



Notice of Meeting of

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

**Wednesday, 13 March 2024 at 10.00 am**

**John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE**

To: The members of the Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families

Chair: Councillor Leigh Redman  
Vice-chair: Councillor Evie Potts-Jones

Councillor Suria Aujla	Councillor Jason Baker
Councillor Simon Carswell	Councillor Peter Clayton
Councillor Andy Hadley	Councillor Pauline Ham
Councillor John Hunt	Councillor Marcus Kravis
Councillor Martin Lovell	Councillor Frances Nicholson
Councillor Jeny Snell	Ruth Hobbs – co-opted member
The Revd Tobie Osmond – co-opted member	Jo Simons – co-opted member

---

For further information about the meeting, including how to join the meeting virtually, please contact Democratic Services on (01823) 357628 or email: [democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk)

All members of the public are welcome to attend our meetings and ask questions or make a statement **by giving advance notice** in writing or by e-mail to the Monitoring

Officer at email: [democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk) by **5pm on Thursday, 7 March 2024.**

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A: Access to Information.

The meeting will be webcast and an audio recording made.

Issued by (the Proper Officer) on Tuesday, 5 March 2024

# **AGENDA**

## **Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families**

**10.00 am Wednesday, 13 March 2024**

**Public Guidance Notes contained in Agenda Annexe (Pages 7 - 8)**

**Information about the Scrutiny Committee - Children & Families (Pages 9 - 10)**

**Details on how to join the meeting online (Pages 11 - 12)**

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### **2 Declarations of Interest**

To receive and note any declarations of interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The other registrable interests of Councillors of Somerset Council, arising from membership of City, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes: [City, Town & Parish Twin Hatters - Somerset Councillors 2023](#) )

### **3 Minutes from the Meeting held on Wednesday 10 January 2024 (Pages 13 - 20)**

To approve the minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 10 January 2024.

#### **4 Public Question Time**

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

We are now live webcasting most of our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, please see 'details on how to join the meeting online' document.

#### **5 Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Programme (Pages 21 - 36)**

To receive an update from the Service Manager, Governance Scrutiny. To assist the discussion, the following documents are attached:-

- (a) The Committee's work programme
- (b) The Committee's outcome tracker

Please use the following links to view the latest Somerset Council Forward Plans and Executive Forward Plan of planned key decisions that have been published on the Council's website:

[Somerset Council Forward Plans](#)

[Somerset Council Executive Forward Plan](#)

## **6 Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing in Somerset (Pages 37 - 54)**

To consider PowerPoint presentation.

The focus of the item is on the Somerset system wide support for children and young people who self-injure and follows on from the item considered by the Committee at the meeting in [July 2023](#). The item will be led by the Council's Strategic Manager, Public Health, Patsy Temple, together with colleagues from CAMHS, ICB, Nik Harwood (Young Somerset) and front line practitioner representation from jigsaw project (Targeted Youth Support) and hospital psychiatric liaison team.

*Notes:*

*Members of the Scrutiny Committee – Adults and Health are welcome to attend the meeting for this agenda item.*

*The Chair will allow 45 minutes for this agenda item.*

## **7 2023/24 Children's Services - Budget Monitoring (Pages 55 - 64)**

To consider PowerPoint presentation.

As background the Committee will find it helpful to refer to the following, considered by the Executive at its meeting on 6 March 2023 - [Children, Families & Education Services – month 10 position](#)

*Note – the Chair will allow 20 minutes for this agenda item.*

## **8 DSG Deficit Management Plan (DMP) (To Follow)**

To consider PowerPoint presentation.

*Notes:*

*The Chair will allow 40 minutes for this agenda item.*

*As background to the item and to assist the Committee, some further information about the DMP was circulated on 5 March 2024.*

## **9 Understanding Elective Home Education (Pages 65 - 72)**

To consider PowerPoint presentation.

*Note – the Chair will allow 20 minutes for this agenda item.*

## **10 Update from Education Standards Standing Panel**

To receive update from the Chair of the Panel, Cllr Evie Potts-Jones.

*Note – the Chair will allow 10 minutes for this agenda item.*

## **11 Report back from committee members on Children's Services Transformation Priorities /Areas (Pages 73 - 74)**

To receive report back from members of the Committee on the strands in the Children's Services Transformation Priorities / Areas:

- Education for Life – Jo Simons
- CLA Transformation - Cllr Evie Potts, Cllr Martin Lovell
- SEND Strategy – Cllr Simon Carswell, Cllr Frances Nicholson
- Connect Somerset - Tobie Osmond, Ruth Hobbs

*Note – the Chair will allow 20 minutes for this agenda item.*

## **12 Items for Information - Standing Item**

This is a standing agenda item and will provide details of information sent to Committee members in between meetings, that cover the Committee's policy areas.

(a) Delivering Better Value – Newton Report – circulated on 3 January 2024

(b) Short break provision – action plan – circulated on 21 February 2024

If Committee members have any questions or comments on the information, please contact the Committee Administrator on [democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk) in the first instance and before the date of the meeting.

## Guidance notes for the meeting

### Council Public Meetings

The legislation that governs Council meetings requires that committee meetings are held face-to-face. The requirement is for members of the committee and key supporting officers (report authors and statutory officers) to attend in person, along with some provision for any public speakers. Provision will be made wherever possible for those who do not need to attend in person including the public and press who wish to view the meeting to be able to do so virtually.

#### Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact Democratic Services at

[democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk) or telephone 01823 357628.

They can also be accessed via the council's website on [Committee structure - Modern Council \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

### Members' Code of Conduct requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: [Code of Conduct](#)

### Minutes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed, and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting.

### Public Question Time

If you wish to speak or ask a question about any matter on the Committee's agenda please contact Democratic Services by 5pm providing 3 clear working days before the meeting. (for example, for a meeting being held on a Wednesday, the deadline will be 5pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting) Email

[democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk) or telephone 01823 357628.

Members of public wishing to speak or ask a question will need to attend in person or if unable can submit their question or statement in writing for an officer to read out, or alternatively can attend the meeting online.

A 20-minute time slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been agreed. Each speaker will have 3 minutes to address the committee.

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chair. You may not take a direct part in the debate. The Chair will decide when public participation is to finish. If an item on the agenda is contentious, with many people wishing to attend the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

### **Meeting Etiquette for participants**

Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.

Mute your microphone when you are not talking.

Switch off video if you are not speaking.

Speak clearly (if you are not using video then please state your name)

If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.

There is a facility in Microsoft Teams under the ellipsis button called turn on live captions which provides subtitles on the screen.

### **Exclusion of Press & Public**

If when considering an item on the agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act.

If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Democratic Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, ask participants to leave the meeting when any exempt or confidential information is about to be discussed.

### **Recording of meetings**

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency. It allows filming, recording, and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public - providing this is done in a non-disruptive manner. Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings. No filming or recording may take place when the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting.



## **Information about the Committee**

This Scrutiny Committee covers the full range of functions covered by the Lead Member for Children and Families. The key focus of the Committee is to assist the Lead Member, the Executive, the Council and its partners to improve the life chances of all children in Somerset through effective and joined up approaches to the delivery of services.

The membership of the Committee includes 2 co-opted church representatives, 2 co-opted parent governor representatives, 2 school governor representatives and 1 representative from the Schools Forum. These co-opted members have voting rights on education matters.

The Committee has a useful 'glossary of terms' document, and this can be found on the website on the following link – [Glossary of Terms](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families 13 March 2024

**John Meikle Room, The Deane House,  
Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE**

To join the meeting via MS Teams, please see below

---

### Microsoft Teams meeting

**Join on your computer, mobile app or room device**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 376 132 369 293

Passcode: 2dvNXq

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

**Or call in (audio only)**

[+44 1823 772277,,337342532#](#) United Kingdom, Taunton

Phone Conference ID: 337 342 532#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)



[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

This page is intentionally left blank



Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families held in the Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR, on Wednesday, 10 January 2024 at 10.00 am

**Present:**

Cllr Evie Potts-Jones (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Simon Carswell

Cllr Pauline Ham

Cllr Marcus Kravis

Cllr Frances Nicholson

Cllr Brian Smedley (sub for Cllr Redman)

Cllr Rosemary Woods (sub for Cllr Aujla)

Jo Simons – co-opted attended remotely

Cllr Peter Clayton

Cllr John Hunt – attended remotely

Cllr Martin Lovell

Cllr Gill Slocombe (sub for Cllr Hadley)

Cllr Jeny Snell

The Revd Tobie Osmond – co-opted

**In attendance:**

Cllr Heather Shearer

**Other Members present remotely:**

Cllr Norman Cavill

Cllr Liz Leyshon

Cllr Lucy Trimnell

Cllr Andy Kendall

Cllr Jo Roundell Greene

Cllr Sarah Wakefield

**Councillor Evie Potts-Jones (Vice Chair) - in the Chair**

**1 Membership changes - Agenda Item**

The Vice-Chair updated the Committee on recent membership changes:-

- (a) Cllr Pauline Ham and Cllr Marcus Kravis have been appointed as members on the Committee, replacing Cllr Caroline Ellis and Cllr Jenny Kenton.
- (b) Mrs Eileen Tipper, longstanding co-opted member on the Committee has taken the difficult decision to stand down from the role. The Vice Chair said that she is a remarkable person and is extremely grateful for the time given to the work of

the committee over the years and will forward on the Committees' thanks and best wishes to her.

The Vice Chair read out the following statement from the Chair – *“Eileen has been an amazing, co-opted member of the committee, she has been there as long as I have, always ready to challenge or delve, her knowledge, background and willingness to question or challenge has been so valuable to me and the committee over the years. I thank her for her service and support to me. Her experience will be missed by the committee, I really do thank her”*.

## **2 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1**

Apologies were received from Cllr Leigh Redman (substituted by Cllr Brian Smedley), Cllr Andy Hadley (substituted by Cllr Gill Slocombe), Cllr Suria Aujla (substituted by Cllr Rosemary Woods) and Ruth Hobbs (co-opted member). Cllr John Hunt and Jo Simons (co-opted member) joined the meeting online.

## **3 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2**

The following declaration of interest was made at the meeting:-

Cllr Pauline Ham – personal interests – (a) family member works for the Leaving Care Team; (b) family member who works for the NUT.

## **4 Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 12 December 2023 - Agenda Item 3**

Resolved that the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Childrens and Families held on Tuesday 12 December 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

Referring to Minute 7 (EHCP- progress update), the Vice Chair advised that Cllr Nicholson had sent in her questions – confirmed that the responses are being collated and will be shared with the committee and will be published.

## **5 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4**

There were no questions asked, statements made or petitions presented.

## **6 Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Programme - Agenda Item 5**

The Committee received and noted the current work plan and outcome tracker and Executive Forward Plan.

The Scrutiny Manager highlighted the following:

- The item on children's mental health / self-harm will be considered at the March meeting.
- To note that the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health will be considered by the Adults & Health Scrutiny Cttee at their meeting on 8 February (an item for information).
- The MTFP will be on the agenda for the Corporate & Resources Scrutiny Cttee meeting on 1 February and all scrutiny members will be invited to attend the meeting. Implications / issues for this committee can be brought to following meeting.
- The next meeting of the Committee is on 13 March 2024, and will be held in the JMR at Deane House, Taunton.

## **7 Sufficiency Strategy for children looked after and care leavers – 2023-28 - Agenda Item 6**

The Committee received a [presentation](#) from Richard Selwyn, the Council's Service Director Children's Commissioning and Julie Breeze, Commissioner – Children in Care on the [Sufficiency Strategy for children looked after and care leavers \(2023-28\)](#) who provided an outline of the Sufficiency Strategy for Somerset, the vision, priorities, Somerset challenges and the programme to improve outcomes and sufficiency / actions to be taken.

Ms Breeze explained the sufficiency means ensuring there are enough high quality homes for our children in care and care leavers. The vision is to:

- Better support children at risk of coming into care, before they come into care.
- Increase the number of homes for children, especially foster care.
- Design our in-house fostering, residential care and supported accommodation so we support the most complex needs.
- Improve choice and match homes to children, significantly reducing out of county places.
- Reduce costs so we are within budget.

The Committee asked a number of questions and made a number of comments which were responded to at the meeting, as follows:

- *Asked about the processes for recruiting foster carers* – this is done creatively, to help show that this is something people can do; there is a financial element but it is about focussing on and being clear about what the offer is and the level of support / training on offer.
- *Query about the 'new generation of carers' point and what means* – advised that in the pandemic a number of younger carers had come forward but had returned to other work and stopped caring when the pandemic ended – have reviewed fees

and allowances, for example.

