

Attendance Working Group Meeting  
Friday 12 July 2024, 8.30 – 12.00pm  
Learn Sheffield

## MINUTES

**Chair:** Greg Fell– Director of Public Health - SCC

**Notes:** Evelyn Priestley – Learn Sheffield

**Attendees:**

Name	Setting/School/Academy	Name	Setting/School/Academy
Stephen Betts	Learn Sheffield	Molly Eedle	Abbeyfield Primary School
Laura Selby	Sheffield Young Carers	Liz Pediani	Arbourthorne Primary School
Anna Wharton	Public Health - SCC	James Gibson	Becton School
Pat Butterell	Assistant Director SCC	Rae Nichols	Longley Sixth Form – Brigantia Learning Trust
Giles Robinson	SCC	Lucy McGann	Minerva Learning Trust
John Mansergh	SCC	Laura Crocker	Springfield Primary School
John Mansergh	SCC	Scott Burnside	TSAT
Candi Lawson	SCC	Martin Finch	TSAT

**Apologies:** Cathy Rowland, Emma Anderson, Jo Quinlen

Item	Detail	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b> Greg Fell, Director of Public Health - SCC welcomed colleagues to the meeting, introductions were made and apologies were noted.</p> <p>This is the last meeting of this task and finish group. The purpose of the group was to understand what the civic issue is and to recognise this is not just an education problem and what can we do about it.</p> <p>Further meetings in the autumn term may be convened.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Minutes and matters arising</b> The minutes were agreed as accurate.</p> <p><b>Item 2 - Pupil Illness Guidance</b> Bethan Plant has prepared a reminder of the guidance and this can be shared with school leaders who would like it. GF to share with EP who will circulate to the group.</p> <p><b>Item 5 – Data analysis</b></p>	<b>GF/EP</b>

	<p>SB has spoken to KW and will fold separate infant and junior school data into the work with Helen Lane.</p> <p>Mobility data relating to children in hospital schools and their significance to be carried forward by SB to speak to KW.</p> <p>The four schools whose data does not seem to be transferring properly to be carried forward for SB to check with KW.</p>	<p><b>SB</b></p> <p><b>SB</b></p> <p><b>SB</b></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p><b>Young Carers and attendance</b> – Laura Selby</p> <p>LS previously shared a document regarding attendance and young carers. We don't have a lot of data about young carers attendance as we don't always know which children are young carers, it is believed that 10% of children are young carers.</p> <p>Young Carers is now included in the census information.</p> <p>Young Carers have an attendance rate of 39%. There is a Young Carers register for Sheffield with 879 children listed, we know this isn't all Young Carers.</p> <p>LS wants to ensure when we talk about attendance we talk about Young Carers in this conversation.</p> <p>Those children that are not identified as Young Carers may have other factors such as having an EHCP or on the SEND register.</p> <p>Barriers for children not attending school are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worry about family when they are not at home</li> <li>• Morning routines can be disrupted by siblings with SEND or physical needs</li> <li>• Some experience bullying around their caring role</li> <li>• Not having someone to talk to in school</li> <li>• Anxiety around independent travel</li> <li>• Difficulties to maintain friendships</li> <li>• Staying off school rather than being late and worrying about detentions</li> <li>• Families not feeling supported by school</li> </ul> <p>Ideas that can help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a named person that knows what is going on at home</li> <li>• Linking with NHS and other services and who needs to be drawn in</li> <li>• Knowing they can make a call at lunchtime or knowing a call made to school will be passed on</li> <li>• How information is shared with staff so they don't ask questions in front of other pupils</li> <li>• There is a school's network and LS can provide more information</li> <li>• E Learning module for staff training – 1 – 1.5 hours in duration</li> </ul> <p>GF noted the lack of identification is noted and where is the NHS in this work.</p>	

Some of the suggestions that can help were commented on by the group. All schools are more stretched in terms of what they can offer. We need to think about a cohort of Young Carers. Identification continues to be a challenge. This is a cohort that need reasonable adjustments.

There is an increased number of pupils with complex needs. The data needs to be transferred from secondary to Post 16. There is no specific data for Post 16 Young Carers.

There are factors that are distinct to Young Carers, and other factors apply across the piece, but more specifically to Young Carers. We need to make sure that the system works extra well for Young Carers.

Young Carers do not want to be identified for fear of being labelled. It was asked if there is a defined criteria to identify as a Young Carer. It needs to be caring for someone who has long term illness, dependency or addition and having to offer a level of care that is not appropriate to their age.

