**South East Regional Education Data Group Meeting**

**Online via Microsoft Teams - Thursday 4th March 2021**

1. **Welcome & Introductions**

**In Attendance**

* Daryl Perilli – Brighton & Hove (Chair)
* Katherine Eastland – Brighton & Hove (Vice Chair and Minutes)
* Allistare Smedley – Brighton & Hove
* Dan Harper - Medway
* Julie Darch – Surrey
* Matt King – West Sussex
* Alastair Lee – East Sussex
* Mark Nunns – East Sussex
* Abi Maunders – Kent
* Andre Merel - Portsmouth
* Edd Shackleton – Southampton
* Rachel Brooks– Surrey (first one)
* Penny Austin – West Sussex
* Paul Stowe – Bracknell Forrest
* Michelle Starr - Surrey
* Matthew Stevens – West Berkshire (first one)
* Liam Skinner – IOW
* Heather Slocomb – Hampshire (first one)
* Michael Steen - Reading
* Hayley Webb – Portsmouth (first one)
* Rosie Gossage – Windsor & Maidenhead
* Charlie Watson - Slough

**Apologies/Non-Attendees**

* Alison Wallis – Oxfordshire
* Cathy Edwards – Kent
* Andrew Macey – Kent
* Wendy Murray – Kent
* Sam Moss – Kent
* Aman Gill – Slough
* Dave Harvey – Hampshire

**Not a Member**

* Milton Keynes (no representative)
1. **Minutes and Matters Arising**
* The minutes were reviewed and agreed
* Nothing was shared after the last meeting, about methodology on collecting data in clinically vulnerable teachers – **Action All – if you have anything to share, please advise how your LAs are collecting/monitoring this data**
* The late duplicates / responses / DfE releasing Academy data on the School Census, is impacting on a lot of us. Daryl shared the feedback via the STAR Chamber. The DfE representative did acknowledge/recognise some of the issues. Consensus amongst members was that the DfE Slack Census forum is one of the better ones for getting responses/help
* How are LAs managing Post 16 and EHE monitoring? Nothing was shared since the last meeting - **Action All to send process/methodology/approach to Daryl**
1. **Regional Round Up & Key Issues**

**Colleagues were prompted to include an update on the following:**

* *What has the impact of loss of data collections in your area?*
* *How has your LA responded to this?*
* *DfE API Attendance Data Collection*
* *Change of pupil premium funding – what has the impact been in your area and what has your LA done about this?*
* *Any other Covid or lockdown-related issues you want to share.*

**Medway**

* Absence of data for education means annual schools report is now very much smaller
* Focus on what we do know and have data for i.e. Exclusions
* Will we take 2 years as anomalous? If not, what is the solution?
* SEN2 return & AP return are current key pieces of work
* The biggest challenge is team resource – Dan was away for 10 weeks and no cover for role

**Kent**

* Loss of income for a second year – there is a member of staff retiring in August and they may not be able to replace them
* Going to offer Primary schools a service to send in estimated outcomes for EYFSP, KS1 & KS2 and produce an analysis pack
* Will try to do something for KS4 & KS5, but secondary schools have more analysis in house from their own data staff, so there is less incentive for them to pay for this

**East Sussex**

* Loss of data collections impact – have carried on traded service with an optional data collection and reporting back for Primary
* Secondary schools wanted to do a data collection last year – a small amount of reporting done for them – this year – still offer as an option
* Change in Pupil Premium funding – a few queries form schools – going back to finance teams

**Surrey**

* Traded services - Early Years census – good take up from all schools. First upload to COLLECT done – less settings returning their census, this year due to so many Nursery closures
* Started costing the service going forward for this financial year – mainly delivered via self-service, from FFT & NEXUS.
* Submitted SEN2 - missing summer census had an impact on data supply
* Really impacted by systems changes - moving from Capita 1 to Liquid Logic EYES
* Pupil Premium - finance colleagues had looked at the changes and the impact it might have and think they had concluded that the LA weren't massive outliers in any of the areas
* Traded services: the majority of schools still bought it last year, so will do it again this year. Fewer primaries bought in, but generally secondaries did. Didn’t really get any take up of the NEXUS offer to submit teacher assessment data. Will be advertising both the FFT and NEXUS offers again this year, and Education Effectiveness advisers will be encouraging schools to take up
* The DFE attendance portal. Has been hugely helpful and about 80% of settings are using it
* There has been a big rise in EHE

