

Notice of Meeting

Children, Families, Lifelong Learning & Culture Select Committee

**Date & time**

Tuesday, 28 July
2020 at 10.00 am

Place

REMOTE MEETING
streaming here:
<https://surreycc.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts>

Contact

Benjamin Awkal, Scrutiny Officer
Room 122, County Hall
Tel 020 8213 2502

benjamin.awkal@surreycc.gov.uk

Chief Executive

Joanna Killian

We're on Twitter:
[@SCCdemocracy](https://twitter.com/SCCdemocracy)

**Elected Members**

Amanda Boote, Mr Chris Botten (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Liz Bowes, Mr Robert Evans, Mrs Kay Hammond (Chairman), Mrs Yvonna Lay, Mr Peter Martin, Dr Andrew Povey, Mrs Lesley Steeds (Vice-Chairman), Ms Barbara Thomson, Mr Chris Townsend and Mr Richard Walsh

Independent Representatives:

Mr Simon Parr (Diocesan Representative for the Catholic Church), Mrs Tanya Quddus (Parent Governor Representative) and Mr Alex Tear (Diocesan Representative for the Anglican Church, Diocese of Guildford)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee is responsible for the following areas:

Children's Services (including safeguarding)
Early Help
Corporate Parenting
Education
Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
Adult Learning
Apprenticeships
Libraries, Arts and Heritage
Voluntary Sector

Please note that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all future meetings of the Committee will be conducted remotely until further notice. These meetings will be streamed live on the council's website, allowing the public to observe proceedings. All meeting papers, decision sheets and minute will continue to be published on the council's website.

AGENDA

7 PREPARATIONS FOR THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

(Pages 3
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Purpose of the Report:

To provide an overview of the work undertaken and planned to support schools' preparations for the full reopening in September.

Joanna Killian
Chief Executive

Published: Wednesday, 22 July 2020

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES, LIFELONG
LEARNING AND CULTURE
SELECT COMMITTEE**



TUESDAY 28 JULY 2020

**TITLE: PREPARATIONS FOR THE REOPENING
OF SCHOOLS**

Purpose of report: To provide an overview of the work undertaken and planned to support schools' preparations for the full reopening in September.

Introduction

1. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, education settings closed on 20 March 2020. Places have been offered throughout the subsequent period to vulnerable learners, children of critical workers and those with Education, Health and Care plans.

In accordance with the Government's Recovery Strategy, published in May, schools began to welcome back children from select years on 1 June, which was expanded on 15 June.

All pupils will return to school at the start of the Autumn Term.

Home-to-school transport and support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

1. Councillor Kay Hammond (Horley West, Salfords & Sidlow) posed a question to the Cabinet meeting on 23 June 2020 in relation to effect of the pandemic on the Home-to-School Transport budget and the challenges in supporting SEND pupils during the lockdown period.
2. In her response, Councillor Julie Iles (Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning) welcomed the opportunity to address some of the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our home-to-school transport service, as well as the specific challenges it brought in supporting our children and young

people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families.

3. From the outset of the pandemic, significant work has gone into securing the sustainability of our school transport sector.
4. We have funded our taxi firms at 50% of the usual route costs where journeys are not required and diverted their capacity to carry out deliveries of essential items such as PPE, food and medicine to vulnerable families.
5. Though there have been some one-off cost reductions on home-to-school transport in this financial year, it is uncertain at this stage how significant that will be, given the cost implications of social distancing measures that may be required as more children return to school.
6. Changes in daily routines and more restricted access to the community resources on which children and young people with SEND rely on have caused greater stress and anxiety for these children and their families.
7. Details of work to support SEND pupils were shared with the Cabinet meeting of 26 May 2020, including accessible and clear information on the Local Offer, online mental health support for parents, therapies delivered to children virtually, and multi-agency virtual 'team around the family' meetings.
8. In the first two weeks of lockdown, our SEND teams identified and risk assessed 10,000 of our SEND pupils.
9. For those children who could stay at home, safety plans were developed with the families, and for those who needed to remain in specialist settings contingency plans were put in place should the settings need to close.
10. The use of innovation and technology has been maximised, to reach out to very many children with SEND and their families.
11. With the support of the Council, more and more children with SEND have returned to school, based on individual assessments of each child's needs.
12. All educational settings have been supported with guidance and advice on how to maintain social distance and control infection, and where needed to acquire protective equipment.

