



Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 2nd September 2020

AC

Subject: Plans for Return to School in September 2020

Summary statement:

The contingency plans in place that will allow education to take place and continue whether there is or is not a further or extended COVID19 local lockdown across the District.

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Overview & Scrutiny Area

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

The contingency plans in place that will allow education to take place and continue whether there is or is not a further or extended COVID19 local lockdown across the District.

2. BACKGROUND

Schools are set to reopen in September 2020 to all pupils following their closure to most pupils on 23rd March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are 7 Local Authority maintained nursery schools within the district. 161 primary schools, 77 which are Local Authority maintained and 84 Academy or free schools. In the secondary sector there are 35 schools in total, 6 which are Local Authority maintained and 29 Academy or free schools. There are 9 designated special schools in the district, 4 of which are in the primary sector and 5 which are for secondary aged pupils, two of these schools are academies.

On 2nd July the Government issued guidance to schools and special schools in relation to their full opening from September 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

Childcare providers have been able to open fully since 1st June 2020 and have been following government guidance to enable them to do this will protective measures in place.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

To support schools with wider reopening the Education and Learning Team produced a bespoke and detailed risk assessment template, which was issued to all Headteachers and CEOs across the district. The template is intended to be utilised alongside all government issued guidance to support the risk assessment of all aspects of pupils returning to school safely in September.

In addition, the local authority has worked closely with colleagues in public health to provide concise advice about how schools and settings should respond to any potential or confirmed cases or outbreaks of COVID-19. This advice allows public health and the local authority to provide support and guidance to any setting who has identified potential cases to minimise the risks of further spreading of the virus.

Throughout the pandemic and school closure to most pupils, schools have adapted to deliver learning to children who remained at home. Schools have all approached this differently, in order to respond to their school community needs, alongside any identified special educational needs of individual pupils.

The government issued Bradford Local Authority with over 2000 laptops and iPads to support the remote learning of children with a social worker, these have been allocated to identified children across the district. Furthermore, schools and academies have set up their own means of supporting those children who did not have access to appropriate IT resources to enable them to learn at home. The local authority identified the need for additionality to this initial response and has committed a further amount of funding to support the broadening of this project for more children and young people.

Additionally, there is a full range of curriculum support being provided by Oak National Academy, available online and free of charge for schools.

<https://www.thenational.academy/oaks-curricula>. Many schools supported children through virtual learning through forums such as Seneca

<https://www.senecalearning.com/> to enable pupils to access a full range of subjects from home. Schools also delivered lessons virtually, enabling pupils to interact with teachers online. Where children did not have access to IT resources, schools ensured pupils were provided with physical learning packs and equipment which were delivered to their homes.

All pupils will be supported to return to school for face to face learning from September. However, there is an expectation that there will be a need for distanced learning to continue as schools manage closures of school bubbles or full school closures, where a pupil or staff member is identified as having symptoms or a confirmed case of coronavirus. The guidance and risk assessment support provided to schools has enabled them to plan fully for this eventuality and they have evaluated processes used since 23rd March to ensure there is as little disruption to learning as possible.

The government has announced £650 million catch-up premium funding allocated across schools in the UK to support children to catch up on missed learning as a result of school closure. This equates to schools being issued with £80 per pupil for mainstream schools, £240 for special schools. Schools should use this funding for specific activities to support their pupils to catch up for lost teaching over the previous months, in line with the guidance on curriculum expectations for the next academic year.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

On Friday 31st August, Bradford District was subjected to local restrictions due to a rise in the COVID-19 infection rate across the district. At the time of writing, there is no suggestion this will impact on the plans to fully reopen schools from September.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

£1.2 Million additional funding has been committed by the council to support post COVID recovery.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

If there are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed recommendations it should be stated but only on advice of the Assistant Director Finance and Procurement and the City Solicitor.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

All advise to schools given in line with National Government guidance

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Impacts on all children and young people of statutory school age.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS – N/A

Not applicable.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS – N/A

Not applicable.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS – N/A

Not applicable.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT – N/A

Not applicable.

7.6 TRADE UNION

The Director of Human Resources may advise on this aspect. – trade unions kept informed inline with guidance. Trade Unions kept informed inline with national government guidance

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS – N/A

Not applicable.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS - N/A (for reports to Area Committees only)

Not applicable.

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING – N/A

Not applicable.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not applicable.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

Not applicable.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the committee to note the contents of this report

11. APPENDICES

None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.