

AD EDUCATION NETWORK MEETING

Notes

12th March 2021



Present: Lucy Butler (DCS, W Sussex), Carol Cammiss (DCS, Wokingham), Christine McInnes and Michelle Stanley (Kent), Chris Hilliard (Bracknell Forest), Mark McCurrie (Slough) Kim James (Oxfordshire), Ian Pearson (W Berks), Mike Stoneman (Portsmouth), Chris Kiernan and Rebecca Smith (Medway), Jo Lyons and Mark Storey (B&H), Brian Pope (Hants), Simon James (Bucks), Clodagh Freeston (Southampton), Louise Ling (Surrey).

Apologies: Sal Thirlway (Wokingham), Clive Haines (RBWM), Jane Winterbone (Surrey), Kate Reynolds (Reading), Paul Wagstaff (W Sussex), Hayley Good (Oxfordshire), Johnny Kyriacou (Slough), Rachel Morgan (Bracknell Forest).

NOTES	Action
<p><u>Key actions and decisions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summarise points on Learning Recovery for the SESLIP / ADCS meeting with Sir Alan Wood - Circulate papers about 'the middle tier'. Draft a long-list of principles based on these; circulate to members for comment and to start populating local features / practice. - LAs yet to respond to Schools Forum survey to do so. - If interested in co-chairing the CME Group, please speak to Chris / Mike. 	<p>CO</p> <p>CO ALL</p> <p>Relevant LAs</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>Welcome</p> <p>Lucy welcomed all to the meeting, and noted that all matters arising are addressed in today's agenda.</p>	
<p>1. Full re-opening of schools: progress and challenges</p> <p>Lots of positives from this week. Most schools are well organised, and their pupils pleased to return to school.</p> <p>A few secondary schools across several LAs have run out of LFD tests. DfE has been slow to respond and most still waiting for additional tests to be delivered.</p> <p>There have been reported issues with false positives (i.e. LFD test positive, but a subsequent PCR test proves negative) and this has provoked parents to withdraw consent for testing, plus some wider controversy. Hopefully this is a short-term issue since we are moving to home testing soon.</p> <p>Lucy fed back that the RSC was positive about previous Roundtable Meetings and is looking to organise further ones over the coming weeks. Keep an eye out for invitations.</p>	
<p>2. Children Missing Education Update</p> <p>Key points from last week's meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about a new upward spike in EHE notifications. • Possible overuse of reduced timetables: several LAs have written to schools to remind them about their local procedures. 	

