

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

**Report to:** Pandemic Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
**Report for:** Information  
**Report of:** Director of Education, Standards, Quality and Performance

### Report Title

**Impact of COVID 19 on schools in Trafford.**

### Summary

**This report provides a response to questions raised regarding the impact of Covid 19 on attendance in schools and the support that has been provided by council officers.**

### Recommendation(s)

**That the Pandemic Scrutiny Committee note the report.**

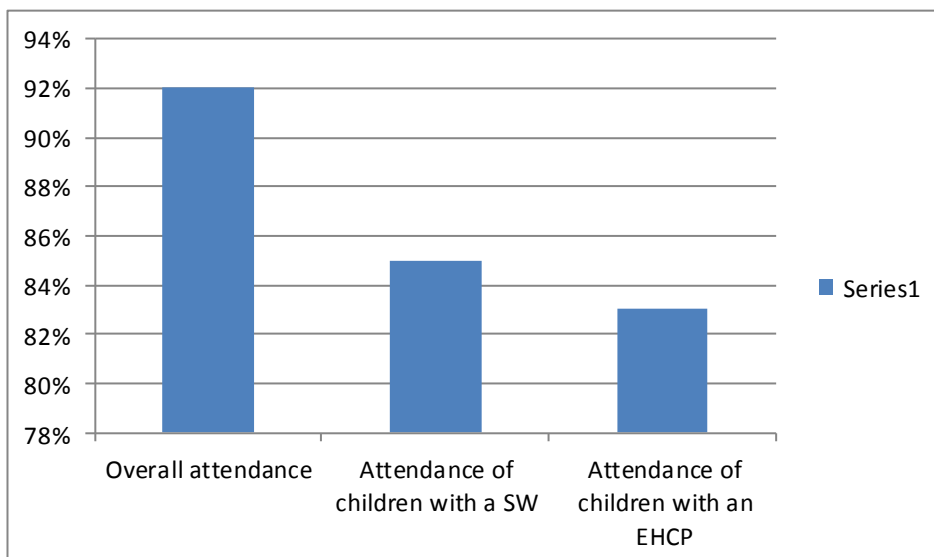
Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Karen Samples

## 1.0 Attendance figures for Trafford schools

The following attendance data is taken from 'View Your Education Data' published each working day with regard to the previous day. The data is informed by submissions to DfE directly from schools and as this is not mandatory, it does not reflect a true picture of attendance overall as some schools do not complete the return.

The data shared below, reflects the position of the authority when there were a higher proportion of returns on 6th November.



The comparative data position across Greater Manchester on 10<sup>th</sup> November places Trafford as one of the highest ranking local authorities and above the overall data for region.

Attendance	Trafford	Greater Manchester
Overall	91%	85%
Pupils with an EHCP	85%	79%
Pupils with a social worker	83%	80%

As you can see, attendance across all pupils remains strong in Trafford, despite the ongoing prevalence of COVID cases in our settings.

## 2.0 The number of bubbles that have been sent home

The number of schools and pupils affected by Covid cases are as follows:

- Number of schools: 90 excluding Independent/Prep Schools (93 including Independent/Prep Schools)
- Numbers of cases in pupils: Early Years 6, Primary 102, Secondary 268
- Number of pupils in isolation: Early Years 189, Primary 3262, Secondary 5754 (NB Some cases have contacts crossover, and some classes have isolated on more than 1 occasion).
- Number of staff cases: 225

## 3.0 Number of mental health referrals coming from schools and whether there has been any impact from the second lockdown

The latest data available from services reflects the period from July to September, so this covers the first month our Trafford pupils returned to school.

Trafford Commissioned Mental Health Service:	No. of referrals made by schools in Q2	Total No. of referrals received in Q2	Percentage (%) of referrals made by schools
<b>CAMHS</b>	13	197	7%
<b>42<sup>nd</sup> Street</b>	8	33	23%
<b>Trafford Sunrise</b>	5	47	11%
<b>Kooth</b>	72	183	39%

#### **4.0 Trafford's position regarding free school meals**

During the October half term, Trafford officers established a system for families to access vouchers for free school meals. Our data shows 3727 vouchers were issued with 200 pupils who weren't previously claiming FSM for a variety of reasons, being identified through the support of the Family Information Service, which is a tremendous outcome.