Provision of additional classroom space and summer activities

1. At the Council meeting of 7 July 2020, Councillor Jonathan Essex (Redhill East Division) requested an update on how the Council was planning to support schools requiring additional classroom space so that they can open for all pupils in September and asked about activities planned for the summer holiday period.
2. In her response, Councillor Julie Iles (Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning) extended her thanks to our school leaders, teaching staff, support workers and school governors for the tremendous work they have done, and continue to do, throughout this period.

Full opening of schools from September 2020 for all pupils

3. The Council's Land and Property team has been exploring a number of options for temporary classrooms or leveraging the use of suitable empty buildings in appropriate locations.
4. Discussions with school leaders revealed that their risk assessments determined that it was better to maintain all children on their existing school site, rather than expand over multiple sites.
5. The comprehensive guidance on the full opening of mainstream and special schools, early years settings and colleges from September 2020 for all pupils was published on 2 July.
6. The guidance, based on Public Health England advice, is that schools should use their existing resources to make arrangements to welcome all children back. They should not need to deliver any of their education on other sites because class sizes can return to normal and spaces used by more than one class or group can be cleaned between use.
7. Some schools' risk assessments may identify requirements for small adaptations to their sites, such as additional wash basins or hand sanitiser stations. Our Land and Property team are providing advice and support to schools to make these adjustments.

Childcare and holiday play schemes

8. The Council's Commissioning teams are working together with Local Borough Councils, voluntary organisations and

private providers to ensure that childcare and activity clubs are available across Surrey to support children and families over the summer holiday.

9. Under current guidance such schemes can only operate from school sites. We have invited providers and partners to express an interest in delivering services and will be brokering partnerships with schools who have identified demand.
10. We will be providing support and guidance for schools around bringing in third-party providers to deliver services to their children.
11. We are also enlisting Early Years providers and childminders who are registered to care for children up to the age of 8 for families who need more flexibility than is afforded by holiday play schemes; working closely with Ofsted, who have committed to expediting registrations when prioritised by Surrey County Council.
12. The County Council will also be running a range of activities and programmes, including:
 - The Summer Reading programme.
 - Fun, Fit and Fed camps for children on free school meals.
 - Hot meals delivered to schools and settings as well as local coordination of the national Free School Meals voucher scheme.
 - 100 sessions of learning taster sessions delivered by Adult learning for a small fee.
 - A range of summer holiday outdoor learning opportunities for young people, families and adults through Surrey Outdoor Learning & Development (SOLD).
 - Early Years schemes funded for 150 vulnerable children for six weeks (which can be allocated flexibly).
 - School-age funding for 250 vulnerable children for three weeks (which can be allocated flexibly).
 - The commissioned Short Breaks programme for families with children with disabilities.
13. Other private providers and Multi-Academy Trusts are also running their own summer programmes.
14. We will be monitoring the availability of holiday provision to ensure it is enough to meet demand. For most families, we expect them to be able to access summer holiday activities in the way they always have done.

15. The County Council will be running a campaign to publicise the programme and encourage take up via advertising and marketing in communities and through schools and settings.
16. We have developed a strong communication plan for the programme for the Summer Holiday Offer 2020, including a brochure which will be distributed widely.

SCC Education Recovery Plan

1. An update on our Education Recovery Plan was given to Informal Cabinet on 20 July 2020 and is included in **Annex 1** of this report.
2. The update highlighted several key concerns resulting from the period of school closure, including the widening learning gap, increased safeguarding risks and the emotional and mental health impact on both pupils and school leaders and their staff.
3. The presentation describes the work of the Education Cell, which led the response to the pandemic, and the four recovery sub-groups which have focused upon key issues for planned reopening.
4. Recovery Plans and Roadmaps for each strand are included.
5. Funding streams are also identified. Opportunities to lobby central government will be highlighted.

