

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on: **16 February 2023 at 6.00 P.M.**

Meeting to be held via: **Council Chamber, Walsall and Microsoft Teams**

Public access to meeting via: <https://www.walsallcouncilwebcasts.com>

MEMBERSHIP

Chair

Councillor S. Ditta
Councillor B. Bains
Councillor R. Burley
Councillor S. Cheema
Councillor I. Hussain
Councillor S.B. Hussain
Councillor A. Hussain
Councillor E. Lee
Councillor P. Kaur
Councillor L. Rattigan
Councillor C. Towe

NON-ELECTED VOTING MEMBERS

Lichfield Diocesan
Representative
Archbishop of
Birmingham's
Representative
Parent Governors

Vacancy

Vacancy

Mrs Heena Pathan
Vacancy
Vacancy

NON-ELECTED NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Primary Teacher
Representative
Secondary Teacher
Representative

Ms Sharon Guy

Ms Wendy Duffus

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Councillor Mark Statham – Education and Skills

Democratic Services, Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall, WS1 1TW
Contact: Jack Thompson ☎ 01922 654196 E-mail: jack.thompson@walsall.gov.uk

ITEMS FOR BUSINESS

1.	Apologies To receive apologies for absence from Members of the Committee.	
2.	Substitutions To receive notice of any substitutions for a Member of the Committee for the duration of the meeting.	
3.	Declarations of interest and party whip To receive declarations of interest or the party whip from Members in respect of items on the agenda.	
4.	Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) To agree that the public be excluded from the private session during consideration of the agenda items indicated for the reasons shown on the agenda (if applicable).	
5.	Minutes To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2022.	Enclosed
6.	Children Not in School Report: Attendance and Exclusions, Children missing education, elective home education and Fair Access (FAP). To provide an update on how the Council meets its statutory responsibility in regard to: Attendance, Children Missing Education (CME), Elective Home Education (EHE), Exclusions and Fair Access Protocol (FAP).	Enclosed
7.	Vulnerable Learners Hub To provide an overview of the work carried out by the Vulnerable Learners Hub Since September 2022.	Enclosed
8.	Recommendation Tracker To review progress with recommendations from previous meetings.	Enclosed
9.	Areas of Focus To review the Committees Work Programme and the Forward Plans for Walsall Council and the Black Country Executive Committee.	Enclosed
10.	Date of next meeting To note that the date of the next meeting will be 28 March 2023.	Enclosed

The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Specified pecuniary interests

The pecuniary interests which are specified for the purposes of Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 are the interests specified in the second column of the following:

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by a member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of a member.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Regulations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority:</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to a member's knowledge):</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority;</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:</p> <p>(a) that body (to a member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) either:</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</p>

Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended)

Access to information: Exempt information

Part 1

Descriptions of exempt information: England

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
 - (a) to give any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.
8. Information being disclosed during a meeting of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee when considering flood risk management functions which:
 - (a) Constitutes a trades secret;
 - (b) Its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the risk management authority);
 - (c) It was obtained by a risk management authority from any other person and its disclosure to the public by the risk management authority would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that other person.

**MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALSALL COUNCIL HOUSE.**

Thursday 12 January 2023 at 6.00 P.M.

Committee Members present:

Councillor S. Ditta (Chair)
Councillor B. Bains
Councillor R. Burley
Councillor S. Cheema
Councillor P. Kaur
Councillor I. Hussain
Councillor A. Hussain
Councillor S.B. Hussain
Councillor R. Martin

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Mark Statham – Education and Skills

Officers Present:

Sharon Kelly - Director Access and Inclusion
Rob Thomas - Head of Access
Jack Thompson – Democratic Services Officer
Thomas Newman – Finance Business Partner for Children Services
Helena Kucharczyk – Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Performance Information

Welcome and introductions were made.

42/22 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: C. Towe, L. Rattigan and E. Lee.

43/22 Substitutions

Councillor R. Martin substituted for Councillor E. Lee for the meeting.

44/22 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

Councillor R. Martin disclosed that she was a governor at the Pelsall Village School.

There were no further declarations of interest or party whip for duration of the meeting.

45/22 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

There were no agenda items requiring the exclusion of the public.

46/22 Minutes

A copy of the Minutes of the meeting held on the 28 November 2023 was submitted [annexed].

It was requested that 'social care internship' contained within minute 37/22 be changed to 'special educational needs (SEN) internship'. In addition, that these internships were being developed by HR and therefore fell outside the remit of this Committee, however, information on these internships would be provided as part of any Special Educational Needs update presented to the Committee in the future.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2023, as amended, a copy having previously been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

47/22 2022 Educational Attainment and Ofsted School Inspection Outcomes

The Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Education to introduce the report.

The Portfolio Holder informed the Committee that there had been an improvement in the Ofsted ratings for schools within the Borough and was pleased Walsall had been chosen by the Government to have an Educational Investment Area.

The Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Performance Information gave a presentation on the educational outcomes in the Borough [annexed]. At the end of the presentation, the Director for Access and Inclusion added that there had been improvements in educational outcomes, but the Council needed to continue to focus on early years. The Council already had a dedicated early years programme. Additionally, there were outstanding maintained nurseries and good private nurseries and the Council needed to help enable them to improve further. The Department for Education was providing additional funding for early years, and the Council was currently working on upskilling early years staff. The Council was also working with the West Midlands Combined Authority on devolution of powers around early years.

The Chair thanked the education team for the work they were carrying out. However, it was noted that it was a recurring issue that the Borough was behind the national average for educational outcomes and the Council needed to understand why this was happening. In addition, the Chair agreed that the Council should be focusing on closing gap in early year's educational attainment and to take pressure off parents as well.

The Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Performance added that young children were not necessarily in provisioned education and the Council was seeking ways to identify children with extra needs earlier. To help with this family hubs were being set up in Walsall and the Council was focusing on the first 1001 days of a child's life. In addition, the Director for Access and Inclusion added that the Council would focus on continued partnership work and needed to identify children who required extra support before they entered a provisioned educational settings.

A member asked what the root cause of educational outcome poor performance was. The Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Performance explained that there had been a drop in education performance across the country however Walsall had fallen a further three percent below the national average. The Council was currently asking schools for reasons as to why this might be the case and was asking them to provide additional data to the Council. In addition, the Council was asking health visitors for their data as well. The Director for Access and Inclusion added that the Council was trying to gather data to determine the outcomes for children who attended different early years provision. This would enable the Council to identify issues in early years provision.

The Chair asked if the Council gathered information on different areas and whether the disparity of facilities had an impact on the outcomes for children in early years. The Director for Access and Inclusion explained that the Council did carry out locality assessments and there were some discrepancies between areas. However, the current data showed there was enough provision for early years throughout the Borough but there was differing needs in certain areas.

A Member asked if children who spoke English as a second language had more help in early years education and if this was why they performed better than native English speakers later on? The Director for Access and Inclusion responded that all children in education would receive an education to their needs. The Council had completed work to help children with English as an additional language and this was reflected in the educational outcomes of those children. The Council was continuing to collect data to identify groups that were falling behind and developing programmes to help those children. The Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Performance Information added that the Council's data showed that children from Asian backgrounds performed better at Key Stage 2 to 4. The Council needed to determine if children with English as an additional language were changing in demographic and thus would need different support. There was a change in demographic in regard to children with English as an additional language.

In response to a Members question the Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Performance Information informed the Committee that 71% of the Academies within the Borough were rated by Ofsted as either Good or Outstanding. Regionally 80% were rated Good or Outstanding and nationally this was 81%. The ratings within the Borough were lower than the average, but it was important to recognise that schools often became academies because of poor Ofsted ratings and had to wait to be assessed again. There were currently 17 schools within the Borough that required improvement, of the 17, and 9 of these were expected to be assessed

imminently. It was therefore important to recognise that only a small number of schools would have to improve for the Borough to be in line with the national average.

A Member asked what support children were getting who were classed as having SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) or were under an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) as the report showed that educational outcomes for these children were lower than that of their peers. The Director for Access and Inclusion responded that SEND/EHCP was the responsibility of the school and this would involve putting a plan in place for the child which could require provision from partners. In addition, the Local Authority School Improvement Grant funding had been re-delegated by the Schools Forum and the Council had powers of intervention with Schools rated as 'Inadequate' or 'Requires Improvement' to help them improve.

In response to a question from a Member on the governments Covid recovery grant the Director for Access and Inclusion informed Members that these grants were directly provided to schools and that the government had created a national tutoring programme. Due to the funding being provided to schools directly from the Department for Education, the Council had no oversight of the spending of this money from the grant. However, the Council still had oversight regarding schools that were causing concern. The Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills added that he was working for one of these tutoring programmes and explained that it was for schools to decide where the need was in terms of educational outcomes since the Pandemic. Furthermore, the data led approach of the Council would help, especially in regard to early year's education, to determine why there were disparities in educational outcomes and how these could be addressed.

In response to a Member question the Director for Access and Inclusion informed the Committee that the Council carried out a programme called 'Schools Causing Concern Policy'. The Council looked at various parts of a schools work to determine if it needed more support and ranked schools within the Borough on a matrix.

Resolved:

1. That the Committee recognise the improving picture of Ofsted gradings in Walsall Schools.
2. That the Committee note the differing attainment results and the specific challenges facing Walsall children, particularly at the Early Years Foundation Stage.

48/22 Schools White Paper, Schools Bill and Education Investment Areas

The Chair invited the Director for Access and Inclusion to introduce the report.

The Director for Access and Inclusion highlighted the salient points of the report including that the Schools Bills was no longer going ahead [annexed]. However, some aspects of the Bill would be continuing; such as the work on school attendance, the national funding formula and Education Investment

Area. The Council would be implementing the national funding formula by the year 2023/25 and the Council aimed to challenge its performance and create a culture of raising standards. The Council was also offering schools access to the 'World Education Forum' and was aiming to build on its partnership work.

A Member asked if any mainstream schools within the Borough was open under the 32.5 hour a week minimum. The Director for Access and Inclusion responded that no school was currently under the 32.5 week minimum.

A Member asked what constituted as an 'excellent teacher' as found within the Schools White Paper. The Director for Access and Inclusion responded that all teachers were measured against the teaching standards framework. There was support for teachers through the teaching schools and new early teaching careers pathways.