NOTES	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children on school roll but abroad: advice had been offered by DfE lawyers that it is not an option to remove a child from the school's roll even if the absence is for an extended period of time with no known return date. Whilst LAs might wish to be more pragmatic about extended absences when there is pressure on school places, however, safeguarding concerns must be paramount and every effort made to communicate with the family. • W Berks reported that they have concerns about specific vulnerable groups of learners becoming CME: especially GRT. This is a focus of efforts across the LA and their LSCB is conducting enquiries into EHE and safeguarding. • Wokingham: have analysed their notifications of EHE (as part of preparations for Ofsted annual conversation) and noted a particular uptick in years 5 and 6. What analysis of age at notification have other LAs carried out? • EHE policies for re-admission: most have local agreements in place, with Portsmouth for example, having agreement if re-admission is within a 6 month period, the pupil will be readmitted to their original school. • <u>Chairing of CME Group</u>: Mike Stoneman asked if a member of the Network would like to co-chair the Children Missing Education Group with him. Please contact Chris or Mike if interested in knowing more. 	ALL
<p>3. Learning recovery</p> <p>Discussion introduced by Kim (Oxfordshire) and Michelle (Kent). Their thinking is largely framed in terms of questions presently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are we looking to recover to? What will this look like? • Where are we now? How do we measure our progress? What are local milestones? • There is a risk that recovery is only seen in academic terms: what about children's wellbeing too? • What are the key school improvement questions? <p>Suggested that recovery planning is designed in terms of: a) system-wide; b) assessment and learner progress; c) vulnerable schools and learners (and how to identify them). There was strong agreement that recovery planning should be built on dialogue with and between schools.</p> <p>Learning loss is unevenly spread and some learners, including some from disadvantaged groups, have progressed well during partial school closures. General agreement that children in early years are a particular concern, due to the loss of important opportunities for socialisation, which impacts on their "school readiness" as they transition into reception.</p> <p>Bracknell and other shared their thoughts on phasing for recovery planning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>March 2021</u>: welcoming and re-establishing school / learning routines, formative assessment and a focus on pupils' wellbeing, particularly in early years' settings. Some key clarifications e.g. finish date for years 11 and 13, arrangements for teacher assessment. <u>Summer 2021</u>: recovery focus to local school improvement support (e.g. pupil conferencing, work scrutiny). Emphasis on transitions and transfers e.g. shared form and information for year 6 to year 7 transfer. How best support pupils being confident in moving to their new school / college? Support for local moderation of teacher assessment of exam subjects. <u>September onwards</u>: Looking for evidence of progress towards a depth of recovery. Confident identification of key learners and/or schools with challenges. What further changes to curriculum and planning to embed progress and recovery? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-16: a couple of LAs had looked into data and retention for disadvantaged groups of learners through 2020 and found disadvantaged pupils had attained slightly better in the summer and were, by-and-large, better engaged post-16 than in previous years. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to home-in on disadvantaged learners? Include a family focus, so there are shared aims for school preparedness and support for strategies to promote learning across school and children's services staff who are working with the family. Some reported that this has featured in their thinking about recovery with elected members. <p>Key points for the DCSs, representing the South-east in discussions with Alan Wood (March 19th):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A dialogue with schools, and between schools, is central to understanding where the local area is now and what recovery will look like. Developing an agreed, local view of 'educational recovery' should be central to the dialogue. Most LAs are thinking along the lines of three phases: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> March – welcoming back, return to learning routines, supporting wellbeing, formative assessment (including of emotional wellbeing); Summer term – teaching and a curriculum that builds a depth of learning recovery; preparations for good transitions and transfers; support for moderation arrangements for formal and summative assessment. New academic year 2021-22 – what focus for the curriculum? Are pupils who have fallen behind their peers continuing to be supported? Are they progressing? Covid-19 contingency arrangements. The need for learning recovery is unevenly distributed. Many pupils are progressing as expected or better. Key groups to plan recovery for: disadvantaged learners and pupils in reception and KS1. Learning recovery is likely to have a 'long tail', partly due to reduced socialisation and developmental experiences for pre-school children. A local medium-term strategy will help to maintain focus, plus it will be important to learn from approaches adopted. Remote learning can be a real tool to address learning gaps. Practice has moved on strongly during 2020-21 and this should be built on. <p>Chris will circulate to the two SE reps: Kevin McDaniel (RBWM) and Alison Jefferey (Portsmouth).</p>	CO
<p>4. Schools Forums</p> <p>Carol thanked the 8 LAs who responded to the online survey. Chris talked through summary points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools Forums are finance focused, all reported spending significant time on HNFB pressures. Clear information was provided by all about the types of members of their schools forum together with copies of the terms of reference and/or constitution for the forum. Responses suggest some difference between Forums that are clear about their position in children's services decision-making in contrast to those whose accountability is less clear, and risk being viewed only as a finance 'rubber stamping' group? Five of eight LAs described clear lead member involvement and where decisions or recommendations of the schools forum were then reported to. <p>W Berks: feel their Forum functions well and a key to its effectiveness is the use of sub-groups (e.g. EYs funding, headteacher funding group). Detailed discussions take place in sub-groups, which frees the main Forum to address the most difficult topics and respond to sub-group recommendations. Lead members for children and for finance participate in meetings plus shadow members are represented too.</p> <p>Portsmouth: their lead member has expectations that Schools Forum is one of the most important consultation opportunities with headteachers and MATs, though there are challenges to achieving good representation of MATs. High needs funding flexibilities and capital funding have been important topics over the past year.</p> <p>LAs who have not yet responded to the survey are asked to do so: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2LWKD89 .</p>	MS (x2), JW, PW, CH, CE, JK, EF, CH, KR, SJ

