

## CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### AGENDA

**Meeting to be held in City Hall, (Committee Room 1) on Thursday  
29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 5.30 p.m.**

#### Membership

Cllrs Chapman, Crosby, Curtis, Dunn, Gibson, McDonough (Vice Chair), Samuels (Chair), P. Smith, D. Snowdon, D.E. Snowdon and Thornton

Co-opted Members – Mrs. A. Blakey

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E. WAUGH,  
Assistant Director of Law and Governance,  
City Hall,  
SUNDERLAND.

21 February 2024

**At a meeting of the CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CITY HALL on THURSDAY 1<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2024 at 5.30 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Samuels in the Chair

Councillors Crosby, Curtis, Gibson and Thornton.

**Also in attendance:-**

Ms. Jill Colbert, Director of Children's Services and Chief Executive, TfC.  
Mr. Richard Cullen, Strategic Lead, School Improvement and Early Years, TfC.  
Mr. Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer, Smart Cities and Enabling Services.  
Mr. Simon Marshall, Director of Education, TfC  
Mr. David Noon, Principal Democratic Services Officer, Smart Cities & Enabling Services.  
Ms. Kim Richardson, Strategic Education Sufficiency Lead, TfC  
Ms. Gillian Robinson, Scrutiny, Members and Mayoral Coordinator, Smart Cities & Enabling Services.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence was submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Chapman, Dunn, McDonough, P. Smith, D. Snowdon and D.E. Snowdon.

**Minutes of the last meeting of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

**Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Early Years Entitlements Expansion and National Wraparound Childcare Programme**

The Director of Education submitted a report (copy circulated) which introduced a presentation from Richard Cullen (Strategic Lead – School Improvement and Early Years) on the background to the proposed Government policy changes to provide a phased expansion of childcare support for eligible working parents together with the current position in Sunderland.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

The Committee was informed of:-

- The large-scale childcare reforms aiming to increase availability, reduce costs and increase the number of parents using it, as announced by the Chancellor as part of 2023 Spring Budget.
- The implementation timelines for each of the proposed reforms.
- The funding available to support the programmes and what it could be used for.
- The current position in Sunderland and the potential delivery models.
- What Sunderland needed to do in terms of Early Years Entitlements and Wraparound Programme both by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024.
- The potential risks and mitigations around the implementation of the programmes.

The Chair thanked Mr Cullen for his presentation and invited questions and comments from Members.

Councillor Thornton stated that the proposals were being promoted by the Government as a means to provide financial support for families however that did not seem to be the case. The main driver appeared to be that it would help facilitate the return-to-work agenda. Councillor Thornton added that she struggled to understand why the provision was limited to 38 weeks which would still leave working parents with a large chunk to fund.

Councillor Crosby noted that the figures showed Sandhill ward had one of the highest shortfalls of supply hours and asked if the plans of the new school in Thorney Close to provide care for 0-2 year olds would help. Mr Cullen replied that the figures were based on GP registration data. There was a need to undertake a thorough analysis of supply, demand and need throughout the LA, using ward-level data and additional surveys. The provision at Thorney would help but to what extent could only be a best guess at this point in time. There was national scheme due to launch soon with the aim of recruiting new child miners to replace those lost following the pandemic, which could have a positive impact.

Councillor Gibson stated that it was a very exciting initiative but as always, the devil remained in the detail. He referred to the deadline for Local Authorities to submit delivery plans for programme funding to the DfE and asked if it would be possible for the Committee to have sight of the submission. Mr Cullen confirmed that it would.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Gibson regarding his preferred delivery model, Mr Cullen advised that the decision over delivery models would be led by schools. The concern around this was that they already had pre-existing workload issues.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Gibson regarding the data sources that would inform delivery, Mr Cullen replied that they would comprise residents' sufficiency data, GP registrations, termly surveys and information provided via the Family Hubs and directly from parents.

In response to a further question from Councillor Gibson on the proposal to establish a two-year training programme for the wraparound care sector, Mr Marshall advised

that the Government ambition was that every PVI should have a level 3 Senco and that Sunderland had already achieved this level of provision. Sunderland would adapt its workforce, so it had the flexibility to provide training as and when required. Regarding changing the gender balance, this was something that Sunderland would look to address. It was acknowledged that the sector attracted a largely female workforce however this was the case nationally.

The Chair referred to the condensed timescales and asked if everything would be in place from day one. Mr Marshall advised that the Council would not be delivering services but would be supporting partners to do so. The dates were the Government's and it centred on the ability of the private sector to deliver. It was currently difficult to estimate demand but there was no doubt that capacity needed to increase.

In response to a further enquiry from the Chair, Mr Marshall advised that the Schools Forum would not have a roll in the process. From a TfC perspective, the lead would be taken by Mr Cullen's Early Years Team. TfC intelligence would be developed in line with what partners wanted to deliver.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chair advised that she would propose a means of considering the item further as part of the Work Programme item later on the agenda, and it was:

2. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted

### **Attendance Update**

The Director of Education submitted a report, (copy circulated) which updated members of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee on the local attendance landscape and provided information as to how children and young people were supported to increase their attendance at school.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Kim Richardson, Strategic Education Sufficiency Lead, presented the report and addressed questions and comments thereon.

Councillor Crosby stated that the figures did not indicate whether any of the absences were for medical reasons. She also noted that the absences in relation to SEND pupils seemed high and asked if bullying could be a determining factor? Ms Richardson replied that the national absence data quoted in the report were the basic absence percentages and were not broken down by category. Regarding pupils requiring a period of absence for medical reasons, schools would record this as authorised absence rather than unauthorised absence. In relation to the possibility that a SEND pupil's absence may be down to bullying this would not be picked up through the raw data but by local intelligence and MSET safeguarding processes.

Councillor Gibson referred to paragraph 4.1 of the report which outlined that the citywide attendance provision was delivered by 4 Attendance Officers who supported 127 schools and questioned whether staffing could be increased. Mr Marshall advised that the onus was on schools to take early intervention work prior to seeking

support from Ms Richardson's Team when there were significant attendance concerns. He confirmed that caseloads are extremely high due to the increase in attendance support required, therefore it was essential that referrals were triaged to ensure that support was timely and targeted for the greatest impact. Mr Marshall added that schools and TfC worked really well together however the lasting impact of Covid on attendance could not be ignored. Good attendance was generally the result of developing a daily routine, Covid had effectively broken the normal routine and for many it was difficult to restart. He believed that the Family Hubs would also be vital in helping to re-establish this routine. Ms Richardson confirmed that her Team were constantly striving to use innovative ways of working in looking to address the problem.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Gibson, Ms Richardson stated that her Team believed that pastoral care was everybody's business in the same way as safeguarding. The Team worked through a number of forums across the city on the basis of a multi-agency approach. All partners played a crucial role in supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance and re-setting routines. Initially Ms Richardson's Team had established an inclusion group with representatives from all forms of schools in the City. This had grown to encompass representatives from the Police, Health Care, CAMHS, CYPS, Early Help, Social Care and Targeted Youth Services. As a partnership it worked really well. Its latest meeting was due to be held the following day and would focus on the yr6 / yr7 transition with a view to increasing and embedding attendance before, during and after the move from primary to secondary school.

Ms Richardson and Mr Marshall then briefed the Committee on the work undertaken by the Evolve School with pupils who had issues around emotionally based school avoidance. It aimed to be a physically and emotionally safe and secure place for young people so that they felt able to improve their previous school attendance and access to learning. Because of Evolve's relatively small size it was able to individually customise its support for each young person. It was a short-term intervention but could provide a life changing service. It had achieved extremely high levels of success in returning young people to mainstream education with few young people relapsing. It was a school that was unique to Sunderland and its success had gained national attention including featuring as an item on the BBC's One Show.

Ms Colbert stated that she would submit a link to Evolve's website for inclusion in the minutes for Member's information. ( [Consilium Evolve - Home](#) )

In response to an enquiry from the Chair, Ms Richardson advised that Evolve was situated on the Thornhill School site but was open for referrals in respect of young people citywide.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Thornton, Ms Richardson confirmed that the service provided by Evolve was only available in Sunderland proving 48 places for young people from across the city. It also provided an outreach model delivering home education during any initial stage where the young person felt unable to go to Thornhill. It was a service that Sunderland as a city should be very proud of.

There being no further questions or comments the Chair thanked Ms Richardson for her report and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

## **Annual Work Programme 2023/24**

The Scrutiny, Members and Mayoral Support Coordinator submitted a report (copy circulated) which briefed members on the development of the Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2023/24 and appended a copy of the programme for Members' consideration.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. Diamond, Scrutiny Officer presented the report and briefed the Committee on the current position regarding those items already scheduled on the work programme and those waiting to be programmed in on a suitable date.

The Chair referred to the pending items in respect of Elective Home Education and Attainment and felt that the Committee would need to consider these matters in due course. Her preference would be for a report that explained exactly what elective home education entailed for parents and the limited powers available to the Local Authority.

In response to an enquiry from the Chair regarding the attainment item, the Committee was advised that whilst the Regional Schools Commissioner could be invited to come and talk to the Committee, it was extremely unlikely that they would choose to attend. Ms Robinson advised that at the request of members of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, Mr Cullen and Mr Marshall had provided those members with a detailed briefing on attainment as part of the regular Council performance report and that a copy could possibly be provided for this Committee. Mr Marshall added that he would be happy to arrange for Head Teachers to attend Committee to present their thoughts on attainment.

With regard to progressing discussion on Wraparound Care and Early Years Entitlements Expansion, the Chair advised that she would be looking to hold an informal meeting of Committee members on Teams to scope the item.

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

## **Notice of Key Decisions**

The Scrutiny, Members and Mayoral Support Coordinator submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

The Committee was advised that if Members had any issues to raise or required further detail on any of the items included in the notice, (that were within the purview of the Committee), they should contact Mr Diamond, Scrutiny Officer for initial assistance.

6. RESOLVED that the Notice of Key Decisions be received and noted.

There being no further items of business, the Chairman closed the meeting having thanked members and officers for their attendance and contributions.

(Signed) A. SAMUELS,  
Chairman.



## **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

### **DEVELOPMENT OF SEND SERVICES IN SUNDERLAND – UPDATE**

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the development of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) across the Sunderland local area, within the context of a planned transformation programme. This work will be funded from the Delivering Better Value (DBV) grant funding following Sunderland's engagement with tranche 3 of this DfE funded initiative.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 In setting its work programme for the year, the Committee agreed to include an update on development of SEND services within the city.
- 2.2 During the year, the service has conducted a Delivering Best Value review of the SEND services in the city, in conjunction with consultants Newton Europe, The findings reflect the way in which the rise in the High Needs Budget (HNB) has been driven by a rise in the number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's). The review has focused on the key areas of need, the effectiveness of current provision and plans and proposals for the future delivery of the service.

#### **3. Current Position**

- 3.1 Pamela Robertson (Strategic Lead for SEND) will be in attendance to provide a presentation and update members on the current with regard to the development of SEND services within the local area partnership.
- 3.2 A copy of the presentation is attached for information.

#### **4. Recommendations**

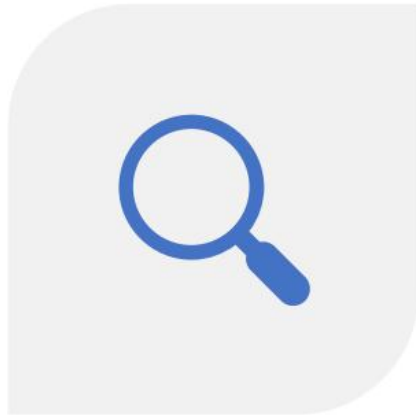
- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider and comment on the report.