A Member asked why being part of the 'World Education Forum' was not standard practice for schools. The Director for Access and Inclusion explained to the Committee that it was up to teaching staff to decide to be involved.

A Member asked if the Council was doing anything to help retain teaching staff. The Director for Access and Inclusion responded that the Borough was not experiencing a loss of many teaching staff. In addition, the Council was running a teaching recruitment pool and a headteacher support unit was being run by schools. The Executive Director for Children's and Customer added that there was currently strong competition for Newly Qualified Teaching positions in Walsall.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

49/22 Update on Children's Strategic Alliance and Walsall Learning Alliance (WR4C)

The Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills to introduce the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills highlighted the salient points of the report [annexed]. The Director for Access and Inclusion added that to build on the partnership work of the Council it had been decided to relaunch the Walsall Learning Alliance with an independent chair. In addition, the aim of the Children's Strategic Alliance was to engage with key partners to identify and focus on the improvements, and to put children at the centre of decision making.

A Member asked whether any young adults were part on the board of the Children's Strategic Alliance. The Director for Access and Inclusion responded that there were young adults on the board however there were still

improvements to be made in gathering the experiences of young people. In addition, the Council sent out surveys to young people and, but the Council needed to do more to capture the voice of young people with SEND.

Resolved

That the Committee support the work the Council was undertaking with partners through the development of a Walsall Children and Young People Strategic Alliance, and Walsall Learning Alliance, to secure better outcomes for children growing up in Walsall.

50/22 Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 – 7 month position ended 31 October 2022

The Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills to introduce the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills highlighted the salient points of the report [annexed]. The Finance Business Partner for Children Services then explained the appendixes of the report.

There were no further discussion on the item.

Resolved

1. That the Committee the forecast 2022/23 year-end financial position for the Council as a whole be noted.
2. That the Committee and commented on the forecast 2022/23 year-end financial position for services within the remit of this Committee be noted.

51/22 Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2026/27

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills gave a brief introduction to the report and highlighted the salient points. He highlighted £4.7m of investment and cost pressures, the saving proposals, and the proposed draft capital programme spending.

The Finance Business Partner for Children's Services (Access and Inclusion & Admin Hub) outlined briefly what each attached appendix showed.

There were no further discussion on the item.

Resolved

1. That the Committee the draft revenue budget proposal attached that related to the remit of the Committee as show in Appendices 1 and 2 be noted.
2. That the Committee the draft capital schemes included in the draft capital programme attached that related to the remit of the Committee as shown in Appendices 3 and 4 be noted.

52/22 Recommendation Tracker

The Chair invited the Democratic Services Officer to update the Committee on the recommendation tracker.

Resolved

That the Committee the Recommendation Tracker be noted.

53/22 Areas of Focus

The Chair invited the Democratic Services Officer to update the Committee on the Areas of Focus. The Democratic Services Officer informed the Committee of the items on the areas of focus scheduled for the next two meetings and asked the Director of Access and Inclusion to expand on these.

The Director of Access and Inclusion informed the Committee that the topic 'Children not in School (Revisited)' would include a report containing information on Attendance and Exclusions, Children Missing Education, Elective Home Education and Fair Access Protocol. There would also be an update report on the Vulnerable Learners Hub. In addition, for the Committee meeting in March the 'SEND (Revisited)' topic would include a report on: Accelerated Progress Plan Update, New SEND Development Framework, Special School Provision Plan Update including information on the modelling process.

Resolved

That the following items be included on the work programme:

- a. Attendance and Exclusions, Children Missing Education Elective Home Education, Fair Access Protocol report
- b. Update on the Vulnerable Learners Hub
- c. Accelerated Progress Plan Update
- d. New SEND Development Framework report
- e. Special School Provision Plan Update

54/22 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was scheduled for the 16 February 2023.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 19:59.

Attendance, Children Missing Education, Elective Home Education and Exclusions Update

Wards All

Service: Access Service

Portfolio: Councillor Statham

1. Aim

1.1. The aim of this report provides an update of on how Walsall continues to meet its statutory responsibility in regard to:

- Attendance
- Children Missing Education (CME)
- Elective Home Education (EHE)
- Exclusions
- Fair Access Protocol (FAP)

2. Recommendations

2.1. That the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the contents of this report and decides whether there should be further information or updates

Report detail

3. Attendance - overview

3.1. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.

3.2. The usual rules on school attendance continue to apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence;
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct;
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing from education.

Attendance – Department for Education (DfE) Data

- 3.3. The latest full year for 2020-21 published data is available in appendix A and shows that both absence and persistent absence in Walsall is higher than regional and national comparators.
- 3.4. The latest statistical release which covers the Autumn and Spring Term 2021/22 looks at pupil absence in the autumn and spring terms 2021/22. While this does not provide data for the whole year, it does give an early indication of changing rates.
- 3.5. The national overall absence rate across the autumn and spring terms 2021/22 combined was 7.4%. This is higher than the same period in previous years, typically around 4-5%. The increase is mostly driven by a large increase in illness absence and includes absence for positive coronavirus cases. UK Health Security Agency data shows large increases in weekly COVID-19 case rates for year groups including children of school age over this period when compared to previous years.
- 3.6. For the autumn and spring terms 2021/22, the category of 'not attending due to circumstances related to coronavirus' should mostly have been used to record where a pupil was absent from school with symptoms of COVID-19 whilst awaiting the results of a test. This differs to previous terms when this code was also used where pupils were advised to shield, were quarantining after returning from abroad, or were in class bubbles advised to isolate.
- 3.7. When a pupil has initially self-isolated pending a coronavirus test result, the school should have recorded the pupil as *not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus*. If the pupil subsequently tested positive the school should have recorded the pupil as being *absent due to illness* and they would be included as an absence.

Attendance – Statutory Responsibilities of the Local Authority

- 3.8. From September 2022, the DfE's 'working together to improve school attendance' document replaced all previous guidance on school attendance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities with the exception of the existing statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures.
- 3.9. This guidance is non-statutory, and has been produced to help schools, trusts, governing bodies, and local authorities maintain high levels of school attendance. Following public consultation, and subject to Parliament, the Secretary of State has committed to this guidance becoming statutory when parliamentary time allows.
- 3.10. The guidance reinforces that to successfully treat the root cause of absence and to remove barriers to attendance, at home, in school and more broadly requires schools and local partners to work together with, and not against families.
- 3.11. The expectation on schools is:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance;
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand;
- Accurately complete admissions and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence;
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place;
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them;
- Share information and work together with other schools in the area, the local authority and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

3.12. The expectation on local authorities is:

- Rigorously track local attendance data;
- Have a School Attendance Support Team;
- Communication and advice;
- Targeting Support Meetings;
- Multi-disciplinary support for families;
- Legal intervention;
- Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker through their Virtual School.

4. Children Missing Education (CME)

- 4.1. Children are classed as 'Children Missing Education' if they are compulsory school age and not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children are of compulsory school age from the start of the first school term after their fifth birthday until the last Friday in the June of the academic year in which they turn 16 years of age.
- 4.2. Children Missing Education (CME) are distinct from Children Missing from Education (CMfE). This term is used to refer to children who are on roll at a school but not attending regularly or full time.
- 4.3. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation, or radicalisation, and becoming part of the NEET cohort (not in education, employment, or training) once these cease to be compulsory school age.
- 4.4. Effective information sharing between parents, schools, local authorities, and other agencies is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.
- 4.5. Local Authorities have a legal duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to decide to identify children missing education. Local Authorities should consult the parents or carers of a child when trying to establish whether a child is in receipt of a suitable education. Those children identified as not receiving suitable

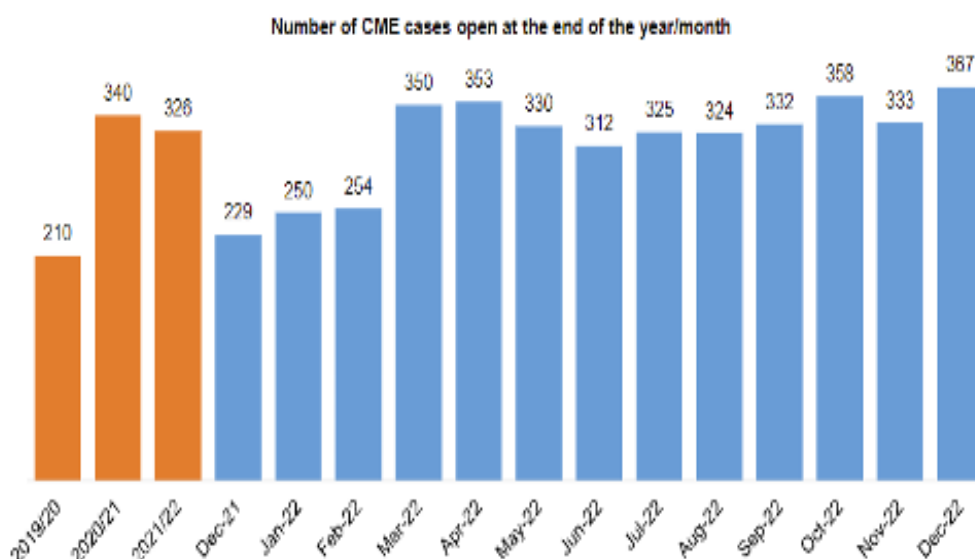
education should be returned to full time education either at a school or in alternative provision.

- 4.6. A child can become open to Walsall Local Authority as a child missing education (CME) for a variety of reasons. These can include Children and Young People who:
- move to Walsall from a different local authority area or from outside the UK and are unable to secure a school place that is within a reasonable distance of their new home address via either primary or secondary mid-year process.
 - fail to take up the school place that is offered to them via the phased admissions process, the mid-year admissions process or Walsall's Fair Access Process.
 - are removed from a school roll after a long period of unexplained absence, or after failing to return from an extended or unauthorised holiday.
 - have previously been open to the local authority as being electively home educated (EHE) but are deemed by the local authority not to be in 'receipt of a satisfactory education.'
 - who are Walsall residents and have who have been permanently excluded from school. In these circumstances, the local authority will open these children and young people as missing education whilst ensuring that appropriate six-day provision is secured for pending the outcome of the governing body hearing process and decision.
 - have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) and for whom the local authority is unable to secure a permanent education provision that can meet their special educational needs. In these circumstances, the local authority will put in place temporary tuition, but the child will still be opened as child missing education until suitable permanent education provision can be secured via the EHCP consultation process.

