



Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Time and Date

10.30 am on Thursday, 24th June, 2021

Place

This meeting will be held remotely. The meeting can be viewed live by posting this link into your browser: <https://youtu.be/Cqr-aDuiqXY>

Public Business**1. Apologies and Substitutions****2. Declarations of Interests****3. Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)

- a) To note the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021
- b) Matters Arising

4. Education and Children's Services (Pages 7 - 44)

Presentation on:

- Children & Young People's Plan – Priorities
- Covid 19 – Children's Services and Education Service Context
- Holiday Activity and Food Programme

5. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues (Pages 45 - 48)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator

6. Any Other Business

Any other items of business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

Private Business

Nil

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House Coventry

Wednesday, 16 June 2021

Notes: 1) The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Carolyn Sinclair, Governance Services, Council House, Coventry, telephone 76972302, alternatively information about this meeting can be obtained from the

following web link: <http://moderngov.coventry.gov.uk>

2) Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Carolyn Sinclair as soon as possible and no later than 1.00 p.m. on day of meeting giving their reasons for absence and the name of the Council Member (if any) who will be attending the meeting as their substitute.

3) Scrutiny Board Members who have an interest in any report to this meeting, but who are not Members of this Scrutiny Board, have been invited to notify the Chair by 12 noon on the day before the meeting that they wish to speak on a particular item. The Member must indicate to the Chair their reason for wishing to speak and the issue(s) they wish to raise.

Membership: Councillors F Abbott, P Akhtar, J Blundell, B Gittins (By Invitation), S Hanson (Co-opted Member), J Innes (Chair), K Jones (By Invitation), S Keough, K Sandhu (By Invitation), P Seaman (By Invitation), R Simpson, R Thay, C Thomas and A Tucker

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

Carolyn Sinclair

e-mail: carolyn.sinclair@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 11 March 2021

Present:

Members: Councillor K Sandhu (Chair)
Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor G Lloyd
Councillor R Thay
Councillor C Thomas

Co-Opted Members: Mrs S Hanson
Mrs K Jones

Other Members: Councillors P Seaman

Employees (by Directorate):

J Gregg, People Directorate
G Holmes, Place Directorate
N MacDonald, People Directorate
M Rose, Resources Directorate
S Watson, People Directorate

Apologies: Councillor J Blundell, B Gittins, B Kaur and L Kelly

Public Business

19. Declarations of Interests

There were no disclosable interests.

20. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 January, 2021 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

21. Children's Services Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic - Vulnerability and Disadvantage

The Scrutiny Board considered a report of the Director of Children's Services which provided a progress update of the current situation and impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Children's Services and partners since October 2020.

Members of the Board asked questions and received the following information:

- There had been no issues acquiring sufficient PPE for staff.

- Demand for Children’s Services had been manageable with the service in a better position to deal with spikes in demand. There had recently been a return to “normal” levels of demand, however there was an expectation that this would rise again once children return to school.
- Use of technology had offered certain opportunities to enhance services for families. There was a mandate to protect children, which would require face to face service delivery, but in some circumstances virtual contact was a good approach, such as with Foster Carers. These improvement would be continued and would continue to be an enhancement to the services offered.
- Partnership working had continued and was the best way forward.
- Schools hadn’t been closed during lockdown but had continued to provide education for vulnerable children and those of key workers
- Agency staff had made a valuable contribution and the service had taken a pragmatic approach, but it would be a priority to create a stable workforce, on which progress had made.
- Feedback from families had been recorded and there had been an increase in appreciation for services, possibly down to the continuation of services when so much had closed or gone virtual
- Virtual Children Protection conferences were not satisfactory and would be hybrid as soon as possible.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board:-

- 1) Note the current situation, progress and impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Children’s Services and partners**
- 2) Request that an item on the use of technology in Children’s Services be added to the Work Programme for 2021-22**

22. Children's Services Continuous Improvement Progress

The Scrutiny Board considered a report of the Director of Childrens Services which informed the Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the progress with Children’s Services improvement reported to the Continuous Improvement Executive Group on 10 February 2021.

Members of the Board asked questions and received the following information:

- A visit from Ofsted is expected in April, sooner rather than later

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board:-

- 1) Note the current progress**
- 2) Agree to receive an annual report reflecting progress against the actions and priorities in the Children and Young People’s Plan**

23. Strengthening Families - Family Valued Programme

The Scrutiny Board considered a report of the Director of Childrens Services which had been considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 9 March, 2021 (their Minute 89 /21 refers) and which indicated that Family Valued is a Leeds City Council

system change programme designed to spread restorative practice across children's services..

There were 2 core strands to the programme;

- Awareness raising and deep dive training to embed restorative practice across social work, Children's Services and the wider workforce for children, families and communities.
- Expansion of Family Group Conferencing to more families, including those affected by domestic violence and with a new model prior to Initial Child Protection Conferences.

An evaluation was undertaken 16 months into the Leeds programme which found that almost all of the Family Valued outcomes had been achieved.

Other outcomes were also identified at the time of the evaluation such as improvements in school attendance, number of children leaving care and returning to their families, and rates of re-referrals for domestic violence.

The Coventry approach would encourage workers to establish a relationship-based method to working with children and families. As a Signs of Safety local authority social workers were already working to a strength based and restorative framework. Existing approaches would need to be developed further to take account of the Leeds Family Valued model.

Coventry was on a journey to good or better and was committed to achieving this. Working with and alongside Leeds Local Authority this proposal would enhance the pace of change and further improve outcomes for children in Coventry.

The Scrutiny Board asked questions and received the following information:

- The bidding process was extensive, requiring six stages which flexed and stretched resources within the service
- Families would not be identified as those who are easiest to support in order to reach targets; social work practice was based on a model of social justice and fighting inequality. The project would operate on a basis of risk. There would be no discrimination on race, ethnicity or language barriers.
- The model had proved successful in Leeds and ensured children stay with families.