- *Would encourage everyone to look into fostering; have found it a rewarding experience and age is not a barrier; you are part of a team and are supported.*
- *Supported housing provision for the rising 16 – 24 year olds is a huge issue – recognise this is an issue and do work closely with housing colleagues and long term strategy and are exploring a rent guarantor scheme for our children in care and care leavers.*
- *Helpful to see information (movement) on numbers of foster carers – officers are happy to provide this information.*
- *Question about therapeutic education provision, part of Homes and Horizons project (providing homes for the most complex children in care) – explained the complex funding mechanisms and the ongoing conversations with the DfE around the model which has to be signed-off at Ministerial level; expect this to happen soon. It is hoped that the therapeutic education provision at Misterton will be opened in April and the Head Teacher has been in place since September and staff are working with the young people already who need that support. Officers also updated on progress on Homes and Horizons, which is providing homes for the most complex children in care and is successful and a genuine partnership; are planning for homes 7 and 8 and putting finance in place for further homes.*
- *Query on Somerset challenges (slide 6) and the ‘increase in unregistered / illegal placements’ and what this means; – clarified that ‘illegal’ means an unregistered placement; explained the process / safeguards if do have to use an unregistered setting (due to, for example, there being no other provider able or willing to take the young person).*
- *Query about comment on rising number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (USAC) (slide 6) – explained this is being managed well and are working hard with providers on this.*
- *Question on ‘shape and manage the market’ (slide 7) – looking at how engage the market and referenced the dynamic purchasing system which will help and QA check any new provider.*
- *Query and concern about inflation negotiations (referenced on slide 7) and commissioning arrangements (slide 8) – referenced the contractual framework and discussions with providers; if a provider is not on contractual framework, it is a laborious process / discussion; the market is very difficult at the moment; always trying to engage on national level too.*

The Vice Chair briefly summarised the discussions at the meeting – recognise the need to find the right quality home for children and young people; one of the key areas is around preventing children & young people from coming into care in first instance; foster care recruitment, which is a national as well as a Somerset challenge; highlighted the increase in the number of children with complex needs; housing issues and work with providers; fostering data to provided.



The Vice Chair thanked officers for the presentation and the Committee noted the update.

## **8 2023/24 Children's Services - Budget Monitoring - Agenda Item 7**

The Committee received a [presentation](#) from Christian Evans, the Council's Head of Business Partnering Finance and colleagues on the 2023/24 Children's Services month 7 budget monitoring position. The presentation focussed on external placements monitoring and forecasting, CLA key cost drivers and the 23/24 DSG budget monitoring (High Needs, home to school transport and SEND transport).

Mr Evans explained that the discussion on the previous agenda item on the Sufficiency Strategy for Somerset had provided good context to this item.

The Committee asked a number of questions and made a number of comments which were responded to at the meeting, as follows:

- *Query about the High Needs (HN) deficit (slide 8)* – there is a programme of work going on to look at mitigations around reversing the deficit on the HN block and to return the in year overspends to zero; there is also the national context (problem) and Somerset is not 'out of line'; the government put in place two different types of activity in place and Somerset is in tranche 1 of the Delivering Better Value project; have done work with Newton Europe but this work is very unlikely to reduce the deficit to zero entirely.; referenced the Deficit Management Plan which will be brought to scrutiny so can understand what are proposing.

Highlighted the main issue and concern that the deficit is effectively underwritten by the government but from 2026 the government is planning to essentially stop underwriting the HN deficit, which will have a huge financial impact on this authority, and probably nearly every upper tier authority in the country.

- *Ms Simons, who represents the Schools Forum on the committee mentioned that the Schools Forum is involved in the HN discussions and will update the committee on these discussions.*
- *Question on the CLA key cost drivers (slide 7) and volatility in charges / costs in sector* – this is due to several sort of different pressures and drivers in the system and some of the drivers are – needs and complexity, long term effects of covid, cost of living crisis, practical changes, working hard at all levels of the system, commissioning changes, the market trajectory and effects on availability in the market place, lack of sufficiency in fostering which means using more residential care and hence the importance of the work to increase the number of foster carers and keep improving both quality as well as reducing the overall cost.

The Vice Chair briefly summarised the discussions at the meeting – data driven, budget monitoring, cost drivers, noting that the council is refreshing the DSG Deficit Management Plan (DMP) and will bring this to scrutiny committee in March so the committee can see what is being proposed.

The Vice Chair thanked officers for the presentation and the Committee noted budget position.

## **9 Update on short break provision (respite) - Agenda Item 8**

The Committee received a [presentation](#) from Louise Palmer, the Council's Strategic Commissioner, Children's Services and Jo Manning, Head of Service on short break provision, which is holiday activities, daycare, fostering, residential and outlined the statutory guidance, current resources, gaps / opportunities, vision and plans for the future / next steps.

They referred to the 'sprint' held in December which highlighted the issues which needed to be addressed (for example, process to get short breaks is too long, transport, workforce). The aim is to re-design the assessment process to be faster and to increase access to local resources so that needs can be met nearer, faster. The action plan will be finalised during January with fortnightly meetings to progress and will return to the committee in May to provide an update.

The Committee asked a number of questions and made a number of comments which were responded to at the meeting, as follows:

- *Change in mindset and paid tribute to the amazing work of families / parents; are there cost implications in what is being proposed* – there will be cost implications and when come back with proposals will look at cost implications of doing, or not doing things. The 'sprint' is a good process and the families said that the current process feels adversarial and it is a 'fight' and want to have more flexible local support so likely to see right level of support, to help families when they need it and want to improve what families experience and reduce costs too. For example, dealing with complaints takes time and resources (tribunals) so having fewer may be able to get more money into the right place.
- *Query on the micro providers mentioned on the workforce slide (slide 11)* – clarified are in the Adult Social Care Team and are independent of the Council and provide support to adults in the community – asked if they could work in children's service as well – and are doing a lot of work with them to dispel myths.

Officers explained the position re the children's homes for respite - have retained the home for children with mild physical or learning difficulties and one for children with very complex learning difficulties, which is very close to the hospital in case

they need urgent medical treatment. The decision was taken to close a third home (Beech Tree) (for children with complex needs, particularly autism) and work going forward is to have some smaller homes, creating a more home-like environment.

- *Pulling these actions together (slide 13) and local provision; comment made that need to have joined up working across the organisation and to ensure that all parts of the council are supporting this approach and not letting people get away with doing something that does not help children.*

The Vice Chair thanked officers for the informative presentation. It was agreed that the Action Plan is shared with Scrutiny and officers were asked to provide an update to the Committee in May.

## **10 Education Place Planning - Agenda Item 9**

The Committee received a [presentation](#) from Phil Curd, the Council's Head of Education Places on education place planning. He provided an overview of statutory duties, the Somerset context, projection modelling, education growth and challenges, local first approach, developer contributions, extended / expanded childcare offer and expansion of wrap around provision.

The Committee asked a number of questions and made a number of comments which were responded to at the meeting, as follows:

- *Question on pupil yields and SEND figure of 0.92 children per 100 homes (slide 7) - the calculation was explained; 2% of school aged children are in specialist provision and the yield data had been recalculated recently and is accurate. When looking at developing school places the approach is the local first approach (slide 8).*
- *Query on yield data (slide 7) - some housing developments have not yielded numbers and some areas of the county such as West Somerset have surplus number of school places.*
- *Developed contributions (slide 9) and is the council making best / ensure that education gets the money it needs - the current challenge is securing the contributions we need; are streamlining the planning process and LGR provides a big opportunity, to amalgamate 4 teams and for a single approach to priority areas; this is an emerging situation but an enormous step forward; the new Somerset wide local plan too is being developed. Detailed work is also on going in the council around developer contributions via s106 process.*
- *Expansion of wrap around provision (slide 18) and how can increase numbers of schools offering after school provision until 6 pm - this is around having sufficient economies of scale and is a challenge. Are more likely to see after school provision being available in more urban areas (where families tend to live closer to the school) than in rural areas (and transport is an issue), so its around*

viability (demand) and rural nature (transport).

The Vice Chair thanked the officer for the excellent presentation and the committee noted the update.

**11 Items for Information - Standing Item - Agenda Item 10**

The Committee noted the following items for information:-

(a) Housing related support and accommodation for 16 – 25-year-olds - the new service will go live in April 2024

(b) C&YP December Bulletin – circulated on 19 December 2023

**(The meeting ended at 1.16 pm)**

.....  
**CHAIR**

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items	Lead Officer/Item Lead
<p><b>Outstanding items from 2022/ 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Transport policy / Post-16 Travel Policy and the ‘Somerset Ticket’</li> <li>• Children missing out on education (numbers, who, reasons)</li> <li>• <del>Evaluation of the West Somerset Opportunity Area (September ‘23)</del></li> <li>• <b>Workshop The disadvantage gap</b> - what we know and options to address, to include health impact of inequalities in education - Public Health, SEND, social workers, case studies, wider health organisations, FSM and pupil premium data</li> <li>• <b>Possible workshop with Adults &amp; Health Scrutiny</b> Self-harm / mental health issues – 10 January 24 meeting – now 13 March ‘24 mtg</li> <li>• <del><b>Possible workshop with Adults &amp; Health Scrutiny</b> Transition arrangements – preparing for adulthood – 25 October mtg</del></li> </ul> <p><b>Items to be scheduled 2023/24</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Household Support Fund</a> / schools (added 15/05/23) (is a Key Decision 23/05/23)</li> <li>• <del><b>Possible workshop with Adults &amp; Health Scrutiny</b> Children &amp; Young People’s access to Dentistry / child oral health improvement (added 04/05/23) – 25 October mtg</del></li> <li>• <del><a href="#">Oral health survey of 5 year old children 2022</a> published March ‘23</del></li> <li>• <del>EHCP process (added 27/06/23) – December mtg</del></li> <li>• <del>Complaints to ombudsman (added 14.08.23) – be part of above item going to Dec mtg</del></li> <li>• <del>School place sufficiency – EY, Nursery places, primary, secondary and special schools (added 27/06/23) – December mtg – now Jan mtg</del></li> <li>• Elective home education numbers (added 27/06/23) – to 13 March mtg</li> <li>• Pupil referral unit (added 27/06/23)</li> <li>• Councillor DBS checks (added 13/07/23)</li> <li>• Provisional – joint with Adults and Health Scrutiny - Asylum Resettlement Programme following issues raised by groups working with asylum seekers in the community in Somerset (added 01.08.23)</li> <li>• <del>Connect Somerset (added 15.11.23) – December mtg</del></li> <li>• What are the implications of the current financial situation on Somerset children services? (added 20.11.23) – to be item early in new year</li> <li>• Update from Education Standards Standing Panel (added 31.01.24) – to 13 March mtg</li> <li>• Education for Life – Plan for Years 2-5 (added 31.01.24) – to 13 March mtg</li> </ul>		
<b>Thursday 4 May 2023 @ 10am</b>		
Education Partnerships & Skills	LA Maintained Schools Core Offer – update / response from last meeting and 2023/24 budgets	Amelia Walker

The focus for the Committee is – what impact does this have on the children in Somerset?

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

	Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items	Lead Officer/Item Lead
	Education Partnerships & Skills	Terms of reference of the proposed Task Group on education standards	Amelia Walker
	Inclusion	SEND Strategy and the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP)	Dr Rob Hart and Andrew Keefe, Deputy Director for Commissioning, NHS Somerset
	Social Care	Reforms in children's social care – draft consultation response	Paul Shallcross, AD Community & Strategy
	Children & Families	Task and Finish Group – sufficiency of external placements – initial response from Executive	Executive member / Claire Winter
	Inclusion	Task and Finish Group – home to school transport – verbal update	Dr Rob Hart
	Cross-cutting	Items for Information – Standing Item (a) Information on Children and Families Board (b) Feedback on the ' <a href="#">Education for Life</a> ' launch event	
<b>Wednesday 12 July 2023 @ 10am</b>			
	Cross-cutting	Budget outturn position 22/23 and issues 23/24 - overview	Claire Winter, Executive Director of Children, Families and Education Sian Kenny, Strategic Manager, Finance
	Education Partnerships & Skills	Academisation / Education Finance	Amelia Walker, Service Director Education Partnerships and Skills
	Commissioning	Update on Homes & Horizons Partnership	Daniel Moncrieff, Strategic Manager
	Inclusion	Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing in Somerset	Dr Tim Cockerill, Patsy Temple, Mark Conway, Patrick Worthington, Nik Harwood and Lisa Walker
	Inclusion	Home to School Transport Task and Finish Group – interim update	Executive member / Service Director – Inclusion, Dr Rob Hart
	Children & Families	Somerset Youth Justice Partnership Board Annual Plan	Jayne Shelbourne-Barrow, Helen MacDonald, Operations Manager
	Cross-cutting	Items for Information – Standing Item	

The focus for the Committee is – what impact does this have on the children in Somerset?