Walsall Children Missing Education Process

- 4.7. When a child is opened to CME, they are allocated a caseworker and become subject to the local authority's monitoring procedures, working closely with the school admissions team an offer where possible will be made through the midyear admission process. Failing a place being able to be offered through the midyear admissions process the child will be taken the ether the Primary or Secondary Fair Access Protocol. If a child does not take up an allocated school place, then the CME team will establish the reasons for this.
- 4.8. If a school is refusing to admit a child, then then the matter will be escalated in accordance with the Department for Education's direction to admit process.
- 4.9. If a parent is refusing to take up the offer of a school place, then the matter will be escalated via the school attendance order process.
- 4.10. Any child that is open to Walsall CME must be seen by a relevant lead professional on a regular basis or the CME team will commission the education welfare service to undertake a home visit every 20 days or more regularly if deemed appropriate.

- 4.11. Walsall currently have 350 children open to CME as per the month of January 2023.



- 4.12. Whilst the number of cases open to CME remain static cases are being closed in a more manner and efficiently across the service, November 2022 saw 210 cases close and December 2022 there were 92 closed. Due to a large proportion of cases that are opened as Child Missing Education being for children that are New to the UK, it is essential that the cases are opened quickly to ensure the team are aware of all children in the Local Authority that should be or require an education.

5. Elective Home Education (EHE)

- 5.1. Elective Home Education (EHE) is the term that is used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of sending them to school full time. There is only a voluntary register for EHE. If a child has never attended school parents have no legal obligation to notify the local authority or to seek consent if they intend to home educate their child. If a child is withdrawn from school for EHE the school has an obligation to notify the local authority.
- 5.2. The local authority has a statutory duty (under s.436A of the Education Act) to make arrangements to enable it to establish the identities, so far as it is possible to do so, of children in its area who are not receiving a suitable education. We do this by working closely with various partners including: parents, school admissions (including children missing education and pupil tracking teams), special educational needs, Educational Welfare, Data matching Team, Black Country Impact, local schools & colleges, school health, Black Country consortium, early help, educational psychologists, social workers, and other neighbouring authorities.
- 5.3. The EHE service is responsible for identifying and recording compulsory school aged children who are home educated. The service also makes enquiries as to whether that education satisfies legal requirements. If it is deemed that the educational provision at home is unsuitable we also have robust processes to return the child/young person to school.

Walsall Elective Home Education Service

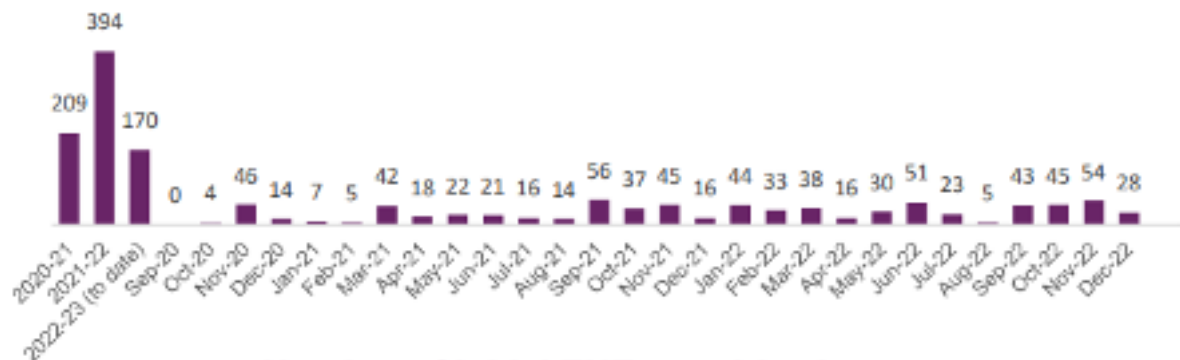
- 5.4. There is an increase in in the number of initial enquiries and EHE registrations. 'Mental health' is the most common reason for EHE enquiries and the EHE service has an Emotional literacy support officer within the team who offers face to face, virtual and group sessions for those children who are identified as experiencing emotional or mental health concerns. The emotional literacy support has been utilised to support reintegration back to school, referrals to school health etc. and to support parents to fulfil their responsibility to provide a suitable and full-time education. The weekly sessions that the emotional literacy support officer implements also means that we have a greater oversight of EHE children.
- 5.5. A greater oversight of EHE children has also been achieved by completing more interim reviews than ever before which has in turn led to a marked increase in children being reintegrated back to school when the educational provision has been judged to be unsuitable.
- 5.6. The service has strengthened joint working with other professionals and raised the profile of EHE and has delivered training for health visitors, the Special Educational Needs service, School Nursing and Early Help.
- 5.7. The most vulnerable children including those under a Child Protection (CP), Child In Need Plan (CIN) or those receiving Early Help (EH) or in receipt of an EHCP are offered additional support and guidance as we contribute to all of the relevant meetings and review all EHCPs on a termly basis.
- 5.8. The recent Ofsted Inspections of Walsall local authority children's services and SEN reports noted

"There is robust oversight of children who are electively home educated (EHE). There is strong partnership working with schools through a new EHE policy and positive relationships with families..."

Leaders know where children are and provide comprehensive support if they are not in school."

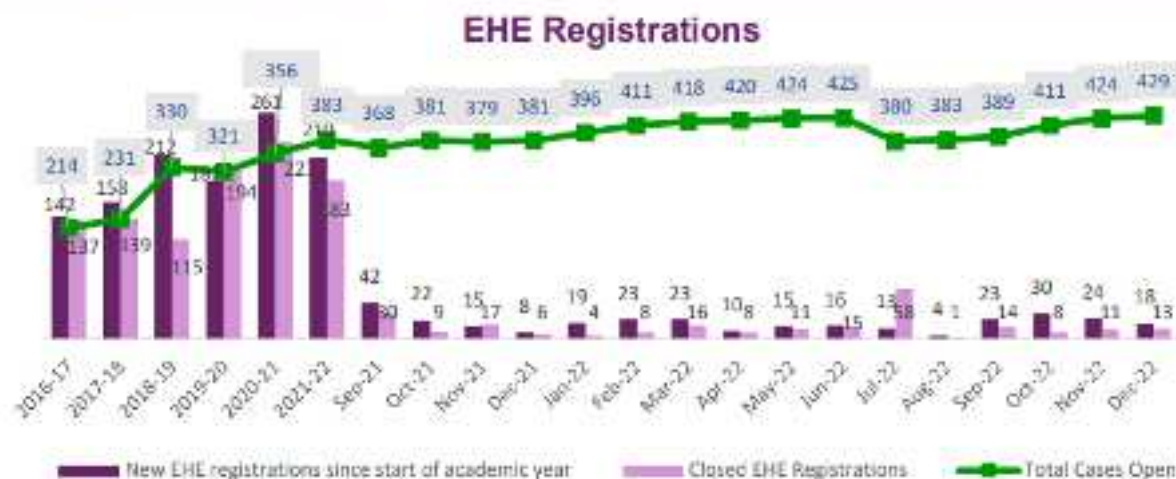
Initial Enquiries

Initial EHE enquiries opened in the year/month



- 5.9. The above graph shows the number of Initial EHE enquiries that have been received. 170 enquiries were received in the Autumn term. As EHE potentially has implications for the child, early intervention is offered to all these families. The EHE service offers parents guidance and support before they formally decide to home educate. All schools have agreed to engage in Pre EHE meetings and most parents are also willing to explore the support available in school and from other agencies prior to making a formal decision to EHE.
- 5.10. The Pre EHE meetings are also an ideal opportunity to remind parents they are taking on a duty of care to ensure their child's educational, social, emotional and mental health needs are met when they elect to home educate. Furthermore it is reiterated that there is no financial support available for elective home education. This has ensured the most vulnerable are more likely to remain at school and if parents are considering EHE as a result of concerns at school this can be addressed at the meetings. Professionals other than from school and EHE have also been involved in the meetings as referrals have been completed to Early Help, SENDIAS and School Nursing to ensure the best outcome for the child.

Starts, Ends & Current EHE



- 5.11. The above graph illustrates the number of EHE registrations and the success of the early intervention. Although the service have received 170 initial enquiries, approximately 45% of parents have decided to keep their child in school and just 95 new EHE registrations were opened in the Autumn term.

6. Exclusions

- 6.1. The data relating to school exclusions can be found in Appendix A.
- 6.2. For many pupils, exclusions may not be necessary, as other strategies can manage behaviour. However, if approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, then suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other pupils and teaching staff are protected from disruption and can learn in safe, calm, and supportive environments.
- 6.3. Schools and local authorities should not adopt a 'no exclusion' policy as an end in itself. This can lead to perverse incentives for schools not to exclude even when exclusion may be a way for a pupil to access Alternative Provision which will help ensure an excluded pupil remains engaged in education. In some cases, a 'no exclusion' policy can present safeguarding issues and expose staff and pupils to unreasonable risks. Instead, schools and local authorities should work to create environments where school exclusions are not necessary because pupil behaviour does not require it.

Walsall School Exclusions

- 6.4. The Local Authority's Placement Panel meets on a weekly basis to consider all permanent exclusions of Walsall resident children and young people both from Walsall school and schools in other LA areas.
- 6.5. As part of our engagement with schools to review existing and to help reduce future exclusions, officers from both Access and Inclusion and the Early Help Service have reviewed and updated Walsall's existing exclusion policy and processes.

6.6. This is to ensure there is clarity about:

- The processes that need to be followed by both schools and the Local Authority in terms of notifying all relevant parties about suspensions (fixed period) and permanent exclusions.
- the levels of support that should be provided by both the Local Authority and Walsall schools to children, young people and their parent and carers prior to, at the point of and post exclusion, dependent on whether the exclusion is fixed period or permanent.
- The level of support and, where appropriate, challenge that should be provided by the Local Authority to schools prior to, at the point of and, post exclusion, dependent on whether the exclusion is fixed period or permanent Plan and SEN Support Permanent

FAP

6.7. A parent can apply for a place for their child at any school at any time. All applications must be processed by the relevant admission authority in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021.