It was noted that the report would be considered by Council at their meeting to be held on 16 March, 2021.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board:-

- 1) Support the acceptance of the grant funding of £4,062,295 from the Department for Education for the two-year period to support the change programme to spread restorative practice across Children's Services.**
- 2) Receive a briefing on the Family Valued Programme and further reports on progress of the project.**

24. **Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Board considered and noted their Work Programme for the 2020/21 Municipal Year and requested an item on SEND be added for 2021/22

25. **Any Other Business**

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.05 am)

Scrutiny Board 2

Education & Children's Services



24 June 2021



- **Children & Young People’s Plan – Priorities**
- **Covid 19 – Children’s Services and Education Service context**
- **Holiday Activity and Food Programme (including free school meal FSM provision)**



Refreshed Children and Young People's Plan (DRAFT) 2021- 22

Living with and recovery from COVID - 19 pandemic



Overview

The draft plan is a refresh of the 2020 Children and Young People Plan.

The plan has been developed through:

- Understanding the impact of the COVID -19 pandemic on children, young people and families
- Understanding the priority areas that needs to continue from the 2020 plan
- Utilising the expertise of the different agencies in the Children's Partnership who interact with Coventry children and families daily



Priority 1: Early Help DRAFT

PRIORITIES

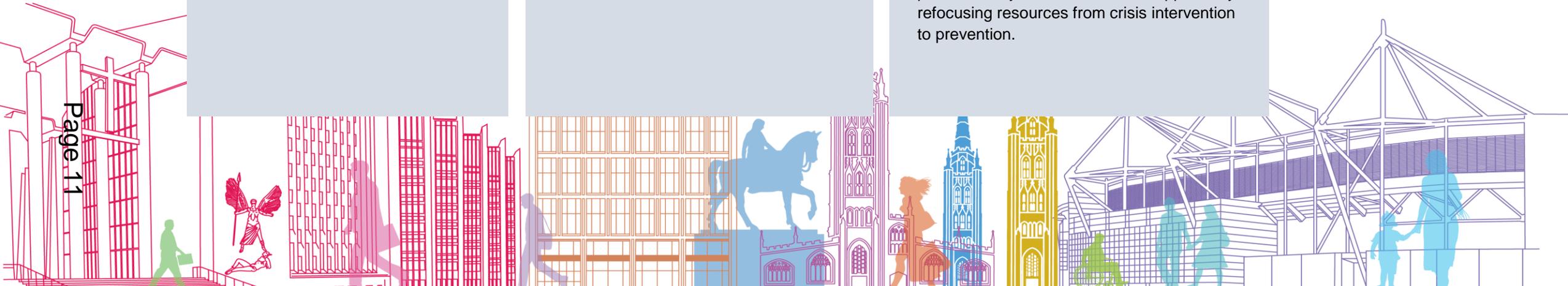
- Develop and implement the Early Help Assessment (EHA).
- Develop the Signs of Safety practice.
- Develop and embed the Family Hub Model.
- Continue to implement the Troubled Families transformation programme.
- Implement Coventry's multi-agency Parenting Strategy 2018 – 2023.
- Develop the use of our Family Hub buildings.
- Develop a new model for mental health and emotional wellbeing support.
- Deliver effective public health promotion and prevention activities.

KEY ISSUES

- Hidden harm –financial hardship exacerbated.
- Living in homes with increased tension and conflict.
- Increased domestic abuse.
- Increased parental conflict.
- Sexual abuse (contact and online).
- Peer on peer bullying and abuse online.
- Possible unidentified developmental needs.
- Gap widening in educational outcomes.
- “Behavioural issues”.
- During the pandemic, there remains concerns regarding hidden harm, and many children may not have been identified early, that need support.

STRATEGY

- Identifying the needs of children, young people and their families across a continuum of need.
- Allocated specific resource from children services to maintain momentum on the Early Help strategy and associated Transformation plan.
- Family Hubs also extended the ‘Here to help’ function.
- Developing multi-agency partnerships to work together within the Family Hub community venues to extend the offer of preventative early intervention to improve outcomes for children, young people and families for generations to come.
- Work collaboratively to support families preventatively and at the earliest opportunity refocusing resources from crisis intervention to prevention.



Priority 2: Mental health DRAFT

PRIORITIES

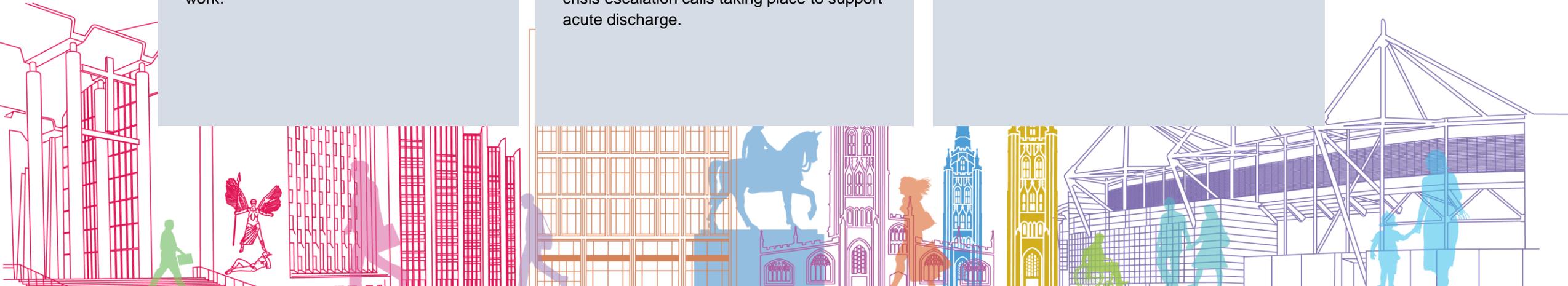
- All children and young people will have timely access to mental health support.
- Everyone will be aware of what mental health support is available for children in Coventry.
- A digital offer of support will be available for children and young people, including a 24/7 crisis response.
- Pathway for care leavers and unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) to access support.
- Reduced number of children and young people will present at acute in crisis and those who will require a tier 4 bed.
- Strengthen approaches to resilience, early help and prevention through partnership work.