Conclusions

1. Working closely with the Regional Schools' Commissioner, the Department for Education and sector partners, and through the Schools Alliance for Excellence (SAfE), the Council has developed and is implementing a clear and robust recovery strategy.
2. The planned activity will ensure that the needs of our disadvantaged children and young people and those with additional needs are met and mitigate against any disproportionate impact on these groups.

Recommendations

1. The Select Committee is asked to note the response to the pandemic in the context of the impact on the education sector and to note the arrangements for recovery planning to support the full reopening of education settings in September.

Next steps:

1. It is proposed that an update outlining the effectiveness of the Recovery Plan in supporting the reopening of settings is presented to Select Committee at its next meeting on 21 September 2020.

Report contact: Liz Mills, Director Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture

Contact details: Tel: 020 8541 7608, Mob: 07968 834579, Email: liz.mills@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

Cabinet Member Question 23 June 2020

Cabinet Member Question for Council 7 July 2020

Annex 1: SCC Education Recovery Plan – Update to Cabinet Informal 20 July 2020

SCC Education Recovery Plan – Update to Cabinet Informal

20 July 2020

Context

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic , education settings closed on 20 March 2020.

Places were offered throughout this period to vulnerable learners, children of critical workers and children with EHCPs and schools remained open for these groups.

On 1 June schools began to welcome back children in Early Years, Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. This expanded on 15 June to Year 10 and Year 12 part-time. All pupils will return to school at the start of the Autumn Term.

This period of closure has resulted in several key concerns:

- A widening learning gap, particularly for disadvantaged children and young people and those with additional needs.
- Low attendance for vulnerable children, compounding other vulnerabilities in their lives.
- Increased safeguarding concerns, with pressures on families, including increasing domestic abuse.
- Emotional and mental health impacts for children, young people and families.
- Economic impact on the education sector, with notable impact for the Early Years sector, schools who have incurred additional costs and other suppliers.
- Uncertainty surrounding the prevalence of COVID-19 during the Autumn and planning for localised disruption to schools through local lockdown arrangements

SCC Response

A major incident was declared in Surrey on 19 March 2020. The Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) was activated to coordinate the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. SCC was directed by the DfE through its guidance to coordinate the response to the COVID-19 pandemic for ALL Surrey schools, irrespective of designation. A team representing schools and educational settings from all phases, SCC, Schools Alliance for Excellence, social care and commissioners was brought together to devise, coordinate and manage the Education response – the Education Cell.

The work of the Education Cell developed a four-phase approach:

- Phase 1 – First two weeks of closure
- Phase 2 - Easter holidays
- Phase 3 - Summer term
- Phase 4 – Restoration

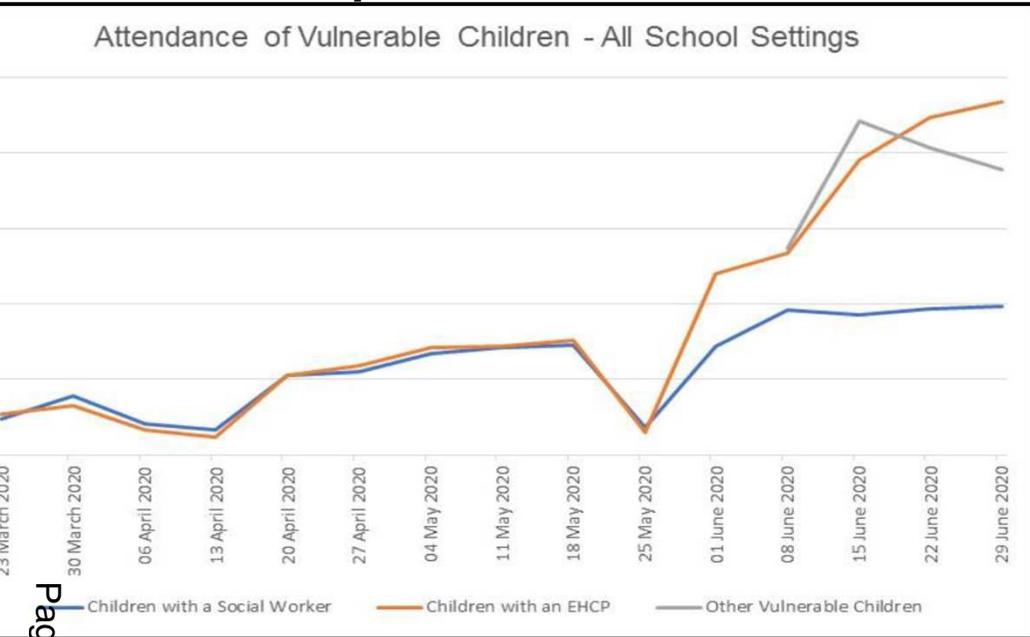
Liaison with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) and the Department for Education (DfE) has taken place on a daily basis, escalating issues and requesting responses to key questions.