6.8. When applications are made outside the normal admissions they are considered in-year applications. Where it can be demonstrated that reasonable measures have been taken to secure a school place through the usual in-year admissions process and this has not been successful, or where a school place has not been sought due to exceptional circumstances, a child may be eligible for referral to the Fair Access Protocol (FAP).

6.9. The purpose of a FAP is to ensure that vulnerable children, and those who are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, are allocated a school place as quickly as possible, minimising the time the child is out of school.

6.10. Every local authority must have a FAP in place. Once it has been agreed by most schools in its area, all admission authorities must participate in it. FAPs should provide a fair and transparent system to ensure that all schools share the collective responsibility of helping the most vulnerable, by admitting their fair share of children being placed.

6.11. The FAP can only be used to place the following categories of children, where a child is having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, and it can be demonstrated that reasonable measures have been taken to secure a place through the in-year admissions process:

- children either subject to a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan or having had a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan within 12 months at the point of being referred to the FAP;
- children living in a refuge or in other Relevant Accommodation at the point of being referred to the FAP;
- children from the criminal justice system
- children in alternative provision who need to be reintegrated into mainstream education or who have been permanently excluded but are deemed suitable for mainstream education.

- children with special educational needs (but without an education, health, and care plan), disabilities or medical conditions.
- children who are carers.
- children who are homeless.
- children in formal kinship care arrangements.
- children of, or who are, Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, refugees, and asylum seekers.
- children who have been refused a school place on the grounds of their challenging behaviour and referred to the FAP in accordance with paragraph 3.10 of the Code.
- children for whom a place has not been sought due to exceptional circumstances.
- children who have been out of education for 4 or more weeks where it can be demonstrated that there are no places available at any school within a reasonable distance of their home. This does not include circumstances where a suitable place has been offered to a child and this has not been accepted; and
- previously looked after children for whom the local authority has been unable to promptly secure a school place.

6.12. Primary Fair Access Panel have placed 200 children since September 2022 and 112 for Secondary.

7. *Financial information*

7.1. There are no direct financial implications of the report but all pupils who are permanently excluded from schools go 'on roll' at the New Leaf Centre for assessment and provision of education. The funding for New Leaf comes from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant through the high needs local funding formula.

8. *Reducing Inequalities*

8.1. The principal objective of the local authority is to continue to identify characteristics of good practice in addressing inequalities for children in education, including elective home education, with particular attention to the following factors, gender, ethnicity, and Special Educational Needs (SEN).

8.2. Our aim is to work towards the position where the needs of all young people are addressed in school or alternative provision and parents are only electing to home educate as a positive choice rather than being evoked due to dissatisfaction or conflict with schools.

9. *Decide*

9.1. Scrutiny may decide to note the current position.

9.2. The Committee may decide to request further information or assurance in respect of the progress of elective home education.

10. Respond

- 10.1. Any recommendations made by the Committee will be assessed against the Access and Inclusion work programme and performance board.

11. Review

- 11.1. All areas are under constant monitoring and assessment via Children's Services Performance Board.

12. Background papers

- Scrutiny Paper – Attendance, Children Missing Education, Elective Home Education and Exclusions Update – September 2022
- Scrutiny Paper – Update on Elective Home Education – January 2021
- Scrutiny Paper – Exclusions – November 2020
- Scrutiny Paper – Education Welfare -

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Children not in school

Appendix A

(data taken from published sources and is 2020-21 unless otherwise stated)



Walsall Council

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IMPROVE
outcomes and
customer experience



IMPROVE
employee satisfaction
and engagement



IMPROVE
service efficiency
and performance

Children Living in Walsall

Updated 10th April 2022

Population of 286,716

69,375 (24.2%) of whom are children aged 0-17

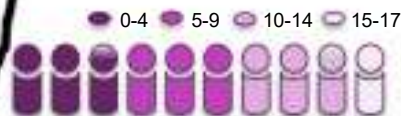
2020 mid-year population estimates

The number of children and young people aged 0-17 is projected to rise to 71,822 by 2030

24.2% of the population are children and young people 2020 mid-year population estimates



31.2% of Children are from BME backgrounds 2011 Census



28% of children are aged 0-4, 29% are aged 5-9, 28% are aged 10-14 and 15% are aged 15-17 2020 mid-year population estimates



39% of children live in poverty after housing costs Campaign to end child poverty – May 2021

Deprivation levels are high

In the Indices of Deprivation Affecting Children (IDACI), Walsall is the **19th most deprived Local Authority** in the country with 29% of neighbourhoods in the top 10% of most deprived neighbourhoods nationally which is the 15 highest.

Two of Walsall's three parliamentary constituencies are in the **top 50** constituencies with the highest levels of child poverty

Children and young people have more health challenges than their peers

4.2% of babies are born with a low birth weight

compared with 3.1% the West Midlands and 2.9% nationally (2020 data)

6.8 per 1,000 children die before their first birthday

compared with 5.6 in the West Midlands and 3.9 nationally (2018-2020 data)

2.5% of young girls get pregnant at 15, 16 or 17

compared with 1.8% in the West Midlands and 1.6% nationally (2019 data)

7.9 per 10,000 would be admitted to hospital as an inpatient for mental health issues

compared with 8.6 in the West Midlands and 8.8 nationally (2020-21 data)

1.5 per 10,000 admitted to hospital for alcohol related issues

compared with 2.5 in the West Midlands and 2.9 nationally (2018-19 – 2020-21 data)

Children attending Walsall Schools as at January School Census 2022



54,917

On roll in Walsall Schools

Free School Meals



33.1%

of children receive FSM in
Primary School

↑ 1.5%pts

since 2021
1.7% pts regionally
1.7% pts stat neighbours
1.5% pts nationally

Gap between Primary FSM
in Walsall and stat neigh

→ 4.9% pts ←
Gap is reducing
(slightly)

Gap between Primary FSM
in Walsall and nationally

→ 10.0% pts ←
Gap is stable

30.2%

of children receive FSM in
Secondary School

↑ 2.7%pts

since 2021
2.3% pts regionally
2.5% pts stat neighbours
2.0% pts nationally

Gap between Secondary
FSM in Walsall and stat neigh

← 4.3% pts →
Gap is Increasing
(slightly)

Gap between Secondary FSM
in Walsall and nationally

← 9.3% pts →
Gap is Increasing

Significantly more children receive
free school meals and numbers are
increasing

Language & Ethnicity



Significantly more children have
English as an additional
language

25.6%

of children have EAL in
Primary School

↑ 0.7%pts

since 2021
0.3% pts regionally
0.1% pts stat neighbours
0.3% pts nationally

Gap between Primary EAL in
Walsall and stat neigh

← 0.4% pts →
Gap is increasing

Gap between Primary EAL in
Walsall and nationally

← 4.4% pts →
Gap is increasing

20.5%

of children have EAL in
Secondary School

↓ 0.6%pts

since 2021
0.3% pts regionally
0.1% pts stat neighbours
0.3% pts nationally

Gap between Secondary EAL
in Walsall and stat neigh

→ -0.1% pts ←
Gap is reducing

Gap between Secondary EAL
in Walsall and nationally

→ 3.0% pts ←
Gap is reducing



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



3.5%

of children in Walsall
schools have an
EHCP

2.1% in Primary

1.9% in Secondary

↑ 0.2%pts

since 2021
0.2% pts regionally
0.3% pts stat neighbours
0.3% pts nationally

Gap between EHCP in
Walsall and stat neigh

← 0.5% pts →
Gap is Increasing

Gap between EHCP in
Walsall and national

← 0.5% pts →
Gap is Increasing

12.6%

of children in Walsall
schools receive
SEN Support

14.1% in Primary

11.6% in Secondary

↑ 0.7%pts

since 2021
0.3% pts regionally
0.4% pts stat neighbours
0.4% pts nationally

Gap between SEN
Support in Walsall and
stat neigh

→ 0.2% pts ←
Gap is reducing

Gap between SEN
Support in Walsall and
national

→ 0.0% pts ←
Gap is reducing

Fewer children have an identified special educational need. For children with an EHCP the gap to stat neighbours and national is similar for both primary and secondary. However, more children receive SEN Support in primary school than comparators, but fewer continue to receive support in secondary schools.

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Walsall Council

PROUD OF OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT AND FOR OUR FUTURE

Attendance

5.4% Absence Rate

4.90% regionally
4.78% stat neighbours
4.60% nationally

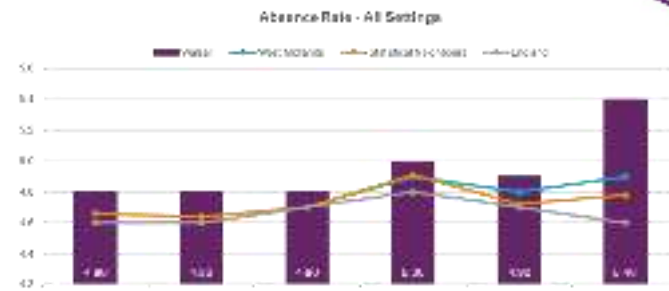
↑ 0.5%_{opts}

since 2019
Compared with
0.1% points regionally
0.06% points stat neighbours
0.1% pts nationally