KEY ISSUES

- Increased numbers of children and young people requiring mental health and emotional wellbeing support, particularly around anxiety and behaviour.
- Children and young people presenting needs are more complex, particularly children with eating disorders.
- Higher risk of death by suicide within children and young people.
- Increased demand on children and young people presenting at acute settings for support, particularly around eating disorders.
- There has also been increased pressure on acute settings with children and young people presenting in crisis, and the growing number of crisis escalation calls taking place to support acute discharge.

STRATEGY

- A Tier 3 Plus Child and Adolescent Mental Health service has been implemented.
- The re-commissioning of tier 2 mental health services
- A trailblazer project health crisis line offer.
- A Mental Health Surge working group has been set up to review mental health referral data across a number of services.
- Develop and mobilise the Think Family Support Team which provides specific support to children and young people with eating disorders.
- Increase access to mental health services.
- Expand the Mental Health in Schools project.



Priority 3: Health inequalities DRAFT

PRIORITIES

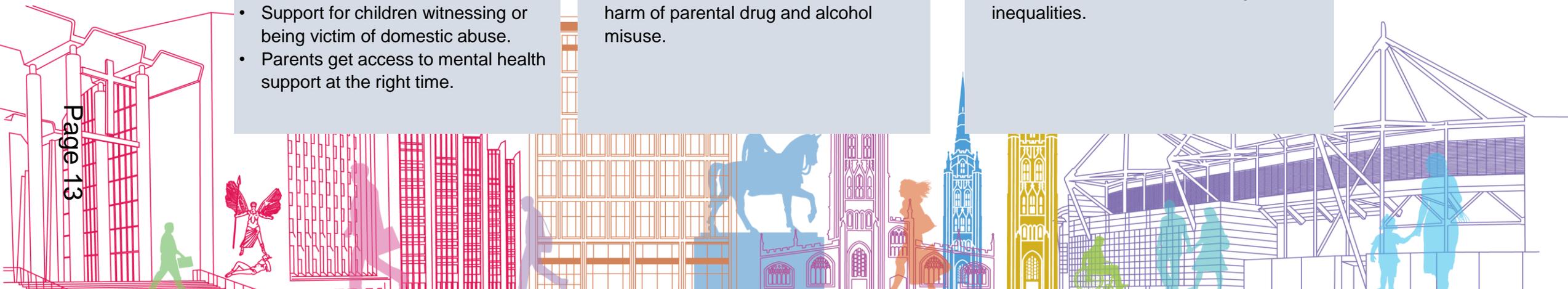
- Tackling inequalities disproportionately affecting young people.
- Ensuring that all Coventry people, including vulnerable residents, can benefit from 'inclusive growth' which will bring jobs, housing and other benefits to the city.
- To work strategically to reduce levels of poverty in Coventry, including actions to address child poverty.
- Children and young people are safe, healthy and supported.
- Earlier intervention and a reduction in management of victims / families in crisis.
- Support for children witnessing or being victim of domestic abuse.
- Parents get access to mental health support at the right time.

KEY ISSUES

- Increased risk of poverty particularly for children of families in lower socio-economic groups and in areas of deprivation.
- Increased risk of inequalities in educational attainment due to closure of schools.
- Risks to mental health through isolation.
- Increased risk of witnessing or being a victim of domestic abuse.
- Digital exclusion – difficulty in accessing online learning.
- Fewer “eyes on” children which has highlighted enhanced joint work between drug / alcohol services and children’s services in respect of hidden harm of parental drug and alcohol misuse.

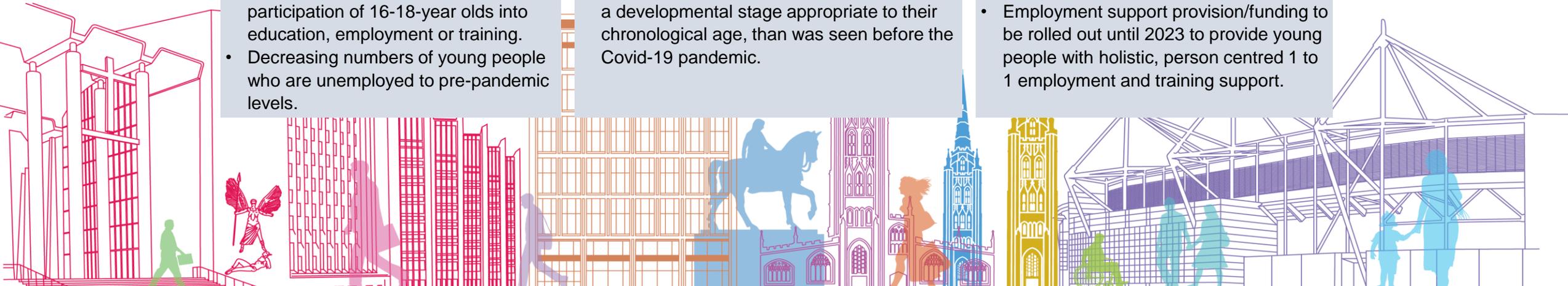
STRATEGY

- Additional resources to expand the amount of safe accommodation for victims and families.
- The Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018-2023 is midway through, however due to significant increase in demand for services it is being reviewed. Alongside the Domestic Abuse Bill, which comes into force on April 1st, 2021.
- The Coventry Parenting Strategy 2018-2023 is delivered by organisations and partners working together, to increase the parenting support offer to families across the city.
- Coventry’s Family Health and Lifestyles 0-19 service will focus on reducing health inequalities.