#### **5 Background Papers**

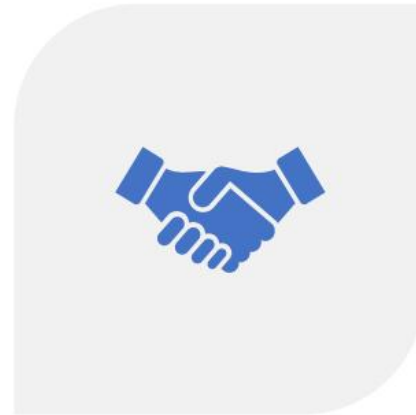
# Delivering Better Value

Scrutiny Committee February 2024

# DBV Journey in summary



**DIAGNOSTIC AND  
EVIDENCE GATHERING**



**DEVELOPMENT OF  
PLANS AND PROPOSALS**

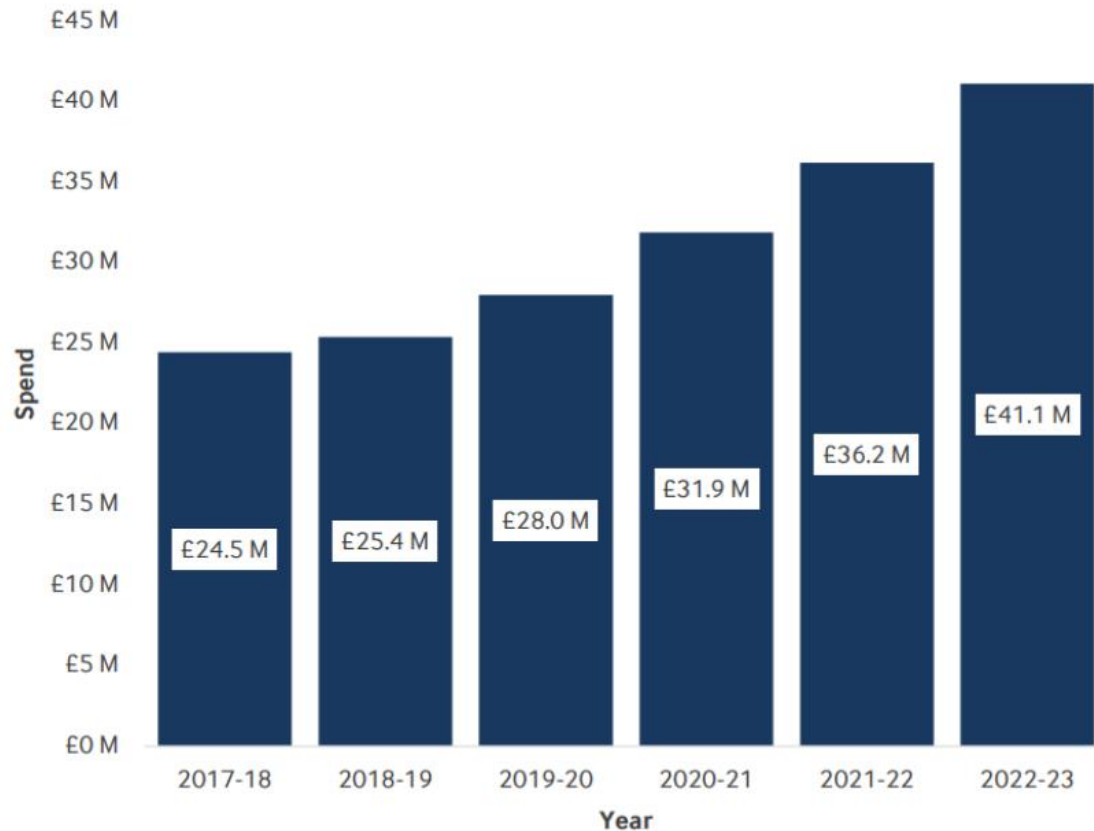


**BID AND NEXT PHASE**

# DBV findings: The historic rise in HNB expenditure has been driven by a rise in EHCPs

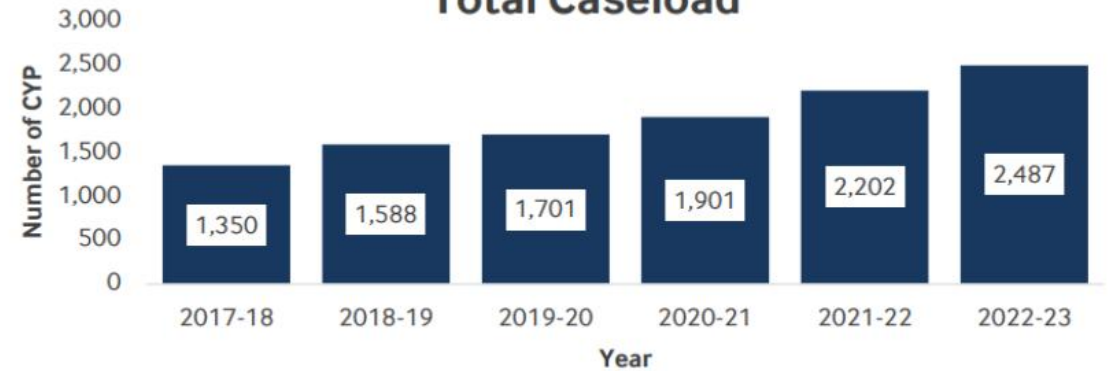
*Total HNB expenditure has risen 68% in the last 6 years*

### Total HNB Expenditure



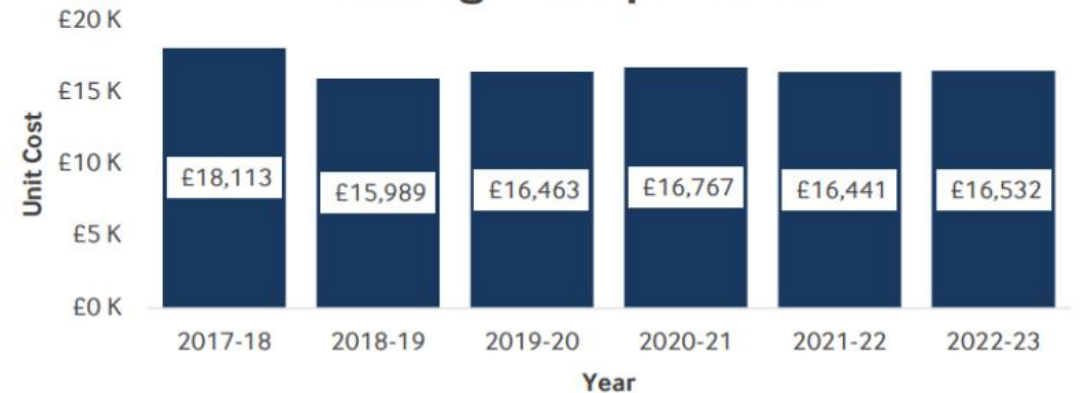
*The number of CYPs with an EHCP has increased by 84% in the last 6 years*

### Total Caseload

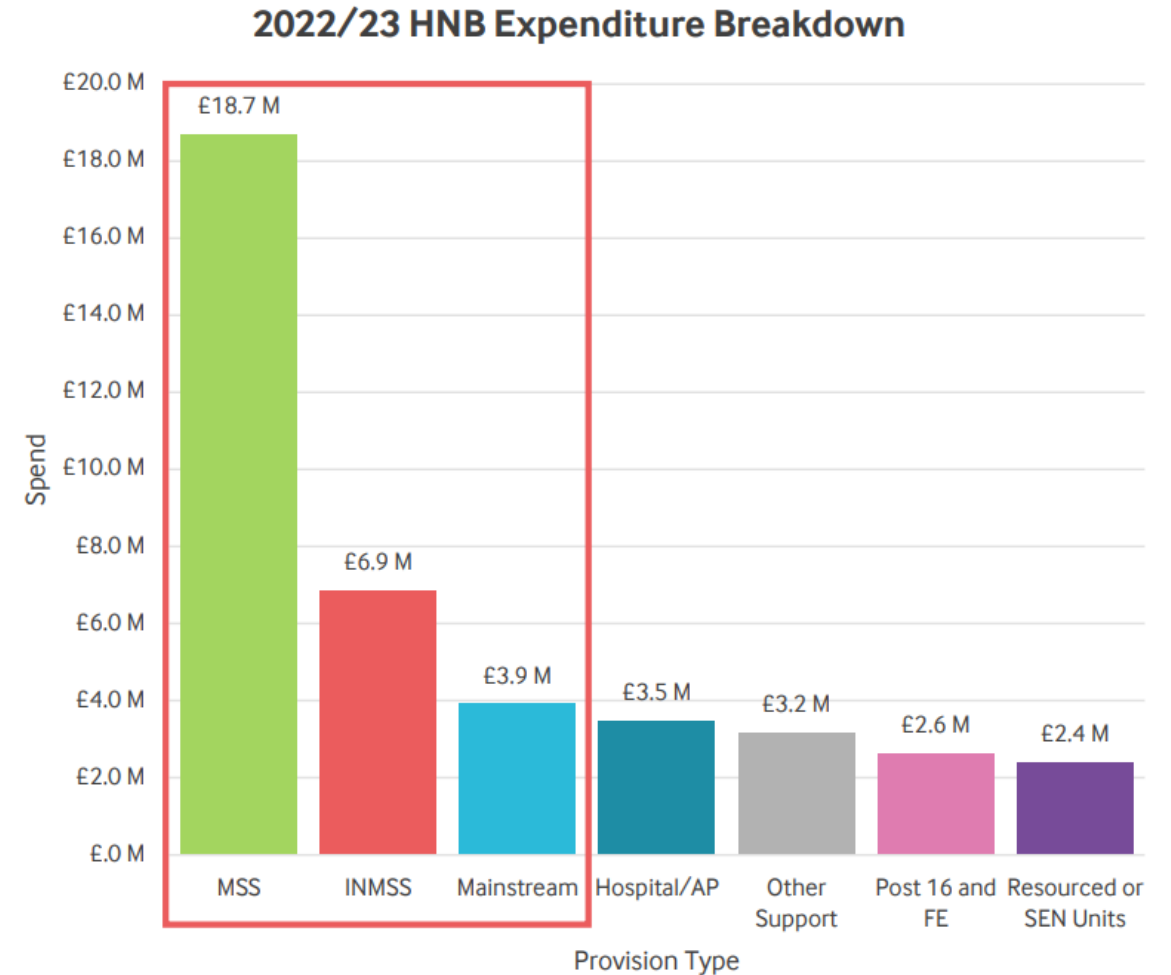
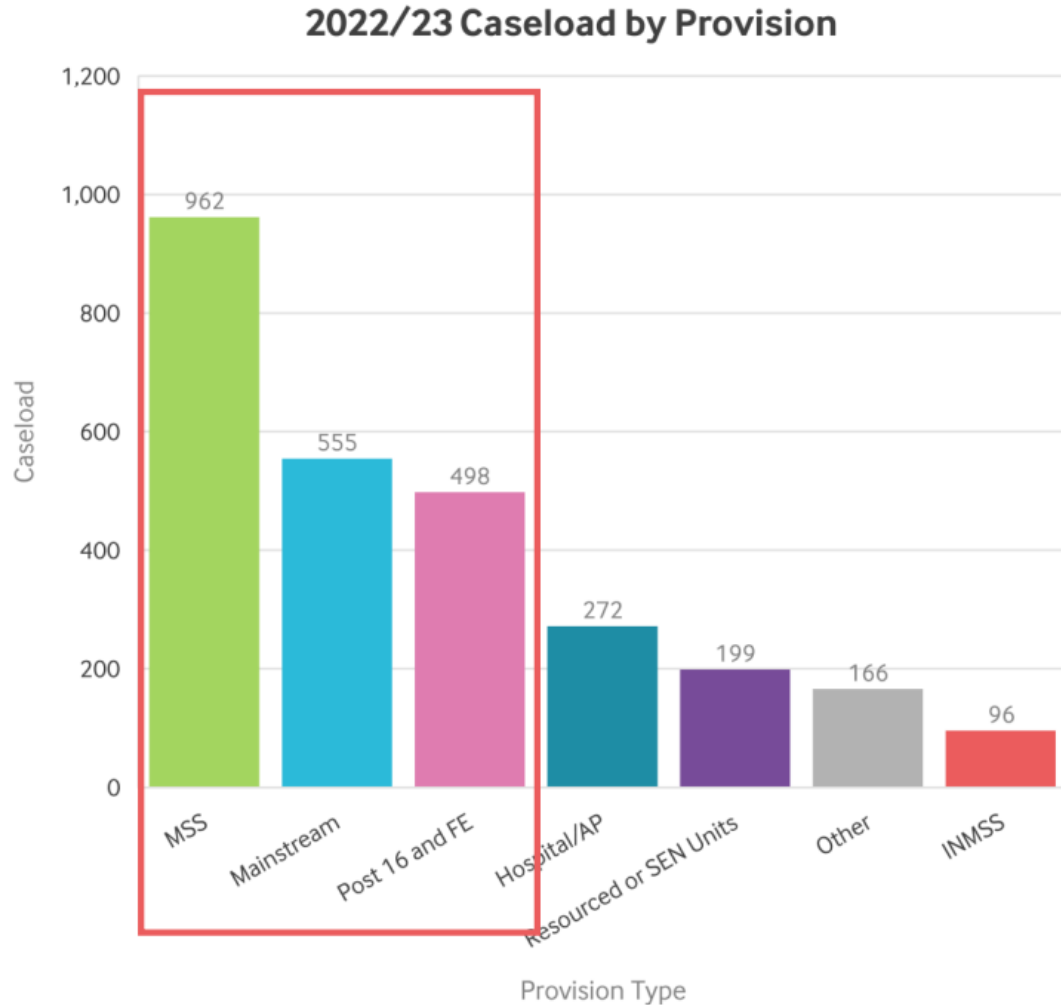


*Average unit costs have remained stable over the last 5 years*

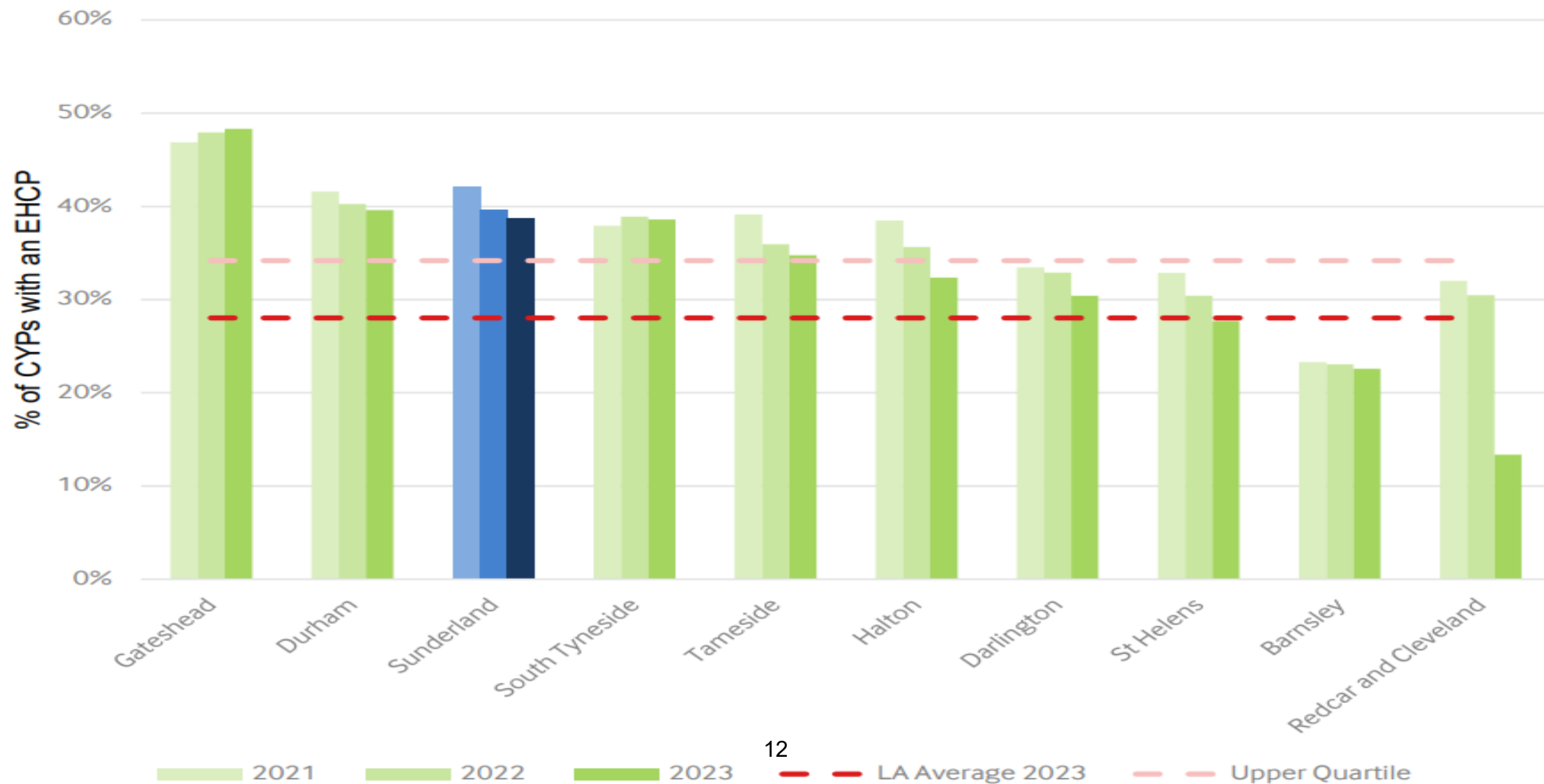
### Average Cost per EHCP



DBV finding: The focus is targeted on the largest cohorts by both number of children supported and HNB expenditure, so that future changes have the greatest impact