Ranked
136
Out of 152 LAs
Compared with
103 in 2019

14.9% Persistent Absence Rate

13.20% regionally
12.84% stat neighbours
12.10% nationally



Gender

5.69%

Of sessions were missed by boys in Walsall

Absence Rate

5.05% regionally
4.73% nationally

↑ 0.69%_{opts}

since 2019

16.16%

Of boys in Walsall were

Persistently absent

13.73% regionally
12.45% nationally

↑ 1.61%_{opts}

since 2019

5.01%

Of sessions were missed by girls in Walsall

Absence Rate

4.76% regionally
4.50% nationally

↑ 0.25%_{opts}

since 2019

13.60%

Of girls in Walsall were

Persistently absent

12.72% regionally
11.69% nationally

↑ 2.36%_{opts}

since 2019

0.68% pts
up from 0.24% pts in 2019

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

7.01%

Of sessions were missed by pupils with SEN Support

Absence Rate

6.70% regionally
6.50% nationally

↑ 0.56%_{opts}

since 2019

20.61%

Of pupils with SEN Support in Walsall were

Persistently absent

19.66% regionally
18.89% nationally

↑ 3.49%_{opts}

since 2019

4.56%

Of sessions were missed by pupils with out identified SEN

Absence Rate

4.20% regionally
3.95% nationally

↑ 0.02%_{opts}

since 2019

11.64%

Of pupils without identified SEN in Walsall were

Persistently absent

10.28% regionally
9.33% nationally

↑ 1.48%_{opts}

since 2019

Gap between attendance for pupils with SEN Support and those without identified SEN needs in Walsall

Page 25 of 62
up from 1.91% pts in 2019

Free School Meals

8.06%

Of sessions were missed by pupils in receipt of FSM

Absence Rate

7.78% regionally
7.83% nationally

↑ 0.73%_{opts}

since 2019

25.34%

Of pupils in receipt of FSM in Walsall were

Persistently absent

24.22% regionally
24.37% nationally

↑ 3.40%_{opts}

since 2019

4.08%

Of sessions were missed by pupils not in receipt of FSM

Absence Rate

3.94% regionally
3.74% nationally

↓ 0.05%_{opts}

since 2019

9.48%

Of pupils not in receipt of FSM in Walsall were

Persistently absent

9.02% regionally
8.30% nationally

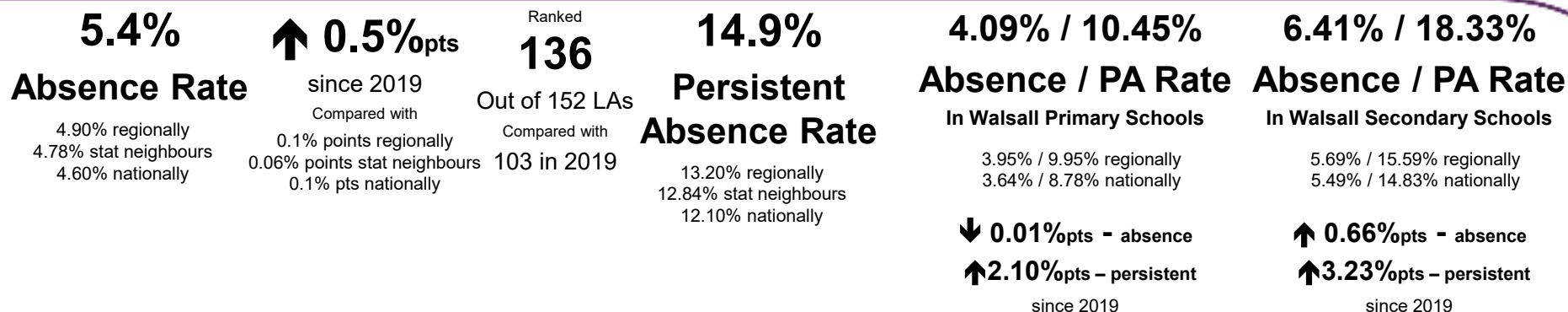
↑ 1.33%_{opts}

since 2019

Gap between attendance for pupils in receipt of FSM and those not receipt of FSM in Walsall

4.02% pts
up from 3.19% pts in 2019

Attendance



The absence rate in Walsall is increasing. It has always been higher than comparators, however, since the Covid-19 pandemic, the gap between attendance rates in Walsall and those regionally and nationally has increased. Persistent absence is also increasing. Absence in secondary schools is 50% higher than in primary schools and the persistent absence rate is 80% higher. Primary school absence is higher than comparators, but only by a small amount, whereas secondary absence, and in particular persistent absence is significantly higher than comparators.

Overall absence for boys higher than for boys and is increasing at a faster rate than absence for girls. Persistent absence for boys is particularly high and although this is not increasing at the same rate as for girls, is much higher than comparators.

Children in receipt of free school meals have almost double the absence rate of pupils without free school meals and over 2.5 times more likely to be persistently absent. While absence and persistent absence rates in Walsall are higher than comparators for both groups, the increased likelihood of being absent from school is reflected at the same levels both regionally and nationally. While issues relating to children with SEN not being in school are well understood, the link between school absence and poverty is more opaque and the reasons more varied, however, as the proportion of children in receipt of FSM increases in Walsall, it is an area that requires further exploration.

Children with SEN Support are 1.5 times more likely to be absent from school and 1.8 times more likely to be persistently absent than their peers who do not have SEN and absence for this group is increasing at a faster rate. Both groups have higher absence and persistent absence in Walsall than regional and national peers with similar gaps.

Permanent Exclusions

IMPORTANT: Exclusions data involves very small numbers of children so should be treated with extreme caution as small fluctuations can have a big impact.

0.08%

of children attending Walsall
Schools received a

Permanent Exclusion

0.06% regionally
0.07% stat neighbours
0.05% nationally

↓ **0.06%pts**

since 2019
Compared with
-0.06% points regionally
-0.09% points stat neighbours
-0.05% pts nationally

Ranked

125

Out of 152 LAs

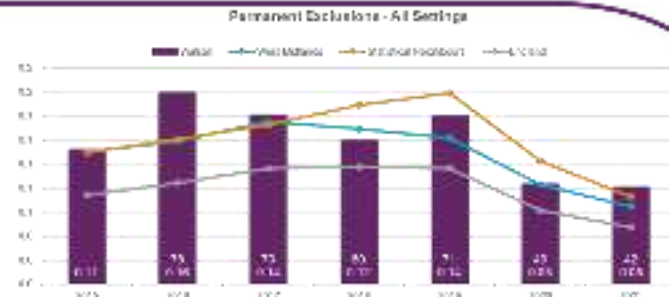
Compared with
112 in 2019

42

Children excluded

Compared with
71 in 2019

**A decrease
of 41%**



Reasons for Exclusion

(2019-20 data)

Disruptive Behaviour
51.2% - 22 Exclusions

Physical assault against an Adult
16.3% - 7 Exclusions

Drug and / or Alcohol use
4.7% - 2 Exclusion

Physical assault against a/n pupil
2.3% - 1 Exclusion

Verbal abuse against an adult
2.3% - 1 Exclusion

The remaining 10 exclusions are categorised
as 'other'

Gender

♂ **0.14% (38)**
of boys in Walsall were
Permanently Excluded

0.10% regionally
0.07% nationally

↓ **0.07%pts**
since 2019

0.02% (4)
of girls in Walsall were
Permanently Excluded ♀

0.03% regionally
0.02% nationally

↓ **0.04%pts**
since 2019

Gap between boys and girls in Walsall

**90% of exclusions are
received by boys**
Up from 79% in 2019

Free School Meals

0.20% (32)
of children with FSM were
Permanently Excluded

0.14% regionally
0.12% nationally

↓ **0.08%pts**
(from 33) since 2019

0.03% (10)
of children without FSM were
Permanently Excluded

0.04% regionally
0.03% nationally

↓ **0.07%pts**
(from 38) since 2019

Gap between children with and without FSM in Walsall

**76% of exclusions are
received by children in
receipt of FSM**
Up from 46.5% in 2019

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

0.20% (16)
of children with SEND in
Walsall were
Permanently Excluded

0.17% regionally
0.13% nationally

↓ **0.07% pts**
(from 19) since 2019
Page 28 of 52

0.06% (26)
of children without
SEND in Walsall were
Permanently Excluded

0.05% regionally
0.03% nationally

↓ **0.06%pts**
(from 52) since 2019

Gap between children with and
without SEN in Walsall
**38% of exclusions are
received by
Children with SEN**
Up from 27% in 2019

Permanent Exclusions

IMPORTANT: Exclusions data involves very small numbers of children so should be treated with extreme caution as small fluctuations can have a big impact.

0.08%

of children attending Walsall
Schools received a

**Permanent
Exclusions**

0.06% regionally
0.07% stat neighbours
0.05% nationally

↓ **0.06%pts**

since 2019

Compared with

-0.06% points regionally
-0.09% points stat neighbours
-0.05% pts nationally

42

Children excluded

Compared with

71 in 2019

**A decrease
of 41%**

0.02% (7)

of children attending Walsall

Primary Schools received a

Permanent Exclusions

0.01% regionally
0.01% stat neighbours
0.01% nationally

↓ **0.03%pts**

(from 8) since 2019

0.15% (34)

of children attending Walsall

Secondary Schools received a

Permanent Exclusions

0.13% regionally
0.17% stat neighbours
0.10% nationally

↓ **0.15%pts**

(from 62) since 2019

**17% of exclusions are
received by children in**

Primary school
Up from 11% in 2019

The 2020-21 academic year was interrupted by the second national lockdown. Schools remained open for vulnerable children and children of key workers and all other children were learning remotely. While permanent exclusions and suspensions were still possible throughout the academic year, school closures have had a substantial effect on the number of permanent exclusions and suspensions and therefore caution should be taken when comparing figures across years. Due to this disruption, the 2019-20 data has been used as a baseline.

Permanent Exclusions are falling in Walsall and have reduced by 41% since the 2018-19 academic year. The majority of this reduction has been in secondary school exclusions. However, despite this reduction, Walsall still has a slightly higher exclusion rate than comparators - our national ranking is in the bottom quartile.

Boys are significantly more likely to be permanently excluded than girls and of the 42 permanent exclusions in 2020-21, 90% (38) were for boys. This is an increase on 2018-19 when there were 71 exclusions and 79% (56) were boys and 21% (15) were girls. This is also in contrast to regional and national results where boys account for 77% and 75% of permanent exclusions respectively. Regionally and nationally boys are three times more likely to be excluded than girls but in Walsall this increases to seven times more likely.

A higher proportion of exclusions are for children who are in receipt of free school meals are excluded from school than those who are not in receipt of FSM. Exclusions for children in receipt of FSM have remained stable, whereas exclusions for those not in receipt of FSM have fallen, however, because the population of children eligible for FSM has increased, the overall proportion of children in this group who are excluded has reduced. The rate of exclusions for children in receipt of FSM is higher than regional and national comparators and is higher as a proportion of exclusions (76% in Walsall compared to 54% regionally and 52% nationally). In Walsall children in receipt of FSM are over six times more likely to be excluded than their peers who are not in receipt of free school meals compared to three or four times more regionally and nationally.