**West Sussex**

* Census went well – just a few late academies, as usual
* AP census – ok – a colleague developed a useful macro, to populate a different spreadsheet, saving a lot of time. As there are 700+ AP pupils, this has been so helpful.
* Trying to use time to improve data cleaning and accuracy in LA data systems
* There is a risk of school colleagues not knowing how to do collections in 2022 due to staff changes
* Few queries on pupil premium – some finance colleagues had no idea about the change
* Attendance – good response rate from DfE dashboard 80/85%
* CLA attendance has been brought back in house. Stopped contract with Welfare Call, due to poor service levels. VBA macros also used for reporting with this, making it an easier process
* Annual reports will be Covid-focussed. How we have dealt with Covid as an LA and the impacts on EHE, what we have done to support schools and staff etc
* SEN2 collection has gone ok
* EHE numbers continue to increase – looking at employing more people to response to the increased workloads

**West Berkshire**

* Just started in role – this is Matthew’s first meeting
* Lack of data has been keenly felt – eager to get and use whatever is available
* DfE data return around 80% of schools
* It is really useful to hear other LA experiences

**Portsmouth**

* Still have minor repercussions from no May census – data cleaning, FSM data, other LAs/academies trying to claim pupils. DfE won’t help – impacts on funding
* Main MIS is Capita One – leaves gaps if no census data
* API – the attendance lead forwarded the request for participants out to schools
* Frustrating that the DfE have not been consistent in the data fields they are sharing via the dashboard
* Pupil premium – complaints from schools and Academy Trusts – AD has raised with DfE
* Cold meals provided by many settings so some potential FSM claims were not submitted – under-reported in Autumn, thinking it would not impact PP
* FSM teams had surge of requests in the Autumn and missed FSM cut off – can’t assess as do not have data yet. 1/3rd of Academy data from Jan census still not available to LA and not all academies even buy into the LA FSM service.
* Redoing data reports for schools who want to provide data to the LA – looking at NCER offer
* Vulnerable pupil tracking – more work to get post 16 college data - poorer quality but grateful to get anything. Be creative – helping other services understand who these pupils are, and which settings need most support
* Early Years outcomes very low – improved data quality year on year checking reports in main census

**Slough**

* Unable to plan services effectively – trying to use what data we do have, to fill in the gaps – hopefully we can look at a better way of doing it for the future
* Attendance data collection - more than 50% of schools are returning data daily
* Pupil Premium funding - still looking at the financial impact on schools

**Bracknell Forest**

* Using NEXUS data and plan to do so again this year – it is useful to have a small authority
* Census - finally received last academy, so can now get on with the analysis
* SEN2 and Census on different days this year - caused an issue
* Have seen a 20% increase in EHCPs, year on year
* AP Census – submitting this today
* LA has high proportion of schools with nurseries and have seen far fewer nursery enrolments this year – need to decide how best to reflect in trend reports
* New Director and new Interim AD for Education starting this month – as a result there have been increased requests for data, which is proving a challenge

**Southampton**

* Collecting SLA responses back from schools. 70% responses and only one downgraded package so far.
* Increased absence reporting to half-termly, with focus on the X code data
* Launched additional contextual reports for schools. Offered to help schools with any data requests/needs and remain flexible in support
* Encouraging use of NEXUS again this year and schools are broadly positive that analysis will be more useful this year
* Pupil Premium funding – contacted schools about it and asked CS Director to e mail schools directly. Some had not realised what it meant for settings i.e. waiting a whole year for additional funding, and this generated quite a lot of concern from some schools – it has in effect, counteracted some of the elements of additional DfE Covid schools funding
* Planning to expand demographic analysis for additional pupils, to spell out the funding impact
* Daily DfE collection – around 88% maintained schools are responding
* API from DfE –already have a full sight of absence analysis although more challenging with new MIS provisions
* NCER have this on their development radar – is access to data became available for LAs? Edd is awaiting a response from DfE on that
* Other returns plodding ahead, with no challenge to meeting deadlines
* Daryl mentioned that the STAR Chamber/DfE acknowledge late upload for academies. We need more than just an acknowledgement –as this creates a real challenge for LAs - **Action DFP to feedback on behalf of the SE Group to the STAR Chamber. Consensus is that this is more a DfE organisational/process/resource/skills issue, in authorising the responses, rather than a late academy/free school upload issue. They look at them late and don’t liaise quickly on queries, causing unnecessary delays**