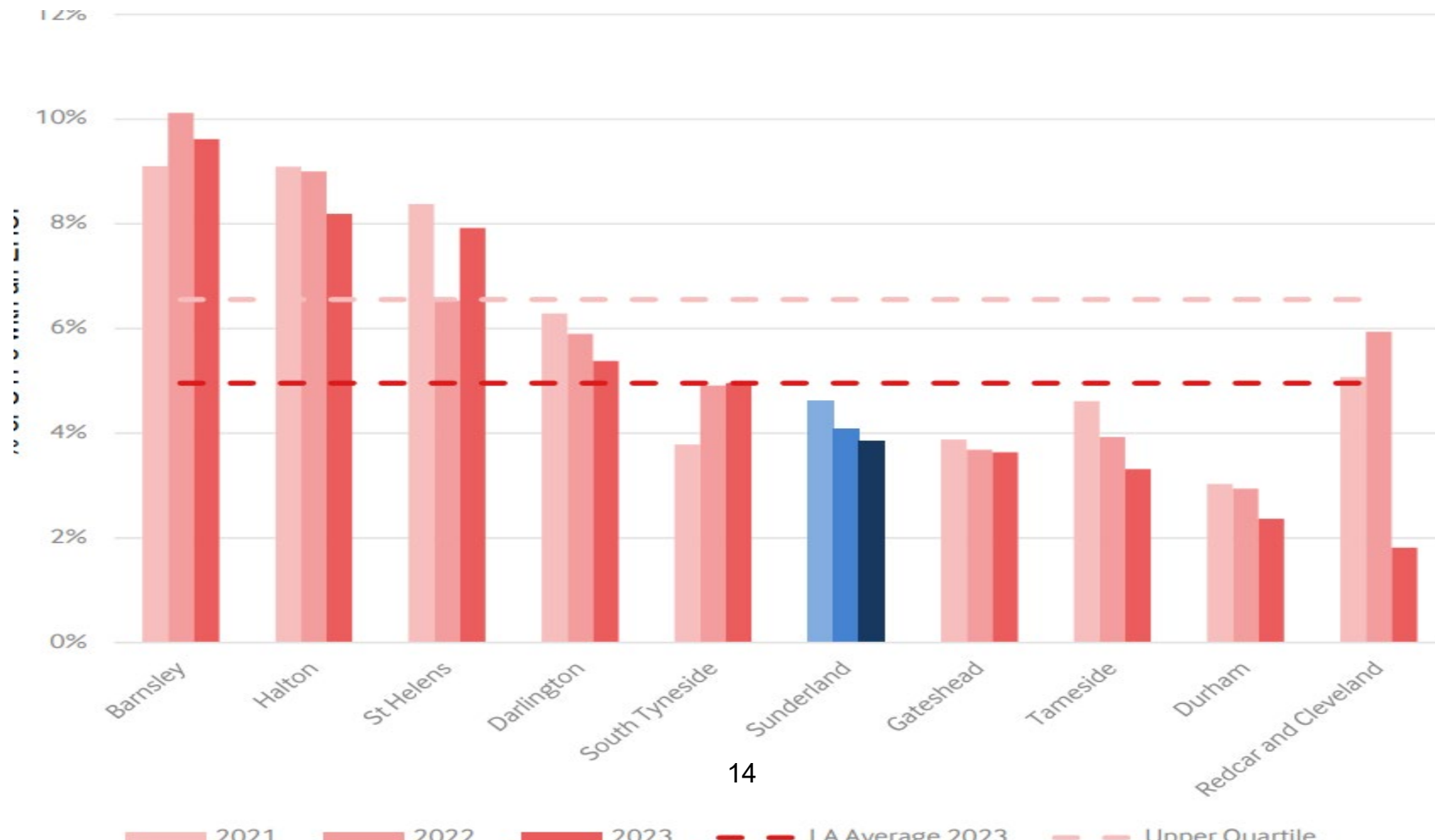
## % of CYPs with an EHCP in a Maintained Specialist Setting



# Key areas of need

- New EHCPs peak sharply at age ranges 5 – 6 years (Reception – year 1) and again at ages 11-12 (years 6-7) linking to key transition points in a child's education journey
- Main primary needs are Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), closely followed by Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) and then Speech Language Communication Needs (SLCN). These 3 groups collectively accounted for 85% of new plans in 2022/3 with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and Physical Disability accounting for the remaining 15%.
- Rise in demand is driven predominately by ASD, SEMH and SLCN

# % of CYPs with an EHCP in an Independent or Non-Maintained Specialist Setting (INMSS) , a regional comparison

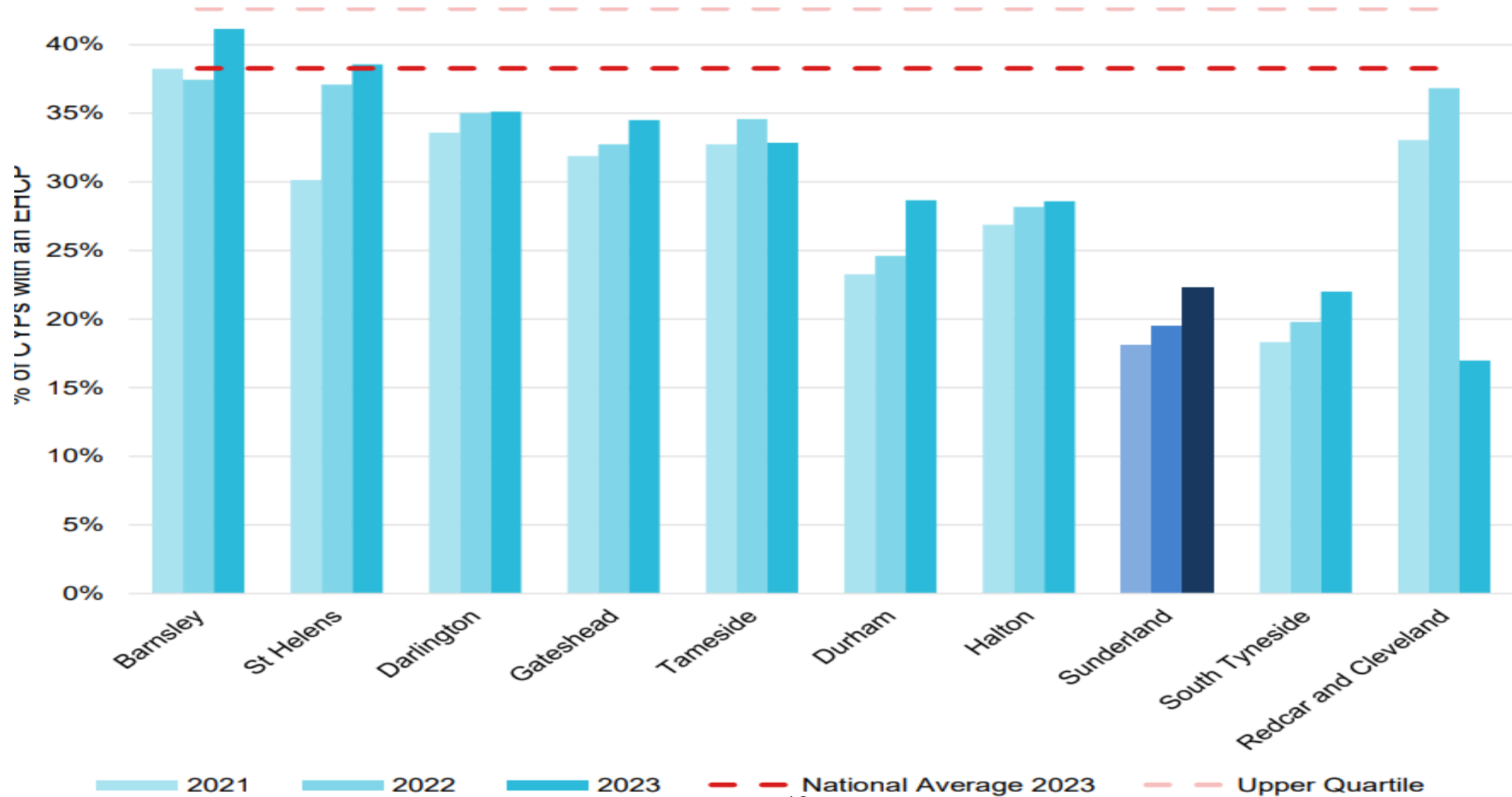




# Independent or Non-Maintained Specialist Setting age analysis

- There is a sharp spike in placement of CYP with EHCPs into INMSS between ages of 12 – 15, this is often linked to an escalating presentation of needs in early adolescent, which often leads to school placement breakdown. The spike in school placement breakdown can also be a consequence of an ineffective transition to secondary settings.

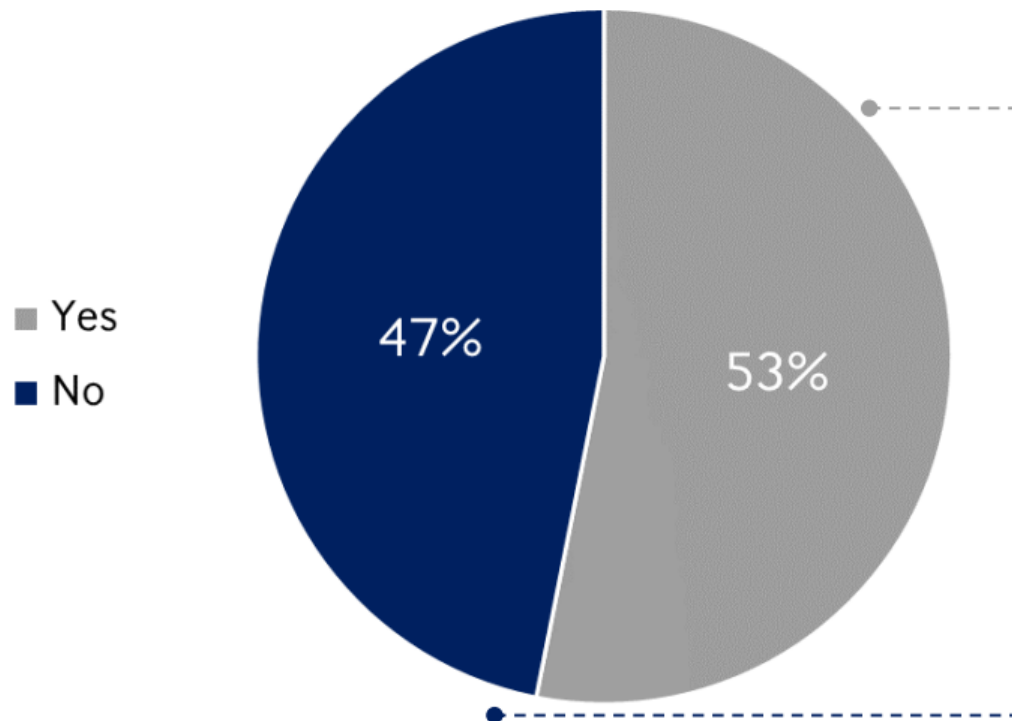
# % of CYPs with an EHCP in a Mainstream Setting (regional comparison)



# Case review outcomes

We completed case review workshops on the **13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2023** with **participants from across a range of disciplines**, reviewing **32 cases**, with a range of ages and provision types, to understand whether we delivered an **ideal outcome** to a CYP with SEND.

**Did we achieve the ideal outcome for the CYP and enable them to achieve their goals and aspirations?**



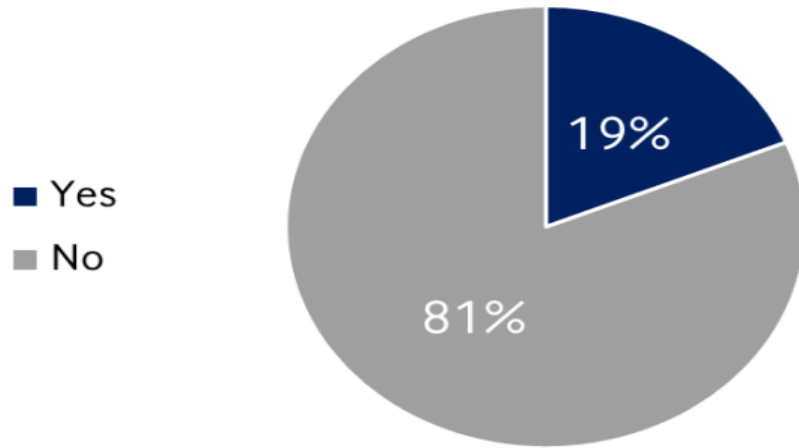
In 53% of cases, practitioners felt an ideal outcome was achieved for the pupil.