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items	Lead Officer/Item Lead
	(a) Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) publication – <a href="#">Scrutiny of Children’s Services – a short guide</a> (b) <a href="#">Homes and Horizons partnership</a> (c) Progress update on Ofsted Action Plan; Life Story work’ (d) Children’s Services – current structure chart	Cathy Jones, Strategic Manager
Commissioning	<b style="color: red;">Communities Scrutiny Committee – 9 August 23 @ 10am</b>  Members of the Children & Families Scrutiny Committee invited to attend the meeting for this item:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Recommissioning of 16+ housing / supported accommodation</a></li> </ul> (initially added to work plan on 17/05/23)	Richard Selwyn, Service Director Children’s Commissioning
<b>Wednesday 13 September 2023 @ 10 am</b> <b>The Luttrell Room, County Hall, Taunton</b>		
Cross-cutting	2023/24 Children’s Services – Budget Monitoring	Sian Kenny, Strategic Manager, Finance
Education Partnerships & Skills	Education Modelling - Frome – next steps	Amelia Walker, Service Director Education Partnerships and Skills  Phil Curd, Strategic Manager presenting
	Regional Adoption Agency Report	Claire Winter, Executive Director of Children, Families and Education
	External Placements Task and Finish Group – response from Executive on recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group	Executive member / Claire Winter, Executive Director of Children, Families and Education
Education Partnerships & Skills	Learning from the West Somerset Opportunity Area	Julia Ridge, Strategic Manager
Cross cutting	Items for Information	

The focus for the Committee is – what impact does this have on the children in Somerset?

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items	Lead Officer/Item Lead
	(a) Education Data	Amelia Walker, Service Director Education Partnerships and Skills – to be circulated
<b>Additional mtg - 25 October 2023 @ 10am – Joint with Adults &amp; Health Committee JMR, Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1HE</b>		
Cross cutting	NHS Dentistry and Children & Young people's access to Dentistry / child oral health improvement	Sukeina Kassam, Deputy Director Primary Care and Matthew Mills, Head of Pharmacy, Optometry and Dentistry  Rachel Handley, Consultant in Public Health
Cross cutting	Approach to reducing youth vaping	Kate Anderson, Service Manager, Public Health  Rachel Handley, Consultant in Public Health
Cross cutting	Transitions arrangements – preparing for adulthood	Emily Fulbrook, Acting Deputy Director, Adults & Health Operations and Jayne Shelbourn-Barrow, Service Director for Children and Families
<b>15 November 2023 @ 10 am Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR</b>		
Cross cutting	2023/24 Children's Services – Budget Monitoring	Sian Kenny, Strategic Manager, Finance
Commissioning	Update on Children's Transformation Programme / Business Plan	Claire Winter, Executive Director of Children, Families and Education Caroline Barnes, Service Manager
Education Partnerships & Skills	Education finance – consultation	Amelia Walker, Service Director Education Partnerships and Skills



## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items	Lead Officer/Item Lead
Education Partnerships & Skills	Standing Panel for Education Standards – update from Chair of Panel	Cllr Evie Potts-Jones
	<p>Items for information – Standing Item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) SSCP Learning Bulletin - September 2023 – circulated on 20 September 2023</li> <li>(b) Children &amp; Young People LGA bulletin – September 2023 – circulated in 28 September 2023</li> <li>(c) Link to the consultation on ‘creating a smoke free generation and tackling youth vaping’, which runs to 6 December - <a href="#">Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping: your views - Department of Health and Social Care (dhsc.gov.uk)</a> – circulated on 30 October 2023</li> <li>(d) Link to <a href="#">NHS dental statistics for England 2022-23, Annual Report</a> - circulated on 30 October 2023</li> <li>(e) Information on the Education Finance consultation – circulated on 1 November 2023</li> <li>(f) LA maintained schools core offer – update – circulated on 6 November 2023</li> </ul>	
<b>Scrutiny Committee – Adults and Health – 7 December @ 10 am</b>		
	<p>Members of the Children &amp; Families Scrutiny Committee invited to attend the meeting for this item:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of Crime &amp; Disorder (added 22.08.23)</li> </ul>	
<b>Additional meeting – Tuesday 12 December 2023 @ 10am</b> <b>Venue – Council Chamber, Brympton Way, Yeovil</b>		
Cross cutting	2023/24 Children’s Services – Budget Monitoring	Sian Kenny, Strategic Manager, Finance
Inclusion	<p>Progress update on SEND Strategy / APP</p> <p>To include ‘SEND system’ update and an update on EHCP process and timeliness and information on ‘bandings’</p>	Dr Rob Hart ,Service Director - Inclusion

The focus for the Committee is – what impact does this have on the children in Somerset?

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items	Lead Officer/Item Lead
Cross-cutting	Connect Somerset	Richard Selwyn Service Director Children's Commissioning
<b>Wednesday 10 January 2024 @ 10am</b>		
<b>Venue - Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR</b>		
Commissioning	CLA Sufficiency Strategy	Richard Selwyn Service Director Children's Commissioning Julie Breeze, Strategic Commissioner
Cross cutting	2023/24 Children's Services – Budget Monitoring	Christian Evans, Head of Business Partnering
Children & Families	Update on short break provision (respite)	Jayne Shelbourn-Barrow, Service Director Children & Families Louise Palmer, Strategic Commissioner, Jo Manning, Head of Service, CLA Leaving Care
Education Partnerships & Skills	Education Place Planning	Phil Curd, Head of Education Places
	Information Items: (a) Housing related support and accommodation for 16 – 25 year olds – update – <a href="#">Key Decision</a> The new service will go live in April 2024 (b) C&YP December Bulletin – circulated on 19 December 2023	Richard Selwyn, Service Director Children's Commissioning
<i>To note that <b>MTFP</b> will be on the agenda for the Scrutiny Committee - Corporate and Resources meeting scheduled for Friday 2 February 2024 and all scrutiny members will be invited to attend the meeting. Implications / issues for this committee can be brought to following meeting. This meeting will be held at Canalside.</i>		
<b>Scrutiny Committee – Adults and Health – 8 February 2024 @ 10 am</b>		

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items	Lead Officer/Item Lead
	Members of the Children & Families Scrutiny Committee invited to attend the meeting for this item:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Report of Director of Public Health (an item for information) (added 10.01.24)</li> </ul>	
<b>Wednesday 13 March 2024 @ 10am</b> <b>JMR, Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1HE</b>		
Inclusion	Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing in Somerset Focus self-harm - members of the Adults & Health Committee be invited to attend meeting	Patsy Temple, Public Health Mark Conway / Claudine Brown - CAMHS Andrew Keefe, ICB Nick Harwood – Young Somerset and front line practitioner representation from jigsaw projected (Targeted Youth Support) Hospital psychiatric liaison team
Cross cutting	Children's Services – Budget – update month 10	Christian Evans, Head of Business Partnering
Cross cutting	DSG Deficit Management Plan (DMP)	Amelia Walker, Service Director Education Partnerships and Skills Jo Currie - Finance
Inclusion	Understanding Elective Home Education – outline / information	Dr Rob Hart, Service Director Inclusion Julia Ridge
Education Partnerships & Skills	Update from Education Standards Standing Panel	Cllr Evie Potts Amelia Walker, Service Director Education Partnerships and Skills
	Report back from committee members on Children's Services Transformation Priorities /Areas  Education for Life – Jo Simons CLA Transformation - Cllr Evie Potts, Cllr Martin Lovell SEND Strategy – Cllr Simon Carswell, Cllr Frances Nicholson	various

The focus for the Committee is – what impact does this have on the children in Somerset?

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items	Lead Officer/Item Lead
	Connect Somerset - Tobie Osmond, Ruth Hobbs	
	Information Items: (a) Delivering Better Value – Newton Report – circulated on 3 January 2024 (b) Short break provision action plan – circulated on 21 February 2024	
<b>Wednesday 15 May 2024 @ 10am</b> <b>JMR, Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1HE</b>		
Children & Families	Update on short break provision / action plan	Jayne Shelbourn-Barrow, Service Director Children & Families Louise Palmer, Strategic Commissioner, Jo Manning, Head of Service, CLA Leaving Care
Education Partnerships & Skills	Education for Life – Plan for Years 2-5 Update on workshops	Amelia Walker, Service Director Education Partnerships and Skills

Page 28

### Universal Education

- Pupil place planning
- Disadvantage gap
- Academisation
- LA maintained capacity and support

### SEND and Inclusion

- Attendance
- Accelerated Progress Plan (Joint Local Area SEND Inspection)
- SEND & Alternative Provision
- SEND Strategy

### Social Care and Commissioning

- Family safeguarding

The focus for the Committee is – what impact does this have on the children in Somerset?

## Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Plan 2023 - 2024

- Early Help
- Placement sufficiency
- Strategic partnership
- The Care Review

### **Cross-cutting items:**

- Long-term financial planning that improves outcomes for children (MTP)
- Involving young people and the community in scrutiny
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing (with health partners)
- Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) – Children & Families Budgets

**Note:** Members of the Scrutiny Committee and all other Members of Somerset County Council are invited to contribute items for inclusion in the work programme. Please contact Democratic Services (01823) 357628 & [democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk) who will assist you in submitting your item.

This page is intentionally left blank

## Scrutiny Committee - Children & Families Outcome Tracker 2023 - 24

Agenda items	Lead / Owner	Agreed Outcome	RAG Status
<b>12 July 2023</b>			
<b>Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing in Somerset</b>	Dr Tim Cockerill and colleagues	Detailed <a href="#">Presentation</a> received, which included an update on the Trauma Informed Somerset practice model and implementation.  Details on Regional Summit in autumn to be shared with Committee. Noted position re recruitment of coordinator and the system wide trauma informed training offer.	<b>progress update in 6 months' time</b>  <b>January '24 – changed to March 24</b>
<b>Joint meeting with Adults and Health Scrutiny on 25 October 2023</b>			
<b>Dentistry and children and young people's access to dentistry and child oral health improvement</b>	NHS Somerset / ICB and Public Health	The Committee received a <a href="#">presentation</a> from NHS Somerset on the provision of NHS Dental Services in Somerset, and a position statement on child oral health improvement, provided by Public Health. The Chair requested (a) a briefing be provided to cover the questions raised during discussions, around early years, sign-posting, primary care recovery plan, route for queries to be funneled; noted that service is creating a webinar (across the SW region); (b) an update to the Committee on issues raised in 4 – 6 months. Link to <a href="#">NHS dental statistical data information</a> The Committee welcomed and noted the update.	<b>Update to a Joint mtg or Adults &amp; Health cttee</b>

## Scrutiny Committee - Children & Families Outcome Tracker 2023 - 24

<p><b>Somerset approach to reducing smoking and youth vaping</b></p>	<p>Kate Anderson Rachel Handley</p>	<p>The Committee received a <a href="#">presentation</a> from Public Health Team and engaged in discussions and debate of the points raised. The presentation raised several important and informative points.</p> <p>The Committee agreed a recommendation that they wished to present to The Executive and unanimously agreed would write to the Executive in relation to electronic cigarettes, as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Committee asked that the current government consultation (link to the consultation <a href="#">Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping: your views - Department of Health and Social Care (dhsc.gov.uk)</a> be shared with all members who are encouraged to complete and promote locally in their divisions. The consultation runs to 6 December.</li> <li>2. The Committee asked that Licensing committee be asked to review and action stronger enforcement of the sale of these devices in line with the current legal position.</li> <li>3. The Committee asked that the 'Quit tool not cool tool' slogan, as highlighted by the presentation be supported and promoted in the council.</li> <li>4. The Committee requested that Council take a position with regard to seeking government to work at increasing legislation around electronic cigarettes, that included but not conclusive:- a ban of the use of single use devices with exception of use to support stopping smoking, a ban on child targeting (advertising and packaging), an introduction of plain packaging that would include a health warning, an introduction of an increasing age ban on sales of these devices in line with the change made to cigarette sales.</li> </ol>	<p><b>On going</b></p>
<p><b>15 November 2023</b></p>			
<p><b>2023/24 Children's Services - Budget Monitoring</b></p>	<p>Sian Kenny</p>	<p>The Committee received a presentation on the 23/24 Children's Services budget and a verbal update on the month 6 position, which is showing a slight increase in forecast overspend (£11.8m to £12.4m).</p> <p>A key area of deficit is the DSG, High Needs Block and will include more detail on this and the 2 areas overspending in the next update to the Committee.</p>	<p><b>On going</b></p>
<p><b>12 December 2023</b></p>			





