

South-East Sector-led Improvement Partnership Children Missing Education Group

Notes

Tue 29th September, 1pm to 3pm.

Attending: Mike Stoneman (Portsmouth), Neil Stevenson (Portsmouth), Debbie Bell (Oxfordshire), Hilary Alford and Cathy Edwards (Kent), Katy Daly (Bracknell), Mark Keiller (Surrey), Gill Dunlop (Reading), Melissa Perry (Wokingham), Dave Harvey (Hants), Gavin Thomas (B&H), Linda Curtis (W Berks), Rosie Gossage (RBWM), James Fowler (Bucks), Bryn Roberts (Southampton), Beth Armstrong (ESCC), Chris Owen (SESLIP).

Apologies: Christine Clarke (Medway), Fiona Hostler (Reading)

	Item	Actions
1.	Welcome & introductions	
2.	Notes of 1st July meeting and matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AD Education Network would like the wider definition to be for 'children missing <u>from</u> education'. Aside from that, happy for it to be proposed to the SESLIP Steering Group. Chris will also circulate the slides shared with the ADs with the notes. Groups: Dave and Hilary are on the committee of the Association of Elective Home Education Professionals. Chris will circulate a table for members of this group to list other regional CME-related groups they are involved with, so that we can ensure there is communications between groups. 	CO
3.	How has the new school year started? Key challenges around CME Round-up – issues included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School attendance – most schools have reported attendance is good and some have had higher than average attendances. A key issue has been recording attendance and use of the 'x' code: inconsistencies across schools, some have had problems with information systems recording too, many school requests to data teams for help. A smaller but harder to shift issue is where parents are very anxious (or may have some shielding concerns) and have hardly left home since March nor their children, but the child is fit to attend. This has been further exacerbated by unhelpful letters from GPs. Home to school transport planning and arrangements have largely gone well. One or two report issues around individual special schools. One LA is doing some 'spot checks' for compliance by students on buses, primarily around face masks. EHE – almost without exception (IoW) notifications and total numbers have risen steeply. This is a big demand on LA time. Many have a mediation offer for parents, before finally being moved off-roll, and this has helped to keep numbers down, where there is early notification from school. Others cannot resource mediation and are going ahead with the deregistration and classification of EHE once parents have informed the LA. Some parents have expressed a view that 'school 	

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	<p>can't be covid-safe' and will EHE until there is a vaccine. Unclear to what extent parents realise they may lose their child's place at school once they are EHE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penalty notices – the main pressure point is families going on holiday (and then some demanding remote learning for when they quarantine afterwards!). About half of LAs reported that they have retained their position to pursue notices for holidays in term time, even if other enforcement has been paused. Others have paused all enforcement, but some schools are requesting response to the issue about taking holidays during term time. Some will review at half-term, others for the start of 2021. • Exclusions – some LAs report an increase in exclusions. Although many are not directly attributed to covid-19 safety, the suspicion is that the return to school and the efforts schools are having to make to comply with the guidance is an underlying factor. Attempting to request to heads to be flexible, especially for more vulnerable pupils. • Children with medical needs – guidance about aerosol-generating procedures (AGP) is making it difficult to provide for children with tracheostomies - hoping for some revised guidance from the NHS. Reports of fewer than expected new referrals for tuition due to medical needs. • One LA shared that they are maintaining arrangements for schools to track and monitor vulnerable children and young people who are not at school and involve multi-professional/agency arrangements that were set up during lock-down because this is working well and ensuring speedy responses. • Chris thanked colleagues for snapshot EHE notification numbers (where available). He will compile for the SESLIP meeting with ADCS leaders on Friday and will circulate to this group too. 	CO
4.	<p>CME Development Activity proposals:</p> <p>Each coordinating LA outlined the activities their group of LAs plan to work on.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Elective home education: led by Reading and Portsmouth (together with Surrey, Kent, Bracknell Forest, Wokingham). In-year admissions and FAP: led by Oxfordshire (together with Surrey, Kent, Southampton and Reading). Flexi-schooling: led by Hampshire (together with W Berks, Portsmouth). Medical needs: led by Brighton & Hove (W Berks, Surrey, Portsmouth, Reading, Southampton). <p>Funding has been agreed for the four proposals. Chris will be in touch with the leads in order to make arrangements for the transfer (which will come from E Sussex).</p>	

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5.	<p>Admissions code consultation</p> <p>Details of the call with DfE were noted. The consultation is due to close on 15th October.</p> <p>Key points raised by members of the group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome for the timeline for vulnerable children and young people. • To fulfil this, the 'nettle' of LAs being able to direct academies to accept admissions needs to be grasped by the DfE / ESFA, as a minimum for year 11s (for whom time is so pressing). • For some LAs, the 10-day turnaround period will be challenging, though. • There are a few academies which appear to be gaming the system by not holding appeals and saying they are full (due to staffing rather than PAN). 	
6.	<p>Future CME Group meetings</p> <p><u>Dates:</u> 16 Nov: 2pm to 4pm (virtual meeting) 19 Jan: 10am to midday (virtual meeting); 4 Mar: 2pm to 4pm. Invites will be circulated.</p> <p>Topics: please notify Chris and Mike. A starter list will be drafted based on suggestions and points from today's discussions.</p>	<p>Kelly Rooker</p> <p>All</p>