Common themes driving the remaining 47% non-ideal outcomes related to type of provision or timing of support offered.

**The next section explores the cases and reasons in more depth.**

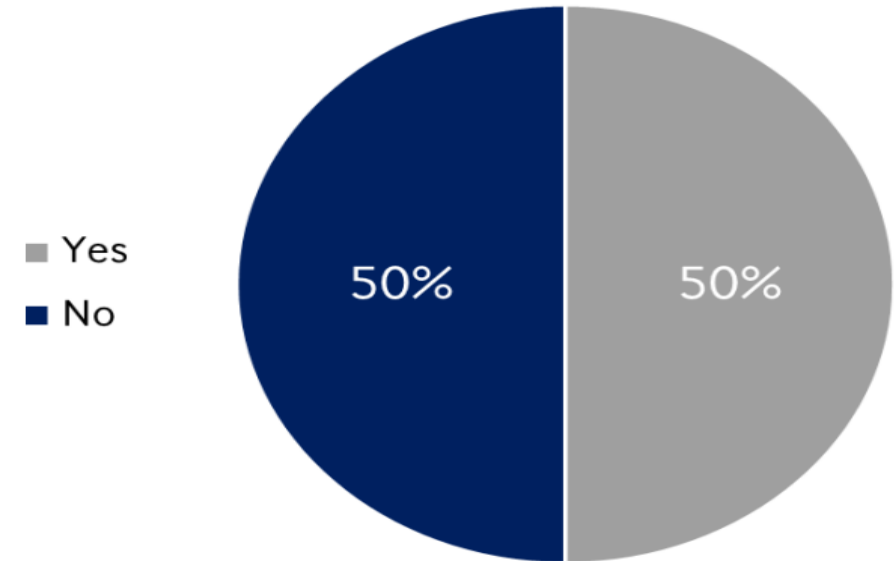
# 1 in 5 CYP reviewed could have had their needs met without an EHCP, with half of all CYP able to benefit from better defined goals

Could the needs of the child or young person have been met without an EHCP?



Practitioners felt that in order to give the children adequate support, an EHCP was necessary.

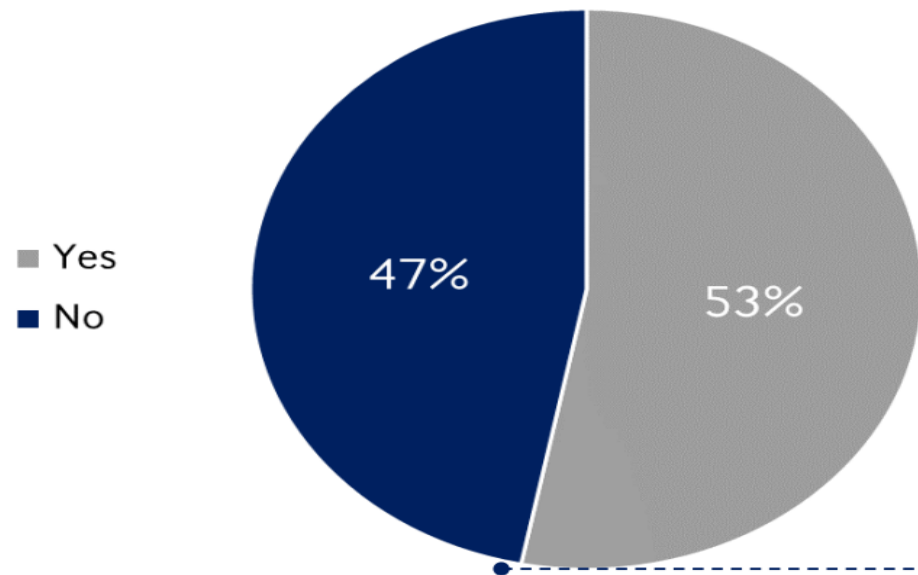
Are the goals for CYP defined in a SMART way?



Practitioners felt the goals in the EHCP could have been defined better to enable practioners to consistently support children.

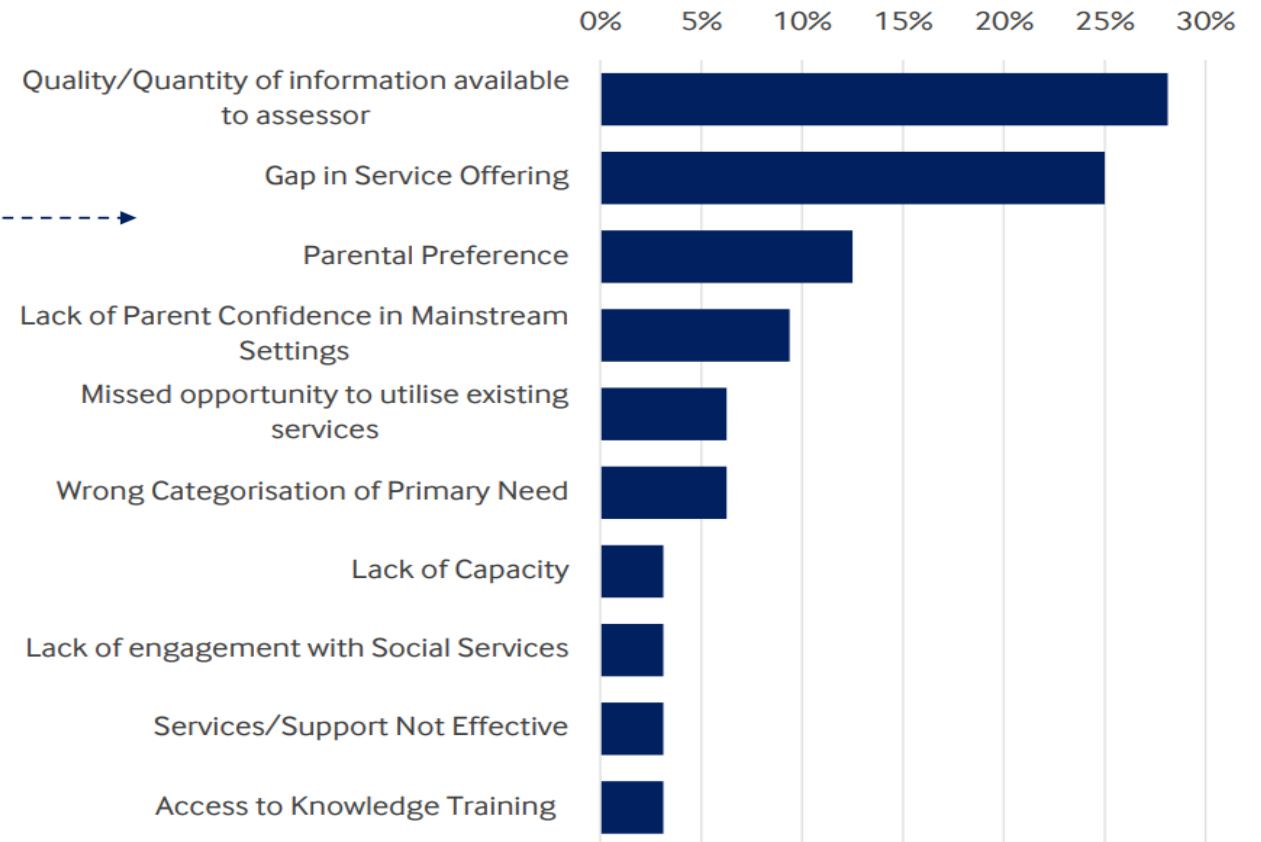
# The key themes information available to assessors, the current service offering and support available for parent

Did we achieve the ideal outcome for the CYP and enable them to achieve their goals and aspirations?



The quality/quantity of information available and a gap in service offering contribute to most of the non ideal outcomes for CYPs with SEN

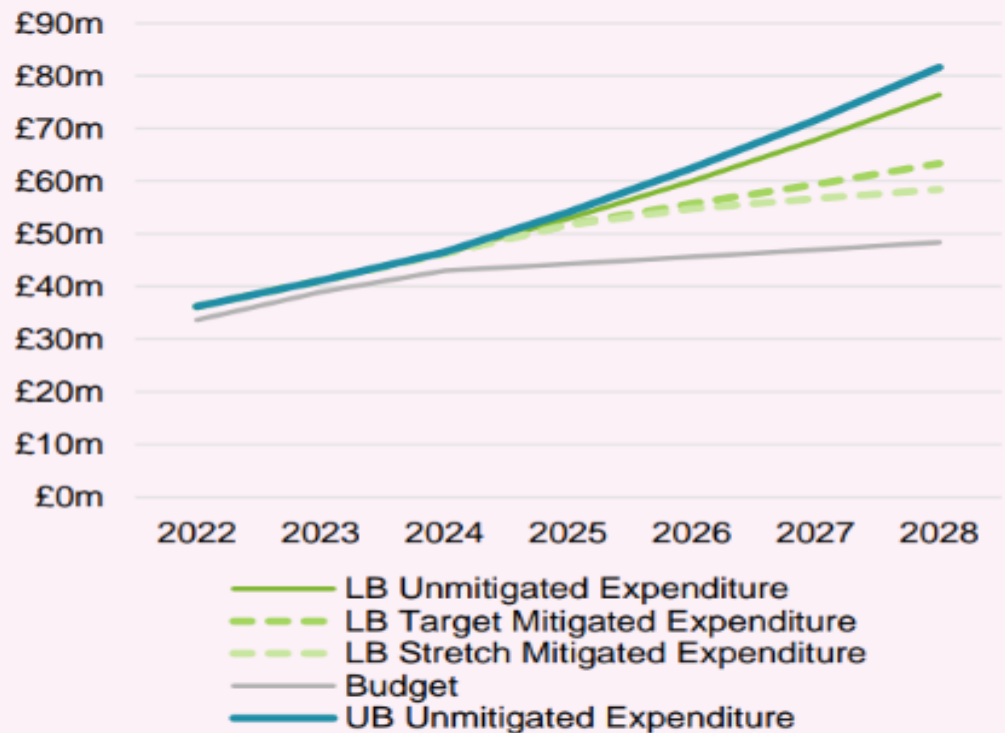
What themes contributed to achieving a non-ideal outcome?



# Outcomes and intended impact

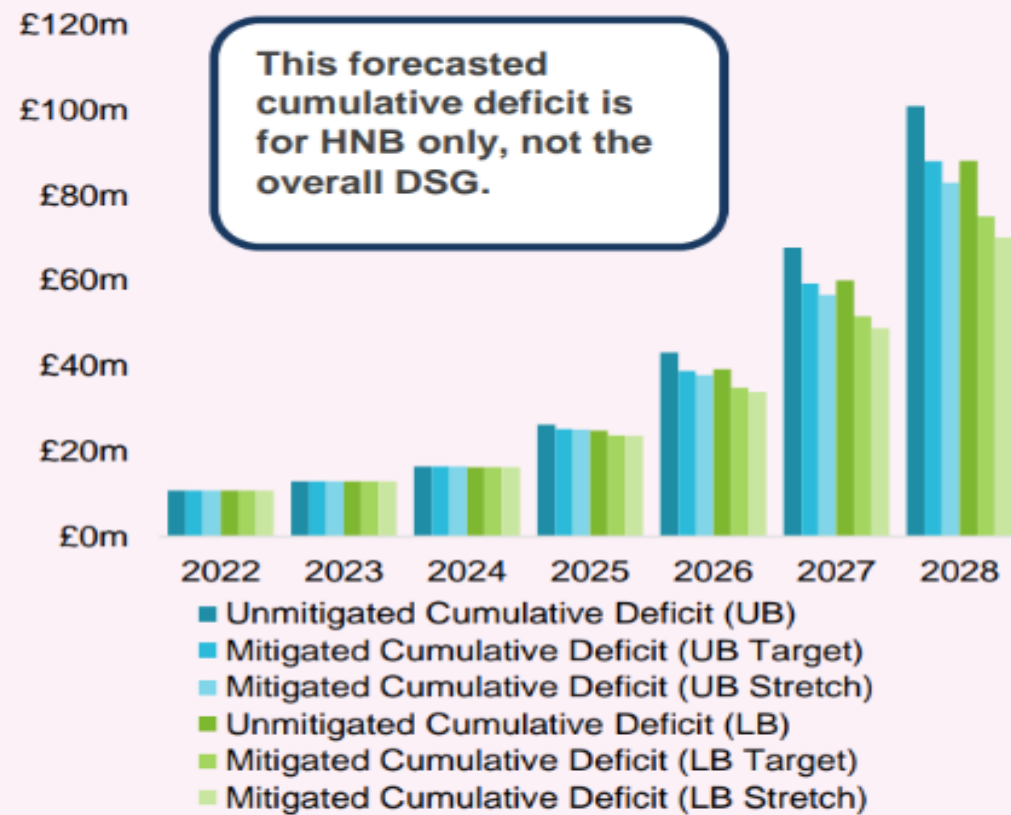
- DBV outputs factor in our existing mitigations to minimise High Needs deficits, including our proactive plans around the expansion of Additional Resource Provisions (ARPs) and Alternative Provision
- The proposals submitted (covered in later slides) in the final bid build on these existing mitigations and seek to develop further opportunities for deficit reduction (monitored via our Deficit Management Plan)
- To be clear though, DBV will not eliminate our High Needs budget deficit as the next slide shows

**Applying these to the unmitigated forecasts – alongside your existing mitigations – results in a potential HNB annual expenditure of £58m-£63m in 2028**



By modelling the mitigations over time, the potential mitigated expenditure in the current optimistic, realistic, scenario is £58m-£63m in 2028. This would be an annual overspend between £10m-£15m

**This could mean a HNB cumulative deficit of between £70m-£75m by 2028**



With current existing and planned mitigations, the HNB cumulative deficit would grow to £70m-£75m in the lower bound scenario. This would be a reduction of £13m-£18m.

