

Bury Health and Wellbeing Board

Report Title	Re-Setting The Education System – COVID-19 Recovery		
Meeting Date	21/07/2020		
Contact Officer	Karen Dolton		
HWB Lead	Karen Dolton		
1. Executive Summary			
Is this report for?	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input type="checkbox"/>	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose of report:	To provide the Board with an update on the implications of Covid-19 on schools, on school attendance, and the impact on learning by children and young people.		
Key Actions:	For Information		
What requirement is there for internal or external communication?	None		
Assurance and tracking process:			

2. Introduction / Background

Context

This report provides members of the Board with an update in on the impact of COVID-19 on schools, and on the education of children and young people across the Borough.

Schools were required to close with effect from 23rd March 2020 to all pupils, but to continue to meet the needs of vulnerable children and the children of key workers. The majority of schools have remained open to serve these two groups, many of them doing so throughout the Easter period, and the June half term. From initially seeing daily attendance of 250 children in the last week of March, this had increased to 1,200 by the end of May.

This is from a total 4-16 pupil population of 29,000.

The ambition by Government was that, in addition to being open to serve vulnerable children, and the children of key workers, all primary schools should re-open to Reception, year 1 and year 6 pupils from 1st June, and secondary schools should re-open to year 10 pupils from 15th June.

The Council made the decision to advise schools to delay opening, and subsequently indicated that all schools should aim to re-open to the specified year groups no later than 22nd June. Government subsequently supported a more flexible approach to re-opening.

With the exception of two Academies, all schools met this revised date and were open to specified year group cohorts by the 22nd. The two Academies opened a few days later.

The daily pattern of attendance fluctuates because of the arrangements that individual schools have put in place. For example, many primary schools have established rota's so that not all children are in attendance at the same time, but over the course of a week, an increased number of children have the opportunity to attend. Similarly, secondary schools have admitted no more than 25% of year 10's at any one time, but over a week, all year 10's will attend.

The daily attendance rate therefore provides a snapshot of the typical number of children attending on a daily basis, but not the number of children that may be attending over the course of the week.

On the 23rd June, with all but two schools open to wider cohorts, there were 4,214 children in attendance. This represents 14.5% of the total 4-16 cohort. This is the second highest attendance rate in GM.

This number has remained stable throughout the last week in June and first week in July.

On the 2nd July, Government issued guidance to support all schools to re-open to all pupils with effect from the start of the new academic year in September.

The focus is now on re-Setting the Education Service, and plan for recovery

Re-Setting the Education System

The processes of resetting the Education Service, and recovering the learning, skills and life opportunities for our children and young people, sits within the wider Bury Recovery Programme.

Whilst some children have flourished during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, others including our most vulnerable children (those Children who have an allocated social worker, those children who are looked after by the local authority, those children in receipt of free school meals or in receipt of an EHCP) will have lost valuable learning and unless we focus sharply on their needs.

The report focusses on vulnerable young people in Bury. It highlights key issues and concerns which have been identified and it proposes strategies to secure a safe return to school. It identifies plans to recover well-being and lost educational opportunities: and it sets a strategic longer term agenda for our ambition that education in Bury should become one of the best, regionally and nationally.

We know from the detailed work of the Council, vulnerable young people are very likely to experience significant challenges associated with some, or all of: family poverty, poor health and well-being, poor housing, poor employment prospects, a higher risk of domestic violence and abusive behaviour. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will have exacerbated these life constraints.

The challenge then is to reset a meaningful and appropriate education agenda within a supportive wider community context. In this way children are supported, and their families are also assisted.

Phase One: Preparing for Children to return to School

Whilst schools in Bury have remained open for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children, a substantial programme of preparation has taken place to anticipate the phased arrival of additional pupils.

The Council has had careful regard to all national guidance, including that relating to the return of key groups of children to school. A Council decision to modify government advice on return dates and to provide an additional safety margin, was strongly supported by schools, and parents.

The additional time gained in Bury through a carefully calibrated return to school for some children has proved valuable in equipping schools with robust risk assessment procedures, based on the Bury Risk Assessment Guidance, a template to support local risk assessment, and a checklist, with support from the Council, and including a Council led quality assurance process.

There continues to be daily briefings to schools; daily management planning meetings; weekly school cluster meetings, weekly meetings with trade unions and associations; and weekly meetings of the Head Teacher Advisory Group.

Phase Two: Medium Term Recovery Work: for at least the next academic year.

The four main elements of this phase are:

School and setting based strategies for pupil well-being and recovery of learning; each school, early years setting, and the PRU, are developing their own approach to assessing the needs of all pupils, including identification of those who have become newly vulnerable. In responding to those needs, support is available through the Local Authority, Multi Academy Trusts and Dioceses. This will include support from a range of LA services across Education and Inclusion and links with health partners in addition to safeguarding.

Support from the Local Authority and the Bury Teaching Schools Alliance, with additional regional HMI support, is focused on key priorities; three cross-service themes have been identified as being critical in resetting an effective service delivery. The three themes link to recovery learning with a focus on specific vulnerable groups (children who are transitioning

from one education establishment to another, children with SEND, the newly vulnerable and children who have fallen further behind in their learning than their peers). The three themes are:

- school Readiness
- recovery curriculum
- impact of support for SEND and inclusion

Up to the end of August 2020, HMI will support and challenge LA Officers in the implementation and evaluation of the LA's COVID-19 recovery plan.

The National COVID-19 Catch Up grant, to primary and secondary schools, will be available during the next academic year to support 'catch up' due to lost teaching time. Head teachers will be able to use this funding flexibly against need however, there is an expectation that this will include one to one and small group tuition. The scheme recognises that all children and young people will have lost time in education as a result of the pandemic. This means that additional support can be provided both to disadvantaged pupils and more widely to address gaps in learning and so raise attainment.

Local deployment of the National Tutoring Programme. This innovative partnership with the Sutton Trust, the Education Endowment Foundation and other partners, offers access to high quality individual tuition for some of the most disadvantaged pupils through approved and accredited Coaches and Tutors. This is a centrally funded subsidised programme for the 2020/21 academic year with legacy activity in 2021/22.

Phase Three: The Strategic Reset; concurrent with phases one and two.

Whilst members will be familiar with the original School Improvement Strategy for the Education Service in Bury; and will recall the steady progress being made in restoring our performance profile, the Covid-19 pandemic has paused that programme, and it has required us to reset our approach to securing robust improvement in pupil attainment and school performance.

Just as each school and setting will need to reset its performance priorities; so too the Local Authority has begun the process of re-basing our performance profiles and our strategic targets. This work will need to be based on revised data to show the profile of our pupils and students across each age group, key learning stage, by ethnicity, by special need and to reflect disadvantage. The programme will inevitably take time as it needs to be progressed on the reassessment of each of our pupils and students in a new education setting with different learning parameters.

3. key issues for the Board to Consider

The Board is asked to note the action taken to date, both by schools, and by the local authority working with its partners. Colleagues in Public Health and in CCG and

commissioned services have made a significant contribution to the Education Service response.

4. Recommendations for action

None

5. Financial and legal implications.

If necessary please seek advice from the Council Monitoring Officer Jayne Hammond (J.M.Hammond@bury.gov.uk) or Section 151 Officer Mike Woodhead (Mike.Woodhead@nhs.net).

None directly arising from this report

6. Equality/Diversity Implications. Please attach the completed Equality and Analysis Form if required.

Not Applicable

CONTACT DETAILS:

Contact Officer:

Telephone number:

E-mail address:

Date: