

Education Access Service

- Pupil Attendance
- Pupil Exclusions and Behaviour
- Vulnerable Learners
- Children Missing Education
- Elective Home Education (EHE)
- Safeguarding
- Operation Encompass (Domestic Abuse)
- Syrian Refugee Education Support
- Child Employment & Performance Licensing

EAS statistics, 23 March – 5 June 2020

- 24 people in the team, equating to 18.4 full time equivalent posts.
- **2043** 'core' attendance/welfare and behaviour cases remain open to EAS Officers since lockdown.
- The EAS team has worked with an **additional 468 families** since lockdown.
- **35** Syrian Refugee children and their families have been supported by the team's Refugee Education Support Assistant during lockdown.
- The service is responsible for monitoring children who are electively home educated (EHE). **45** families have been contacted directly during lockdown so far.
- **35** Children Missing Education (CME) have been traced.

Covid-19 Service Continuity & Response

- At point of lockdown, pupils open to EAS immediately RAG rated by Officers to ensure that these vulnerable children were listed on the school's RAG rating return to the LA.
- Where the assessed level of risk means that the child ought to attend school but parents/carers do not send them, the Education Access Team is engaged to work with agencies to resolve the issues presenting barriers to that child's attendance.
- Teams involved with assessment and securing a vulnerable child's attendance include staff from educational settings, Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education Welfare, SEND and Health.
- Education Welfare Officers are in daily contact with school staff, supporting the contact of vulnerable pupils including home visits to check on welfare.
- EAS Officers are supporting parents and carers through offering guidance and promoting contact with schools. We signpost to agencies that can offer support (Covid-19 helpline, food bank referrals, housing support).

- Education Welfare Officers provide expert advice and guidance to schools about recording pupil absence in the current situation.
- There has been a continuation of Pupil Planning Meetings through lockdown; these have been held virtually.
- Increased time allocation to the daily domestic abuse triage sessions and Operation Encompass.
- Virtual Pupil Disciplinary Committee meetings have been convened to assist with timely responses to the Exclusion process.
- Specialist Placement and Fair Access Panels have continued to ensure that school placements are identified and plans remain in place to support vulnerable learners.
- Continuing participation in Exploitation triage meetings and Panels. Due to demand for triage, additional time has been allocated to allow for bi-weekly meetings.
- EAS Officers to support parents with the new Schools Admissions Appeal process.

- The Education Access team have continued to participate in strategy meetings, child protection conferences and Early Help meetings.
- The service has collated all school risk assessments of vulnerable pupils for the LA and undertakes ongoing monitoring of entries.
- Officers attend MARAC to share relevant pupil information following conversations with school Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- A Covid 19 safeguarding addendum has been developed by the Education Access Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Development Officer (EIS). This was circulated to all schools on 2 April 2020 to provide advice and guidance to supplement school's safeguarding and child protection policies already in place and will be updated as required.
- A Covid 19 Behaviour addendum policy has been developed by the Education Access Service and circulated to all schools. This policy reflects government guidance and is under regular review . It provides advice and guidance to supplement current Behaviour policies that are in place.

- School Safeguarding virtual ‘drop in’ sessions have been established. These sessions provide a multi-agency collaborative and supportive network for all Shropshire schools to share safeguarding practice and information in light of the Covid 19 Pandemic. They are scheduled to take place on a weekly basis and will run until further notice.
- The EAS Manager represents Learning & Skills on the Coronavirus Community Response group.
- EAS Officers are part of the Mental Health Task and Finish Group convened through the Coronavirus Community Response group.
- All key responsibilities and current statutory functions continue to be met.

Case study related specifically to Corona Virus pandemic

On 21 April 2020 the headteacher of a small, rural school reported to EAS that the parents of three children were frequently breaching lockdown rules as mother couldn't cope with having the children at home. Year 6 child has challenging behaviour but the children were not originally assessed as being in the 'vulnerable' category for a school place.

The EAS Safeguarding Officer arranged and chaired a meeting involving mother and the school on 22 April 2020. Agreed children should attend school as parents struggling/heightened risks. Parent admitted breaching lockdown rules – police had been involved with case and have been monitoring daily. Liaison with police took place to obtain further information.

Further meeting (Early Help Planning) held on 24 April 2020.

Outcomes:

- Parents agreed to adhere to lockdown rules and self-isolate for 14 days.
- Parents provided with activities for the children and Targeted Early Help Workers engaged to provide parenting support.
- Children to attend school from end of self-isolation period.
(Actions successful, children in school as planned and continue to attend.)