# Exploring the themes from DBV diagnostic phase

- Following the diagnostic phase of the DBV programme we identified 4 themes which were explored with stakeholders in a system wide engagement event (October 2023)

1 Improving the quality of information

2 Effective and consistent application of the graduated response

3 Developing inclusive practice (an Inclusion Framework)

4 Implementation of effective transition programmes



# Theme 1: Improving the quality of advice and EHCPs

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Key areas:

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High quality & timely statutory advice

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Compliance for statutory duties

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Capturing Children and Young Person  
views more effectively

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How will we achieve this consistently  
across all ages and all partners?

# Theme 2: Effective & consistent graduated response

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More effective use of Multi-disciplinary  
planning

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Accurate Application of Code of Practice

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Effective take up of all services within the  
universal local offer

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How can we ensure a more joined up  
approach to supporting CYP at SEN support?

# Theme 3: Developing inclusive practice

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Adapted curriculum offer to meet a diverse range of needs in local schools

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Consistent high and quality information and offer available to all families

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Identifying and resolving gaps in service offer

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How can we ensure all families are confident they will receive high quality support for SEND?

# Theme 4: Strong transition offer

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Development of an enhanced transition offer for vulnerable CYP with SEND?

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Ensuring transition is multi-agency and joined up

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Building knowledge and confidence in the next phase of education for both CYP, families and current settings

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Understanding what support is needed for Preparation for Adulthood and the most appropriate pathways for young people post education or training

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What does a good quality transition look like for a child or young person with SEND?

# Our proposals

- Support a pilot programme supported by an outstanding local special school (Sunningdale), to develop adapted curriculum offer for schools. This will support inclusion for children not yet able to access the full national curriculum in the same way as peers through an adapted semi-formal curriculum. Six Primary Schools are currently involved
- Purchase Education for Learning Assessment tool and support training to embed wider use across the local area
- Establish inclusion fund schools can use to bid for specific child related funding (not staffing) to remove or mitigate barriers to inclusion within mainstream

# Our proposals

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Create a Quality Assurance team to deliver focused training and support to schools and other professional advice givers (3 posts)

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Quality Assurance team will also complete targeted work with schools, including INMSS and settings around their graduated response and use of top up funding / fees / bandings

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Secondment of Head Teachers / Assistant Head / SENDCos ( 5 x 1 day per week) to share best practice and embed a common understanding of a universal offer for SEN in settings

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Purchase and embed the Invision QA tool to support Quality Assurance framework and develop expertise in what 'good' looks like

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# Our proposals



Develop a high intensity support team of 2 x specialist teachers and 2 x HLTAs who will sit within our current Specialist Support Service.



This team will oversee the bespoke arrangements for our most complex children, including those with an EOTAS package (Education Other than at School). They will work with Alternative Provision providers, where appropriate to develop tailored packages



Provide an outreach service to work with schools to support children with complex needs who may be at risk of non-attendance / permanent exclusion, focusing on higher levels of need, including emotional school based avoidance

# Our proposals

- New role of Digital Development Officer to further progress with digital roll out of assessment and review processes in line with DfE aspirations with SEND & AP Improvement Plan to streamline bureaucracy and work 'smarter' (we are already on this journey)
- Communication Officer: To develop and maintain the Local Offer and proactively support positive messages and examples of best practice / case studies for parents of children with SEND



# Our proposals

- Create a transition team to sit under our new Strategic Transition Lead 3 posts (Early Years, Primary to Secondary and Post 16). These posts will develop pathways and embed these to ensure a consistent approach and offer for young people with SEND (with or without an EHCP)
- Additional resource with the statutory team to support Annual Review Team. This will take the form of 2 Annual Review Officer roles who will focus on ensuring Annual Reviews for key phased transfer points (including Post 16) are robust in terms of the information quality. This post will also enable us to data cleanse in terms of plans for young people to be ceased where outcomes have been achieved.

## Next steps

The bid for a grant of £1m to support improvements to the SEND system has been submitted and it has passed 2 stages of Quality Assurance

Final confirmation should be through within the next few weeks with funding starting from 1<sup>st</sup> April

We are currently in the process of completing recruitment activity for the new posts and finalising an implementation plan for delivery of the workstreams

A key commitment is to maintain active stakeholder engagement and ensure all partners are fully involved in development and monitoring of activity and outcomes

Monitoring for Phase 2 moves to CIPFA / DFE who will approve and then monitor our Deficit Management Plan, which has just been submitted following interim feedback (20.02.24)

# Item 5

29 February 2024

## CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### VIRTUAL SCHOOL UPDATE

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

## 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To update members of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee on the outcomes for Cared for Children and Young People and how they are supported by the Virtual School.

## 2. Background

### Role of the Virtual School

- 2.1 Local Authorities have a duty to 'Promote the education of Cared for Children' (CfC) under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004.
- 2.2 The Virtual School report on key performance indicators for Cared for Children to:
- **Governing Board**
  - **Corporate Parenting Board**
  - **Ofsted and the DfE**
- 2.3 Each Local Authority area in England has the statutory role of Virtual School Head (VSH), who supports colleagues in the Local Authority to discharge their role as Corporate Parent for all matters related to the education of Cared for Children and Young People.
- 2.4 This is the mainstay of the work of the staff within the Virtual School, each of the caseworkers, in the phase-based teams, provide support and advocacy to around 60 young people. We do this by providing support, advice and constructive challenge to schools, social care colleagues, other professionals, carers and young people through the Personal Education Planning (PEP) process, a statutory part of the Care Plan.
- 2.5 The role of the VSH was expanded in 2018 to include 'Promoting the Education of Previously Cared for Children' (PCfC). In 2021, VSH's were given the additional strategic responsibility to 'Promote the Education of Children with a Social Worker' (CWSW). For PCfC and CWSW we provide advice, guidance, and signposting, we do not act in the capacity of Corporate Parent, therefore, our role is not to monitor outcomes or to provide direct interventions as we do

with CfC but to raise awareness of the disadvantage faced by these children and young people. The role is set to expand further in September 2024 to incorporate those children in Kinship Care.

### **Educational Barriers**

2.6 There are approximately 1.6 million children (between 2012 – 18) in England and Wales who have or have had Social Care interventions, which equates to approx. 3 children in every classroom and compared to their peers, they are:

- 3 times more likely to be a Persistent Absentee (>90% school attendance)
- Children with > 50% school attendance are now identified as at higher risk of safeguarding concerns including criminal and sexual exploitation (Attendance Guidance, DfE 2022)
- 4 times more likely to be permanently excluded from school
- Only 50% achieve a good level of development in Early Years, compared to 72% of their peers
- They are 50% less likely to achieve a good pass at GCSE's compared to peers
- 3 times less likely to study for A Levels
- Only 6% go to University compared to 27% of peers

2.7 Many of our young people have experienced educational neglect, often for years before coming to the attention of services who can support. This includes, poor attendance, lack of stimulation in the home, gaps in learning, multiple school moves, suspensions and exclusion often as a result of low parental aspiration or poor educational experiences.

### **Raising Awareness of Barriers to Learning and Support for Colleagues**

#### **Support for Schools**

2.8 Virtual School staff are raising awareness with school staff of the impact adverse childhood experiences have on a child's ability to learn, the barriers faced by CWSW, and the need to minimise these barriers.

2.9 The Virtual School Head (VSH) works closely with the SIO for Safeguarding when advice and guidance is requested, or concerns are raised.

2.10 Collectively we provide the following support and network/training opportunities to staff in school:

- Termly network meetings for Designated Teachers
- Termly network meetings for Designated Safeguarding Leads

- Training for Chair of Governors and Headteachers on Roles and Responsibilities for CWSW
- Provision of a training bursary to raise awareness in school staff around trauma informed practice for all schools in Sunderland
- Training programme for individual schools – thresholds, improving the quality of referrals, KCSIE, roles and responsibilities of DSL in care teams
- Newsletters – Virtual School and Safeguarding
- Signposting to external training and awareness raising events, conferences, and meetings
- Annual VS Conference for schools ‘Impact of ACE’s and mental health’
- Annual Safeguarding Conference
- Signs of Safety Training delivered to all DSL’s and 30 Headteachers in the city

### **Provision of Support to Colleagues in Social Care and Health Services**

- 2.11 Section 31 grant funding has enabled the Virtual School to strengthen our relationship with social care colleagues, including a weekly advice surgery within the Social Care base. Social workers can seek advice and support around education issues for children and young people when they have concerns.
- 2.12 Post 16 Team provide support to the Next Steps Teams in Stansfield Centre one day per week.
- 2.13 VSH provides briefings and training for social care staff which outline the composition of our cohort, educational neglect and the importance of school attendance in keeping children safe. VSH attends Social Care Team meetings to promote the support we are able to offer to colleagues around education.
- 2.14 Strategic Leaders in Education and Social Care meet half termly for a Keep in Touch Meeting to discuss any issues arising, share information and practice and provide early intervention for complex children.
- 2.15 When support is requested from caseworkers they will, contact schools on behalf of the Social Worker or families to ensure the correct strategy is followed and appropriate challenge is given when issues are brought to our attention.

- 2.16 We also offer support to schools and social care colleagues in professionals' meetings to facilitate a resolution to issues for children and young people in their education.

### **Support for Parent/carers**

- 2.17 Virtual School staff seek engagement with a range of parent/carer forums
- Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Support Group
  - Kinship and Connected Carers
  - More than Grandparents
  - Adoptive Parent Forums and support groups
- 2.18 We offer advice and guidance to parents and carers around a range of educational issues and signpost to services which can meet the needs of their children.
- 2.19 We facilitate workshops for parents/carers on 'the impact of trauma on children and their education' and 'how to access support to meet their children's needs'.

### **Representation**

- 2.20 The Virtual School provides representation to a wide range of local authority, education, and health panels, such as:
- Vulnerable Pupils Panel
  - Dynamic Support Register
  - Children's Partnership Commissioning Panel
  - In-year Fair Access
  - Health Partnership
  - Headteacher Forums
- 2.21 When attending panels/forums, we advocate on behalf of children with a social worker and provide additional advice and guidance around their educational needs.
- 2.22 The Virtual School Head attends NHS workstream groups to raise issues of health and well-being which impact on disadvantaged children and young people and works closely with the National Association of Virtual Schools and regional colleagues to share common challenges and explore good practice.

### 3. Outcomes

3.1 Data provided in the tables in this report is the latest available validated version from LAIT (for academic year ending in Summer 2022), however, locally sourced data has been provided where possible to give an up-to-date context for some of our outcomes.

#### Admissions

- All cared for children should be educated, wherever possible, in a good or outstanding school. Schools operate their own admissions policies and criteria for oversubscription; however, they must give the highest priority in their criteria to a Cared for or Previously Cared for Child. (School Admissions Code)
- Similarly, a maintained school or academy cannot refuse to admit a child on the grounds of challenging behaviour, neither can they refer the child to the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol.
- The VS staff support social care colleagues and carers in identifying a suitable education provision and assist in the admission of any child where a change of school is considered essential.

#### 3.2 School Ofsted Ratings for Sunderland Cared for Children

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate or awaiting inspection
<b>2019 – 2020</b>	14%	50%	14%	21%
<b>2020 - 2021</b>	14%	65%	14%	7%
<b>2022-23</b>	13%	71%	10%	6%

- 84% of our children are educated in Good or Outstanding schools, an improvement on previous years, with 10% in schools which required improvement, these predominantly being in the secondary sector.
- When children and young people are educated in schools which Require Improvement, attention is always given to ensure the care, guidance and support offered by the school is of a good standard.
- 30% of our children are educated in schools outside of Sunderland, the majority of which were in our neighbouring authorities, however, children are educated in 27 different local authority areas across England, Wales and Scotland.

### 3.3 Attendance

Percentage of absence from school of children who have been cared for continuously for at least 12 months		
Area	2021	2022
Sunderland	9.10	7.10 (↓-2.00)
North East	8.50	7.00 (↓-1.50)
England	9.10	7.80 (↓-1.30)
National Rank		45
Quartile Banding		B

- Overall attendance for our cared for children in 2021/22 was 92.9%, (last validated data from LAIT), on par with attendance of all pupils nationally for the same period and above that of Cared for Children regionally and nationally.
- Currently (January 2024) our local data shows Primary attendance well above that of primary children in both Sunderland and National at 96.5%, although in secondary, attendance remains a major challenge (86.5%) below that of all secondary pupils locally and nationally.
- Attendance is monitored daily by Welfare Call, a service commissioned by the Virtual School which telephones the child's school daily to check they are in school.
- Casework Leads monitor attendance weekly with their team on a case-by-case basis to ensure early intervention, advice and next steps are given to carers, schools, and social worker.
- Attendance issues are quickly flagged up on PEPs and targets set at the PEP meeting, where appropriate.
- Vulnerable Pupil Panel applications are supported for those pupils with emotional school-based avoidance, or those who have disengaged with mainstream provision, to ensure referrals for local authority commissioned alternative provision is detailed and appropriate provision is identified.
- Associate Teachers within the Virtual School provide 1:1 tutoring whilst children are awaiting access to alternative provisions, should they be unable to access their named school or to support reintegration back to school following a long-term absence.