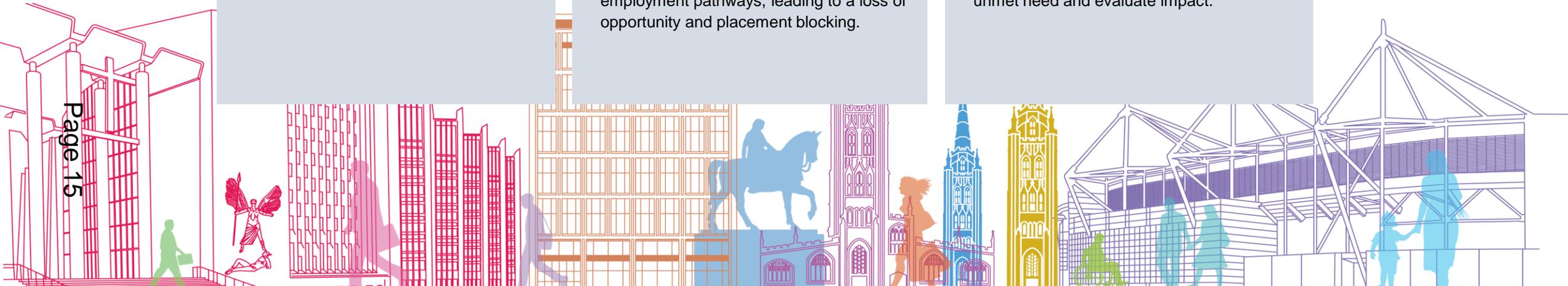
Priority 4: Education, training and employment DRAFT

PRIORITIES	KEY ISSUES	STRATEGY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing COVID-19 protective measures in Early Years settings, and in Schools and Further Education sites (including LFT). • Developing children and young people's emotional resilience and support a successful return to learning from remote learning. • Identifying gaps in learning for all pupils and ensuring progress in Education and Learning to narrow this. • Minimise and prevent pupils being excluded. • Tracking and supporting the participation of 16-18-year olds into education, employment or training. • Decreasing numbers of young people who are unemployed to pre-pandemic levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping vulnerable children and young people safe and enabling them to continue to engage with learning. • Potential health impacts – as a result of less activity, social isolation and increased screen time. • Curriculum plans and delivery has had to be adjusted to enable remote delivery. • Early Years - day to day work has focussed on responding to the pandemic, through provision of a range of advice, support, training and documentation provided to the Early Years sector. • Local and national research indicates that a greater number of children are less secure in a developmental stage appropriate to their chronological age, than was seen before the Covid-19 pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been national funding allocated to schools to identify and support gaps in pupil's learning as a result of the pandemic. • Supporting vulnerable pupils outside of term-time, including the launch of a holiday activities fund programme. • Joining up offers of support from variety of agencies/charities etc. Including a more comprehensive food network and social supermarkets to ensure children can access food. • Tracking of all post-16 young people has continued and will continue throughout the pandemic. • Employment support provision/funding to be rolled out until 2023 to provide young people with holistic, person centred 1 to 1 employment and training support.



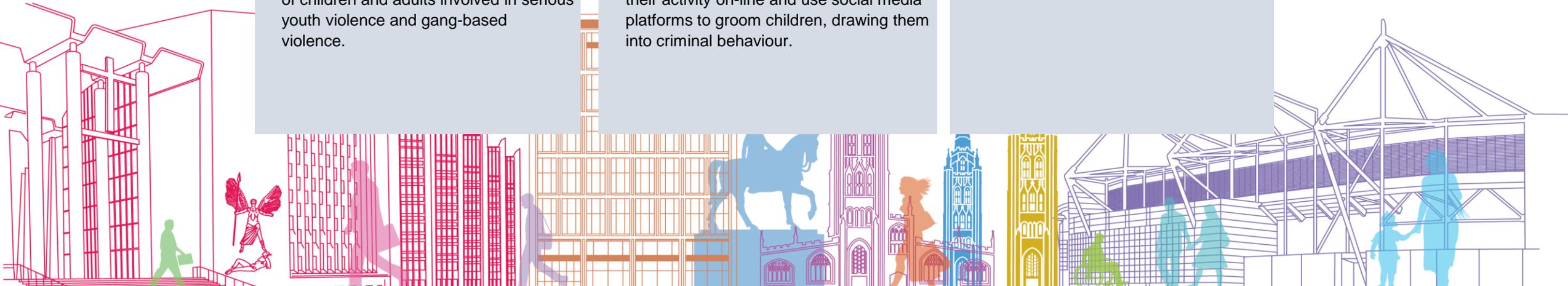
Priority 5: Children with SEND DRAFT

PRIORITIES	KEY ISSUES	STRATEGY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory requirement 'business as usual' – secured through a blended model of virtual and face to face service. <p>Covid specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthening safeguarding and support for emotional health and well-being• Enabling re-engagement and attendance for complex learners• Promoting confidence in pathways to adulthood, to secure positive outcomes and regenerate system flow• Securing a sufficiency of placements against rising demand and financial limitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-engaging and re-socialising vulnerable learners particularly ASC• Unknown demand - early years specific.• Parental confidence in system safety for CV and CEV, links to national increase in EHE.• Mental health and well-being of all SEND learners.• Lost skills and the widening of the achievement gap for children with lower cognitive functioning.• Fewer SEND learners moving into employment pathways, leading to a loss of opportunity and placement blocking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blended model of service delivery, embracing efficiencies.• Focused priorities on delivering bespoke responses to individual schools and children.• Continuing investment in the recovery curriculum including the provision of training for school and college senior mental health leads.• Ongoing promotion and development of supported employment pathways.• Ongoing co-production with parents, carers and young people to design responses to unmet need and evaluate impact.