Children with SEN accounted for 38% of exclusions in 2020-21 compared to 27% of exclusions in 2018-19. Overall exclusions for children with SEN have reduced from 19 to 16 (16%) whereas exclusions for children without SEN have halved from 52 to 26. Children with SEN are over three times more likely to be excluded from school and this is a pattern which is seen both regionally and nationally.

Suspensions

IMPORTANT: Exclusions data involves very small numbers of children so should be treated with extreme caution as small fluctuations can have a big impact.

2.89%
Suspensions
as a % of pupils

4.00% regionally
5.38% stat neighbours
4.25% nationally

1.81% of pupils received a suspension
compared with 2.3% regionally and 2.2% nationally

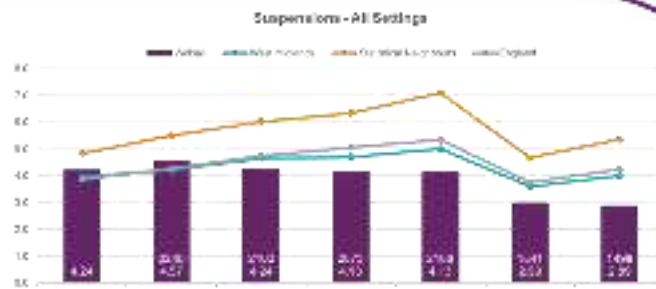
↓ 1.25%_{opts}
since 2019

Compared with
-1.01% points regionally
-1.73% points stat neighbours
-1.11% pts nationally

Ranked
30
Out of 152 LAs
Compared with
52 in 2019

1,498
Suspensions for **941** pupils
Compared with
2,106 for 1,195 pupils in 2019

A decrease of 29% in suspensions and 21% in pupils suspended



Reasons for Suspension (2019-20 data)

Disruptive Behaviour
30.0% - 463 Suspensions

Physical assault against a/n pupil
21.1% - 341 Suspensions

Verbal abuse against an adult
15.0% - 231 Suspensions

Physical assault against an Adult
8.5% - 131 Suspensions

Verbal assault against a/n pupil
4.7% - 72 Suspensions

Other
14.0% - 215 Suspensions

The remaining 88 suspensions are a combination of factors

Gender

2.61% (691)
boys in Walsall were
Suspended
3.14% regionally
3.02% nationally

↓ 0.81%_{opts}
since 2019

0.99% (250)
girls in Walsall were
Suspended
1.32% regionally
1.34% nationally

↓ 0.24%_{opts}
since 2019

Gap between boys and girls in Walsall
73% of pupils suspended are boys
down from 74% in 2019

Free School Meals

2.87% (449)
of children with FSM were
Suspended
4.12% regionally
4.53% nationally

↓ 1.43%_{opts}
(from 498) since 2019

1.36% (492)
of children without FSM were
Suspended
1.65% regionally
1.59% nationally

↓ 0.41%_{opts}
(from 696) since 2019

Gap between children with and without FSM in Walsall
48% of pupils who receive a suspension are in receipt of FSM
Up from 42% in 2019

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

4.05% (324)
of children with SEND in Walsall were
Suspended
5.28% regionally
5.54% nationally

↓ 1.32% pts
(from 350) since 2019
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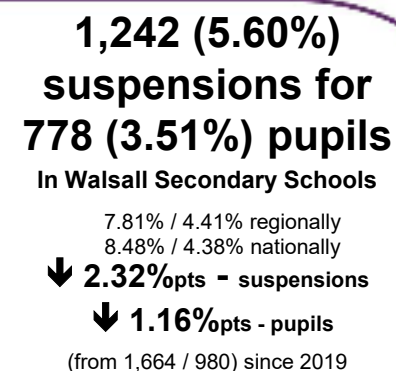
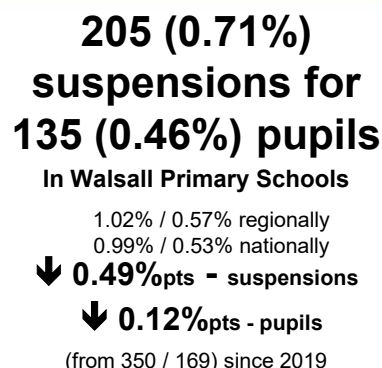
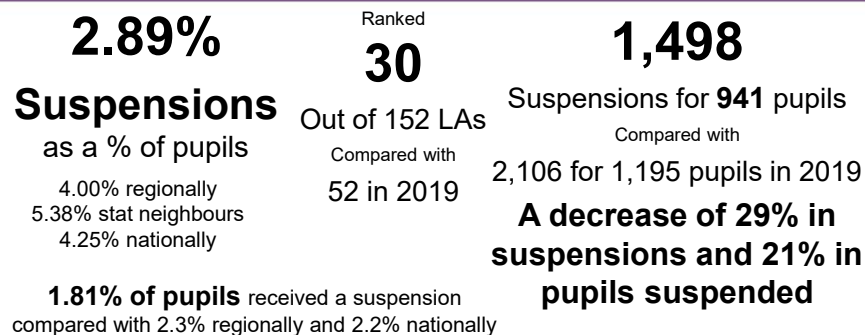
1.41% (617)
of children without SEND in Walsall were
Suspended
1.66% regionally
1.58% nationally

↓ 0.46%_{opts}
(from 725) since 2019

Gap between children with and without SEN in Walsall
34% of suspensions are received by Children with SEN
Up from 32% in 2019

Suspensions

IMPORTANT: Exclusions data involves very small numbers of children so should be treated with extreme caution as small fluctuations can have a big impact.



The 2020-21 academic year was interrupted by the second national lockdown. Schools remained open for vulnerable children and children of key workers and all other children were learning remotely. While permanent exclusions and suspensions were still possible throughout the academic year, school closures have had a substantial effect on the number of permanent exclusions and suspensions and therefore caution should be taken when comparing figures across years. Due to this disruption, the 2019-20 data has been used as a baseline.

Suspensions are falling in Walsall and have reduced by 29% since the 2018-19 academic year with 21% fewer pupils receiving a suspension. The majority of this reduction has been in secondary school exclusions. Walsall has a much lower suspension rate than comparators regionally, nationally and among statistical neighbours.

As with permanent exclusions, boys are significantly more likely to be suspended than girls and of the 941 pupils suspended 2020-21, 73% (691) were boys. This is a slight increase on 2018-19 when 1,195 pupils were suspended and 74% were boys. Suspensions for boys are slightly higher than regional and national results where boys account for 71% and 70% of pupils suspended respectively. Overall boys are almost three times more likely to be suspended than girls.

A slightly higher proportion of children in receipt of free school meals receive suspensions than those not in receipt of free school meals, however, unlike permanent exclusions children in receipt of FSM make up a smaller proportion of the cohort who are suspended – just 48%. While the percentage of children in receipt of FSM who are suspended has fallen at a faster rate than those who are not in receipt of FSM, the overall number has not, down by just 9.8% compared with 29.3% for those not in receipt of FSM meaning that overall the proportion of suspensions for these children have increased and they remain more than twice as likely to be suspended. However, the proportion of children with FSM who are suspended is significantly lower in Walsall than the proportions regionally and nationally where this group of children are between three and four times more likely to receive a suspension.

Children with SEN accounted for 34% of suspensions in 2020-21 compared with 32% in 2018-19. Suspensions for this group fell by 7.4% compared with 14.9% for children without SEN, however, as a percentage of the population of pupils with SEN, the proportion with suspensions is falling at a faster rate. This is in partly due to smaller cohorts as well as increasing identification of SEN. Children with SEN are just under three times more likely than those without SEN to be suspended compared with just over three times more likely regionally and three and half times more likely nationally.

Vulnerable Learners Hub

Ward(s): ALL

Portfolios: Education and Skills Councillor Statham

1.0 Aim

- 1.1 This report will provide an overview of the work carried out by the Vulnerable Learners Hub since September 2022

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 For the committee to note the impact of the work carried out by the VLH

3.0 Report detail – know

- 3.1 Walsall's Virtual School is responsible for liaising and working in partnership with agencies to support the education of looked after / vulnerable children. Following a national review which identified that 3 children in every classroom needed a social worker, Walsall Council developed its offer launching a Vulnerable Learners Hub to improve educational outcomes of children with a social worker.
- 3.2 The Department of Education (DfE) announced that from September 2021, the role of the Virtual School Head would be extended to promote the education of all children aged 0-18 with a social worker and those who have had a social worker within the last 6 years (every 6), meaning there will be a local champion for children with a social worker in every local authority in England. This was to ensure more focus is placed on targeting support earlier on in these young people's lives and helping improve how they engage with education. In June 2022 funding for the additional duties was extended for a further 12 months
- 3.3 To enable us to deliver our new duties we developed the **Vulnerable Learners Hub** to work alongside the Virtual School and seconded three members of staff to work with social workers, schools and LA officers to help make visible the disadvantages children with a social worker can experience and promote practice that supports their engagement in education.
- 3.4 The team continue to be proactive in raising awareness - they have attended social care managers meetings and delivered training to designated safeguarding leads to explain the role of the team and encourage social workers to refer young people who were not engaged in education through the hub, the team also devised a training package for school staff which highlighted the poor educational outcomes for children with a social worker.

- 3.5 We have seen an increase in referrals this term compared to the same time last year. The team received 189 referrals from social workers, schools and other professionals from September to December, where as last year 100 referrals were received. The team also used the Vulnerability Matrix to identify children who were more at risk of underachievement. The chart below provides a breakdown of the referrals and reasons for referral

Referrals	Total
Number of YP referred to the VLH	189
Number of YP referred to the VLH with an EHCP	36

Reason for referral	Total
Attendance issues	82
Children missing education	18
Advised of permanent exclusion	20
Risk of exclusion/suspension	36
School moves	5
Special educational needs	17
Other i.e. post 16, transport	11

- 3.6 Through hard work, determination, support and challenge, the Vulnerable Learners Hub team were able to work creatively with 13 schools, alternative provision providers, social care staff, and other local authority teams from September to December to avoid the permanent exclusion of 18 vulnerable children, of which 2 had an EHCP. They did this by:

- Signposting, advice and guidance to schools and education providers on strategies to help avoid exclusion
- Liaising with other schools, education providers and local authority teams to help identify alternatives to exclusion
- Offering advice and guidance, both statutory and non-statutory, on the use of exclusion and the processes to be followed
- Attending governing body exclusion disciplinary hearings and independent appeal hearings on behalf of the child/young persons for permanently excluded pupils who attend Walsall maintained schools
- Signposting to bespoke training packages for individual and clusters of schools on request or where issues have been identified.