Most of the families were supported through the online system where a voucher was generated based on their eligibility and also matched with school census data. Where there were any complications, the team looked into each case personally, carrying out an eligibility check and in some cases a manual check, in order to ensure families were receiving their full entitlement.

Our outreach service has been actively taking vouchers to nominated community hubs for families who were unable to access them through an email system or who may not have access to internet.

The whole of the Family Information Service have been instrumental in ensuring families access their FSM support. We are now in the process of contacting schools to ensure that families who have not come through the application process are accessing their entitlement too. Schools that may not have been aware of a pupil's eligibility are also now checking entitlements to Pupil Premium for these children.

#### **5.0 Additional support being offered to schools during lockdown**

Schools are continuing to be supported throughout lockdown as previously, as there have been no changes to the provision of education and pupils are expected to attend. Therefore, Education Managers continue to assume the role of Cluster Liaison Officers, supporting schools in geographical clusters, alongside colleagues from Children's Social Care and School Nursing. This allows every school to have a single point of contact and forges a Covid-19 bridge between schools and Children's Services.

#### **School Engagement**

The Cluster Liaison structure provides an essential communication pathway linking in local information from school communities with Council wide and national information and guidance. Each of the Cluster Liaisons initially had daily, then weekly contact with Headteachers, to gather views, share consistent key messages and to discuss key items in the fortnightly education briefings led by the Director Education Standards.

Weekly briefings are issued with content covering all aspects of educational provision. These briefings share external links to essential guidance documents and recommended reading, as well as advice that would be useful for staff, pupils and parents/carers. Additionally, sets of "Frequently Asked Questions" are produced by Education Managers, working with Council and Public Health partners e.g. Health and Safety and HR.

Working in this way has helped to create stronger links between the School Improvement Service and other Education Managers with the delivery of both operational and strategic elements, which has been helpful in allowing schools to hear consistent messages. The regular meetings have given Headteachers more opportunities to ask questions, connect with Education Managers and to express their views.

During the Summer Term and into the Autumn Term a suite of documents has been issued to all schools to aide their full reopening and curriculum recovery. Schools have reported that these have been invaluable resources that have helped schools quickly get back on their feet and close gaps in learning. Schools have needed to be supported in new approaches to data analysis, leadership at all levels and curriculum adjustment to ensure that children and young people are recovering any lost ground as quickly as possible. There will be a particularly sharply focused in in Year 1 where children missed a full term of the EYFS and statutory assessment years where there may be curriculum adjustments required ensuring key knowledge and skills are supported.

Below is an example of a model and themes of the recovery rationale (emotional/social and academic) recommended to schools. Early indications demonstrate that this model is having success in Trafford's schools and the targeted approach to development planning is allowing schools to close gaps and move forwards.

1. Ensure pupils/students and staff are safe and feel safe.
2. Support and promote mental health and wellbeing of pupils/students and staff.
3. Engage and motivate pupils/students to learn and re-engage with parents and the wider community.
4. Identify significant gaps and provide learning sequences and opportunities which address them.
5. Prioritise the curriculum content which is most important for pupils/students.



### **Health and wellbeing support**

The health and wellbeing of school communities has been at the heart of planning and delivery of education during the school closure period. A Mental Wealth sub-group includes a range of officers from across education, health, social care and commissioning to develop

a strategic approach to supporting children, families and schools and a suite of resources and support material has been produced.

The council has received £33,363.00 through the Wellbeing in Education Grant. This seeks to better equip education settings to support pupils and students' wellbeing and psychosocial recovery as they have returned to full-time education this autumn.

Four officers from across education and health have received the training offered and this will help to complement what is already in place. This term has seen many successes in the reintegration of the vast majority of pupils into school life and schools report that the recovery materials have supported this.

### **Public Health Training**

Fortnightly question and answer sessions take place for Headteachers of all schools by Public Health colleagues which are invaluable support sessions and enable School Leaders to be supported as they review their risk assessments and work through specific scenarios. As schools deal with the daily challenges of managing covid cases and business continuity issues, colleagues liaise with them to provide the right advice, manage contact tracing and assist with communications.

Outbreak Control Meetings are held in the event of schools managing a significant number of cases and colleagues from across the council attend to support the settings. Schools have been unanimous in their appreciation of the work of our Public Health teams