## Scrutiny Committee - Children & Families Outcome Tracker 2023 - 24

	<p>Highlighted position re Annual Reviews / timeliness (slide 8) and referenced the LGCSO decision (slide 9). Performance against annual review timeliness will continue to challenge the LA as the number of EHC plans it needs to maintain continues to grow. The link to the Ombudsman report will be shared with the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To note the update on EHCPs and the ongoing challenges for teams across the Council and wider partners.</li> <li>2. To note the activities underway to support improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Planning Meetings offered (and monitored) to every school across Somerset to identify children requiring support from specialist LA teams.</li> <li>• Clarify expectations with schools to ensure that appropriate advice and support in advance of meeting.</li> <li>• Notes the additional staff in place to process Annual Review reports in a timely way.</li> <li>• The scrutiny committee to receive an update in 6 months on impact / uptake / number of reviews completed and so on (KPIs &amp; training).</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	
<p><b>Children's Services Transformation Priorities 2023 - 2026</b></p>	<p>The Chair referred to the discussions at the last meeting of the Committee on <a href="#">the Children's transformation priorities</a> and invited volunteers to focus on particular strands of the transformation priorities, to allow individual meetings with officers to gain a better understanding / learn more about one of the areas, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education for life</li> <li>• CLA Transformation</li> <li>• SEND Strategy</li> <li>• Connect Somerset</li> </ul> <p>The following Committee members expressed an interest in the areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education for Life – Jo Simons;</li> <li>• CLA Transformation – Cllr E Potts-Jones, Cllr M Lovell;</li> <li>• SEND Strategy – Cllr S Carswell, Cllr F Nicholson;</li> <li>• Connect Somerset – Tobie Osmond, Ruth Hobbs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>On-going</b></p>
<p><b>10 January 2024</b></p>		
<p>Membership changes</p>	<p>Noted changes to membership and that Mrs Tipper, co-opted member is standing down.</p>	

The focus for the Committee is – 'what impact does this have on the children in Somerset'?

## Scrutiny Committee - Children & Families Outcome Tracker 2023 - 24

Sufficiency Strategy for children looked after and care leavers – 2023-28	Richard Selwyn	The Committee received a presentation on the Sufficiency Strategy for children looked after and care leavers (2023-28) - outlined the Sufficiency Strategy for Somerset, the vision, priorities, challenges and the programme to improve outcomes and sufficiency / actions to be taken. Agreed that will provide foster carers data to the Committee. The Vice Chair thanked officers for the presentation and the Committee noted the update.	<b>Completed</b>
2023/24 Children's Services - Budget Monitoring	Christian Evans	The Committee received a presentation on 2023/24 Children's Services budget monitoring position - month 7, focussing on – external placements monitoring & forecasting, CLA key cost drivers and the 23/24 DSG budget monitoring (High Needs, home to school transport and SEND transport). Noted that the council is refreshing the DSG Deficit Management Plan (DMP) and will bring this to scrutiny in March so the committee can see what is being proposed.	<b>On going</b>
Update on short break provision (respite)	Louise Palmer	The Committee received a presentation on short break provision, which is holiday activities, daycare, fostering, residential and outlined the statutory guidance, gaps / opportunities, vision and plans for the future.  Agreed that the Action Plan is shared with Scrutiny and officers were invited to update the Committee at the meeting in May.	<b>Progress update to May meeting</b>  <b>Action plan shared</b>
Education Place Planning	Phil Curd	The Committee received a presentation on education place planning, providing an overview of statutory duties, the Somerset context, projection modelling, education growth and challenges, local first approach, developer contributions, extended / expanded childcare offer and expansion of wrap around provision. The Vice Chair thanked the officer for the excellent presentation.	<b>Completed</b>
<b>Scrutiny Committee – Corporate &amp; Resources – 2 February 2024</b>			
<b>Scrutiny of budget proposals for 2024/25</b>			
Education & Inclusion		Recommend that Scrutiny Children & Families receive quarterly reports regarding the Deficit Action Plan for High Needs Block and Dedicated Schools Grant and the continuation of the statutory override  Reason - To maintain sufficient oversight on delivery of this plan and its mitigation of significant risks to the Council	<b>DSG Deficit Management Plan on agenda March mtg</b>
		<b><u>Decision of Executive – 7 February 2024</u></b> For Scrutiny Committee – Children and Families to receive quarterly reports regarding the Deficit Action Plan for High Needs Block and Dedicated Schools Grant and the continuation of the statutory override	

The focus for the Committee is – ‘what impact does this have on the children in Somerset?’

## Scrutiny Committee - Children & Families Outcome Tracker 2023 - 24

Significant and high risk savings proposals		<p>Scrutiny Committee Children &amp; Families to receive quarterly updates on the delivery of savings proposals CFE 003, CFE 004, CFE 005, CFE 009, CFE 011, CFE 012, CFE 013 and CFE 014, together with scrutinising any adverse impacts on young people, partners and providers</p> <p>Reason - To be assured on the delivery of the proposed savings and scrutinise any adverse impacts on young people</p> <p><b><u>Decision of Executive – 7 February 2024</u></b> For Scrutiny Committee – Children and Families to receive quarterly updates on the delivery of savings proposals CFE003, CFE004, CFE005, CFE009, CFE011, CFE012, CFE013, and CFE014 and scrutinise any adverse impacts on young people, partners, and providers.</p>	
Service delivery and Ofsted rating of service for vulnerable children		<p>Seek assurance from the Executive that the proposed savings proposals will not adversely affect outcomes for vulnerable children and the Ofsted rating that the Council has invested significant staff and financial resources to achieve</p> <p><b><u>Decision of Executive – 7 February 2024</u></b> For assurance from Executive that the proposed savings proposals will not adversely affect outcomes for vulnerable children and the Ofsted rating that the Council has invested significant staff and financial resources to achieve.</p>	

Page 36

*The CYPP 2022 - 2025 had been produced following a multi-agency process. The CYPP had three priorities: keeping children and young people safe (priority 1); supporting physical and emotional health and resilience (priority 2); enabling young people to learn and thrive (priority 3)*

[Somerset Children & Young People's Plan – SSCP \(safeguardingsomerset.org.uk\)](https://safeguardingsomerset.org.uk)

Completed	Action complete and will be removed from tracker for next meeting
Pending	Action on-going or plans in place to address.
Incomplete	No action currently in place with a minimum of 3 months since action agreed.

The focus for the Committee is - 'what impact does this have on the children in Somerset'?



Agenda Item 6

Page 37

# Somerset System Wide Support for Children and Young People who Self-Injure



# Defining Self-Injury

Page 38

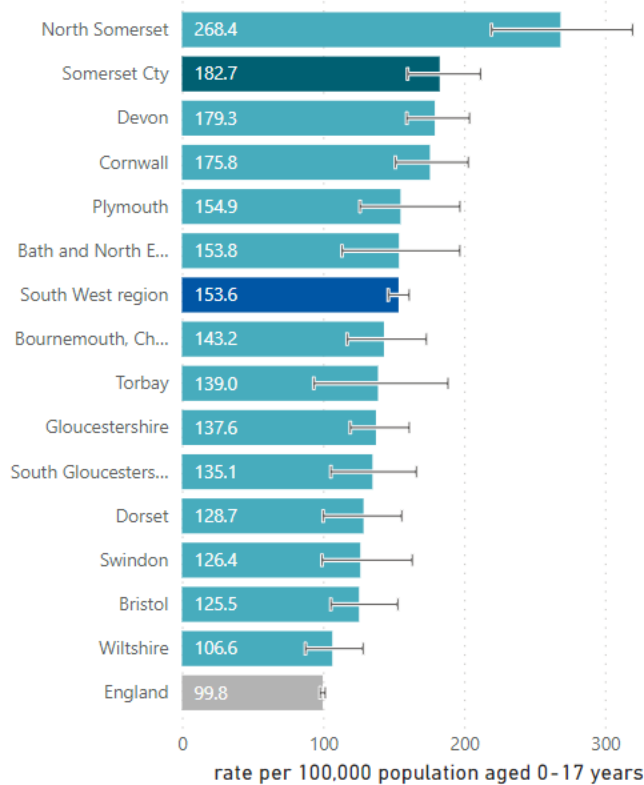
“

**Self-injury is when someone intentionally injures their body in response to painful feelings or overwhelming situations and experiences. Self-Injury is an expression of very real personal distress but not necessarily an indicator of a clinical mental illness**

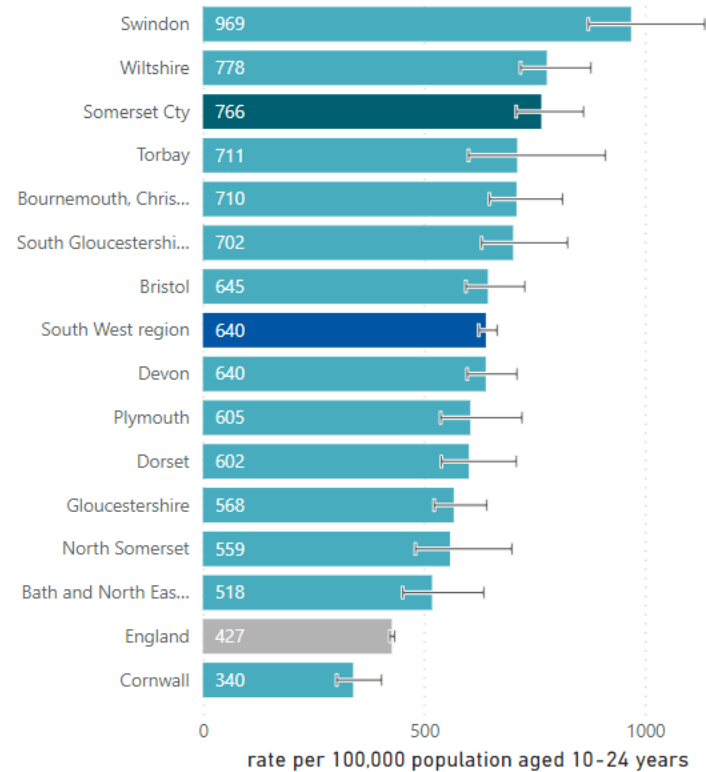
”

# What does the data tell us – Somerset

**Hospital admissions for mental health conditions 2021/22**  
admission rate for mental health disorders per 100,000 population aged 0-17



**Hospital admissions as a result of self-harm (10-24 years)**  
finished admission episodes for self-harm per 100,000 population aged 10-24 years. 2021/2022



Somerset rate whilst high is trending down since 2018 and continues to do so whereas other areas in England who have higher rates are not seeing this downward trend

# CYP Voice in Somerset

## Somerset Schools Health and wellbeing Survey 2023

**1 in 10**

Secondary aged pupils had the worst WHO-5 well-being score



**3 in 10**

Pupils in year 6,8 and 10 get angry when worried

**27.5%**

of pupils in year 10 do not have someone to talk to about feelings and worries

**12%**

of year 10 pupils Self-harm when worried

Page 40

Responses similar % to 2021

Similar % of somerset respondents said they self harm compared to other areas school surveys (Gloucestershire)

## Youth Forum October 2023

Why are Somerset young people self-harming? And do they have the right support?



### Context

Youth Forum met over Zoom on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October to discuss this topic. They looked at:

- Where do you come across self-harm?
- What can you do when you spot it?
- What support is there in schools, colleges and the community?



- Informing ICS CYP & Families partnership board, SSCP, Somerset System priority

CYP Engagement project spring 2024 'Help my friend has told me'



# Recent Improvement in Services

---

- Significant Investment in Training and Skills Development for Staff across all agencies
- Dedicated Mental Health Workforce on Hospital Sites (CAMHS Liaison)
- Development of voluntary sector involvement (Jigsaw and Mindline 24/7)
- Enhancement in Community Crisis Support
- Development of Mental Health Support Teams to support earlier intervention
- Intensive Treatment Course for parents of young people accessing CAMHS (FLASH)
- Improvements in Care Planning alongside young people
- An increased CAMHS Workforce (Rated Outstanding by CQC)
- Homes and Horizon's Multi-agency Partnership (for most complex young people)
- Dedicated High Intensity User Group Clinical Lead
- Training – for school and youth service staff and parents and carers – Harmless, Mental Health First aid

# Defining the Start of the Pathway

---

- Young people frequently seek help through school, friends or family
- In some cases the self-harm may be relatively superficial and not require medical treatment. However, these young people are often still in need of emotional or psychological support.
- For anything other than superficial self-injury, a medical or mental health assessment is needed.

