

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

18 NOVEMBER 2020

## STATEMENT OF EDUCATION &amp; SKILLS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

**Covid-19 – impact on schools and early years**

Since the start of September we have been supporting education settings in North Yorkshire to continue to remain open and to manage the impacts of covid 19 across their settings. Children and young people have been able to return to their education as a result of services working together to ensure that key infrastructure is in place. This includes being able to resume a pre covid timetable on at least 300 school bus routes which transport around 12,000 pupils each day.

We have worked closely with public health colleagues to ensure a joined up approach and offered a range of tools to help settings feel confident if faced with a positive case. Colleagues from HR, Health and Safety, School Improvement and Inclusion have worked together to provide information and support through a single channel. This has included a series of tailored webinars attended by over 200 providers, updated risk assessments for specific subjects, and a refreshed dedicated website with easily accessible key information. In addition, we have set up a dedicated phone line and online form for settings to seek advice and report positive cases; this provides bespoke local support to compliment the national DfE and Public Health England helplines.

A £126,000 DfE funded wellbeing for education grant has been used to provide training for staff in schools to support the mental health and wellbeing of children on the return to fully open schools. Work continues in response to the changing situation and we are preparing for the months ahead; very shortly we will have the capacity to offer covid test kits to vital school staff in the event they are unable to access one through usual routes which will reduce unnecessary absence due to awaiting tests. A bespoke reporting tool to give real time data about cases across all education settings in the county is also in the final stages of being refined and this will further help focus localised responses and communications.

**DfE Digital Devices**

The DfE made devices available for vulnerable and disadvantaged students during the summer term and in response to the national lockdown. North Yorkshire received an allocation of devices and 4G routers to distribute to vulnerable pupils and disadvantaged Y10 pupils (these are now year 11 pupils in the 2020/21 academic year).

- 830 for children who are looked-after (LAC), care leavers and/or children who have a social workers.
- 149 for disadvantaged year 10 pupils in maintained schools. This is defined as those eligible for free school meals.
- Over 200 4G wireless routers.

At the time of writing, these devices have now been fully allocated to students across North Yorkshire.

Since the start of the autumn term, the DfE has also made devices available for school directly in the event of a full, or partial, school closure. Schools were able to order an allocation of devices directly from the supplier for disadvantaged children in certain circumstances:

- years 3 to 11 who do not have access to a device and whose face-to-face education is disrupted due to full, or partial, school closure.
- in any year group who have been advised to shield because they (or someone they live with) are clinically extremely vulnerable.
- in any year group attending a hospital school.

On 23 October, the DfE announced it was changing how devices were allocated in order to address the pattern of small groups of children self isolating at any one time rather than full school closures. However if a school closes fully then they will be contacted by the DfE to explain what their options are, including how to request more devices. As such, school can ask for as many devices as are needed for eligible children, although there is no guarantee that they will get all the devices requested.

### **Strategic Plan for SEND Education Provision 0-25**

Work on the implementation of the Strategic Plan continues. The following points give an update:

- The new alternative provision model was implemented from September 2020.
- The SEND Hubs commenced their work in September 2020. Comprehensive information has been provided for schools and can be found here: <https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/send-hubs>.
- The Medical Education Service was implemented from September 2020. Positive feedback is being received from families.
- Locality boards are established in Selby, Scarborough/Whitby/Ryedale and Hambleton/Richmondshire. The Harrogate board is in development and work is taking place to set up the Craven board. Inclusion panels have been set up in all localities.
- The first phase of work at Mowbray School (Ripon) is complete, with the second phase due to be completed before the end of the year.
- A workshop led jointly by North Yorkshire County Council and Parent Carer Voice, the parent/carer forum, to plan engagement about early years provision for children with SEND will be held in November 2020.
- Work continues with the DfE and the appointed trust to develop the special free school in Selby
- 9 schools have been approved to deliver the first Targeted Mainstream Provisions. The first 3 schools will formally begin delivery in January 2021. These are East Whitby Academy, Grove Road CP and Holy Family Academy.
- Work will begin shortly on the second annual review of the Strategic Plan.

In addition, as part of the joint working and joint commissioning workstream, progress has been made towards the development of an overarching SEND strategy for North Yorkshire. This involves services across the Council, all CCGs and Parent Carer Voice. It is also planned that the voice of young people will contribute to the strategy.

### **School funding**

During Summer 2020, school funding announcements for the 2021-22 financial year were confirmed indicating minimum per pupil funding levels of at least £4,000 per pupil at primary level and £5,150 per pupil at secondary level. In addition, primary schools will receive an additional £180 per pupil and secondary schools £265 per pupil respectively to cover additional teachers' pay and pension costs previously funded through separate grants. Locally, the local authority has consulted schools on the level of the minimum funding

guarantee. A separate funding consultation will be undertaken with North Yorkshire Special Schools.

The local authority welcomes additional funding for small and remote schools, with an increase in the maximum sparsity value for primary schools from £26,000 to £45,000, for 2021-22. However, we remain concerned at the financial challenges faced by our small, rural secondary schools.

The local authority remains, grateful for the contribution from Early Years providers during covid-19 and we continue to work closely with the North Yorkshire Schools Forum and the sector to ensure childcare sufficiency and sector viability.

### **School organisation changes**

The following school organisation decisions have been taken since my last Statement:

- To lower the age range of Riccall Community Primary School to age 2-11 with effect from 1st September 2020.
- To consult publicly on new primary school provision in Knaresborough (Manse Farm) and North Northallerton

COUNTY COUNCILLOR PATRICK MULLIGAN