SCC created a dedicated webpage with FAQs, general information and communications for school leaders, parents and carers and other stakeholders during the pandemic, responding to national guidance and local issues and risks.

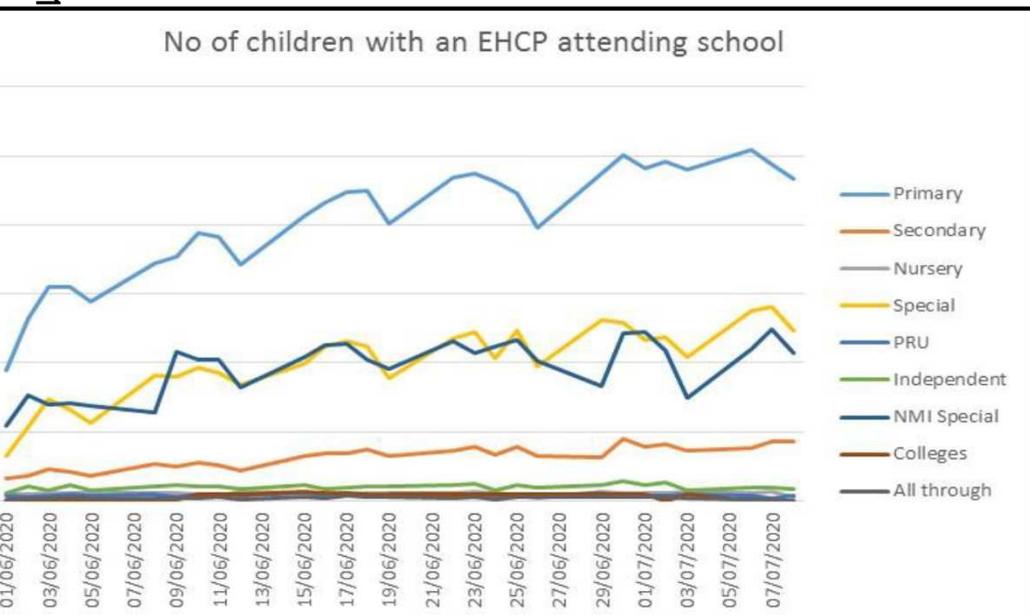
Our Recovery subgroup was set up to support the phased opening of schools and settings that began on 1 June.

Four workstreams have been leading recovery for settings in key areas: Logistics and Social Distancing; Staffing, Recruitment and Retention; Learning and Narrowing the Gap; Mental Health and Well-being of Children and Young People.

Impact of SCC Response



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- Robust partnership working with Phases and SAfE, including representation from Special Schools and Early Years providers.
- Overall increase in the number of vulnerable children attending settings – see graphs.
- 500 laptops distributed to disadvantaged young people and the remainder to be rolled out by early September.
- Over 7,000 risk assessments completed for vulnerable children and young people.
- Cluster-working between schools either on an individual basis or as part of a hub to provide provision.
- Free School Meals for eligible families, including over holiday periods.
- Market management intervention to support Early Years and Transport providers.
- Targeted webinars delivered by SAfE for governors and school leaders, covering topics such as mental health and wellbeing, returning to school and narrowing the gap.
- A dedicated and live SCC webpage for School Leaders with FAQs, tools and guidance for settings.
- A strengthened and targeted Summer Holiday Offer, with activities for children and families developed and communicated via a dedicated SCC webpage. We will have approximately 55 summer holiday clubs and schemes running across the county.
- Emergency PPE packs available for schools and settings, with a list of suppliers shared.

