

South East Sector-led Improvement Partnership

South East Children Missing Education Group

Notes

19th January 2021.

Attending: Mike Stoneman (Portsmouth), Neil Stevenson (Portsmouth), Debbie Bell (Oxfordshire), Hilary Alford & Paul Manning (Kent), Katy Daly (Bracknell), Gill Dunlop (Reading), Melissa Perry (Wokingham), Dave Harvey (Hants), Gavin Thomas (B&H), Linda Curtis (W Berks), Rosie Gossage and Clare Raffaelli (RBWM), James Fowler (Bucks), Bryn Roberts (Southampton), Lynn Sims & Christine Clarke (Medway), Andrew Parker (W Sussex), Farah Malik (Slough), Mark Keiller (Surrey), Chris Owen (SESLIP).

Apologies: Beth Armstrong (ESCC).

	Item	Actions
1.	Welcome & introductions	
2.	Notes of last meeting and matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes approved There has been an exchange of emails with Karl Dixon-Myers the lead for EHE at the DfE. He has been invited to the March 4th meeting. Chris & Mike will speak with him beforehand to ascertain what information and practice would he find most helpful to hear about from members of the CME Group. Chris circulated the list of documents saved in the SESLIP CME library. Other items are addressed in the agenda. 	CO / MS
3.	New lockdown and school closures: key challenges <p>a. <u>School registration / coding</u></p> <p>Most confirmed they are supporting their schools to use 'c' and 'x' codes with the new lock-down. Some schools have reported frustration over this, and some schools have tried using 'x' rather than 'unauthorised absence' for vulnerable pupils not attending. Can we override 'x' or 'c' for illness? (Yes)</p> <p>If family has travelled overseas, the group's view is that this should be recorded as unauthorised absence.</p> <p>b. <u>Engaging pupils with remote learning</u></p> <p>Portsmouth reports between 85-95% engagement of learners with the remote offer from schools and they are encouraging schools to raise with the LA if certain pupils are persistently not engaging and the LA can back the school if there is communication with the family. Similar levels of engagement were reported from other LAs.</p> <p>Medway raised a question about vulnerable learners who are in school, but are now at risk of exclusion due, usually, to not complying with covid-safety procedures. Can</p>	

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	<p>individuals be risk-assessed and moved to be remote learners to avoid possible exclusion? Members' views included this could result in greater risk and that offering support to the HT about strategies for flexibility and that negate pursuing a disciplinary route would be far preferable.</p> <p>c. <u>Attendance and vulnerable learners</u></p> <p>Most members reported that vulnerable attendance is lower than had been hoped for this term. Most were reverting to some EWO-type actions, such as home visits, although capacity for doing this is limited, so the most vulnerable are prioritised.</p> <p>Some have continued / reactivated partnership arrangements that involve early help and social workers to promote attendance (e.g. Surrey). Building a shared view that non-attendance by certain vulnerable pupils is a safeguarding concern helps. Systems developed in 2020 that have now been reactivated. Examples include:</p> <p>A secure Dropbox in Bracknell Forest for schools to notify the LA of absence of key vulnerable pupils, which can then trigger action by a social worker to raise the issue with a family if absence persists. Some comments, though, that social workers are not as challenging with families as they could be.</p> <p>Oxfordshire has found a much greater grasp of the importance of vulnerable children and young people attending school and that this is the business of all in children's services. Training and briefing materials have been provided to social care colleagues (Debbie will share) and names of CIN / TAF are passed to the nominated social worker.</p> <p>d. <u>EHE, now and future effects</u></p> <p>Access to teacher assessment for young people of exam age who are EHE: with the recent announcement from DfE and Ofqual about summer 2021 exams there is a window until the end of this week for families to approach the school their child was previously on roll with, to enrol them again for exam purposes (mostly GCSE).</p> <p>Oxfordshire have managed to facilitate this for just over twenty students.</p> <p>Reminder that the consultation about assessment for GCSEs, A-levels and other award bearing subjects for 2021 is currently open. Hilary noted that there is an opportunity in section 11 of the consultation to raise the need for guidance on how those who are EHE can have access to teacher assessments. The consultation can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-alternative-arrangements-for-the-award-of-vtqs-and-other-general-qualifications-in-2021 . The consultation closes on 29th Jan.</p> <p>Numbers of EHE: the spike experienced in the autumn term has eased off. In fact, Medway has received no notifications yet this term (but expects numbers to pick up once schools open normally). W&M found increasing numbers of school refusers being reported to the LA in the second half of the autumn term. This has gone away due to the current lock-down, but is expected to re-emerge once schools open normally.</p>	<p>DB</p> <p>ALL</p>