Page 42



# Seeking Medical Help for Urgent or Emergency Care

---



- Young Person arrives
- Medically triaged
- Any treatment is commenced
- Referral to CAMHS Liaison (on-site)



- Assessment by CAMHS Liaison
- Linked into Appropriate services (including Jigsaw)
- Always followed up within 7-days

# What We Know

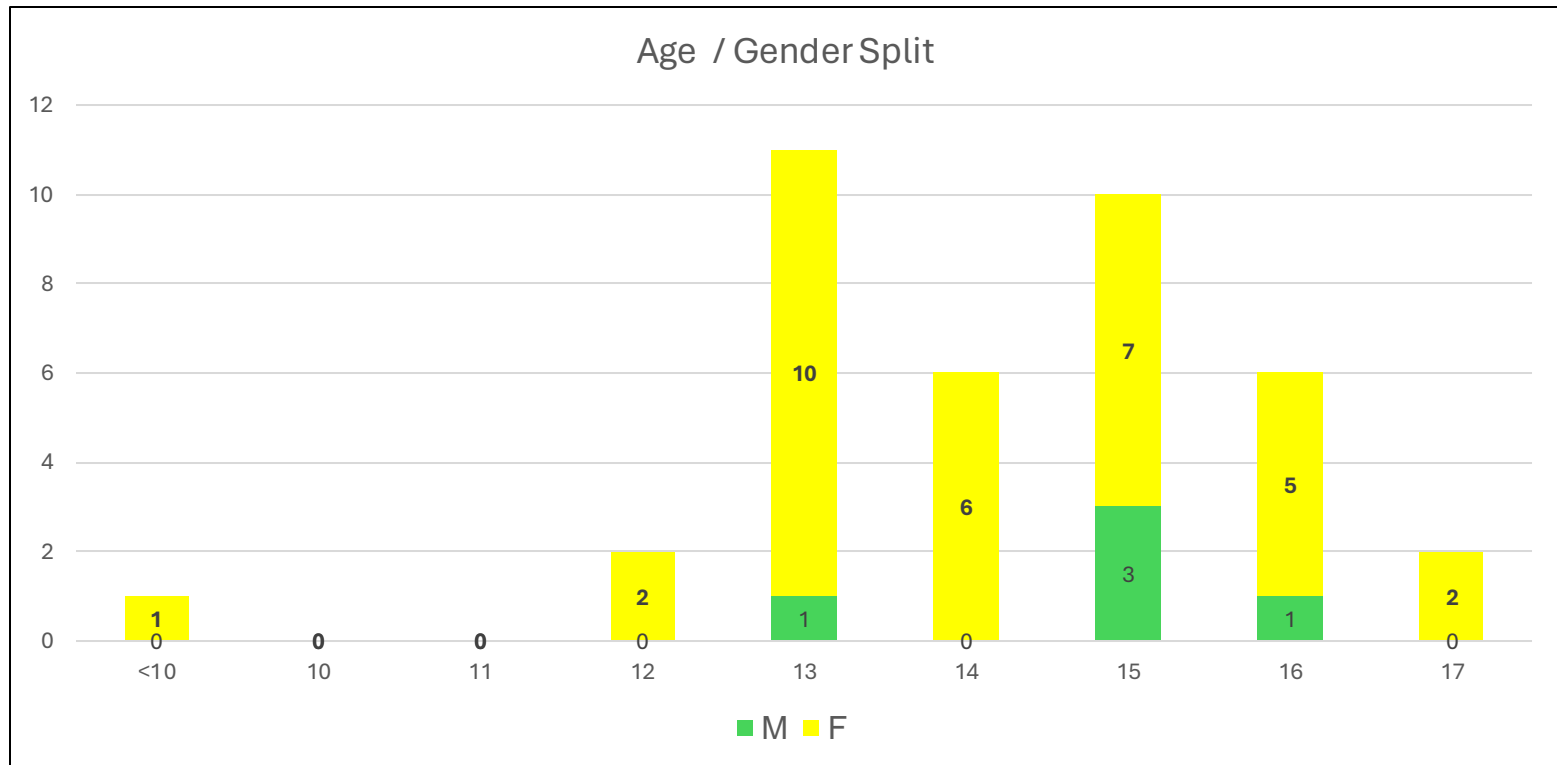
---

- Reduction in the number of assessments year on year  
**2022: 965** → **2023: 804**
- Number of young people needing **2 or more** assessments in the same year is decreasing  
**2022: 617** → **2023: 490**
- The 10 most frequent attenders accounted for:  
**25%** of all assessments in **2022** but fell to **15.5%** in **2023**.
- The number of Children Looked After presenting has decreased since Homes 2 Horizons has commenced
- Seeing a slight increase in first time presentations
- Some indications of younger children presenting with psychological distress

# Gender and Age Split

A Month Snapshot

Page 45



# A Day in the Life of a CAMHS Liaison Practitioner- What We Do, What's Changed...

Page 46



# Jigsaw Project –Targeted Youth support

---

The Jigsaw Project is for Young People who have had a recent hospital admission for their mental health difficulties or low emotional wellbeing.

It takes a youth work, strength focused approach to work with the young person and their family

## Jigsaw

- **Referrals**

- From **CAMHS Liaison teams** at Yeovil District Hospital (YDH) & Musgrove Park Hospital (YDH) and the **Enhanced Outreach Team (EOT)**
- From **YDH & MPH**

- **Methodology**

- 12 weeks (average) of 1:1 support - extensions where required
- Being present in their lives and providing advocacy

- **Closure**

- Signposted to other services or enabled to make their own informed decisions for change

# Jigsaw Project – Impact

---

---

**22/23** Jigsaw worked with **178** young people.

---

Of those **178** only **20** or **11.2%** re-presented at Hospital [Taunton MPH or Yeovil YDH]

---

Within the **11.2%**, **5** young people were escalated to our **Mosaic** service.

---

**23/24** Jigsaw has worked with **99** young people so far

---

**23/24** predict **10% readmission** rate

---

- CAMHS Liaison saw a **decrease in readmissions** from:
  - **77%** in **20-21** to
  - **23%** in **22/23**
- despite a **26%** increase in those accessing the support
- In **2022/23** Jigsaw supported **30%** of young people who accessed CAMHS Liaison



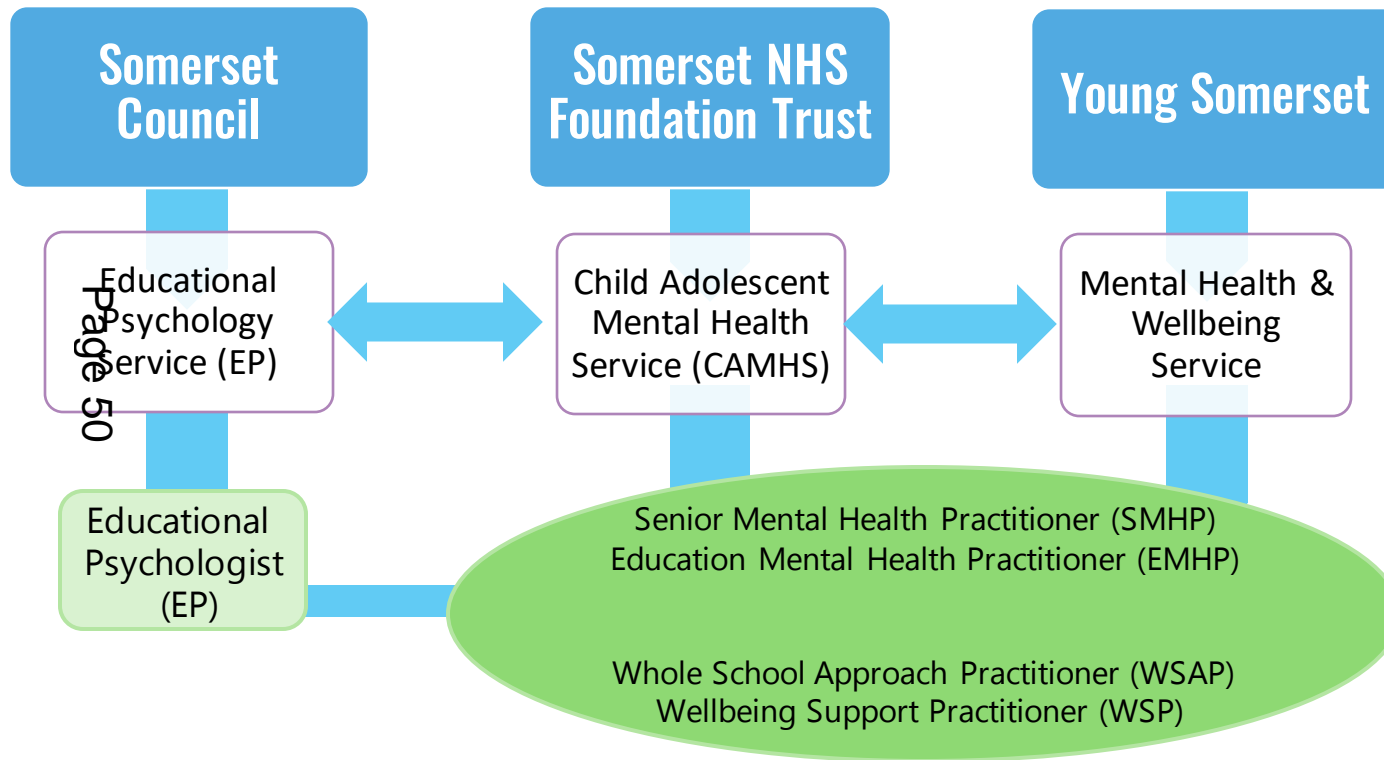
# Supporting schools and school aged children

---

- Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) ICB commissioned
- Childrens Wellbeing Practitioners - delivered through Young Somerset
- Senior Mental Health Leads – DfE funded
- Further support – Kooth online counselling, Tellmi app peer support, Young Minds
- Training offer for schools Continued Professional Development (CPD) & Relationship Sex and health Education (RSHE)
- CYP website - Mental Health Tool Kit [Somerset children & young people : Health & Wellbeing : New Home \(cypsomersethealth.org\)](https://www.cypsomersethealth.org)

Page 49

# Mental Health Support Team (MHST)



# Public Health Training Offer

**Visit - [Somerset children & young people : Health & Wellbeing : Training Menu \(cypsomersethealth.org\)](https://cypsomersethealth.org)**

- Self-Harm awareness training sessions delivered by Harmless
- Mental Health First Aid (Youth) – how to recognise crucial warning signs of mental ill health
- Mental Health training offer [Healthysomerset.co.uk](https://Healthysomerset.co.uk)  
Range of Suicide awareness and prevention training



## Education setting specific

- Relationship Sex Health Education RSHE CPD training
- Senior Mental Health Leads - Network and Supervision groups
- Harmless – system leaders / school staff



# Somerset System Strategic work

---

- Self harm Priority set by ICS Children and Families partnership board in Autumn 2023 :
  - Area of focus #1 – A&E and admissions
  - Area of focus #2 – Support in school settings

Page 52

Task and finish group established January 2024

- Better understanding data across the Somerset System
- Linked with regional and national leads for Self Harm
- Office for health inequalities and disparities (OHID) -Somerset is contributing to SW population health tool for self harm
- Regional Self Harm conference in April

# Questions?

This page is intentionally left blank

# 2023/24 Children & Families Budget Monitoring

- Children & Families Scrutiny Committee
- 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024



**Somerset**  
Council

# Childrens Service budget monitoring position – Month 10

General fund  
£121.6m net budget

£14.9m forecast overspend  
(12.3% overspend)