Priority 6: Youth violence DRAFT

PRIORITIES	KEY ISSUES	STRATEGY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in violence for those under 25 years of age. • Children and young people having a better understanding and awareness of the dangers of crime, exploitation, county lines and gang activity. • Parents and young people involved in or victims of crime and/or anti-social behaviour is reduced. • Policing resources which target gang activity linked to wider intelligence from partner organisations. • The Local Authority and Police Prevent Plans are also in sync, with the violence/gang's strategies/plans. • Coordinated multi-agency management of children and adults involved in serious youth violence and gang-based violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knife crime and serious youth violence are a significant concern. • A number of high-profile murder trials concluded in 2020 all involving children from Coventry. • Young people from Coventry are coming to the attention of neighbouring police forces, often being picked up in possessions of drugs. • In 2019/20 children in Coventry were convicted of 91 Violence Against the Person/Robbery offences and this made up 27% of all convicted offending behaviour by children in Coventry. • During government restrictions those that seek to exploit young people have taken their activity on-line and use social media platforms to groom children, drawing them into criminal behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 10-year violence prevention strategy in place. The local strategy mirror's the regional violence reduction unit strategy and runs until 2029. • Work with under 4's has continued, and many activities went "online." • Place-based approaches focus on building a local network of providers and community members to support local people to reject violence and support each other.



Governance

Key sponsor and leads have been identified for each of the six priority areas.

Workstream	Sponsor	Strategic Lead
Early Help	Director (Children's Services)	Strategic Lead (Help & Protection)
Mental health	Director of Commissioning (CCG)	TBC
Health inequalities	Director (Public Health)	Consultant (PH) People
Education, learning & training	Director (Education & Skills)	Head of Education Improvement & Standards/Head of Employment & Skills
Children with SEND	Director (Education & Skills)	Head of SEND & Specialist Services
Youth violence	Chief Superintendent Coventry Police	Programme Manager – Violence Reduction



Recommendations

The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:

1. Note the refreshed draft Children and Young People's plan
2. Identify any areas the Board may want to consider in more detail at a future meeting



Children's Services

Covid-19 context on services



Context/background



Children's Services has continued to deliver protection, support and intervention to vulnerable families across Coventry, whilst maintaining critical services throughout the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- The critical elements of the service involved the immediate protection of children who were brought to the attention of Children's Services including: MASH; The Emergency Duty Team (EDT); Section 47 Child Protection enquiries; Section 17 support to Children in need; Children and Families Assessments; any other type of assessment of need.
- The ongoing protection and support of children has also continued during this period and included: children who received an early help offer to prevent them requiring statutory intervention, Open CiN cases, open CP cases, open LAC children, open care leavers. Children's Services continued as far as possible to provide the same range of provision to children and families in Coventry, albeit scaled back and delivered in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Context/background



- Children's Services depends on a system of partners across the city to enable the delivery of a safe and efficient service. Partners continued to work with the service throughout this period: Section 47 enquiries with the police; health as a safeguarding partner; foster carers; third party providers of looked after children placements; and schools.
- Where services temporarily ceased, there was increased pressure on families/carers, wherever possible alternative support was offered. The vast majority of Children's Services continued to operate albeit in a different way.
- Four Family Hubs and the area social work offices closed. This enabled staff to be supported to work from home and continue to ensure children were safeguarded. Four Hubs remained open which continued to provide an Early Help Offer to families and were open for a 'Here to Help' function so families could access face to face support at a time of crisis. All buildings re-opened during the summer 2020 and have remained open since the November 2020 and January 2021 lockdowns.



Impact of Covid-19



The overall volume of statutory work reduced at the beginning of the pandemic, in April 2020 there were 25% fewer referrals than in April 2019. The reduction in referrals was a result of lockdown and less daily school contact

- Contacts and referrals peaked in September /October 2020 and reduced with further lockdown and less daily school contact.
- Since all pupils have returned to onsite school provision the number of referrals have increased as anticipated.
- Domestic abuse is one of Coventry's highest reasons for referral. The reduction in overall MASH referrals was therefore a concern because it indicated hidden need and potential risk, particularly as other support services within the community supporting domestic abuse ceased or reduced, for example, the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programs, or Domestic Abuse Victim Support groups.



Impact of Covid-19



- Agencies have continued to work together within the Covid-19 constraints. Schools across the city identified children that they deemed to be vulnerable and put monitoring systems in place, proportional to the risk.
- Where the risks to children required escalation to court proceedings court slots were reduced and courts worked virtually. Solicitors had limited availability to support parents and there was an increase in adjournments.
- Where children needed to be removed from home, there was a shortage of placements, locally, regionally and nationally. This became more acute and impacted on the costs of placements to ensure safe provision for children to move to.
- Overall, services were concerned that the increased pressure on the system would result in an increased risk that some children and young people would not be safeguarded because they fell through an unavoidable gap during this Covid-19 pandemic. Services have continued to remain committed to ensure children and families in Coventry are safeguarded as far as is possible.



Impact of Covid-19 Workforce



The service experienced a number of staff self-isolating because of Covid-19, leading to some capacity issues and impact on the service's ability to effectively respond to all safeguarding issues. Agency staff were in short supply and did not compensate for service pressures, the pressure and impact on frontline staff therefore increased.

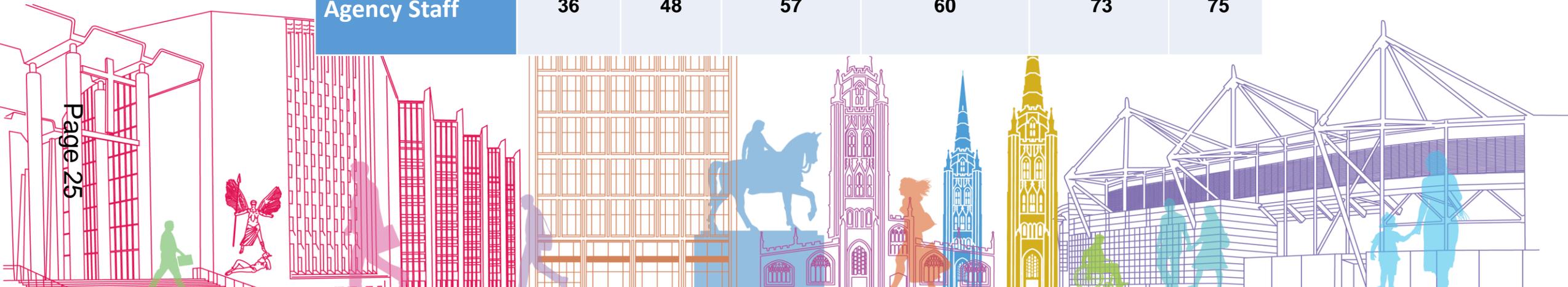
- The recruitment and retention of experienced frontline Children and Families Social Workers continues to be a challenge. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on recruitment, and we have faced difficulties recruiting experienced social workers during this period. This has led to an increased use of agency staff and increased financial impact.
- The service continues to have a robust recruitment process that specifically targets recruiting experienced children and family's social workers via a range of social media platforms, recruitment campaigns and other innovative approaches and is working on solutions to address the shortage of experienced social workers.