### 3.4 Suspensions and Exclusions

Percentage of children with at least one fixed term suspension from school		
	2020	2021
Sunderland	13.45	9.24 (↓-4.21)
North East	9.50	9.70 (↑0.20)



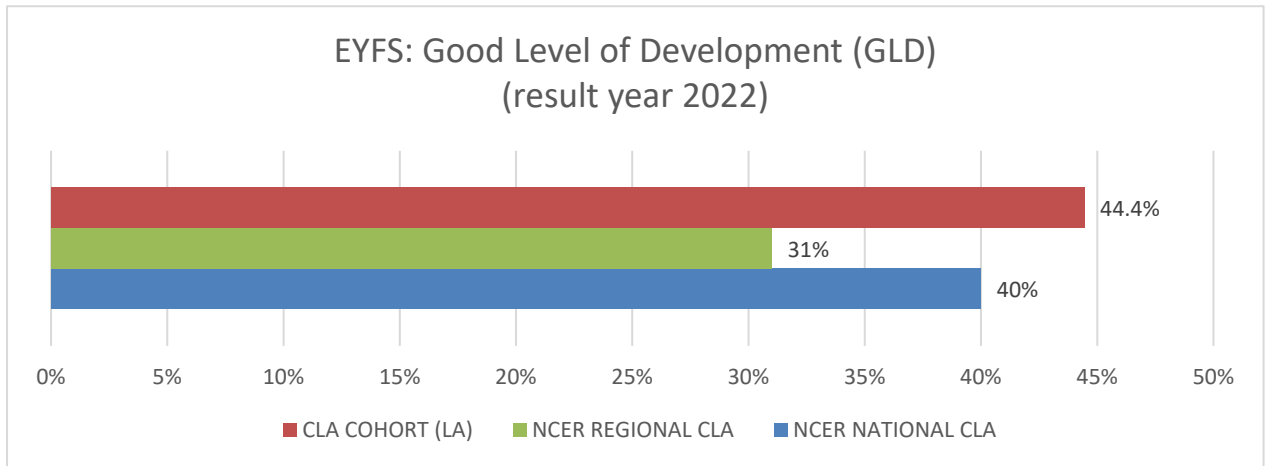
England	9.35	9.80 (↑10.45)
National Rank		58
Quartile Banding		B

- The latest validated data on suspensions for 2021 showed a drop in the percentage of children who received at least one fixed term suspension to slightly below that of national and regional levels, however, suspensions have risen by 26% this year compared to 2021, although remain significantly lower than the rise in suspensions for all pupils in the city.
- Higher levels of suspensions follow a national rising trend, and also mirror that which is experienced by other virtual schools in the area
- Support and professional challenge around the use of suspensions is given before and during reintegration meetings, which are attended by caseworkers to ensure school, carers and the young person are clear on the support needed to prevent an exclusion
- Targets around conduct and engagement are becoming more explicit in PEPs, and swift referrals are instigated by Caseworkers for Formal Statutory Assessment to identify any unmet SEN need, particularly related to Social, Emotional or Mental Health
- Referrals to Alternative Education placements are prioritised through the Vulnerable Pupils Panel for those who require alternative commissioned education provision
- Work is ongoing with new Multi-academy Trusts moving into the area, who may initially implement zero tolerance policies, which can lead to a lack of inclusion for our children in Sunderland
- Caseworkers work with carers, schools, and alternative providers to find alternative solutions which supports both the child and the school to reengage with learning and maintain the child on their school roll
- Support is given to social care colleagues, through the Sandhill Surgery, to upskill them in the knowledge and signposting they need to effectively challenge in situations where unmet need leads to a pattern of suspension.
- Virtual Schools in the Northeast area are reporting their first permanent exclusions (PEX) taking place this year, with a rise in challenging behaviours, a shortage of appropriate alternative education places, and special school provisions which are full
- Eight incidents which could have resulted in a permanent exclusion have been avoided through the intervention of the Virtual School staff this year, however sadly, we have also seen our first permanent exclusion for six years.

### 3.5 Attainment Outcomes

- Source for the following graphs on attainment (NCER 2022)

### Early Years Outcomes

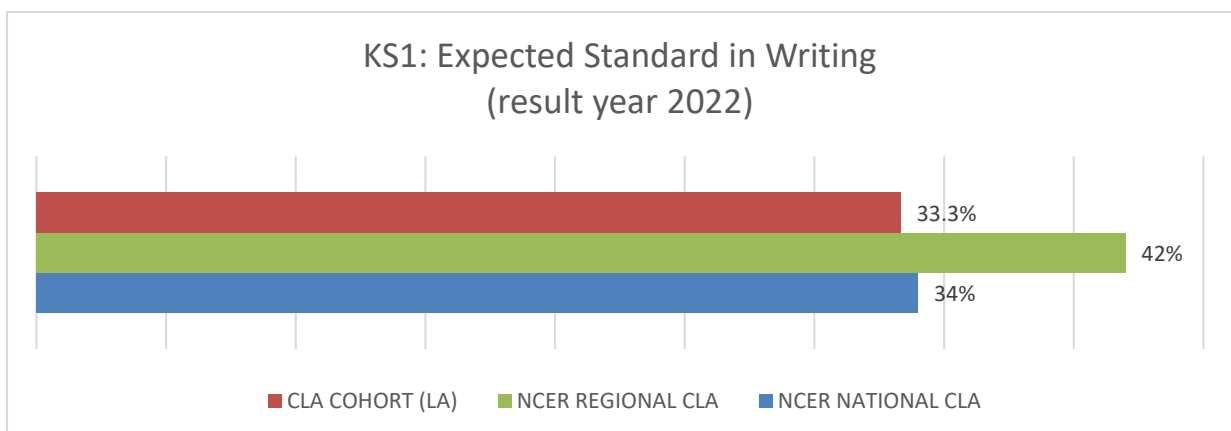
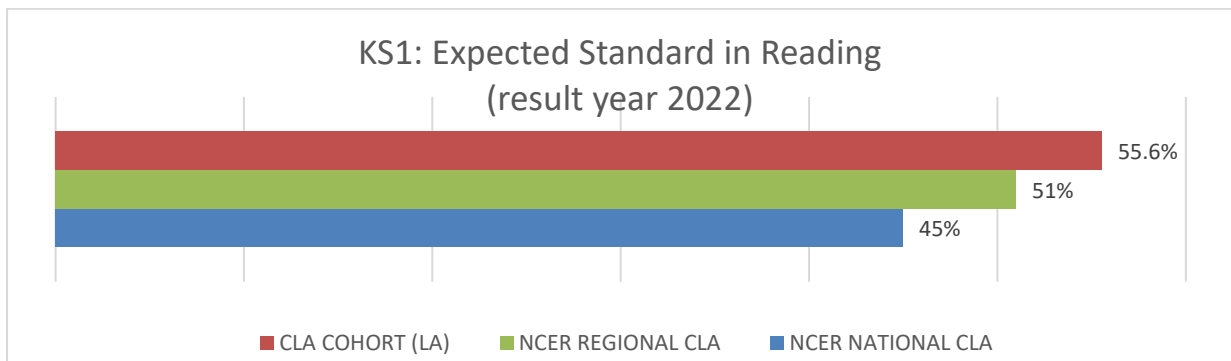


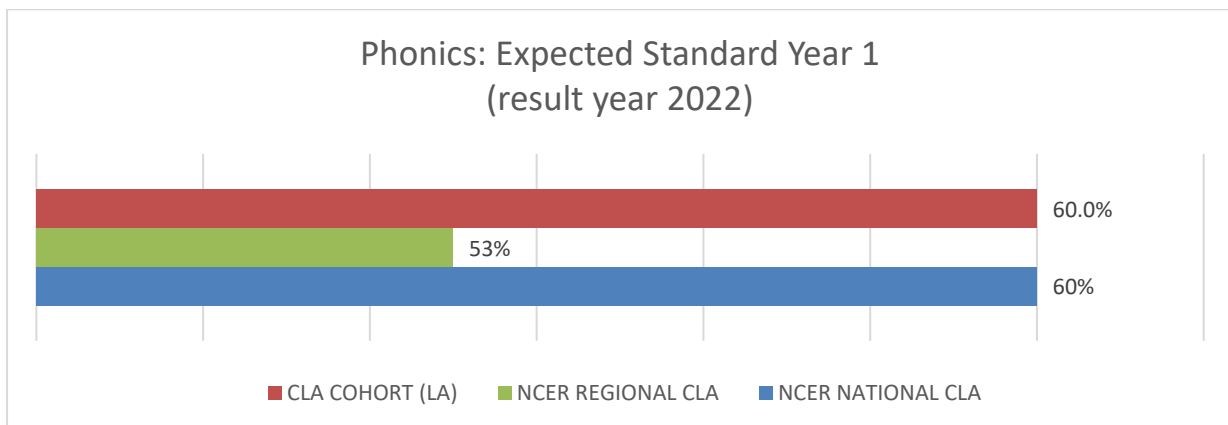
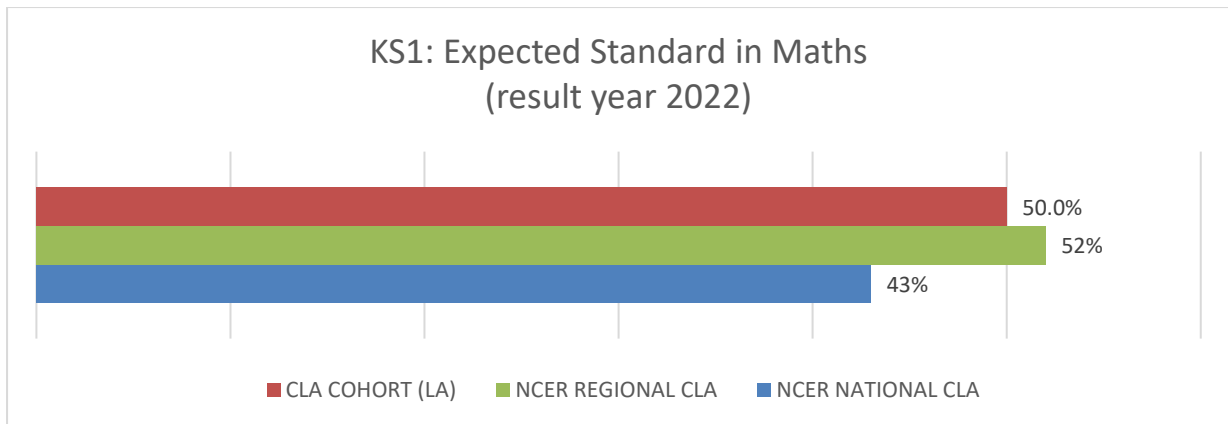
- Red is Sunderland Cared for Children; Green is Regional CfC and Blue is National CfC

From the above table the following salient points can be noted:

- The cohort was assessed using the early years foundation stage profile,
- 44.4% of children in Sunderland achieved a good level of development
- This is 4.4% higher than the national (CLA) average of 40% and 13.4% higher than the regional (CLA) average of 31%.

### Key Stage 1 Outcomes



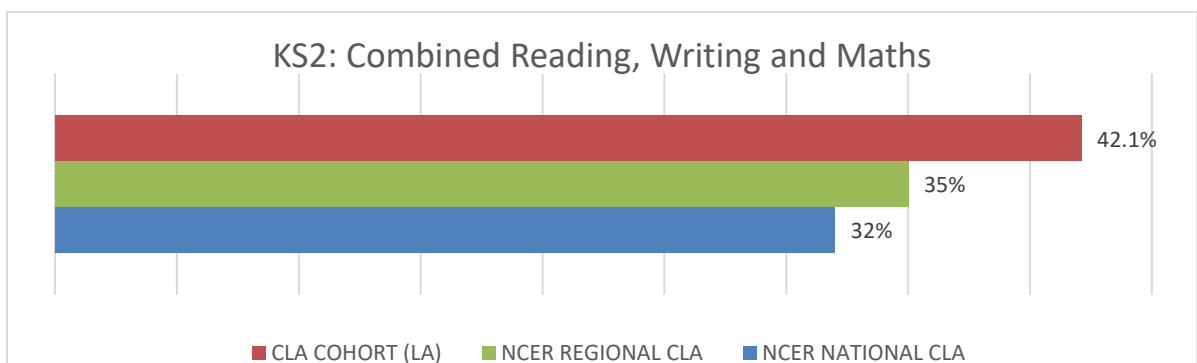
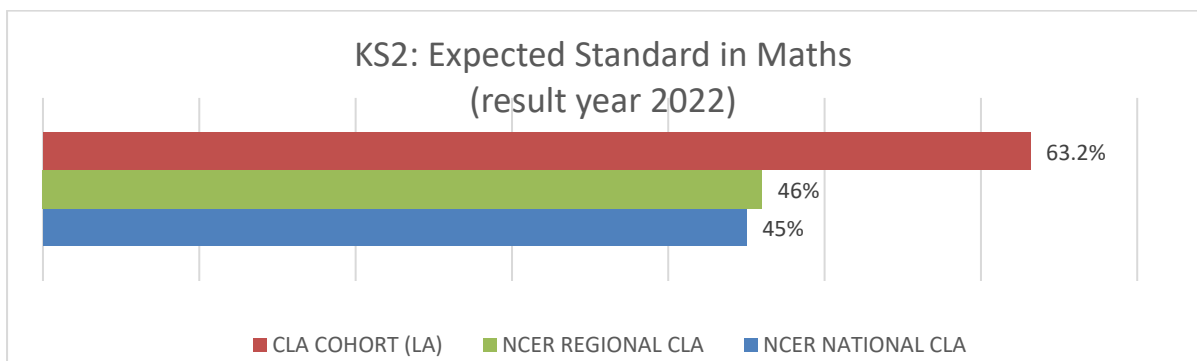
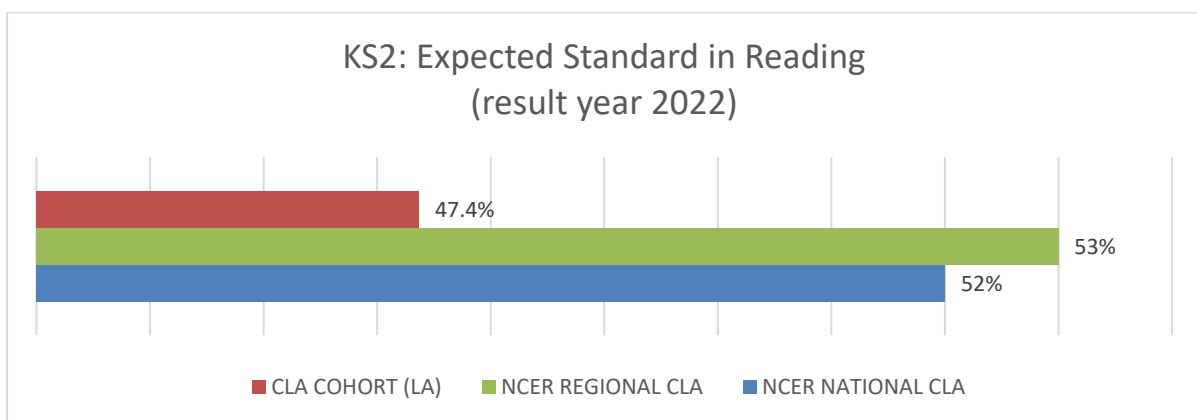
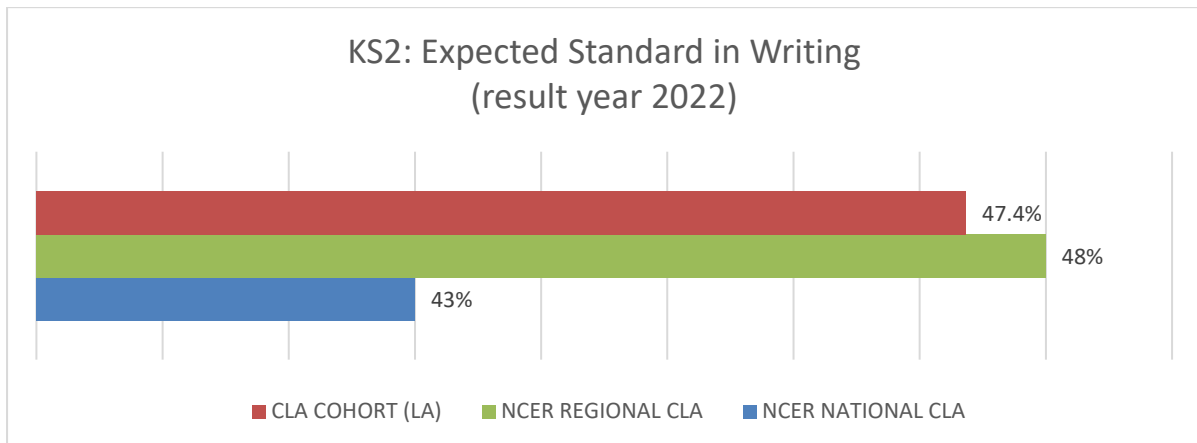


