

AD EDUCATION NETWORK MEETING

Notes

25th September 2020



Present: Lucy Butler (DCS W Sussex), David Adams and Michelle Stanley (Kent), Johnny Kyriacou (Slough), Paul Wagstaff (W Sx), Louise Ling and Jane Winterbone (Surrey), Ian Pearson (W Berks), Clodagh Freeston and Tammy Marks (Southampton), Kim James (Oxfordshire), Clive Haines (RBWM).

Apologies: Cate Duffy (DCS Slough), Brian Pope (Hants), Sal Thirlway (Wokingham), Mike Stoneman (Portsmouth), Rachel Morgan (Bracknell), Cheryl Eyre (Milton Keynes), Simon James (Bucks), Jo Lyons (B&H), Rebecca Smith (Medway).

NOTES	Action
<p><u>Key actions and decisions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EHE notifications data to be sent to CO by 1st Oct: number of notifications in Sept 2020, against the number in Sept 2019. - CME Group: feedback on proposed definition as one for 'children missing from education', plus support for the 4 development activities. - Education data dashboard: CO to recirculate the v1 trial data to show current suite of indicators. CO will ask the Education Data Sub-group to request (statutory) CME data and EHE data to be collected for this term. - Slough to share their updated FAP and panel documentation. - CO to report back about possible Silver Linings way of working, then follow-up with individual LAs. - Review the 'middle tier' article in the Update; a possible future webinar? 	<p>CO</p> <p>CO</p> <p>All</p> <p>JK</p> <p>CO</p> <p>All</p>
<p>1./2. Reflections on how the school year has started and the education landscape for this year:</p> <p>Updates by individual LAs, general points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good local partnerships continue with schools. Meetings between LA leaders and headteacher representatives weekly or fortnightly and this has involved independent schools in some areas too. • Preparation of good communication with schools and parents has been important. In Southampton, for example, positions and messages were agreed by all schools and this has reduced negativity from awkward parents. • Children have, very largely, been happy to return to school and some secondaries are reporting higher attendances than this time last year. • Closer working with social care colleagues and seeing many CLA doing well through lock-down, both in terms of learning and with their relationships with carers. • Despite the short lead-in time of guidance from the DfE, school transport arrangements have been put in place that adhere to requirements. • Continuing with the blended learning offer for some vulnerable pupils such as those with medical needs and some under the virtual school. <p>Less positively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some secondaries have been found to be less confident in responding to positive covid-19 tests and some guilty of over-reacting. • Managing the frequent / daily calls from the DfE, although one LA now has an agreement that communication is by email unless either party requests a phone call. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most local PHE advice is rated, while the DfE helpline is less helpful. • A significant increase in the number of children whose families have notified the LA that they are electively home educated (EHE), as expected. In the group this ranged from a 16 – 20% increase to over twice as many compared to last September. It is challenging to check how many of these are vulnerable children and to find the capacity for the LA to monitor and support. The meeting is concerned about this increase. LB is involved in an ADCS regional meeting next Friday and can raise these concerns for relay to the DfE. Please can <u>EHE data be sent to CO by 1st Oct</u>: number notified Sept 2020 against number notified Sept 2019. This could also help to put pressure on the DfE about the contents and timing for the revised guidance on EHE. • Teacher / staff absences have been an issue due to covid-19. One LA estimated its schools had paid up to £250,000 to cover teacher absence in one week. DfE should collect better data about school staff absence: due to illness, or awaiting a test, or own need to self-isolate or due to family members need to self-isolate. W Sussex was concerned that it had been told by its local NHS that teachers were currently not a priority group for testing. Others' have advised schools to prioritise teaching staff for their testing kits. However, some schools or colleges that have ordered additional test kits are still waiting delivery after 2 weeks. • Special schools: some complex issues. Some parents have chosen to keep children away because of varied openings and length of day that is too difficult to manage with children. The issue of flexi-timetabling has been raised. The issue of following guidance for children who need aerosol-generating procedures has led to some of them not returning to school. Where special school have on-site nursing staff, these have managed this well; but in other areas community nurses have advised mainstream schools not to allow these pupils to return. <p>Future education landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Exams and tests</u>: Continuing uncertainty about when and about how, especially in subjects like DT and art, could build to problems for summer 2021. Schools are concerned about accountability and about how to ensure their students have the best chance to perform in exams and tests. This is another challenge with the increasing number of EHE young people: parents ensuring that they are named with an assessment centre so they can actually sit their exams. • <u>Increasing numbers who are NEET</u>: this is both from young people drifting away from courses and with those who might have found paid work, since the level of youth unemployment is high due to covid-19 restrictions. • <u>Ofsted</u>: the feedback from one or two schools who have been part of the current one day visits is that they are largely conversational. Our concerns are about the current timing for the return to full inspections, in Jan 2021. The view around the table is that this is too early if we are having national restrictions for the coming six months. This timing affects the LA-school support / challenge relationships. Local SEND visits are proposed to be three days. The view was that this is more like an inspection, and, if visits are by agreement, that LAs should refuse. 	All
<p>3. Children Missing Education – update on develop activities</p> <p>Discussion about a SESLIP definition. To avoid potential confusion with data gathering and DfE guidance, the AD Network would want the presented definition to be of “children missing from education” (CMFE); hence, an extension to the DfE’s definition of children missing education.</p> <p>All four development activities are supported. CO to circulate the slides.</p> <p>FAPP and changes to admissions code are a current focus for several LAs. Slough talked about the work they have done, informed by Portsmouth, to revise their protocol and raise expectations</p>	<p>CO</p> <p>JK</p>

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<p>across all schools about in-year admissions. JK will send the new protocol and procedures and templates to CO for distribution. Surrey have been overhauling their FAPP and have committed to a year of chairing by an AD so there is senior leadership and, if necessary, challenge to schools.</p> <p>CO reminded that the development of the SESLIP Education Data Dashboard had been interrupted by covid-19. This was likely to continue to be a factor this term.</p> <p>The group requested that Education Data Group do a limited data gathering for this term that is focused on core CME and those EHE. Whether a full test could be carried out in spring 2021 would be discussed next time. CO will re-circulate the test data from the spring 2020 trial of the dashboard; more to remind colleagues about the indicators being included that about numbers reported, at this stage.</p>	CO / DP CO
<p>4. SESLIP ‘Silver Linings’</p> <p>There are several example areas where practice has changed as a result of lock-down These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer working between the LA and the school system, with more frequent meetings (weekly or fortnightly) with all schools. • Blended learning for vulnerable learners in receipt of individual tuition and others via the virtual school. Many learners have seen improved progression. • Communication between LA and schools and also, via schools to parents and carers and local communities. • Closer working between teams in children’s services, such as school improvement and social care, with a focus on vulnerable learners. Examples of impact include good learning progress by CLA, remote learning, combined with them establishing improved relationships with their carers. <p>It was raised that this term / school year will be challenging and different from the rest of 2020. There is still a need to think differently and strategically about how the next 12 months can and should look for schools and their pupils.</p> <p>CO will report back about these potential areas and follow-up with colleagues off-line.</p>	CO
<p>5. Future meetings and possible themes</p> <p>Suggested topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch-up grants and 1:1 tutoring: how are these being deployed in our schools, what does best practice look like? • Post-16 pathways – vocational and for students with SEND. • CO has included in this week’s update a research piece about the relationship and impact of the middle tier of education (in England) with schools (by Prof Toby Greany). Please read and comment whether he should invite Prof Greany to give a (remote) presentation at a future meeting. <p>Arranged dates for meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27th November 2020 • 29th January 2021 • 12th March 2021 	ALL