

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

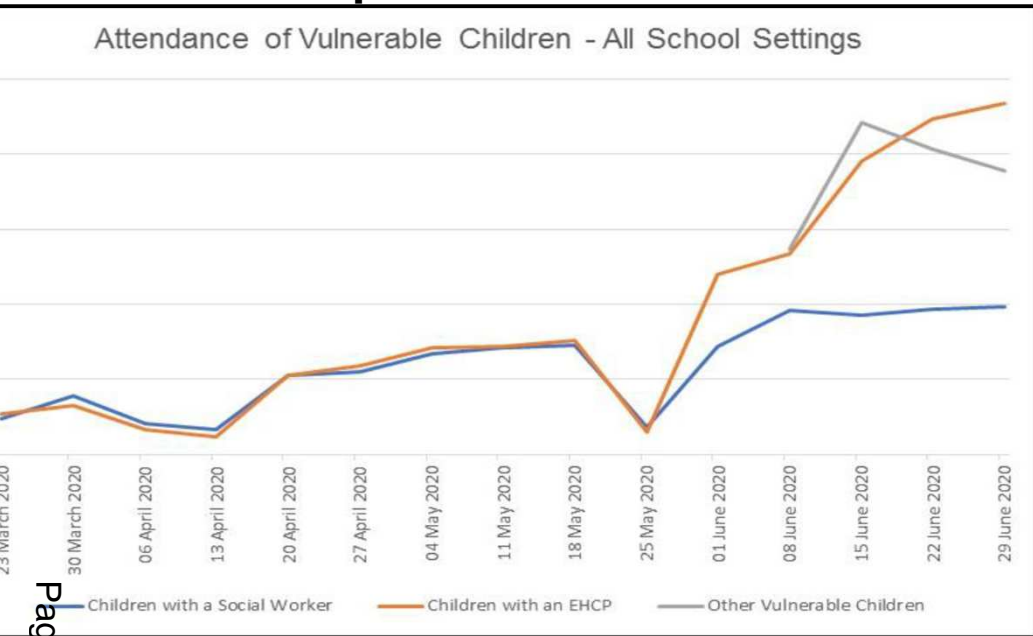
Liaison with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) and the Department for Education (DfE) has taken place on a daily basis, escalating issues and requesting responses to key questions.

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.

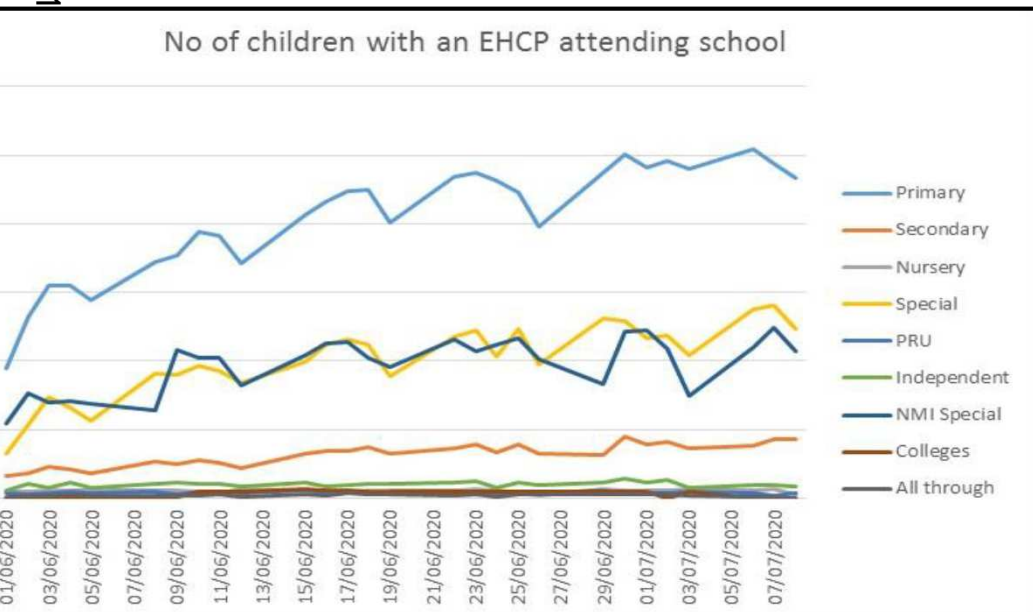
Our Recovery subgroup was set up to support the phased opening of schools and settings that began on 1 June.

