

COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLANNING HIGHLIGHT REPORT

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| SERVICE AREA: | Education |
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KEY ACTIVITY HEADLINES

- The number of pupils in schools and settings has continued to increase this week.
 - Around 290 schools have been open across most of the week with schools only being closed due to lack of demand or schools merging their provision. The increase in numbers now means around 3% of the school population attending, with consistently more than 3000 pupils attending. This has included over 350 children with a social worker attend and around 220 pupils with Education Health and Care Plans. We continue to meet all parental demand.
 - The position on the 14th May within early years provision can be seen below –

| | Childminders | | Early Years | | Overall Children |
|-----|--------------|--------|-------------|--------|------------------|
| | Number | % Open | Number | % Open | |
| CCC | 239 | 40% | 147 | 42% | 1170 |
| PCC | 73 | 47% | 21 | 20% | 369 |

- On Monday 11th, the DfE released its first set of guidance for school and settings to reopen. It outlined the phased opening of schools and settings from the 1st June with a focus on the following –
 - Early Years Settings – all settings to open with limitations on numbers – priority to key worker and vulnerable children. Full time offer to parents.
 - Primary Schools – early years and reception, Year 1 and Year 6. A full time offer to parents. The government wish all primary pupils age pupils to attend for the final month of the academic year (24th June onward)
 - Secondary schools – Year 10 and Year 12 will receive some face to face support from teachers.
- The quality of the guidance was weak and left lots of room for ambiguity. We provided advice to schools across the week through conversations with the DfE and their guidance was further updated on Thursday. Schools are planning for the 1st June and the decision over opening rests with the responsible body (either the LA or the Academy Trust).
- The guidance recommends no more than 15 children in a class but does acknowledge that social distancing of 2m is not possible in the primary sector. We have recommended that schools look at their space and decide how many children can be supported appropriately. The guidance also states that attendance is not compulsory.
- We have sourced PPE to support schools in situations where they have to support children who have Covid19 symptoms and are waiting to go home. This is a new requirement.
- Throughout this crisis, schools have supported the LA request to remain open over the Easter Holidays and bank holidays. Following the announcement to open schools on the 1st June, it was decided that the school staff needed time to rest and prepare for reopening so we would not be making this request for the upcoming half term week. We consulted with colleagues from Health over this decision and they understood and accepted the decision we had made. We have asked schools where possible to provide holiday clubs to support those parents that need them.
- In order to support schools in their planning we have recommended that they ask parents on their intention to send their children to school, review space in schools and develop a capacity that is reasonable for schools managing distancing in the best way they can.
- We are communicating daily with schools and settings giving updates and interpretation on government guidance. We have provided support this week on inset day planning, a risk assessment for re-opening, physical education, attendance, procurement of cleaning materials, advice on staff absence due to covid-19, transition from early year's settings to schools and home to school transport and key worker status. We have also developed a recovery guidance pack for Headteachers to sit alongside our recovery planning document. A new set of FAQ's have also been developed to assist schools and setting leaders.

- Following the release of the reopening guidance from the DfE, a further briefings took place via Zoom with around 300 Headteachers and leaders for LA maintained and academy primary schools across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Meetings have also been held with Secondary, Special and Nursery colleagues. We have also provided briefings for early years settings. A range of seminars are being held with primary maintained heads next week to support their planning.

RISKS / CHALLENGES (AND MITIGATION)

- Anxiety in leaders / staff in schools is a huge concern – the announcement of school reopening has caused a huge amount of concern in schools. We continue to speak to Headteachers and settings on a regular basis and reply to a significant volume of emails to support their concerns.
- Financial viability of providers in early years / catering / building contractors – there is going to be a legacy issue with provision potentially closing due to financial challenges.
- Legal requirements around EHCP and the requirement to review children with SEND provision - we are working hard to ensure we meet the new legislative requirements and are redeploying schools from elsewhere in the directorate.
- Schools financial position – we continue to work schools in financial difficulties. We are unable to undertake restructures during the period of closure. The grants available to schools are limited to cleaning, meals and increased premises costs results from opening in holidays.

WORKFORCE UPDATE

- There are no critical issues currently with staff absence although the workforce has worked extended hours over a 2 month period. Across the wider service, our capacity for business as normal activity is significantly impaired.
- We have seconded two Ofsted inspectors to support the work in Education. They will be supporting developing home learning advice for SEND, reviewing our advice to schools, enhancing our home learning support for Secondary and developing our recovery plan. Two further members of the Ofsted team are joining us next week to support with Early Years and Social Care.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (increase in costs / reduction in income)

- Education has quantified all its financial impact for overall council reports. All training and selected non-contracted traded service have been cancelled until September.
- We continue to review rent payment arrangement with early years settings that are using our buildings.

RECOVERY ACTIVITY (plans being considered / future steps)

- Our recovery planning tools are being used by schools. Some of our questions in this tool were used by the DfE in their national planning document for schools.
- Key elements of planning moving forward for LA services will be support for SEND, home to school transport, restarting traded services, support to schools around premises, admissions, appeals and support for school leaders.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Daily positive news story continue to be publish and we continue to promote our early years advice line to parents.
- A letter was sent to parents to set expectations around reopening. We plan further parent communication this upcoming week.
- We have weekly meetings with the Trade Unions to discuss key concerns for their members. Unions push hard on the safety of reopening and we will continue this dialogue in the coming weeks.

Feedback on Twitter

- @CambsCC have been doing a great job supporting schools led by @jdlewis78
- Huge thanks @Cambs_PE for the PE Covid Guidance - this document is really helpful and has answered a lot of questions we had
- Once again... Cambridgeshire/Peterborough LA come up trumps...this time a fantastic guidance document to help planning for reopening... So grateful to @jdlewis78, Andrew Read and the team behind this. We have been so well supported throughout this.