The priorities of the Education Cell currently include:

Delivering a summer, including food security.

Ensuring school and setting readiness for September.

Supporting risk assessment and planning within maintained schools (including free schools and academies).

Planning support for Year 10 and 12 cohorts and their exams in 2021 (minimising the reduction in subjects under examination).

Safeguarding (increased disclosures and referrals).

Reopening special schools, including independent providers.

Support for the Early Years sector.

Strengthening digital access for all to support learning through local outbreaks or future lockdowns.

Preventing risk of NEET.

Support for transition years.

Readiness to respond to increased requests for support in SEND.

Resilience of staffing models to ensure smaller schools can stay open.

Transport arrangements (new guidance to be issued shortly by DFE).

Mental health and wellbeing, including support for anxiety and bereavement.

Looking Ahead

Most schools are now closed for Summer holidays, whilst day care providers and most childminders will remain open.

Government guidance released on 2 July specified that all children, in all setting types, should plan to return to full-time education in September 2020 and attendance will be mandatory.

It went on to set out the measures that should be taken in order to ensure children could return safely to schools and other settings. This includes a system of control measures including social distancing and larger 'bubbles' to prevent the spread of infection.

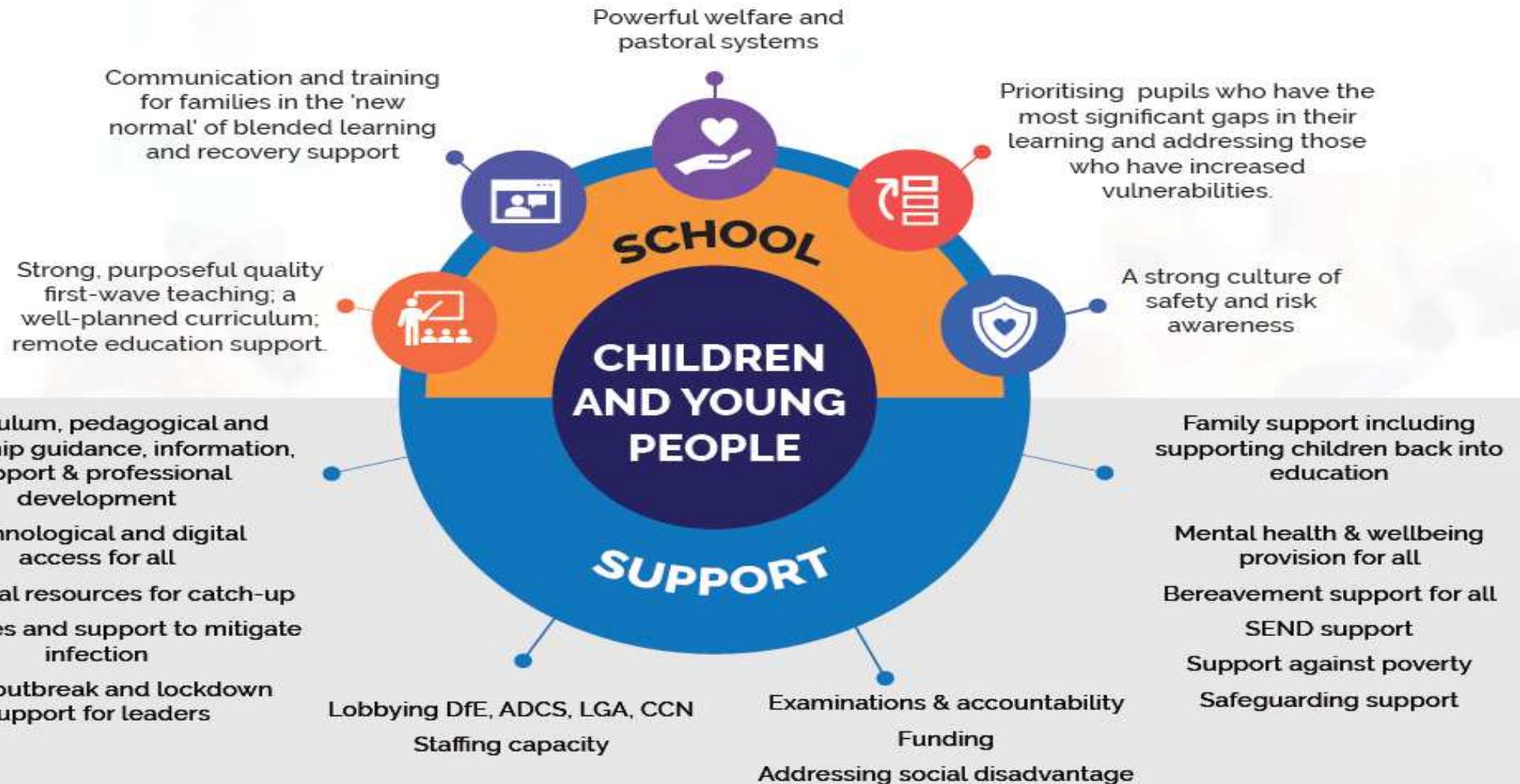
Emphasis is on schools putting into place facilities to support handwashing and other control measures where needed on-site.

Specific guidance has been provided for specialist settings and alternative provision, including hospital schools.

Consultation is underway to inform the Key Stage 4 examinations in 2021 and additional funding has been provided in a number of areas to target specific areas of concern, including Free School Meals over the summer period, closing the gap for disadvantaged learners, and those young people at risk of NEET attending PRUs in year 11.

Recovery Plan and Roadmap

Our common ambition is to ensure that all children and young people are back to full-time learning in September with a focus on curriculum recovery and where necessary emotional recovery. Schools, trusts, colleges and settings will have the autonomy to lead and manage recovery supported by high quality cohesive support from partners including the Local Authority, Schools Alliance for Excellence and the Dioceses.



Recovery Plan and Roadmap

Support

Support work is being addressed under each strand with an underpinning clear set of action and priorities

Strand 1: Logistics and Social Distancing - led by LA

To ensure schools have the relevant and appropriate advice, equipment, support and resources to open that give confidence to the community about the safety of returning to schools.

To provide support and guidance to implement local outbreak and potential localised lockdowns

Strand 2: Organisation and People - led by SAfE

- To ensure clear and timely protocols and guidance for schools and settings around staffing challenges and issues.
- To provide a county-wide framework for supporting schools and settings with staff capacity issues due to social distancing measures, illness or safety concerns.
- To facilitate well-being support for all school and setting staff including headteachers and other leaders.
- To ensure leadership development programmes are in place that support all leaders in the recovery period.

Strand 3: Learning and Narrowing the Gap - led by SAfE

- Schools and settings are supported to ensure all children and young people are accessing high quality learning through guidance, support, resources and professional development focusing on strong, purposeful quality first-wave teaching and a well-planned curriculum.
- Schools are supported to provide a high quality remote learning offer where necessary due to local or wider periods of lockdown.
- The growing educational gap for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners (including those with SEND/LAC) is ameliorated ensuring the best use of resources.

Strand 4: Mental health and Well-being of children and young people - led by LA

- Ensure all children and young people are supported through a recovery process during reintegration.
- Ensure Educational settings are aware of and have access to Early Intervention Services in Surrey, which includes our CAMHS Primary Mental Health Team, Emotional Wellbeing School Nurses, Children's Wellbeing Practitioners (in selected Schools).
- Staff have access to guidance and training to enable them to support reintegration.

Funding opportunities:

- A £1bn COVID-19 'catch-up' package to directly tackle the impact of lost teaching time and a National Tutoring Programme, worth £350 million, to support access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people for 2020/21 academic year have been announced.
- £5m funding to help community projects support people with their mental health during the pandemic.
- A 'coalition of charities' will help vulnerable children most impacted by the coronavirus pandemic as part of a Department for Education programme. More than £7 million will fund the launch of the *See, Hear, Respond* service, to provide targeted help to vulnerable children, young people and their families affected by the virus and the measures put in place to stop its spread.
- A one-off funding package worth £7 million to boost the support offered to Year 11 pupils in alternative provision making the transition from secondary school into post-16 education, work, or training, amid concerns that many may become unemployed after completing their GCSEs.

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