Page 56

Service Area	Current Expenditure Budget	Current Income Budget	Current Net Budget	Full Year Projection	Month 10 Variance	A/(F)	RAG Status	Movement From Month 9
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m			£m
<b>Children &amp; Families</b>								
Prevention Services	6.8	(1.1)	5.7	5.6	(0.1)	(F)	Green	(0.0)
Fostering & Permanence	13.3	0.0	13.3	12.9	(0.4)	(F)	Green	0.3
External Placements	49.6	(11.3)	38.3	49.3	11.0	A	Red	0.1
Fieldwork	9.1	0.0	9.1	9.9	0.8	A	Red	(0.5)
Disabilities	7.1	(0.3)	6.8	6.2	(0.6)	(F)	Green	0.0
Partnership, Audit & Quality	3.0	(0.3)	2.7	2.6	(0.1)	(F)	Green	0.0
Children Looked After	4.7	0.0	4.7	4.9	0.2	A	Red	(0.1)
Leaving Care	2.5	(0.3)	2.2	2.4	0.2	A	Red	(0.1)
CSC Management	(0.9)	0.0	(0.9)	0.9	1.8	A	Red	0.0
C&F Apportionments	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
<b>sub total</b>	<b>95.2</b>	<b>(13.3)</b>	<b>81.9</b>	<b>94.7</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>(0.3)</b>
<b>Commissioning &amp; Performance</b>								
C&P Commissioning	4.9	(3.3)	1.6	1.5	(0.1)	(F)	Green	(0.1)
Performance & Transformation	4.5	(0.1)	4.4	4.2	(0.2)	(F)	Green	(0.1)
Business Support	4.3	(0.1)	4.2	4.2	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Children, Families & Education Team	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Early Help Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
<b>sub total</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>(3.5)</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>(0.3)</b>	<b>(F)</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>
<b>Inclusion</b>								
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	59.3	(56.7)	2.6	2.7	0.1	A	Red	0.0
Vulnerable Learners	4.6	(4.4)	0.2	0.3	0.1	A	Red	0.1
Educational Psychology	3.3	(1.3)	2.0	2.1	0.1	A	Red	0.1
Inclusion Transformation & Partnerships	1.0	(0.7)	0.3	0.4	0.1	A	Red	0.0
SEND Transport	10.2	(0.7)	9.5	11.2	1.7	A	Red	(0.3)
Inclusion Strategic Management	1.4	(1.3)	0.1	0.1	0.0	-	Green	0.0
<b>sub total</b>	<b>79.8</b>	<b>(65.1)</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>
<b>Education, Partnerships &amp; Skills</b>								
Education Leadership	2.7	(2.6)	0.1	0.0	(0.1)	(F)	Green	0.3
Education Operations	6.1	(6.2)	(0.1)	(0.4)	(0.3)	(F)	Green	(0.1)
Curriculum & Literacy	3.2	(3.3)	(0.1)	0.2	0.3	A	Red	0.0
Education Places	2.1	(1.5)	0.6	0.6	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Home to School Transport	14.4	(1.5)	12.9	12.9	0.0	-	Green	0.1
EPS Management	1.2	(0.5)	0.7	1.3	0.6	A	Red	0.0
<b>sub total</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>(15.6)</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Childrens Services</b>								
Childrens Directorate	1.1	(0.4)	0.7	0.5	(0.2)	(F)	Green	(0.1)
<b>sub total</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>(0.4)</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>	<b>(F)</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>
<b>Children, Families &amp; Education Services</b>	<b>219.5</b>	<b>(97.9)</b>	<b>121.6</b>	<b>136.5</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>(0.4)</b>



# External Placements Monitoring & Forecasting

The table opposite provides a breakdown of the external placements budget by placement type.

The main areas of overspend are:

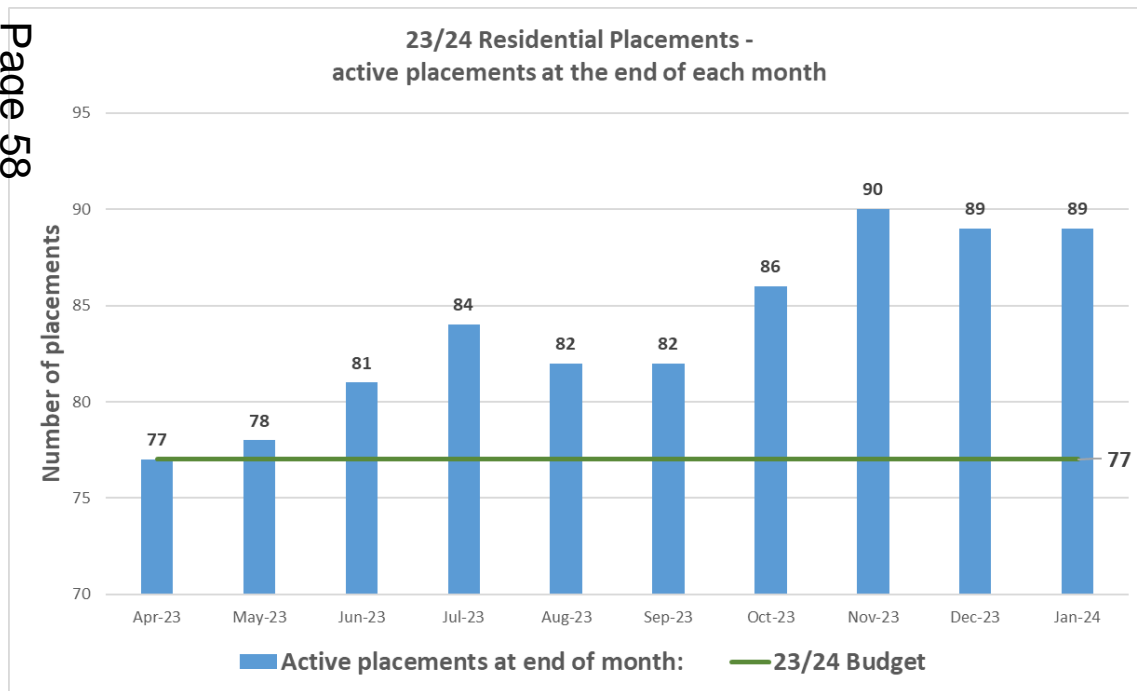
- Residential placements - £5.1m forecast overspend
- Unregistered placements - £4.0m forecast overspend

External Placements	23/24 Budget	Full Year Projection	Month 10 Variance	Change on Month 9
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Residential Placements	24.6	29.7	5.1	0.2
Independent Fostering Agencies	8.2	7.5	(0.7)	(0.1)
16+ Supported Accommodation	5.7	7.4	1.7	(0.1)
Homes & Horizons	4.1	3.5	(0.5)	(0.1)
Unregistered Placements	3.7	7.7	4.0	0.2
UASC Placements	1.9	2.8	0.9	(0.1)
Residential Parent & Child	1.1	1.0	(0.1)	0.1
Secure	0.9	1.4	0.5	(0.2)
Other	1.3	2.7	1.4	0.0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>63.6</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>
DSG Grant	(5.1)	(6.0)	(0.8)	0.1
UASC Grant	(2.4)	(2.8)	(0.4)	0.0
NHS Funding	(5.3)	(5.3)	0.0	(0.1)
Other	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.1)	0.0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(13.1)</b>	<b>(14.3)</b>	<b>(1.2)</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>

# Residential Placements

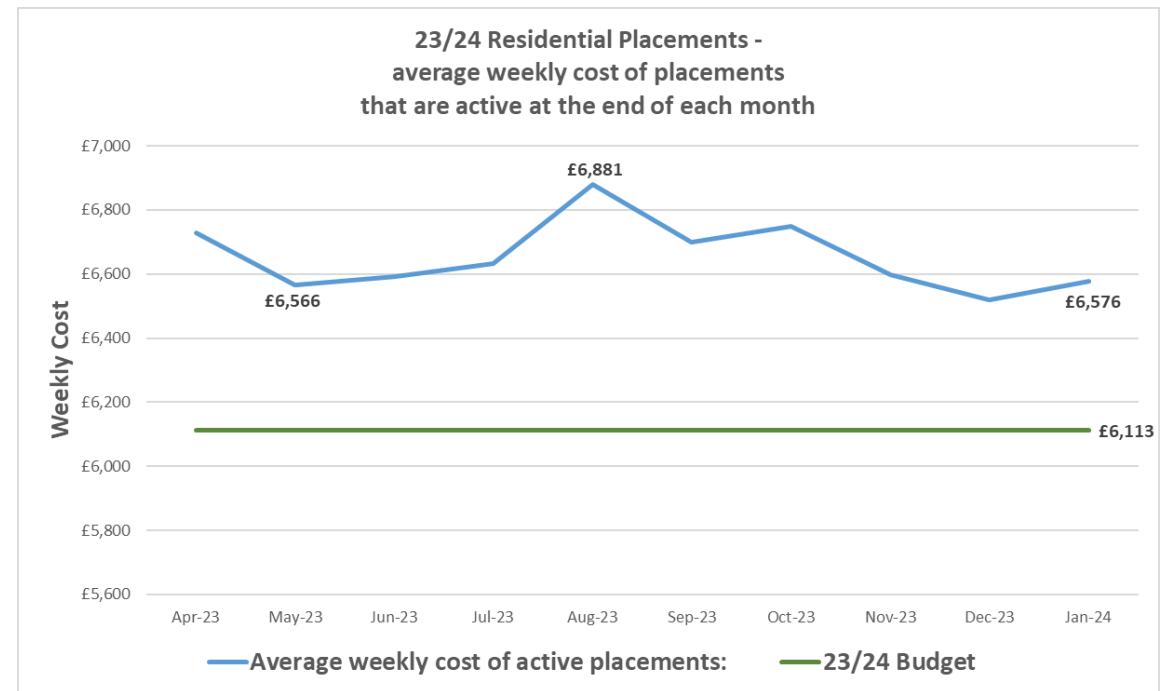
The graph below shows the trend in the **number of active residential placements** at the end of each month during 23/24.

The budgeted number of residential placements for 23/24 was 77.



The graph below shows the trend in the **average weekly cost** of residential placements that were active at the end of each month during 23/24.

The budgeted weekly cost of residential placements for 23/24 was £6,113.



# Unregulated Placements and Homes & Horizons

The graphs opposite show the trend in the numbers of unregulated placements and Homes & Horizons placements.

Page 59

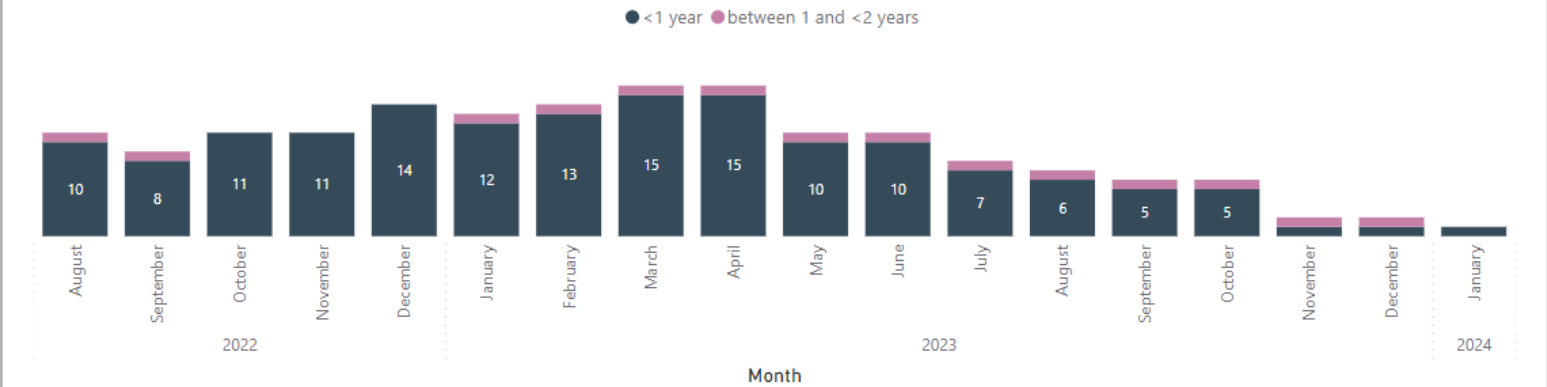
Young people in relatively high-cost unregulated placements have gradually been relocated to more cost-effective placements in Homes & Horizons residential homes.