**Isle of Wight**

* The SEN2 numbers were similar to those in last year’s return
* Nearly all schools are uploading attendance data to the DfE, but IOW also get direct responses from schools. However, it does not match up to DfE data - what is the methodology they are using – different to ours?
* Analysis has led to big push to get more of the vulnerable pupils into schools
* Troubled families monitoring has been challenging - no guidance about the latest lockdown impact – DfE guidance has been very fuzzy about requirements
* Winter grant payments work has taken a lot of time – the way it was done caused a lot of additional work
* The LA eligible pupils identified, didn’t match what the school’s own data did
	+ Allistare (B&H): Vulnerable pupils calculation – how are you doing this? Brighton and Hove match against Social Work data, as we have found that schools do not always know the number of their own vulnerable pupils. DfE use a snapshot rather than average and not all vulnerable pupils are in every day of the week

**Hampshire**

* We are dealing with the data we do have available and using this to identify gaps
* Strategic planning has needed to be more thorough – more interrogation of available data leading to evidence-based decisions
* AP, SEN2 and census on track
* Increase in FOIs, especially in the Social Care data part of the team
* Increase in FSM from Autumn to Spring, as a direct impact of Covid 19
* Also seeing much lower registration numbers in Nurseries
* Winter Grants – has been painful – we have done things similarly to Isle of Wight as we work in partnership
* Transformation – developing new ways of visualising data using Power BI – more interactive and joined up approach. Also moving systems, to MOSAIC
* Social care and education data talking to each other still provides a challenge
* Hayley (PCC) and Heather discussed sharing best practice and notes on how systems can be better joined up, as their LAs are at the same stage in the process and also work on similar systems (ESCC synergy and liquid logic EYES). Several other LAs would also be interested in this data set joining work. **Action DFP – could a meeting Sub-Group be set up to provide a new focus on this? Action All – please e mail Daryl if you want to be part of the Sub-Group**

**Reading**

* Most schools have continued to buy in service – adapting service to provide data surrounding the impact of Covid 19 and assisting schools with their recovery
* Census – some academies have not even uploaded data yet
* SEN2 & AP census done – have other sources of data, so having no May census data had minimal impact
* Matching of vulnerable children against attendance data – there have been some challenges on this
* Early Years data – the number of families enrolling children into Nurseries has dropped considerably – longer term effects?
* Have seen a big rise in EHE children
* Winter grants programme – delivered centrally rather than via schools, so it was a lot of work to support with data to enable delivery. Take-up has been affected because families are not familiar with central LA staff, rather than known school colleagues
* Holidays and FSM project – initial planning has been done to support this
* **Would be interested to work with other LAs on data/systems integration Sub-Group**

**Brighton & Hove**

* The Jan Census is complete, and the analysis has just started – over 1,000 more current FSM pupils, than this time last year
* All schools bought data service last year and the team have been flexible to support Covid issues and recovery. One team member is in the office covering the phones
* Pupil Premium change to Oct Census impact was calculated at just under £400,000 across the LA. Is it worth capturing this approximate figure for all SE LA’s?
* We have a complete attendance dataset directly from schools, for the first time
* Covid 19 effect has seen more appetite from local leaders, for real-time pupil data
* This will hopefully help secure funding for real time, pupil level data solution.
* There are 2 options – a Groupcall add on product and Studybugs (developed from a Sussex University project, following more understanding required of the very high numbers of pupil absences recorded as illness, in Brighton & Hove. The product was created for parents to be able to log on and record absence reasons and then these can be analysed)
* Using NEXUS data and plan to do again – it is useful to have a small authority