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.

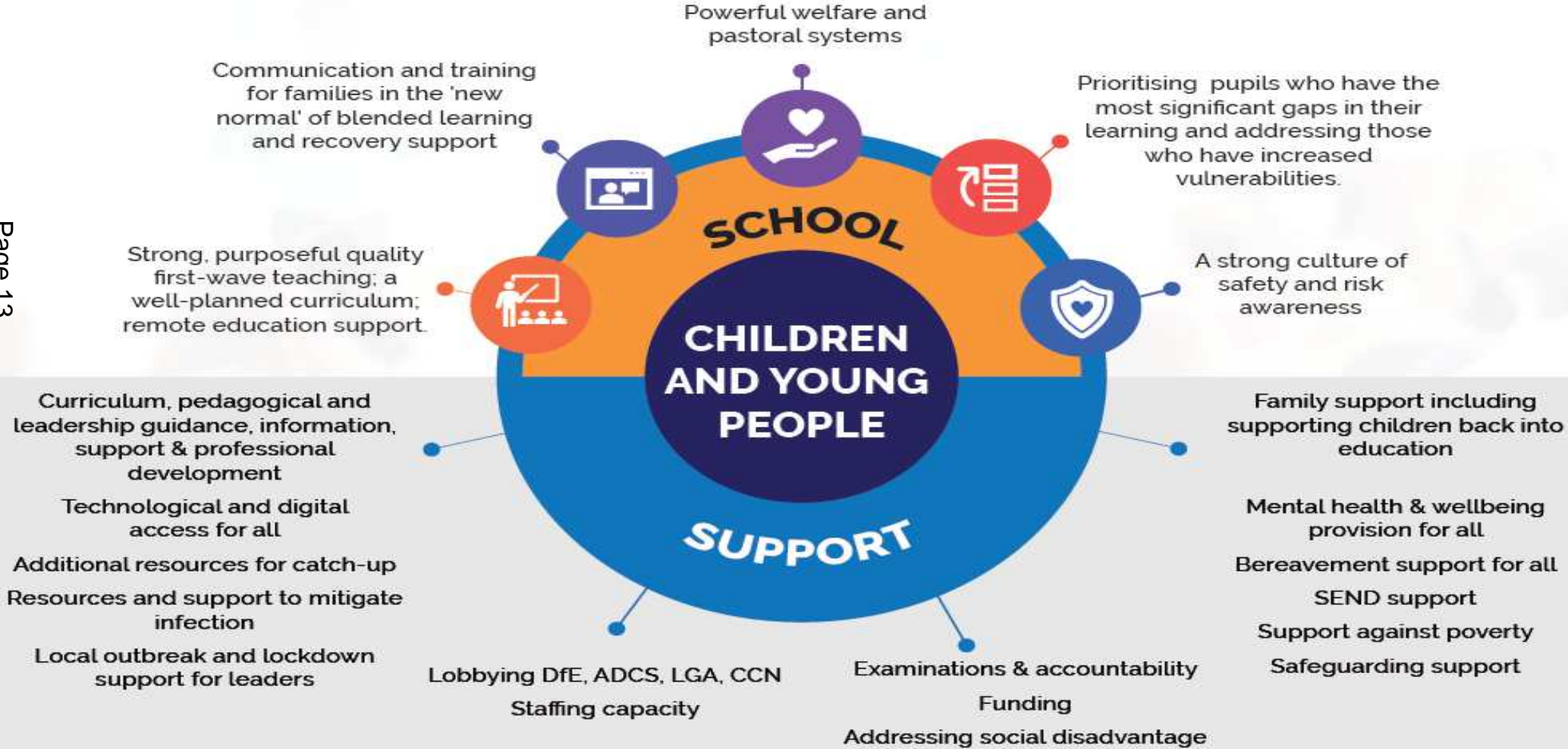
Specific guidance has been provided for specialist settings and alternative provision, including hospital schools.

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.

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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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