## Unregulated Placements:

1

CLA Cases in Unregulated Placements at end of last month

Number of CLA in Unregulated



## Number of CLA in Homes and Horizons

10

CLA Cases in Homes and Horizons at end of last Month

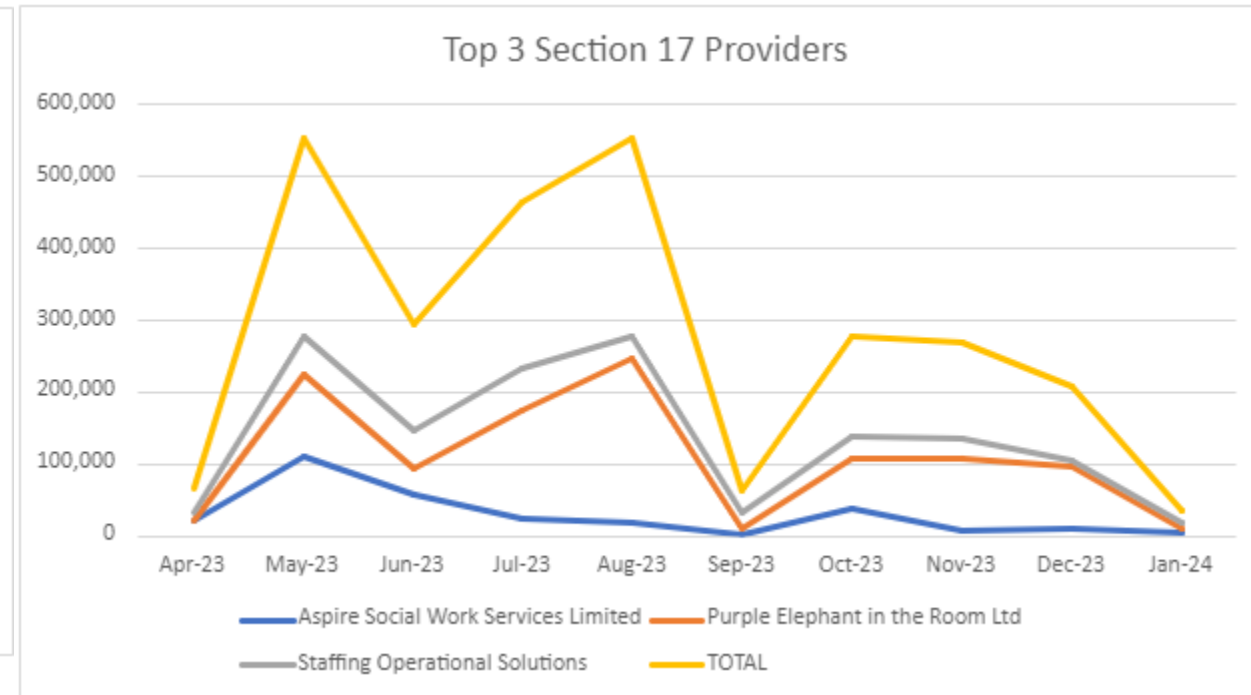
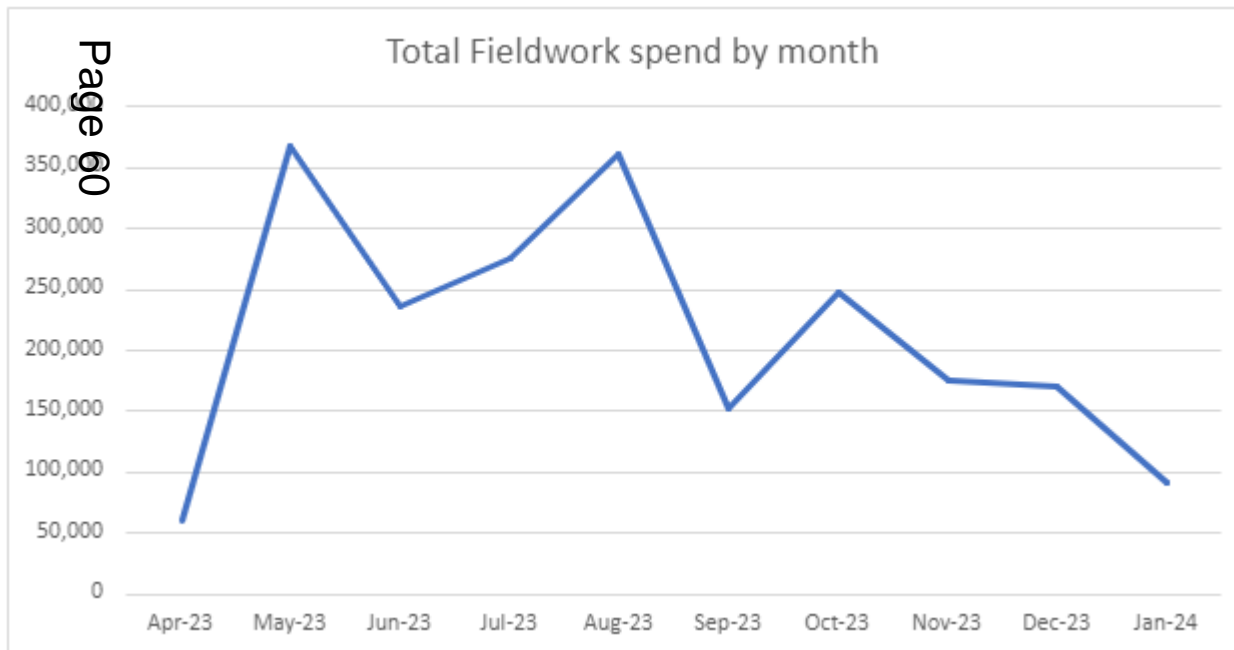
Number of CLA in Homes and Horizons



# Fieldwork Spend

The graphs below shows the Assistance to Families and PLO spend per month plus the top 3 providers within this spend

The outcome of the Resource and Finance Panels has seen this spend reduce. This is particularly around court ordered assessments and creative transport solutions



# 23/24 DSG Budget Monitoring Report

Forecast outturn as at the end of January (Month 10)

## £15.5m forecast in year deficit; cumulative £38.0m deficit

Page 61

DSG Block £m	Total funding available for services 2023/24	2023/24 Forecast Month 10	Forecast in-year variance surplus/ (deficit)	DSG Block £m	Balance b/f at 1 Apr 2023 Surplus/ (Deficit)	NFF drawn from Growth Fund	Forecast in-year variance surplus/ (deficit)	Forecast carry forward 31 Mar 2024
Schools	2.5	2.9	(0.4)	Schools	2.6	(1.2)	(0.4)	1.0
Central Schools	5.0	5.0	-	Central Schools	5.6	-	-	5.6
Early Years	31.1	31.1	-	Early Years	0.9	-	-	0.9
High Needs	73.5	88.7	(15.2)	High Needs	(29.8)	-	(15.2)	(45.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>112.1</b>	<b>127.7</b>	<b>(15.6)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(20.7)</b>	<b>(1.2)</b>	<b>(15.6)</b>	<b>(37.6)</b>

# 23/24 Budget Monitoring Report

Area £m	Budget	Forecast Month 10	Variance A/(F)	Forecast Month 9	Movement from Month 9
Home to School Transport	12.9	12.9	-	12.8	0.1
SEND Transport	9.5	11.2	1.7	11.5	(0.3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>

Page 62

- Increased demand on SEN Transport due to rising numbers of children in Specialist provision combined with inflationary pressures
- SEN passenger numbers have doubled since 2018 from 674 to over 1,250
- Mainstream transport subject to inflationary pressure and passenger numbers remain flat

# Questions



This page is intentionally left blank



# Elective Home Education

Children and Families Scrutiny Committee  
13 March 2024

- Rob Hart (Service Director, Inclusion)
- Julia Rudge (Head of Service – Vulnerable Learners)



# What is elective home education (EHE)?

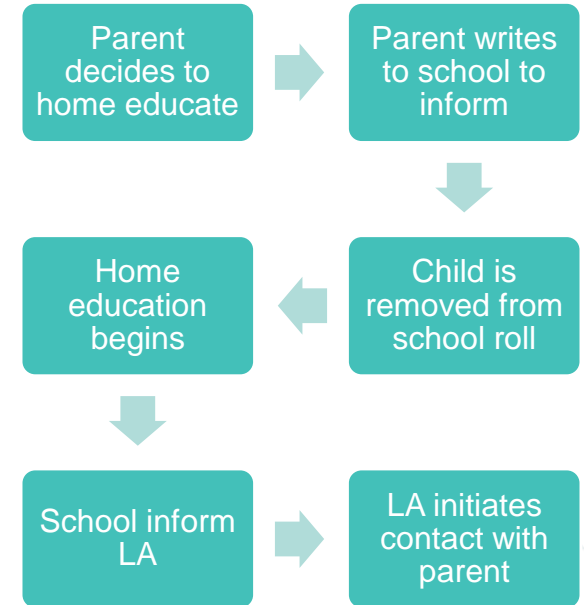
## Legal basis

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children receive an education. They can decide to provide an education “otherwise than at school”. All parents have the legal right to home educate and the council cannot refuse:
  - *Should parents not wish to send their child to a school, post-16 institution or alternative provision, they can make other suitable arrangements in the form of EHE. The EHE must be **efficient, full-time, and suitable**, according to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, and to any special educational needs (SEN) they may have.*
- Local Authorities have no statutory duties in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis. However, under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, local authorities shall intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education. There is no definition of what is deemed ‘suitable education’.
  - *“If it appears to a local authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they shall serve a notice in writing on the parent requiring him to satisfy them, within the period specified in the notice, that the child is receiving such education.”*

# About EHE

## Council approach & responsibilities

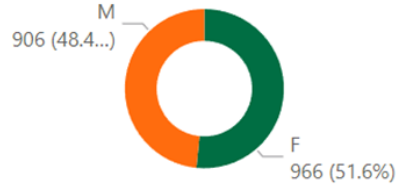
- LA has a named senior officer responsible for EHE policy and procedures.
- Maintain a voluntary register – record all cases where a child is removed from a school role to EHE, or LA is otherwise notified.
- Undertake enquiries where there are concerns about suitability of EHE.
- Intervene if enquiries suggest EHE may not be suitable for a child.
- SEND team support the annual review of child with EHC plan who receives EHE.
- A child who is on roll at a special school cannot be removed to EHE without the consent of the LA (the only scenario where the LA must agree).
- Social care investigate concerns about a child's welfare or safety (as for any child).
- If the LA identifies that a child is not receiving a suitable education, it can issue a School Attendance Order.
- Parents take on full responsibility for provision of education when they choose to home educate, including funding the cost of provision.
- EHE children have access to school nursing support.