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	<p>Attendance by children with SEND, plus delivery of aspects of support in some EHCPs is a tricky balancing act currently.</p> <p>e. <u>Exclusions</u></p> <p>Main discussion was on incoming changes that the DfE is proposing from September 2021 (e.g. permanent and fixed-period exclusion to be replaced by expulsion and suspension). Still unclear whether the recording changes will be accompanied by more far-reaching guidance. Dave Harvey is involved in a meeting later this week with Pauline Myers from the DfE and will report back to the group.</p> <p>The DfE is expected to issue a 'call for evidence' about managed moves and off-rolling; they have a particular interest about managed moves within MATs. If a call for evidence is issued in time, managed moves will be added to the agenda for the March meeting providing an opportunity to escalate any issues to the SESLIP DCS group.</p>	<p>DH</p> <p>CO</p>
4.	<p>Development projects - updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Flexi schooling:</u> Limited progress so far due to work pressures and impact of the lockdown. Expect to have reviewed the available flexi-school policies by the end of April. • <u>Elective home education:</u> Workstream 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wokingham Policy Officer is analysing multiple SE policies for common themes, best practice (including practical 'real life' vignettes) to help standardise LA approaches to EHE across the SE region (where there is an appetite to do so). It will provide an 'off the shelf' policy to those who want to adopt it or draw from parts of it. • The policy will also have agreed template letters, forms and reports to assist LAs in having a framework that they could choose to use • The analysis will clearly identify which sections of the DfE guidance it refers to • Analysis to be completed by mid-February with a final report in mid-March. • Finished policy will then be produced through graphic design and web accessibility. Workstream 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a framework for assessment of suitability of education provided, possibly separated into a primary and secondary model – draft by end February. What are the questions that should be asked of the evidence is the guidance being developed? Outputs: Example EHE policy with good practice vignettes drawn from the list above, ready to share with the Group in mid-March. Recommended definition of 'suitable education' and practice in assessing this, hoping to share a draft for the March meeting. • <u>In-year admissions and FAP:</u> Group members met last week. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have reviewed in-year admissions statements from 10 LAs and pulled together commonalities across 4 themes. • Although thinking there is limited desire for a shared, South-east, cross-border protocol, Bryn will circulate an online survey soon to assess all CME Group members' views. 	<p>BR</p>

	Item	Actions
	<p>Aim to report back to the group early in the summer term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited progress this term due to work pressures and impact of the lockdown <p>Output: a clearer understanding as to what range of medical needs LAs in the SE are supporting and potentially some recommendations about referral processes and decisions-making. In the summer term.</p>	
4.	<p>SESLIP CME / EHE data snapshot</p> <p>Reminder that the spreadsheet is confidential and not for circulation.</p> <p>The main request to members is to liaise with data colleagues to achieve more than 9 LAs responding with data for the whole of the autumn term 2020. Chris will share the email requesting the data, produced by Daryl Perilli who coordinates the SESLIP Education Data group, so CME Group members can help with this.</p> <p>Although the spreadsheet is partial, half of SESLIP LAs responded and it covers half of a term, there are potentially informative figures such as the differences in the rate of EHE against the whole school population (from 80 per 10,000 to nearly 300 per 10,000) and the different rates of EHE among those who have SEND.</p>	CO
5.	<p>Any other business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion about approaches and funding for pupils referred for short-term education support due to medical needs, from RBWM, either because they are undergoing EHC needs assessment or those with a defined recovery period. <p>Suggestions made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working closely with LA SEN Team is key, which might mean short-term funds from HNFB for some who are expected to be issued with an EHCP. ○ Clear LA position about child remaining on referring school's roll until a place / provision elsewhere is agreed (by LA). ○ Recharge of AWPU (on daily basis) as a minimum, but what about adding an amount for notional SEN if at SEN support? ○ Southampton will only accept referral that includes completed individual healthcare plan. ○ Oxfordshire also highlighted the importance of planning for reintegration from the point of referral. They commission a reintegration package from their hospital school. 	
6.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>4th March 2021, 2.00 - 4.00 p.m. (virtual meeting) 22nd April 2021, 10am – midday (virtual meeting) 9th June 2021, 2pm – 4pm</p>	