Of the 20 young people who the team were informed by schools that they were at serious risk of exclusion, the team were able to avoid the exclusion of 18 as only 2 went on to be permanently excluded. 1 with an EHCP and 1 on a child protection plan.

- 3.7 In 2019/20- 47 children were excluded from a Walsall school of which 13 had an EHCP. In 2021/22, following covid closures, 64 children were excluded from Walsall schools of which only 4 had an EHCP. And in this academic year 16 young people have been excluded from school 1 of which had an EHCP. This shows the impact of the VLH in relation to reducing exclusions of children with an EHCP
- 3.8 The team have also implemented and led a regional working group with staff from other authorities carrying out the role of supporting children with a social worker. We presented and shared our Vulnerability Matrix with 4 other authorities including Sandwell, Solihull, Telford and Staffordshire.
- 3.9 In July 2022 we joined up with Challenging Education to develop a training programme for schools to help improve the educational outcomes of all children with a social worker. The programme is running from January 2023 and will consist of 4 sessions with 40 schools already registered.



3.10 Feedback

The work of the vulnerable learners Hub was recognised in both the Inspection of Walsall's Children's Services (ILACs) inspection and in the 2022 Local area SEND Inspection. Ofsted inspectors said:

"There is significant investment in and value placed on children's education. Senior leaders have ensured that there is robust oversight of vulnerable children as a result of strong partnership working with schools through new policies and positive relationships with families. Councillors and senior leaders have made a clear commitment to provide the resources needed for the virtual school to fulfil its new statutory duty to support all vulnerable children"

The development of Walsall's Vulnerable Learners Hub to support children and young people at risk of permanent exclusion is a positive step forward. The hub provides support, challenge and strategies to help children, young people and schools.

The team also receive regular positive feedback from schools and social workers, examples

"Thank you for your support with co-ordination and ensuring the right support is offered. As you are aware, I have shared many times we cannot achieve positive outcomes on our own." Primary school HT

"Just here to say how grateful I am for the support.... From preventing a child being excluded and identifying alternative provision, from getting a child in school who had been out of education since July 2021 and also giving me information where a school can support with breakfast club so the 6-year-old can get to school albeit her mom has sadly had a stroke."- Social worker

3.10 Case study

Child A is an 8-year-old child subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) in January 2021 under the category of risk of significant harm. He had previously been on a Child in Need (CIN) plan. Child A's needs are complex, and he has experienced trauma in his life. Child A has been excluded on fixed term exclusion and at the point of referral was on a 2-day exclusion having also received a one-day exclusion in the previous week. He struggles at school both academically, socially, and emotionally.

As part of an integrated and joined up approach the Vulnerable Learners Hub worked closely with the social worker to understand and address Child A's needs and barriers, liaised with Pastoral Leads and school SENCO, gathered updates regarding CAMHS involvement and challenged the school around the need for an EHCP. Nurture provision was arranged, and Child A responds well. The home environment becomes more stable, and Child A appears less tired at school.

Supporting Child A in school has had a positive impact on his attitude to learning and engagement and most importantly he has continued to access education with no further fixed term exclusions and no permanent exclusion as a result of the Hub's involvement. School, social worker and carers are continuing to work together to make small adjustments in the best interests of Child A. The EHCP is progressing, and Child A is now on a CIN plan which has de-escalated from CP.

- 3.11 In 2022 the Vulnerable Learners Hub was nominated and won the Council's **Proud to be one team Award** and due to its success and demonstrable impact an additional Education Liaison Officer has been seconded into the team to provide additional capacity to help improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children.
- 3.12 The Vulnerable Learners Hub is being extended to promote more vulnerable groups. Promoting the education of children & young people under Youth Justice is moving under the remit of the VLH to enable us to have a better oversight of the educational challenges faced by children in the criminal justice system and more recently and more recently the team are working alongside Early Help to track and monitor the attendance of our young carers to ensure they are not missing education.

4.0 Financial information

- 4.1 The posts within the team are funded through the DfE VSH additional duties grants. Local authorities were given additional funds based on the number of schools. Walsall received £100k for academic years 2021/23 and 2022/23. We are currently waiting to hear whether the funding will continue.
- 4.2 If the DfE funding is no longer available, to ensure we continue to deliver this successful service to our most vulnerable young people we will request investment as part of the STP and budget setting work

5.0 Reducing Inequalities

- 5.1 While there is no single cause for the poor educational outcomes for children with a social worker, experiences of adversity can create barriers to good outcomes. The work carried out by the VLH ensures that with the right support, the aspirations of these children can be raised to enable them to achieve their best and ensure there is equal access to education opportunities.

6.0 Decide

- 6.1 The committee may decide to request further information on the education outcomes of children with a social worker.

7.0 Respond

- 7.1 Any recommendations made by the committee will be responded to by the appropriate service area

8.0 Review

- 8.1 The actions and outcomes within this report are monitored by Access & Inclusion SMT and Children's Services DMT and through a monthly performance board

Author

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Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Recommendation Tracker (22/23)

30 June 2022	Areas of Focus	A work program for the municipal year be produced and be circulated to members of the Committee.	Jack Thompson	Complete	6 September 2022	Sent to members of the Committee with agenda for the meeting on the 6 September 2022.
		The suggested items of 'teenage pregnancy' and 'overweight children' be referred to the Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Jack Thompson	Complete	14 July 2022	Members of the Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to put these items on the Committee work program.
06 September 2022	Areas of Focus	Items suggested; young people's homelessness and the finance Funding formula to be added to the areas of focus for future meetings.	Reena Farmah	Complete	30 September 2022	Areas of Focus updated to include items.
	School Attendance Bill and Children Not in School Bill	To share the SEND inspection report with Members.	Reena Farmah	Complete	30 September 2022	Circulated to Members via email.
11 October 2022	Areas of Focus	That young people's homelessness be referred to the Children's Services OSC and removed from this Committee's Areas of Focus.	Edward Cook	Complete	17 November 2022	Areas of focus updated.
	Ofsted Local Area SEND Revisit Inspection	To share with Members, data on the number of EHCP applications in Walsall which have gone to tribunals.	Edward Cook	Complete	28 November 2022	Circulated to Members via email.

	Outcome and Actions	To share the Accelerated Access Plan document with Members, once available.	Edward Cook	Complete	28 November 2022	Circulated to Members via email.
28 November 2022	School Place Planning: Capital strategy for schools	To share with Members, data on the amount of pupils from out of the Borough now attending Walsall schools.	Jack Thompson	In progress		
		That a report on internships would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.	Jack Thompson	Complete	12 January 2023	The HR team taking lead on internships offered by the Council and an update would be provided in the future reports.
		That a report on the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.	Jack Thompson	In progress	9 January 2023	An update of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment was sent to all Councillors on the 9 January 2023.
	Corporate Financial Performance – Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Position for 2022/23	That a report on future spending of the capital budget be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.	Jack Thompson	Complete	12 January 2023	Future capital spending was presented to the Committee as part of the proposed budget papers.

	Areas of Focus	To merge the first two items on the work programme for January's meeting: 'Attainment and improving Educational Outcome' and 'Increasing the Number of Good and Outstanding Schools' and to reflect this change in the Committees Work Programme.	Jack Thompson	Complete	4 January 2022	Changes reflected in the agenda published on completed date.
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Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work programme 2022/23

Main agenda items	06/09/22	11/10/22	22/11/22	12/01/23	16/02/23	28/03/23
Theme: Children not in School						
School Attendance Bill and Children Not in School Bill	X					
Children not in school (attendance, exclusions, elective home education and children missing education)	X					
Fair access and FAP	X					
Vulnerable Learners Hub	X					
Theme: SEND						
OFSTED Inspection Outcome and actions inc EHCP		X				
Transitions		X				
SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper		X				
Special School Provision Plan		X				
Theme: School Place and Capital Strategy						
School Place Planning: Capital strategy for schools inc Early Years sufficiency, Primary, Secondary, Post 16 and Special Schools (inc Black Country plan impact and Free School development)			X			
Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring			X			
Theme: Outcomes and improvements						
Attainment and Improving Educational Outcomes				X		
Increasing the Number of Good and Outstanding Schools				X		
Schools White Paper and Education Improvement Area				X		
Childrens Strategic partnership and Walsall Learning Alliance (WR4C)				X		
Budget Setting 2023/24				X		
Theme: Children not in School (Revisited)						
Children Not in School Report: Attendance and Exclusions, Children missing education, elective home education and Fair Access (FAP).					X	

Vulnerable Learners Hub					X	
Theme: SEND (Revisited)						
Accelerated Progress Plan Update						X
New SEND Develop Framework						X
Special School Provision Plan Update inc SEND modelling process						X

NB: The Outturn, Q1 and Q3 Finance reports to be by email circulation to the Committee.



FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

**Council House,
Lichfield Street,
Walsall, WS1 1TW**
www.walsall.gov.uk

6 February 2023

FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan sets out decisions that are termed as “key decisions” at least 28 calendar days before they are due to be taken by the Executive (Cabinet). Also included on the plan are other decisions to be taken by the Cabinet (“non-key decisions”). Preparation of the forward plan helps the Council to programme its work. The purpose of the forward plan is to give plenty of notice and an opportunity for consultation on the issues to be discussed. The plan is updated each month with the period of the plan being rolled forward by one month and republished. Copies of the plan can be obtained from Democratic Services, Walsall MBC, Council House, Walsall, WS1 1TW craig.goodall@walsall.gov.uk and can also be accessed from the Council’s website at www.walsall.gov.uk. The Cabinet is allowed to make urgent decisions which do not appear in the forward plan, however, a notice will be included on the agenda for the relevant Cabinet meeting which explains the reasons why.