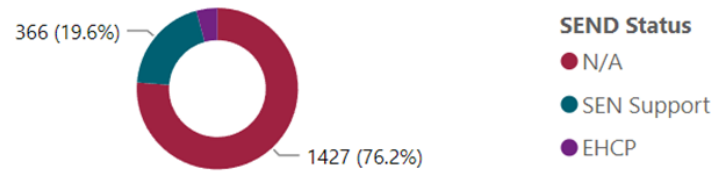
# EHE data

Students  
1872

Students by GENDER

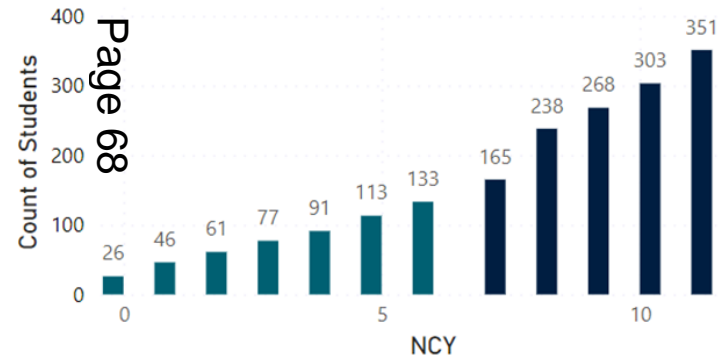


Students by SEND Status

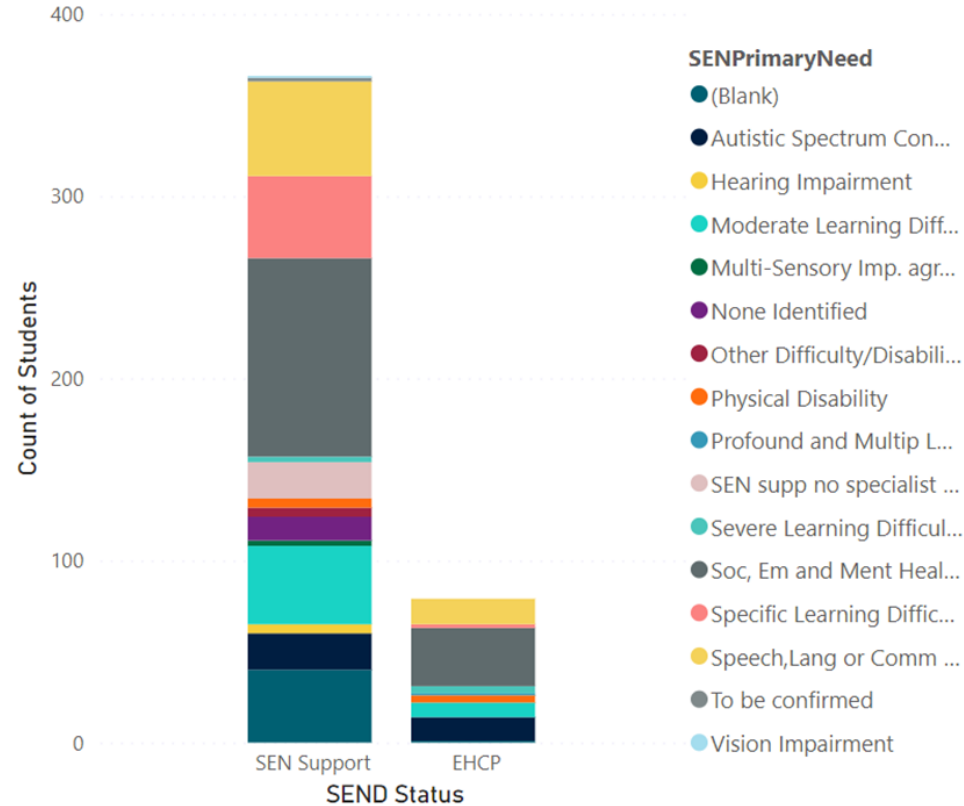


Students by NCY

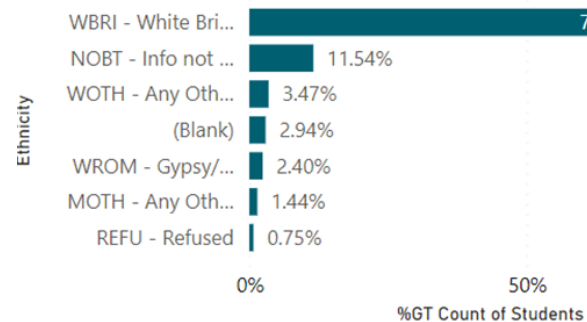
NCYPhase ● NCY 0-6 ● NCY 7-11



Count of Students by SEND Status and SENPrimaryNeed



Students by Ethnicity



**Elective Home Education**  
Reception to Year 11 that live in Somerset

1872

Children Looked After

1

Children In Need

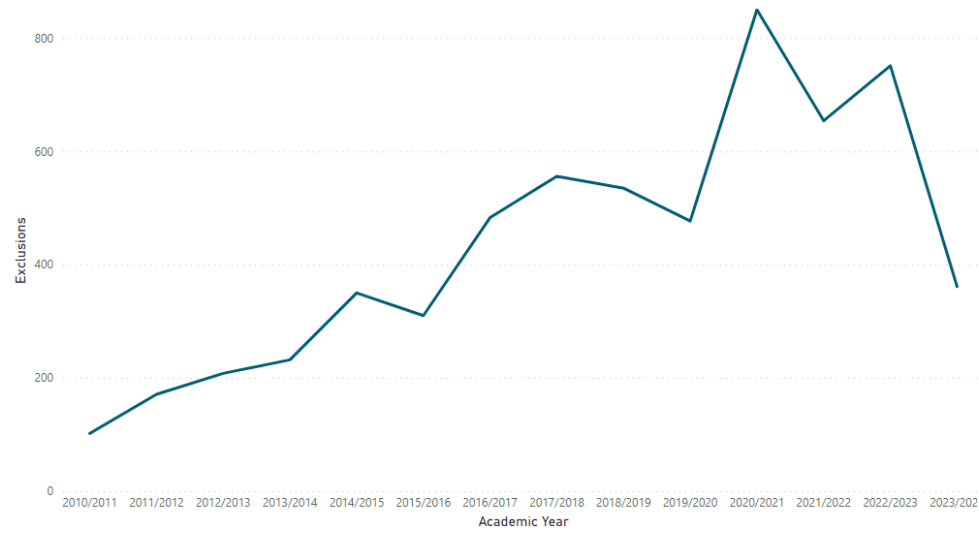
4

Child Protection

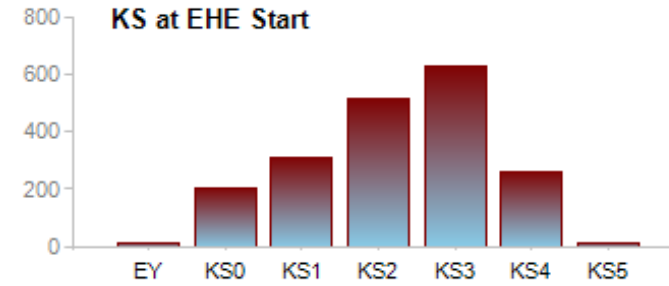
7

# EHE data

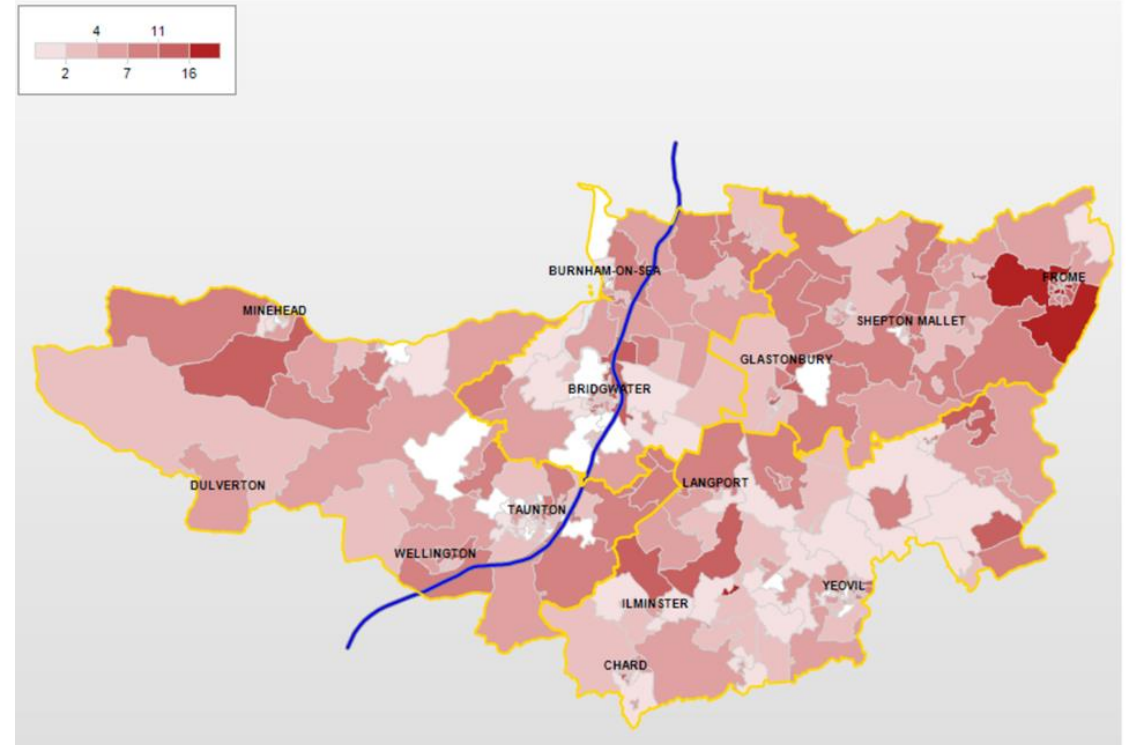
EHE numbers by Calendar Year



KS0 KS1 KS2 KS3 KS4 KS5 Post KS



Top 15 Previous Schools before becoming EHE	Total
Avanti Park School	81
The King Alfred School	45
Bridgwater College Academy	45
West Somerset College	41
Heathfield Community School (Closed)	39
Frome Community College	38
Stanchester Academy	38
No Provision (Out of School)	33
Pre-School Children with No Base	33
Robert Blake School	32
St Dunstan's School	28
Holyrood Academy	28
Pyrland School	27
The Blue School	24



# Area in focus: Frome

## Frome – Electively Home Educated - Community Connections

The Frome area has currently got around 203 children and young people registered as EHE, this has gone down slightly from 217 which was the number in June 2023. The total number across Somerset is currently around 1599.

When looking further at the data we can see that the highest year group in Frome is Year 8 with 32 young people, closely followed by Year 9 with 29 and Year 7 with 27. There are plans to look further at this data, to see if there has always been a higher number in those year groups or if it has changed over the years.

There are several factors that could account for Frome having higher than average EHE numbers. The historical Steiner School offer which closed in 2019 could account for some choosing EHE as an option, along with struggles to access suitable SEND or SEMH provision locally. Parent carers also spoke about making this choice after the lockdown lifted as they found that home schooling better suited their families.

The Community Development Team at Frome Town Council are working to develop partnerships with the EHE community particularly around the engagement around future town growth.

The Community Development Team at Frome Town Council are working to develop partnerships with the EHE community particularly around the engagement around future town growth.

Themes and ideas that have come from these early conversations are:

- Engagements and consultation events (FTC) should be designed not just to fit around school timetables.
- More information about local support and signposting is needed during the meeting with Somerset teams when they discuss EHE as an option/register as EHE.
- Frome would benefit from more playful social opportunities for EHE families particularly during the school day – further partnership work with local voluntary and community groups to develop this is needed.
- More volunteering/work experience opportunities post 16 are needed for EHE young people.
- Better timely SEND support and/or school spaces available to Frome families, lots of options are geographically very far away or not suited to specific children and young people.
- Inclusion of EHE groups in local community networks and forums.

# What's next?

## Changes in legislation and guidance in the pipeline

- Mandatory register of children not in school
- Guidance on what is a “suitable education”, including focus on literacy and maths:
  - *“a suitably educated child should be literate in English and numerate appropriate to the child’s age, ability and aptitude and any SEN they may have”;*
  - *“parents should be able to provide information to the local authority so they can establish the child’s levels of literacy and numeracy and whether they are appropriate to the child’s age, ability, aptitude and SEN”.*
- Guidance about support available to EHE families
- Guidance to support more consistent approach across LAs to school attendance orders

# Questions & Discussion





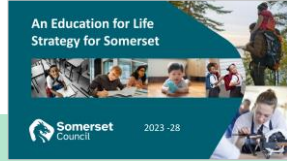
# Children's Services Transformation Priorities 2023-2026

Sufficiency

Efficiency

Manage risk

Page 73



## Education for Life

1. **Best Start in Life** – quality pre-school places for 0-5 years
2. **Whole school focus** – raise attainment for all pupils
3. **Increase attendance & reduce exclusions** – identify children at risk and build effective Team around the School model
4. **School places** – reduce pressures in Bridgwater and Taunton
5. **School transport** – support children to attend their local school and improve value for money

- Improved early years access & engagement
- Improved school attendance
- Improved take up of post 16 education and training
- Reduced exclusions
- Improved attainment
- Improved staff recruitment & retention
- Improved school transport value for money



## CLA Transformation

1. **Homes & Horizons** – 8 to 10 homes, pods and annexes
2. **Fostering improvement** – recruitment, retention and support for Foster Carers
3. **Re-commissioning 16+** – support for independence for young people at risk of homelessness
4. **Edge of care support**
5. **Intelligence and control** – better data to plan & manage
6. **Shape and manage the market** – increase sufficiency
7. **Regional commissioning**

- More local foster carers for Somerset children looked after (CLA)
- More children in residential care live in Somerset
- Better value for money through good quality local provision
- Fewer children coming into care



## SEND Strategy

1. **Working together** to help children achieve what matters to them
2. **Getting help as early as possible** so that families can access the right support at the right time
3. **Access the right information, support and provision**
4. **Preparing for the future** – gaining the right skills to achieve ambitions and prepare for adulthood

- Enhanced learning provisions enable mainstream schools to offer more inclusive provision
- Providing more specialist places for children with SEMH needs
- Fewer children with SEND excluded from school
- Family feedback evidences a more positive experience
- More young people supported into training and employment



## Connect Somerset

1. **Champions, hubs and neighbourhood teams** so services are close to home
2. **#Help4All** offer including targeting early help based on needs
3. **Investment in communities** and redesign delivery to start with the community
4. **Team around the school** wrapping resources around schools to improve attendance
5. **Early Help system workforce development** shared vision, shared case management and communications

- Less demand for statutory services because families are more resilient
- Integrated neighbourhood teams – more efficient shared estate, process, management
- More efficient delivery and increased take up of early help
- Increase delivery of digital and hybrid support
- Target help to those most in need – proactive offer

Agenda Item 11

This page is intentionally left blank