From the above tables the following salient points can be noted:

There were 18 pupils in the reportable cohort at the end of Key Stage 1:

- 55.6% achieved the expected standard in Reading and 5.6% achieved a greater depth in Reading.
- This compares favourably with the regional average of 51% and is 10.6% above the national average of 45%.
- A third of pupils achieved the expected standard in Writing, broadly in line with national average for Cared for children, however, this is lower than the regional average at 42%
- 50% of our children achieved the expected standard in Maths with 5.6% achieving a greater depth. This is 7% higher than the national average of 43% although slightly lower than regional at 52%.
- 60% achieved the expected standard of 32 in Phonics at the end of Year 1 which is equal to that of National (CLA) and 7% above that of the regional (CLA) cohort at 53%.

## Key Stage 2 Outcomes

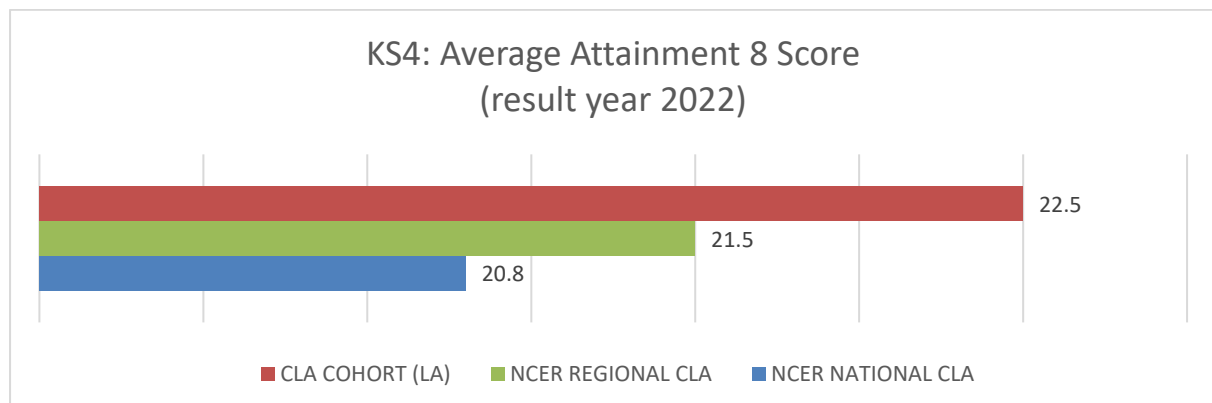


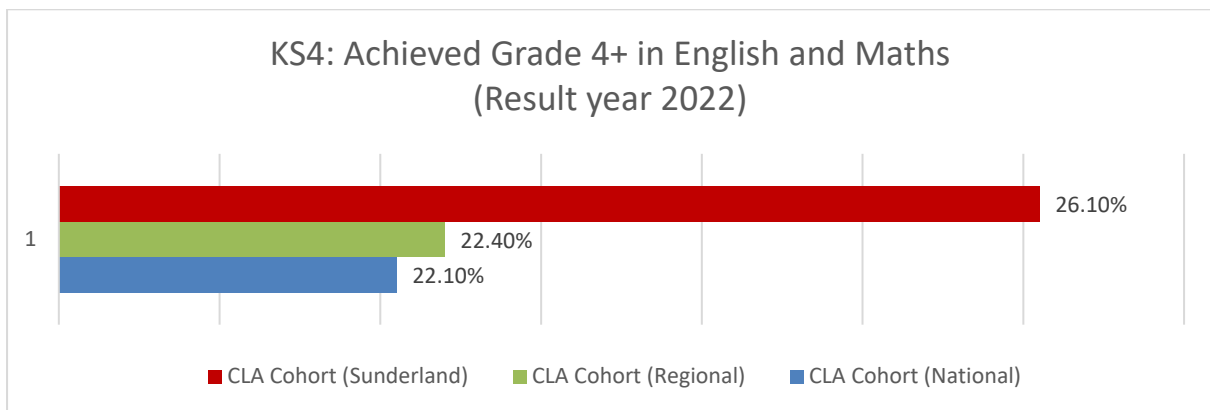
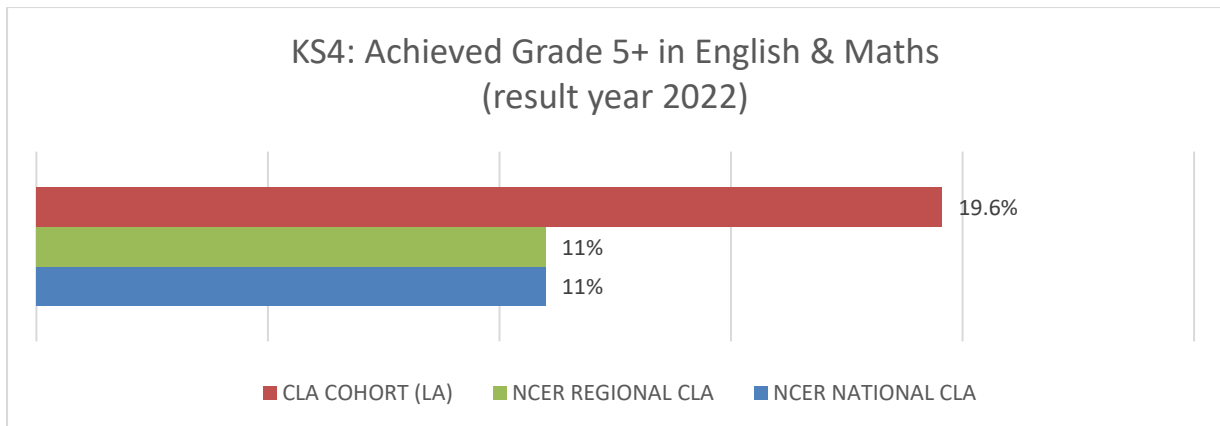
From the above tables the following salient points can be noted:

There were 19 pupils in the reportable cohort at the end of Key Stage 2:

- In Writing, 47.4% achieved the expected standard broadly in line with regional and 4.4% higher than national average.
- 47.4% achieved the expected standard in Reading, 4.6% lower than national and 5.6% lower than the regional average.
- In Maths, 63.2% of our children achieved the expected standard 18.2% higher than National at 45% and 17.2% higher than regional at 46%.
- The Combined measure for KS2 of Reading, Writing and Maths was 42.1%, this is 10.1% higher than the national average of 32% and 7.1% higher than the regional average of 35%.
- An intervention programme has been developed to provide 1:1 tutoring through the National tutoring programme for children who require additional support, to close the gap from lost learning due to the pandemic.
- Where reading is found to be of concern the newly established early years and primary team, through their attendance at PEP meetings, provide greater support and challenging for targets to be specific within PEPs
- Two reading programmes are being explored to encourage reading for our children, Letterbox Book Club and StoryTime Magazine, both specialising in encouraging reading with cared for children aged 4-9 years.

## Key Stage 4 Outcomes





From the above tables the following salient points can be noted:

- There were 46 pupils in the reportable cohort at the end of Key Stage 4:
- The cohort in Sunderland has an Attainment 8 score of 22.5, which is 1.7 points higher than the national cohort at 20.8, and 1 point above regional average of 21.5
- The English Baccalaureate average point score is 1.77, which is marginally higher than the national and regional point scores, EBacc is a suite of subjects which includes English, maths, science, a humanities subject, and a modern foreign language
- 19.6% of our cared for children achieved a grade 5 or more in English and Maths which is 8.6% higher than National and regional at 11%
- 26.1% of our young people achieved a grade 4 or more in English and Maths, again higher than national and regional. Prior to the pandemic this figure in 2019 was 17%

### **3.6 Support from the Virtual School to Raise Attainment**

- Quality Assurance, moderation, and standardisation of PEP's takes place with an increased focus on attainment and progress data, and in school support for underachievement. CPD has been delivered to both Primary and Secondary casework teams around national assessment requirements.

- A tracking document has been established to measure progress, engagement and conduct, attendance, emotional health and well-being and attitude to learning and is fully populated with data which is then analysed for targeted intervention.
- 1:1's are held with casework leads to review pupil progress, supervision by casework leads with their team occurs every two weeks using the new tracker.
- The tuition tracker is now fully functioning with 1:1 tuition delivered for the following groups of learners: Primary, Complex Secondary, UASC pre and post 16, Year 11 and resit Maths and English Post 16.
- VSH attends the majority of Y11 PEPs and many Y6 PEP's with the caseworker to ensure appropriate challenge is given to schools when academic intervention is needed, and to offer targeted additional 1:1 teaching support by Virtual School teachers.
- A comprehensive identification and intervention programme was introduced to provide individual 1:1 tuition through the National Tutoring Programme for any Year 11 pupil who is underachieving in English and/or Maths. This was extended to Year 10 in Spring term of 2023 and to Year 9 in the summer term of 2023. Meanwhile, the increased capacity of caseworkers affords greater support and challenge across all key stages through attendance at all PEP meetings.
- Weekly tuition meetings ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the many strands of tuition currently in operation.
- The intervention programme has ensured 91 students this year have received 1:1 tutoring to close gaps in knowledge in English and/or Maths at Key stage 4, Reading, Writing and/or Maths at Key stage 2, and Phonics intervention at Key stage 1, with a total of 1,900 hours delivered.
- The tuition Team are in the initial stages of developing an evidence-based assessment to review the effectiveness of the tuition provided by the associate teachers in the VS. This package will include an audit of the quality of provision and measure outcomes.
- A further 16 teaching assistants were funded by the Virtual School to work in schools to ensure individual students were able to access the curriculum whilst awaiting formal statutory assessment.
- The Virtual School has commissioned 7 alternative education provisions this year for young people who were unable to manage within their mainstream school to ensure their education remained on track – this included the provision of both English and Maths.
- Funding for 10 young people to attend specialist schools or provisions has been made available by the Virtual School whilst they are awaiting an EHCP, or the availability of a specialist school place.
- A thrive target for the secondary caseworker around raising aspirations has resulted in the creation of a central register which has identified 12 young people (Y7-Y12) who are now participating in the Choices Together- Raising Aspirations Programme (NERAP). This gives the young person access to experiences relating to Higher Education.

### **3.7 Post 16 Pathways**

## Strengthened Relationships with Colleges

- The expansion of the team and increased hours has enabled more intensive support to our young people who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and those who are at risk of leaving education/training.
- Caseworkers currently liaise with 35 colleges, training providers and employers to support our cared for young people (this number fluctuates throughout the year).
- Improved attendance and timely completion of PEPs – 301 PEPs were completed in the 2022/2023 academic year with 98% rated as Good.
- Improved liaison with SEN caseworkers - 25% of the cohort had an EHCP and 22% were SEN Support.

## Share Good Practice Regionally and Nationally

- Post 16 Leads met with Durham and Northumberland colleagues who are also amongst the pilot authorities for the new Pupil Premium Post 16 Grant, to discuss best practice and challenges in the Post 16 landscape.
- Sunderland Casework Leads have set up a regional Post 16 steering group for Virtual schools which meets on a termly basis, with all 14 North East Virtual Schools involved
- Positive outcomes from the steering group include the sharing of ESOL provision for our young people who live in neighbouring authorities; closer working links to support with complex young people across borders
- Information on Northeast college and summer activities shared for young people throughout the region, good practice shared relating to transition and SEND.
- The Casework Lead also attends the National Post 16 Steering Group and has been asked to take on the role of Regional Lead for Northeast region.