Please note that the decision dates are indicative and are subject to change. Please contact the above addressee if you wish to check the date for a particular item.

The Cabinet agenda and reports are available for inspection by the public 7 days prior to the meeting of the Cabinet on the Council’s website. Background papers are listed on each report submitted to the Cabinet and members of the public are entitled to see these documents unless they are confidential. The report also contains the name and telephone number of a contact officer. These details can also be found in the forward plan.

Meetings of the Cabinet are open to the public. Occasionally there are items included on the agenda which are confidential and for those items the public will be asked to leave the meeting. The forward plan will show where this is intended and the reason why the reports are confidential. Enquiries regarding these reasons should be directed to Democratic Services (craig.goodall@walsall.gov.uk).

“Key decisions” are those decisions which have a significant effect within the community or which involve considerable expenditure or savings. With regard to key decisions the Council’s Constitution states:

- (1) A key decision is:
 - (i) any decision in relation to an executive function which results in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant, having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates or
 - (ii) any decision that is likely to have significant impact on two or more wards within the borough.
- (2) The threshold for “significant” expenditure/savings is £500,000.
- (3) A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
MARCH 2023 TO JUNE 2023 (06.02.23)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reference No./ Date first entered in Plan	Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside the Council)	Decision maker	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Contact Member (All Members can be written to at Civic Centre, Walsall)	Date item to be considered
141/22 (10.10.22)	Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23: To report the financial position based on 9 months to December 2022, including the impact of Covid-19.	Cabinet Non-key decision	Vicky Buckley Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk	Corporate Management Team and Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023
142/22 (10.10.22)	Corporate Budget Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27, incorporating the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management and investment Strategy 2023/24: To recommend the final budget and council tax for approval by Council.	Cabinet Council Key decision	Vicky Buckley Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk	Council tax payers, business rate payers, voluntary and community organisations Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023 Council 23 February 2023
150/22 (7.11.22)	Payments Project Contract Award: To award a contract to Capita/Pay360 Ltd (soon to be Access Group Ltd) for the provision of Pay 360 Licences and Capita/Pay360 Ltd services.	Cabinet Key Decision	Janice Freeman-Phillips Janice.Freeman-Phillips@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023

7/23 (9.1.23)	TUPE transfer of Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Economic Intelligence Team: To consider the transfer of the Black Country LEP Economic Intelligence Team to Walsall Council.	Cabinet Key Decision	Stephen Gunther Stephen.Gunther@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023
107/22 (6.6.22)	Procurement of Corporate Landlord Strategic Partner: To seek approval to the appointment of a strategic partner to support the programme of capital schemes related to the council's property portfolio.	Cabinet Key Decision	Nick Ford Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	8 February 2023
1/23 (9.1.23)	Derelict Sites Intervention: That various key derelict sites be appraised and prioritised for intervention and that authority be delegated to pursue Compulsory Purchase Orders where appropriate. <i>This will be a private report containing exempt information.</i>	Cabinet Key Decision	Philippa Venables Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	8 February 2023
9/23 (6.2.23)	Changes to the council's bus lane provision: To agree the council's approach to responding to a request to grant access to bus lanes for private hire vehicles.	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Dave Brown Dave.Brown@Walsall.gov.uk Background paper: Council meeting minutes 07 January 23	Internal services Transport for West Midlands Enhanced Partnership reference group	Cllr Andrew	8 February 2023

8/23 (9.1.22)	We Are Walsall 2040: To consider the draft We are Walsall 2040 strategy and consultation framework.	Cabinet Key Decision	Karen Griffiths Karen.Griffiths@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	8 February 2023
151/22 (7.11.22)	Introduction of Council Tax Premium on unoccupied but furnished properties: Levy the premium on properties that are unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 12 months. Effective from 1 April 24	Cabinet Council Key Decision	Mark Fearn Mark.Fearn@walsall.gov.uk	Part of budget consultation	Cllr Ali	8 February 2023 Council 23 February 2023
156/22 (7.11.22)	Healthy Lifestyles Contract and Smoking Cessation Contract Extensions: To delegate authority to the Director of Public Health and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing. This will allow them to extend contracts on behalf of the Council and to subsequently authorise the variations to the contractual arrangements for the services should this be required at any time during the term, in line with Public Contract Regulations and the Council's Contract Rules.	Cabinet Key Decision	Joe Holding Joe.Holding@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Flint	8 February 2023
2/23 (9.1.23)	Adult Social Care Market Sustainability Plan: 1. To consider the outputs of Phase 2 Fair Cost of Care Exercise in Walsall and note the potential implications for	Cabinet Key Decision	Tony Meadows Tony.Meadows@walsall.gov.uk	Adult Social Care service providers Internal Services	Cllr Pedley	8 February 2023

	<p>Adult Social Care fee rate setting and budgets.</p> <p>2. To note the content of the final Market Sustainability Plan briefing paper.</p> <p>3. To seek delegated authority for the Portfolio holder, Adult Social Care and the Executive Director, Adult Social Care to approve the final Market Sustainability Plan submission to Department for Health and Social Care.</p>			Local Integrated Care Board		
3/23 (9.1.23)	<p>Determination of the Scheme for coordinated admissions, and the Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools for the 2022/23 academic year</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Alex Groom Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Statham	8 February 2023
152/22 (7.11.22)	<p>Renewal of the Council's Oracle Cloud Licenses:</p> <p>To renew the Council's Oracle cloud Licenses required for the operation of the Council's One Source system for HR, Payroll, Finance and Procurement from May 2023</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Ian Tuft Ian.Tuft@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird Cllr Ferguson	22 March 2023
162/22 (5.12.22)	<p>Approval of the Black Country Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement:</p> <p>Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Resources and</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Kelly Valente Kelly.Valente@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services	Cllr Bird	22 March 2023

	Transformation to enter into legal agreements with WMCA relating to the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Legacy funds.					
10/23 (6.2.23)	LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Action Plan: To approve the Action Plan produced in response to the report by the Local Government Association following the January 2023 Corporate Peer Challenge.	Cabinet Non-key decision	Karen Griffiths Karen.Griffiths@walsall.gov.uk Elizabeth Connolly Elizabeth.Connolly@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	22 March 2023
145/22 (7.11.22)	Town Centre Theatre Project: To agree next steps for the Town Deal Theatre project, setting out funding implications and options. <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet Key Decision	Philippa Venables Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services	Cllr Andrew	22 March 2023
4/23 (9.1.23)	West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2023/24: To approve West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2023/24.	Cabinet Key Decision	Matt Crowton Matt.Crowton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	22 March 2023
5/23 (9.1.23)	Sandwell Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation: To approve Walsall's response to the Sandwell Local Plan consultation.	Cabinet Key Decision	Neville Ball neville.ball@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	22 March 2023

153/22 (7.11.22)	Walsall's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 to 2027: To approve Walsall's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, 2022 to 2027.	Cabinet Key Decision	Neil Hollyhead Neil.HollyHead@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services, service users, external stakeholders	Cllr Ali	22 March 2023
11/23 (6.2.23)	Walsall Civic Centre and Council House improvement works To approve Council House improvement works including heating and ventilation replacement; fire alarm replacement; Civic Centre window replacement; Civic Centre ground floor refurbishment.	Cabinet Key Decision	Ian Lister Ian.Lister@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Ferguson	22 March 2023
6/23 (9.1.23)	Borough Playing Pitch Strategy: To adopt and publish the Walsall Playing pitches strategy and the Black Country strategic framework	Cabinet Key Decision	Liz Stuffins Liz.Stuffins@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Flint	22 March 2023
12/23 (6.2.23)	Street Scene Strategy: To approve the councils 5-year plan for residential streets	Cabinet Key decision	Kathryn Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@Walsall.gov.uk	Internal services	Cllr Murphy	22 March 2023
13/23 (6.2.23)	Trading Standards Letting Agents Enforcement Policy To approve Walsall Council's Trading Standards policy on the enforcement and determination of financial penalties in circumstances where persons engaged in letting agency work and property management business fail to comply with legislative requirements.	Cabinet Key decision	David Elrington David.Elrington@walsall.gov.uk Page 49 of 52	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	22 March 2023

129/22 (5.9.22)	Update on Resilient Communities Safer Streets Programme: To report back on Safer Streets activity and recommend any adjustments/additions to the programme.	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Paul Gordon Paul.Gordon@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	22 March 2023
140/22 (10.10.22)	High Needs Funding Formula: To approve changes to the High Needs Funding Formula, as agreed by Schools Forum, to be used for the allocation of Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block to schools in Walsall for the 2023/24 financial year	Cabinet Key Decision	Richard Walley Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services, Schools Forum	Cllr M. Statham	22 March 2023
154/22 (7.11.22)	Early Years Funding Formula: That Cabinet approves the Early Years Formula, as agreed by Schools Forum, to be used for the allocation of funding to early years providers in Walsall	Cabinet Key Decision	Richard Walley Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk	Schools Forum Internal Services	Cllr M. Statham	22 March 2023
14/23 (6.2.23)	Growth Funding for Schools: To enable the Local Authority to fulfil its duty to secure sufficient primary and secondary school places, through the adoption of a policy for the application of revenue funding for school growth.	Cabinet Key Decision	Alex Groom Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services, Schools Forum	Cllr Statham	22 March 2023
155/22 (7.11.22)	Council Plan: Review of Achievements 2021/22: To note the Review of Achievements for 2021/22, highlighting successes and	Cabinet Non-key decision	Meresh Kumari Meresh.Kumari@walsall.gov.uk Page 50 of 52	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	19 April 2023

	progress towards achieving our Council priorities.		Elizabeth Connolly Elizabeth.Connolly@walsall.gov.uk			
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Black Country Executive Joint Committee
Forward Plan of Key Decisions Published up to June 2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	Black Country Executive Joint Committee Governance			
05/12/2022	Approval of the Black Country Executive Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement Approval of future arrangements for the Black Country Executive Joint Committee, and approval of the revised Black Country Executive Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement setting out how legacy funds, including Enterprise Zones, will be dealt with.	Simon Neilson Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	19/04/2023