Impact on Covid-19 - Performance



	April 2020	June 2020	October 2020	December 2020	March 2021	May 2021
Child Protection Plans	408	410	457	449	461	462
Looked After Children	693	703	757	760	749	741
Child in Need	1,225	1,508	2,010	1,901	1,755	1,920
Child and Family assessments	516	296	475	510	343	430
Contacts received	1,582	2,127	2,441	2,468	2,644	2,478
Agency Staff	36	48	57	60	73	75



Covid-19 - Current position

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All Family Hubs and Area Teams; Broadgate House; Children's Homes have remained COVID-19 compliant and have risk assessments in place for each building with protective measures to mitigate COVID-19 risks, including VERA's for staff. These are regularly updated and shared with staff.

- Staff who can be based effectively at home continue to do so. Staff who need to attend work are attending the office based on the needs of the service as part of a rota or via line management agreement
- PPE continues to be used by staff in accordance with public health guidance
- Lateral Flow testing twice weekly is encouraged for staff who are working with the public or attending the office.
- The wearing of face coverings/masks continue to be worn when away from the desk or walking in and around the building
- The service have continued to incorporate learning digital opportunities into business as usual and hybrid conferences are taking place and have received positive feedback



COVID-19 Response: The Children's Services Roadmap



What does this mean for Children's Services Staff ?

- **Child Protection Conferences and LAC Reviews** - To continue as a Hybrid model, with face to face for all attendees resuming from 19th July 2021
- **Family Group Conferences – Conferences** – To continue face to face subject to appropriate venues and covid compliance
- **LADO** – To continue to be based in the office
- **Commissioning Services** – To continue with face to face monitoring
- **Help and Protection Meetings-** To continue virtually and resume face to face from 19th July 2021



COVID-19 Response: The Children's Services Roadmap



- **Area Teams/Family Hubs** – To continue to attend work on a rota basis based on service needs
- **Youth work groups** – To reintroduce group work once government guidelines allow from 19th July 2021
- **LAC & Permanence/Through Care/CDT and Edge of Care Teams** - To continue to attend work on a rota basis
- **Placement Team/Fostering Team /Service Development Team** – To continue to work from home effectively
- **Professional Support Team** – To continue to work from home and as part of a rota based on service needs
- **Social Work Academy** – To continue to work 3 days a week in the office and 2 days working from home
- **First Aiders at Broadgate House** – With effect from 24 May – 5 staff are providing first aid on a rota basis- attending the office 1 day a week



COVID-19 Response: The Children's Services Roadmap



Next Steps

- Children's Services Leadership Team to review staff numbers for each service and the general estimated ratio of building based work and remote home working going forward
- Services will operate with a flexible approach of remote/home working/office based face to face and via a hybrid solution to meet the needs of the service
- Occupation of desks and how this is managed will be arranged by Managers to ensure appropriate numbers in the office at any time
- A plan will be produced of who is in on what days and how this works for each service. This will be cascaded and shared with all staff shortly
- Plans will be subject to change and will be in line with government and CCC guidance.



Education

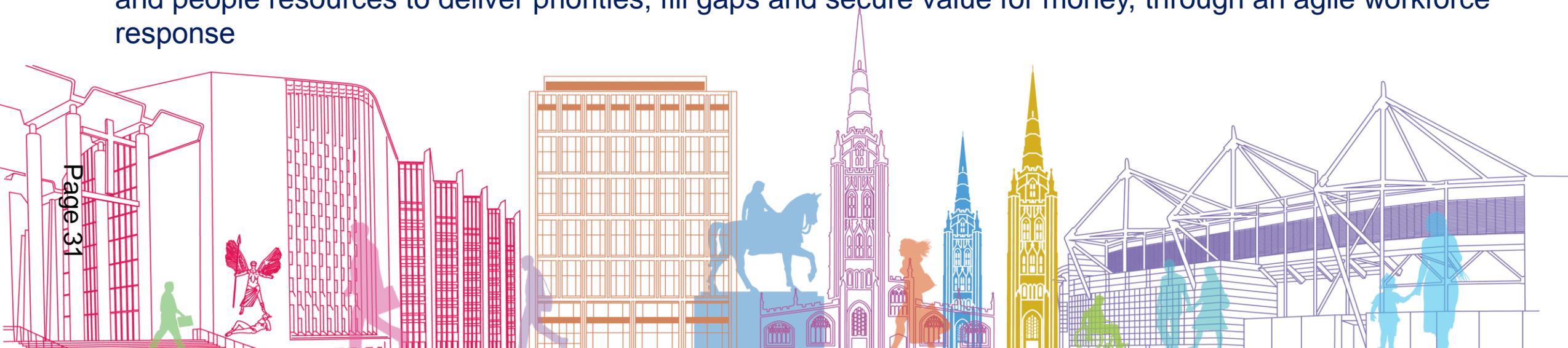
Covid-19 context – Education Partnership