## Transition Support for Year 11 into Post 16 Pathways

- VS Transition Mentor role focuses on Y11 students at risk of NEET, to support their transition onto Post 16 provision and continues in the first term of Year 12.
- Transition Mentor has developed strong links with young people, schools, TfC Careers Team, secondary caseworkers, and carers to support Year 11s with preparation for transition, including support to open days and making applications.
- A high percentage of Year 11s had clear Post 16 plans in place and the Transition Mentor supported with their enrolment at colleges in Year 12
- Developed retention spreadsheet which is regularly reviewed at Post 16 one to one meetings, identifying patterns of engagement and barriers to learning.
- Introduced Education Review meetings for Year 13's who have turned 18 before the end of the academic year to meet with Personal Assistants and support with transition to Year 14
- Positive impact of transition work is demonstrated by the improvement in retention figures for Year 12s. The Year 12 pilot cohort for 2022/23 contained 60 young people



	Nov 2022	July 2023
Further Education	34	31
Training	7	13
Employment	1	3
Apprenticeship	2	2
NEET	16	11

## NEET Reduction

- All students have PEPs and are supported to maintain engagement in Education, Employment and Training

	Jun-20	Jun-21	Jun-22	Jun-23
EET	50%	66%	72%	80%
NEET	50%	33%	28%	20%

- Post 16 Caseworkers offer NEET mentoring and support tailored to meet the needs of each cared for young person who is not in education, employment, or training.
- At the end of the academic year 2022/23, NEET figures were the lowest they have been since Post 16 Caseworkers came into post.
- 17% of 16/17-year-olds are NEET, with a participation rate of 73% remaining in Education or Training
- NEET mentoring involves home visits to offer information, advice and guidance, multi-agency working to support, exploring options, accompanying on visits to local providers, interview preparation and in some case creating bespoke programmes to meet the needs of the individual that cannot be met by mainstream provision.
- Casework Leads have established a multi-agency NEET Support Panel to review young people who are not in education, employment or training or complex cases at risk of becoming NEET to ensure they have wrap around support, advice, and guidance to improve retention (see below).
- Joint working between Virtual School, Next Steps, Careers/Positive Activities Co-ordinator, and College has improved significantly.
- Post 16 Casework Leads have been working from Stanfield Centre one day per week since November 2022, this has enabled more joint working with social care.
- Transition Mentor is meeting with young people in their college setting and also offers to meet at their preferred venue.

## Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

- The Virtual School have responded to local need due to the increase in UASC post 16 students, we have a small but growing cohort of 29 young people.

- Many of our young people are living in areas outside of the North East which increases the challenges of obtaining appropriate ESOL provision.
- Every UASC young person is provided with a laptop, and referred for Flash Academy (language and learning assessment), online ESOL tuition and FE provision, and has an initial PEP within 20 days of entering our care.
- During the year 18 laptops were issued, 15 young people engaged with Flash Academy, 5 engaged with TLC live online tuition, and 2 engaged with Targeted Provision one to one tuition.
- 9 UASC young people engaged in tuition over the summer holidays.
- The VS Associate Teachers delivered in the young people's homes, in settings including Monument View, YMCAs in Sunderland and Chester le Street and Harbour View.
- Due to an increase in UASC, with a wide variety of educational experiences and prior learning, the Virtual School are in the process of exploring a new Vocational study programme to meet the needs of this group of learners.
- 3 young people have visited Springboard provision to explore this as a Vocational option and are awaiting taster sessions and a further 2 young people have offers to start a full-time study programme with ESOL support provided by the Virtual School.

#### Raising Aspirations for Care Experienced 18 year olds

- Work is ongoing with the Next Steps Personal Advisor Team to share Higher Education opportunities and joint working to support HE aspirations through the Choices Together Programme and Regional Pilot to support care experienced students from FE to HE.
- Post 16 Caseworkers attend Northeast Raising Aspiration Partnership and the Care Experienced Student Steering Group.
- Regular meetings with NERAP and caseworkers support and refer cared for Young People to the Choices Together programme to raise aspirations and promote Higher Education.
- Virtual School & Next Steps jointly fund travel to university open days.
- Post 16 Caseworkers continue to support Y13 young people after they turn 18, when they are accessing Further Education, and hold education reviews to monitor progress and plans for progression.

## **4 Recommendations**

- 4.1 Committee are asked to note the content of the report.

## CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29 FEBRUARY 2024

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023-2024

#### REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT COORDINATOR

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The report sets out for members' consideration the work programme of the Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The work programme is designed to set out the key issues to be addressed by the Committee during the year and provide it with a timetable of work. The Committee itself is responsible for setting its own work programme, subject to the coordinating role of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.
- 2.2 The work programme is intended to be a working document which Committee can develop throughout the year, allowing it to maintain an overview of work planned and undertaken during the Council year.
- 2.3 In order to ensure that the Committee is able to undertake all of its business and respond to emerging issues, there will be scope for additional meetings or visits not detailed in the work programme.
- 2.4 In delivering its work programme the Committee will support the Council in achieving its corporate outcomes.

#### **3. Current position**

- 3.1 The current work programme is attached as an appendix to this report.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The work programme is intended to be a flexible mechanism for managing the work of the Committee in 2023-24.

#### **5 Recommendation**

- 5.1 That Members note the information contained in the work programme.

Contact: Gillian Robinson, Scrutiny and Members' Support Co-ordinator

REASON FOR INCLUSION	8 JUNE 23 (INFORMAL MEETING)	6 JULY 23	7 SEPT 23	5 OCT 23	2 NOV 23	30 NOV 23	11 JAN 24	1 FEB 24	29 FEB 24	18 APRIL 24
<b>Policy Framework/ Cabinet Referrals and Responses</b>										Scrutiny Annual Report – 23/24
<b>Scrutiny Business</b>	Work Programme 2023/24	Fostering Pathfinder (Majella McCarthy)	Respite Care Services (Jill Colbert)	Joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to children and families who need help (Jill Colbert)  Youth Justice Plan 2021-24 – Update (Linda Mason)	Short Break – Update (Jill Colbert)  Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Sharon Wills)	Sunderland Healthy Related Behaviour Study Report (Jennifer Green/Ryan Houghton)	Early Help Update (Karen Davison)  Short Break – Update (Jill Colbert)	Wraparound Child Care – Implementation Update (Simon Marshall)  Schools Attendance (Simon Marshall)	SEND – Update (Pamela Robertson)  Vulnerable Pupil Update from the Virtual School (Simon Marshall)	Apprenticeships/T Level Qualification (Iain Nixon/Judith Quinn Sunderland College)  Child and Adolescent Mental Health (Scott Watson)  Elective Home Education (Karen Davison)
<b>Performance / Service Improvement</b>		Children Services Customer Feedback – Annual Report (Stacey Hodgkinson)		TfC Meaningful Measures Performance Report (Jill Colbert/Stacey Hodgkinson)		Children Services Customer Feedback (Stacey Hodgkinson)	TfC Meaningful Measures Performance Report (Jill Colbert/Stacey Hodgkinson)			TfC Meaningful Measures Performance Report (Stacey Hodgkinson)
<b>Consultation / Awareness Raising</b>		Notice of Key Decisions  Work Programme	Notice of Key Decisions  Work Programme	Notice of Key Decisions  Work Programme	Notice of Key Decisions  Work Programme	Notice of Key Decisions  Work Programme	Notice of Key Decisions  Work Programme	Notice of Key Decisions  Work Programme	Notice of Key Decisions  Work Programme	

**To Schedule**

## CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS

#### REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY MAYORAL AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT CO-ORDINATOR

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an opportunity to consider the items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions.

#### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Holding the Executive to account is one of the main functions of Scrutiny. One of the ways that this can be achieved is by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive (as outlined in the Notice of Key Decisions) and deciding whether Scrutiny can add value in advance of the decision being made. This does not negate Non-Executive Members ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.
- 2.2 To this end, the most recent version of the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions is included on the agenda of this Committee. The Notice of Key Decisions is attached marked **Appendix 1**.

#### 3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 In considering the Notice of Key Decisions, Members are asked to consider only those issues where the Scrutiny Committee or relevant Scrutiny Panel could make a contribution which would add value prior to the decision being taken.
- 3.2 In the event of Members having any queries that cannot be dealt with directly in the meeting, a response will be sought from the relevant Directorate.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 To consider the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions at the Scrutiny Committee meeting.

#### 5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Cabinet Agenda
-

Notice is given of the following proposed Key Decisions (whether proposed to be taken in public or in private) and of Executive Decisions including key decisions) intended to be considered in a private meeting: -

Item no.	Matter in respect of which a decision is to be made	Decision-maker (if individual, name and title, if body, its name and see below for list of members)	Key Decision Y/N	Anticipated date of decision/ period in which the decision is to be taken	Private meeting Y/N	Reasons for the meeting to be held in private	Documents submitted to the decision-maker in relation to the matter*	Address to obtain further information
221006/744	To seek agreement to enter into the Northumbria Road Safety Initiative Partnership and Collaboration Agreement.	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
220207/690	To approve the sale of the former Alex Smiles site and to undertake required remedial works.	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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220524/714	To agree to the grant of an option to sell property at Richmond Street, Sheepfolds, Sunderland.	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
221110/753	To seek approval for the Disposal of an Industrial Property in Washington.	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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230428/799	To seek approval for Housing Strategy for Sunderland 2023 - 2030	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
230818/831	To update Cabinet on the Masterplan proposals for High Street West, Sunderland and to seek approval to appoint a Multi-disciplinary Design Team to progress the feasibility, design and planning work to develop the Project.	Cabinet	Yes	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
230927/840	To Seek Cabinet Approval for the Siglion Business Plan	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>



						public interest in disclosing the information.		
Item no.	Matter in respect of which a decision is to be made	Decision-maker (if individual, name and title, if body, its name and see below for list of members)	Key Decision Y/N	Anticipated date of decision/ period in which the decision is to be taken	Private meeting Y/N	Reasons for the meeting to be held in private	Documents submitted to the decision-maker in relation to the matter*	Address to obtain further information
231116/856	To consider Housing Investment and Delivery Plan Housing Disposals	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
231120/857	To approve works to address storm damage to pier	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
231211/863	To provide an update on the former Civic Centre site	Cabinet	Y	During the period 31 January to 31 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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240108/867	To approve the Community Asset Transfer Policy	Cabinet	N	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240115/868	To seek approval to the partnership with Salvation Army in the creation of a Homeless Hub	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240116/869	To consider the review of Public Spaces Protection Orders	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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240118/870	To procure a developer for the Sheepfolds Neighbourhood of Riverside Sunderland	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240119/871	To seek approval to enter into a new operating agreement with Sunderland BID Ltd for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2029	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240119/872	To seek acknowledgement of the Homes England Compliance Report	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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240122/873	To receive an update on Sunnyside Regeneration Activity and to approve the Sunnyside Place Strategy	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240122/874	To procure consultants to deliver the Sunnyside Place Strategy	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240122/875	To provide an update on the delivery proposals for Riverside Park Sunderland and seek authority to proceed with procurement and construction of the first phases of work	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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240126/876	To consider the updated Local Welfare Provision Policy and Discretionary Housing Payment Policy	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240201/877	To seek approval to procure works and award contracts for construction of a new school building for Thorney Close Primary School	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240201/878	To seek approval for the proposed maintained school admission arrangements for the academic year September 2025-2026	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240202/879	To approve Council Tax Premiums and Discounts	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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240205/880	To approve the Highways Maintenance (including Bridges) and Integrated Transport Capital Programme 2024-2025	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240205/881	To seek approval to procure training providers to deliver the devolved Adult Education Budget – academic year 2024/2025	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240205/882	To seek approval to receive external funding to develop new sport and physical activity 'playZones' across the city.	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Governance Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240206/883	To seek approval to award funding to Third Sector organisations providing social care related services	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Governance Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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240208/884	To seek Cabinet approval for the letting of buildings at Hillthorn Business Park and Washington Road	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240208/885	To seek approval to transfer external grant funding to SLM to support additional revenue and capital costs incurred at the Hetton Community Pool and Wellness Centre	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Governance Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

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240208/886	To approve a delivery model for the provision of Biodiversity Net Gain ("BNG") including the use of Council owned land and the passporting of monies secured from third parties for the delivery of BNG.	Cabinet	Y	14 March 2024	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet Report	Democratic Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
240209/887	To seek approval to procure and appoint an Electric Vehicle Charge-point Operator to deliver Residential Community Charging Hubs	Cabinet	Y	During the period 14 March to 30 June 2024	N	N/A	Cabinet Report	Governance Services City Hall Plater Way Sunderland SR1 3AA  <a href="mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk">committees@sunderland.gov.uk</a>

**Note;** Some of the documents listed may not be available if they are subject to an exemption, prohibition or restriction on disclosure.

Further documents relevant to the matters to be decided can be submitted to the decision-maker. If you wish to request details of those documents (if any) as they become available, or to submit representations about a proposal to hold a meeting in private, you should contact Democratic Services at the address below.

Subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure, copies of documents submitted to the decision-maker can also be obtained from the Democratic Services team City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, or by email to [committees@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:committees@sunderland.gov.uk)

**\*Other documents relevant to the matter may be submitted to the decision maker and requests for details of these documents should be submitted to Democratic Services at the address given above.**



**Who will decide;**

Councillor Graeme Miller – Leader; Councillor Claire Rowntree – Deputy Leader & Clean Green City; Councillor Paul Stewart - Cabinet Secretary; Councillor Kelly Chequer – Healthy City; Councillor Kevin Johnston – Dynamic City; Councillor John Price – Vibrant City; Councillor Linda Williams – Children, Education and Skills.

This is the membership of Cabinet as at the date of this notice. Any changes will be specified on a supplementary notice.

Elaine Waugh,  
Assistant Director of Law and Governance

14 February 2024