GR would be interested in getting further data on this. It was asked if there was any mapping on where the 10% of pupils, there is a link to deprivation geographically.

There is a cultural expectation in some families for caring responsibilities to be provided within the family.

We need to find ways we can be out there supporting these Young Carers.

It was asked if there were any funding streams that can be tapped into to support Young Carers.

Are there third-party software packages to help release personnel to be out there helping Young People. SB mentioned Jane Low DfE adviser link for Sheffield who has a role in this area.

CL raised the issues and risks with intersectionality, there are a range of different issues and when we focus on one issue rather than all the issues in the family. How do we work more closely to support schools to respond to needs quicker and we could be in danger of not getting to the root of the problem.

LS advised there are some schools who are doing well in this area and there will be a report to share practical ideas.

Identification of the pupils is not accurate and a conversation how to get better at this would be welcomed.

<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Data analysis: Cohort with attendance below 50%</b> - Giles Robinson GR shared a presentation with the group following the previous meeting.</p> <p>Severe absence in Secondary is high with 1 in 20 pupils. Transition attendance can be high for pupils with SEND. Many of the pupils disappear off the data at Y11. Boys are overrepresented in the severe absence group data. Gypsy Roma are overrepresented in all groups and mixed black BME boys were also highlighted.</p> <p>There is a mix of data and GR would like to look further into the persistently severely absent pupils to find out the stories behind it by working with those input the data.</p> <p>From a children's services perspective could we look at the adult factors such as mental health, domestic violence and addiction and criminality. There is a new data system being developed to merge all the services data within the local authority.</p> <p>It was asked if there could be a look at disadvantage population and male and female breakdown. In terms of SEND is this an exacerbation of the Speech, Language and Communication Needs work that has been started.</p> <p>The Y11 data reflects study leave weeks which does affect attendance data. If they leave four weeks before the end of term equates to 10% of the year.</p> <p>The data points towards the need for early intervention with these pupils.</p> <p>The data needs to improve, however, study leave and how it is recorded in other parts of the country may be misleading.</p> <p>In Becton school, pupils who join the service are in Y10 &amp; Y11 and are dual registered and it was asked if these pupils are included in the data. Becton school only take pupils who are severely absent.</p> <p>Some of the patterns point to how we address curriculum.</p> <p>One observation from the data was the dip from Y7 to Y8, we know there is a dip for Y6 to Y7 and it would be useful to understand the driver for this dip in Y7 to Y8. When does the decline start and how do we arrest it, when do we need to intervene.</p> <p>Tracking the early intervention and where have gaps arisen across the phases. We need to track pupils from primary to secondary.</p> <p>GR ended with some positive data, there is a positive recovery for primary school years, during the pandemic and post pandemic.</p> <p>The slides will be shared with the group .</p>	<p><b>GR/EP</b></p>
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<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Attendance policy template</b></p> <p>SB noted that schools had asked us the group to look at and if there was an attendance template policy and Tracey Rice is following this up with Sai Patel. It was suggested that The Key produce some good templates and this to be looked into.</p> <p>From a school perspective, it is easier to write it than implement it and get parents to understand it. A booklet version can be helpful and a link to the full policy so remind parents of the things that need to be done every day.</p> <p>SB will follow this up with Sai Patel.</p>	<p><b>SB</b></p> <p><b>SB</b></p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Future analysis: what works and the impact of larger number of PA pupils – Stephen Betts</b></p> <p>The piece of work is to model which schools outperform their context, in order to identify settings to speak to about their attendance practice.</p> <p>Helen Lane will visit four primary and four secondary schools in autumn, then write a report. It is anticipated this report will be done by autumn half term.</p> <p>The key questions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the features of settings that outperform their cohort?</li> <li>• What is the impact of higher volumes of PA and CA pupils on the systems and resources of Sheffield settings?</li> <li>• What is the impact of locally available support services?</li> </ul> <p>JG offered to invite Helen Lane to visit Becton school to talk pupils who have dropped out of school.</p> <p>RN offered to invite Helen Lane to visit Longley Sixth Form College.</p> <p>JM could help influence which schools to visit.</p> <p>Parent Voice may be useful to include in this work.</p> <p>CL offered to provide info about what children services involvement has been.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Next steps and actions</b></p> <p>GF and SB will produce an end of term report of this task and finish group.</p> <p>Recommendations will be included and recognising the good practice. This aim is to have this ready by autumn term. Colleagues in the group will be involved in the co-production of this report.</p> <p>The work of this group is complete. There may be a recall of this group in the autumn to review the further work.</p>	<p><b>SB/GF</b></p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>None raised.</p>	



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