Context/background



- The initial focus of services was to safeguard vulnerable children, young people and their families. The pandemic has given us the opportunity alongside schools to build on our community response
- We have co-produced a partnership strategy with agreed operational principles to guide practice and secure City-wide consistency
- Ensuring practice in risk management is as safe as it reasonably can be – a clear focus on minimising the risk of transmission within education settings and the wider community
- Influencing national policy – ongoing discussions with the DFE and collaborative regional practice, and being a conduit for the system: absorbing, interpreting, filtering the daily streams of Government guidance; delivering agile response times, securing compliance and consistency of approach; re-directing financial and people resources to deliver priorities; fill gaps and secure value for money, through an agile workforce response



Context/background

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We placed and monitored attendance of vulnerable pupils throughout the first and subsequent lockdowns

By the end of April 2020 100% of eligible children were recorded as accessing free school meals (FSMs)

- With the help of schools we have delivered food vouchers/parcels for benefits eligible FSM children, and other eligible children in Early Years across the holiday periods – over 15,000 children and young people have been reached
- Over 1,200 laptops were reconfigured, updated and delivered to vulnerable children
- Home schooling delivered directly by schools – the offer has been built on and improved, we have facilitated schools to meet and share best practice
- Onsite lateral flow testing of a high proportion of secondary pupils took place on return to school in March, and schools continue to distribute kits
- No KS2 assessment in either 2020 or 2021, teacher assessed for KS4 and KS5



Impact of Covid-19



- Increase in demand / vulnerability of pupils
 - FSM numbers in the city have increased 11,600 (21.6% of pupil population) at the start of the pandemic to 13,666 (25.2% of pupil population) currently
 - SEN Jan 2021 – maintained 2,344 EHC Plans = overall growth in 5 year period of 26%
 - Mental health – reported increases in pupils requiring mental health support
- Unknown need – concerns in relation to impact of pandemic on early years cohort, including pre-school SEN - extra support for schools will be available from September
- Education Recovery, national research suggests
 - Average learning losses (primary) are reported to be nearly 2 months in reading and over 3 months in maths
 - This is exacerbated for children from deprived backgrounds



Impact of Covid-19 Workforce

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The school workforce has had staff self-isolating because of Covid-19 since reopening in September. This was most pronounced in the Autumn term when community transmission was at its highest and led to some school capacity issues across the Autumn term. Overall, the secure risk assessments that schools had in place helped to keep this manageable and schools open

- The non-school workforce have largely been able to deliver services remotely
- The Team have responded to provide in and out-of-hours support for all schools and Early Years settings in relation to COVID in partnership with Public Health
- School staff and leadership have felt the pressure of managing COVID in schools – in the first lockdown schools were required to open through holiday periods, and schools have continued to be on call through later holiday periods



Covid-19 - Current position



- We continue to take a cautious approach alongside the national roadmap
- The Education Partnership view is that little should change ahead of the end of the Summer term
- A number of mitigations continue to be in place to reduce the risk of transmission and ensure children and young people can stay in school -
 - LFTs (staff and pupils), Face masks (staff and pupils), virtual transition, restricted parental activities, retain pupils in consistent bubbles/groups
- Education Staff can now visit schools with risk assessments in place
- Lateral Flow testing twice weekly is encouraged for all staff who are visiting schools or attending the office.
- Education staff wear face coverings/masks when away from the desk or walking in and around the building



COVID-19 Response: Education Roadmap



- Schools to remain open (with consistent bubbles/groups in place until the end of the Summer term), we continue to support schools in their use of facemasks, and encouraging pupils and staff to LFT
- Position to be reviewed for September in light of national guidance and transmission rates
- Delivery of Summer Schools and HAF programme
- Education Services continue to be delivered virtually where possible, or on school site with risk assessment in place
- Some meetings are likely to remain virtual e.g. Director's Briefing, Partnership, Schools Forum, some school governors meetings
- OFSTED graded inspections resume in September



COVID-19 Response: Key Education Priorities



- **Education Recovery** – supporting schools to continue to deliver recovery, and monitor the impact and effectiveness of provision
- **SEN Strategy** – ensuring we secure the right provision and support for our education system to support pupils in City to meet growing demand
- **Early Years** – birth to 5 integrated offer, and assessing the impact of the pandemic on future cohorts
- **Dealing with increased vulnerability** – continued work around cost of the school day and associated work, HAF programme, linking in with Family Hubs and partner agencies
- **Support for Mental Health** – increased services, and clear access pathways



Recommendations

The Education and Children’s Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:

1. Note the impact on Children’s and Education Services and the continued work to support children and young people in the City
2. Identify any areas the Board may want to consider in more detail at a future meeting



Coventry Holiday Activities & Food Programme



National context – HAF Programme

Cocktail of negative school holiday experiences - holiday hunger/poor nutrition, less access to positive activities and holiday experiences, increased costs for families (childcare, food) coupled with reduced incomes

- Momentum built for government to act (initial HAF pilots in some areas since 2018), public awareness (e.g. Marcus Rashford)
- National programme launched for Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021 for children and young people (5-16 year olds, reception to year 11 & accessing benefits-related Free School Meals)
- Holiday clubs/experiences need to include: enriching activities, hot or cold meal, food nutrition awareness, making families aware of support & services
- Not a like-for-like replacement of FSM vouchers approach – meal linked to attendance at the activity
- Engagement/attendance is voluntary - every eligible child has access of up to 64 hours provision
- Coventry allocated £1.5m – Coventry City Council (Education and Skills) programme management/ co-ordination for Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday delivery.