**Windsor and Maidenhead**

* EHE anticipating a further increase, when schools go back next week
* Most schools are reporting vie the DfE portal, but we also get a direct return once a week from schools
* Pupil premium is managed under a different team
* Most schools use SIMs – have any other LAs had issues with academies sharing the data? **Action – All to note some best practice ideas below:**
	+ In Surrey and in Reading once they become academies, they stop sharing data. Tend to share with their own academy Trusts, rather than LA
	+ Southampton managed to push back successfully on that, from the safeguarding and admissions angle. They have ‘positively encouraged’ data sharing and managed this via customer service angle. i.e. this will reduce the volume of phone calls to schools, asking for info. What are your specific concerns? We have manged to still get info in, but less frequently – once every half-term/term
	+ Portsmouth – data sharing agreements encourage schools to deliver. It helps that we are a geographically compact area – schools can understand that it helps to build a city-wide appreciation of data. Even some maintained schools refuse to give direct data. Moving away from SIMS is causing issues. Text files sent in and all sorts!
	+ Paul (from NEXUS) - In Calderdale, we refer to dataloads from the schools helping to facilitate the directors safeguarding duty, whenever we have a school or academy that wavers on providing data. Obviously, it's not a safeguarding requirement, but we believe (and state) that it does facilitate it. That aligns with the number of calls schools will receive from LA services if they don't provide it as mentioned by other colleagues. It's worked so far
1. **Break**
2. **NCER Presentation - Peter Richmond & Paul Calerdine**
* Presentation shared prior to the meeting
* Membership goes up to 153 LAs, due to Northamptonshire being split into *North Northamptonshire* and *West Northamptonshire*
* Chasing purchase orders – not profit-making organisation 86 have already raised purchase orders.
* Governance – there will be an online Conference on 13th May – Donna Ross will send details out shortly
* Portsmouth had a question about the match rate – if census etc not uploaded with makes match rates for LAC very poor. LAs are allowed to modify their own cohort, as there will never be 100% match rate as not all pupils are in schools or those schools included in the census. Lower use of NEXUS in the last year – workaround implemented. NPD dataset will be added **Action: Andre and Edd to follow up separately after the meeting**
* **Action – Daryl to send out links to NEXUS Webinars with the minutes**
* NEXUS CIN attainment outcomes analysis – Daryl fed back that it is really important work which has helped to shine a light on the gaps in outcomes for CIN children
1. **CME, EHE, Reduced Timetables Benchmarking for Autumn Term**
* Thank you to all those who chased the submission and sent them in – there was a better response rate this term, even though there was a tight turnaround. Next collection more time will be allowed.
* The Data has been shared with AD network and with Regional School’s Commissioner
* Daniel from Daryl’s team, has done the report. The Dashboard was reviewed in the meeting. *I like the simplicity of the data sets and the % increases* (Penny)
* Chris Owen had fed back to Daryl about the annual Ofsted Conversation, as there is a focus on CME & EHE. **Action: Any LAs who did not submit please do so, so the data can be updated. This also applies for the previous term’s data.**
* Anything else useful to include in future benchmarking collection? Nothing of note.
* Edd explained that the Service lead for area in Southampton has a concern about submitting data, using different methodologies. Alistair Lee added that they have had this all the way through Social Care reporting – now ok about that – mainly looking at increases and decreases, and not relative performance. **Action: Daryl to feed this back to AD network via Chris Owen**
1. **Upcoming changes to collections:**
* Voluntary AP items in the school census
* Change from ‘Exclusions’ to ‘Expulsions’ and ‘Suspensions’
* Daryl said he would raise this at the STAR chamber meeting later today. **Action: Daryl to feed back to the group**
* Big impact and cost for no apparent rationale to change a name
1. **Reflections on Today’s Meeting and Next Steps**
* **Action: Katherine to e mail out to collect pupil premium impact data across South East Data Group – an average could be produced to cover any LAs not submitting data?**
* Liam from IOW spoke to someone from Study Bugs – he really liked the product, but managers would not buy in. Can we get more info about it? Useful going forward. Andre said he had a conversation due on Friday about this – has anyone already started using Studybugs already? There is the options of a free Pilot. **Action: All to note Allistare (Brighton Hove) happy for people to e mail/call him for further information**
* Potential new Sub-Group to look at best practice and learning around joining social care and education data
* A few LAs had mention data and requirements for the FSM and Holiday programme – **Action: Daryl - Share slides his team have done on mapping needs for the programme**
1. **AOB**
* Andre – Portsmouth – There was a question about the DfE API Project – this was covered during in the meeting. Daryl said it was clear that the DfE are not listening to feedback from LAs. A lesson from DfE, after many failed attempts, is to listen to feedback from those with experience. **Action – All – if you hear anything about this project please feed back to the meeting**
* Allistare – Brighton & Hove – When schools go back next week will LAs be recommencing Fixed Penalty enforcement for non-attendance? We are delaying this until after Easter in B&H, what about other teams? **Action: All to feed back any relevant info**

**Next Meeting**

* Summer - **Thursday 8th July 2021** Via Teams online. *(If you don’t receive the Teams link, please let Daryl know)*