual Statutory Complaints Report 2022-23	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director - Early Help	Performance Scrutiny

01 December 2023			
Item		Contributor	Purpose
1.	Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2023-24 – Quarter 2	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help	Performance Scrutiny

Items to be scheduled

- Review of Children and Young People Mental Health Services
- Performance of Academy Schools

2. Conclusion

The Committee is invited to review, consider and comment on the work programme as set out above and highlight for discussion any additional scrutiny activity which could be included for consideration in the work programme. A list of all upcoming Forward Plan decisions relating to the Committee is also attached at Appendix A.

3. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Forward Plan of Decisions relating to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer, who can be contacted on 07552 253814 or by e-mail at tracy.johnson@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

FORWARD PLAN OF DECISIONS RELATING TO CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM 03 JANUARY 2023

DEC REF	MATTERS FOR DECISION	REPORT STATUS	DECISION MAKER AND DATE OF DECISION	PEOPLE/GROUPS CONSULTED PRIOR TO DECISION	DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED	OFFICER(S) FROM WHOM FURTHER INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED AND REPRESENTATIONS MADE (All officers are based at County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL unless otherwise stated)	DIVISIONS AFFECTED
I025746	Recommissioning of Children with Disabilities services	Exempt	Executive Councillor: Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement Between 20 Jan 2023 and 27 Jan 2023	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	Reports	Strategic Commissioning Manager E-mail: mark.rainey@lincolnshire.gov.uk Strategic Commissioning Head of Service E-mail: charlotte.grey@lincolnshire.gov.uk	All Divisions
I028391	Branston Academy - Dining Hall Extension & Classroom Remodelling	Exempt	Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning) Between 23 Jan 2023 and 27 Jan 2023	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – January 2023	Reports	Head of Property Development - Corporate Property Tel: 07879662279 Email: dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk	Potterhanworth and Coleby
I028640 New!	Proposal for Fulstow Community Primary School to become a voluntary controlled church school (Final Decision)	Open	Executive Councillor: Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement 10 Mar 2023	Interested parties as DfE guidance including school staff, schools, County, Parish and District Council's, MPs, Trade Unions and Diocese.	Reports	Admissions and Education Provision Manager - Children's (Education) E-mail: matthew.clayton@lincolnshire.gov.uk	

DEC REF	MATTERS FOR DECISION	REPORT STATUS	DECISION MAKER AND DATE OF DECISION	PEOPLE/GROUPS CONSULTED PRIOR TO DECISION	DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED	OFFICER(S) FROM WHOM FURTHER INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED AND REPRESENTATIONS MADE (All officers are based at County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL unless otherwise stated)	DIVISIONS AFFECTED
I028654 New!	Gosberton House Academy - New Block Extension and External Works as part of the SEND Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy	Exempt	Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning) Between 26 Jun 2023 and 30 Jun 2023	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	Reports	Head of Property Development E-mail: dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk	
I028647 New!	Lincoln St Francis School - Refurbishment and External Works as part of the SEND Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy	Exempt	Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning) Between 26 Jun 2023 and 30 Jun 2023	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	Reports	Head of Property Development E-mail: dave.pennington@lincolnshie.gov.uk	

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Agenda Item 9

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