Coventry HAF programme - principles

Following principles agreed by steering group (representatives across community/voluntary sector, public sector partners) for Coventry programme:

- Positive, memorable & happy holiday experiences that demonstrate the value of every person
- Impacts that last beyond the holidays and experiences that reach parents and families through children and young people
- Building on, and enabling, trusted relationships and Coventry strengths
- Collaboration, partnership and “blend” across a wide range of organisations and engaging with children, young people and families throughout
- Joined-up locality offer - particularly in areas of higher deprivation
- Tailored approaches for primary and secondary ages with a key focus on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Joining-up with school summer and education recovery programmes
- Learning from others - across Coventry, West Midlands and nationally
- Delivering an incredible summer programme that enhances the national case for HAF continuation and expansion in 2022



Coventry HAF Summer offer

- Approx. 50k half-days sessions and meals to be delivered by approx. 40 organisations (e.g. community/voluntary & faith groups, Coventry Youth Partnership members, Cultural Education Partnership members, sports/leisure providers, after-school clubs, universities, food providers etc.) plus wider range of organisations/groups providing information and advice to families
- Key focus on communication/engagement through relationships – invitations sent to schools to identify eligible children who schools feel would particularly benefit from Coventry HAF to enable them to have first preference to book sessions
- Beginning of July – invitations out to all eligible FSM children/families to book onto activities directly
- Additional “marketing” will take place depending on take-up by end of first week of July in advance of Summer holidays
- Focus within the programme of “detached youth work” to also engage with harder to reach young people and help to families to book places to overcome any barriers



Examples of Summer activities

- Music (action songs, musical games, percussion, samba, music making, ukulele, soundscapes for stories & characters)
- Crafts (print making, clay)
- Video production
- Sports activities and games
- Cooking & food preparation
- Team games
- Day trips
- Storytime
- Food nutrition
- Gardening
- Nature-based arts and crafts
- Ready steady grow packs
- Drama
- Team-building
- Public speaking
- Post-16 opportunities
- Transport Innovation engagement sessions
- Dance
- Smoothie bikes
- Yoga
- Photography
- Coventry City of Culture 2021 activities
- Etc.....and more to be developed



Summary and recommendations

Coventry is well-positioned to deliver a creative, engaging HAF offer to Coventry children and young people in line with the national HAF guidance

- Key focus on capturing stories, case-studies, photos and videos from the activities – including Coventry HAF video
- September – strong focus on evaluation and learning from the programme – aim is to contribute to the case for extension and expansion of HAF nationally. Suggest an update to SB2 following this.
- Next phase of the programme will be Christmas holidays 2021

The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:

1. Note the progress of the Coventry HAF programme
2. Identify any areas the Board may want to consider in more detail at a future meeting
3. Identify any future recommendations for the Cabinet Member (Education and Skills)



Agenda Item 5

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2021-22

Last updated 10/6/21

Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

24th June 2021
Children and Young People's Plan i) Overview of services ii) Covid-19 context iii) Holiday Activity Fund including provision of Free School Meals
16th September 2021
Ofsted Outcomes and Action Plan
21st October 2021
Covid-19 recovery update
16th December 2021
-
27th January 2022
Covid-19 recovery update
17th March 2022
-
Items for 2021-22
School Performance Information – validated data Children Missing Education One Strategic Plan Adoption Service Annual Report Family Health and Lifestyles Service update Coventry and Warwickshire Maternity, Children and Young People Programme (MCYP) (Joint SB5) Use of technology by Children's Services Children's Services Strategic Plan and Journey to Excellence Family Valued Programme Youth Provision in Coventry Library provision

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2021-22

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
24th June 2021	Children and Young People's Plan i) Overview of services ii) Covid-19 context iii) Holiday Activity Fund including provision of Free School Meals	An introduction to the Board on the priorities of the service for the coming year, including the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people in school, as well as a focus on the planned activities over the summer, including the provision of Free School Meals over the summer holiday	John Gregg/ Kirston Nelson Cllr Sandhu/ Cllr Seaman
16th September 2021	Ofsted Outcomes and Action Plan	To look in detail at the recommendations from the Ofsted visit in May 2021 and progress on actions	John Gregg Cllr Seaman
21st October 2021	Covid-19 recovery update		
16th December 2021	-		
27th January 2022	Covid-19 recovery update		
17th March 2022	-		
Items for 2021-22			
	School Performance Information – validated data	A report on school performance data using validated data, including LAC and vulnerable groups, as well as gender analysis. Possibly overlaying with Marmot	Kirston Nelson
	Children Missing Education	To include children excluded, at risk of exclusion and home schooled	Kirston Nelson Sara Mills, Jeanette Essex
	One Strategic Plan	The One Strategic Plan was approved by Cabinet in Feb 2020. The Board will monitor progress on implementation of the plan.	Kirston Nelson

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2021-22

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Adoption Service Annual Report	Annual report – including information about the diversity of the adoption panel and adopters as well as support to birth mothers after their children have been adopted	Cllr Seaman Paul Smith
	Family Health and Lifestyles Service update	The service includes the following; Family Nurse Partnership (supporting first time teenage parents), Health Visiting, Infant feeding, Stop Smoking in Pregnancy, Family Weight management – Be Active Be Healthy, School Nursing and support for BAME families. The paper will provide an overview on how the service is being redesigned to ensure that there is an even greater focus on increasing levels of service to those with greater health inequalities in Coventry.	Harbir Nagra Sue Frossell Charlotte Finlayson - SWFT
	Coventry and Warwickshire Maternity, Children and Young People Programme (MCYP) (Joint SB5)	Looking scrutinise plans to develop and deliver joined-up services commissioned for babies, children, young people and their families being developed as part of the Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Care Partnership work programme.	Anna Hargraves, South Warwickshire CCG
	Use of technology by Children's Services	As requested by the Board at their meeting on 11 th March, an item on the use of technology to improve communication with service users be considered	Cllr Seaman John Gregg
	Children's Services Strategic Plan and Journey to Excellence	At their meeting on 28 th November, the Board requested progress on data from performance highlights, with demographics where possible, provided in the strategic plan. Also, to include RAG ratings from the action plan. At their meeting on 11 th March the Board agreed that this report would replace the regular progress reports from the Improvement Board	John Gregg Cllr Seaman
	Family Valued Programme	To consider progress and impact on families of the programme	John Gregg Cllr Seaman

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Youth Provision in Coventry	How and where we work with outside partners (and specifically the third sector) to deliver it	
	Library provision	With particular reference to those now being delivered with/by volunteers e.g. Earlsdon and the 'new' library in Holbrooks	

DRAFT