

Cabinet Response to Children's Readiness for School Scrutiny Recommendations Completed Action Plan

Cabinet response to Children, Education and Skills Committee report on *Children's Readiness for School*

In accordance with Section 122 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Cabinet are required to provide a response to the recommendations of the Committee within 2 months. In providing this response Cabinet are asked to state whether or not it accepts each recommendation and the reasons for this decision. Cabinet must also indicate what action, if any, it proposes to take.

Recommendation	Officer Commentary	Cabinet Decision (Accept or reject)	Action to be taken (if any) and timescale for completion
<p>1. Cabinet requests that the Director of Children's and Adult Services considers improving communication between the Council, schools, and private nurseries in relation to early help and being ready for school.</p>	<p>A number of recent developments across the Authority's services will assist with responding to this recommendation.</p> <p>A recently recruited Ready for School Improvement Officer post works across a range of partners to support children to be 'school ready', with communication and engagement across key partners, including the Authority, schools and private nurseries a key part of the role.</p> <p>In addition, the School Improvement Service has recently appointed to the Early Years SENCO post, with part of this role being to support early years settings with regard to children with SEND.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Develop and deliver a comprehensive communication plan to launch the new Prevention & Early help Strategy. This will increase awareness of the services and support offer across the partnership.</p> <p>This will be carried out in May and June 2021.</p>

	<p>We have also increased the capacity of the Early Years Manager in the early help service to further develop this work.</p> <p>We have recently reviewed and updated our Prevention & Early help Strategy (2021 -2024). We plan to launch the strategy between May and June and as part of the launch we will develop a comprehensive communications plan.</p>		
<p>2. Cabinet requests the Director of Children’s and Adult Services to consider simplifying the early help assessment process, so it is less time consuming and bureaucratic for schools and private nurseries or provides adequate help to schools and private nurseries in completing the early help assessment process.</p>	<p>The Early Help Assessment (EHA) is a short, 3-page document, which was developed with partners, and has been reviewed with partners to ensure it meets everyone’s needs.</p> <p>A significant proportion of the role of Early Help Coordinators is to assist partners with the Early Help Assessment process.</p> <p>In addition to early help, there are specific processes and requirements in order to access early years-specific funding and resources. This is unrelated to the EHA process.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>It is proposed that further communication is undertaken with early years providers and settings to ensure the respective Early Help Assessment and early years funding and resources processes and requirements are understood.</p> <p>This will be carried out in April 2021.</p>
		<p>Accept</p>	

<p>3. Cabinet requests that the Director of Children's and Adult Services provides more help to schools and private nurseries for toilet training, including for children without special needs.</p>	<p>The key focus is on ensuring parents that would benefit from support in these areas are aware of, and have access to, this support.</p> <p>New approaches have been developed over the past year to enhance the support model, including online/virtual information and support, which is available to all parents. In addition, bespoke support is available for our most vulnerable parents, where needed.</p>		<p>All partners, including schools and private nurseries, will receive information and materials regarding available support so that parents are aware of what is available.</p> <p>This will be carried out in April 2021.</p>
<p>4. Cabinet requests that the Director of Children's and Adult Services provides more help and encouragement for parents and carers in accessing early help information and services, including help for toilet training, language development, and accessing online educational material for children.</p>	<p>The online information /sessions have been developed by the Early Years Manager in Early Help, in partnership with 0-19 Public Health team.</p> <p>They are currently being piloted with the parents registered with the Ready for School Centre in online sessions. Topics specifically cover "Helping your child talk" and "Toilet Training" amongst other child development/parenting issues.</p> <p>Parents have reported them to be easy to understand and the strategies useful. The 0-19 team have also developed a direct text service, so parents can text any questions or ask advice; parents are responded to directly by the Health Visitors.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Pilot sessions to be mainstreamed on both the RFS and Childrens Centre Facebook pages, with the option to join virtual group sessions or face to face options, dependant on Covid restrictions.</p> <p>This will be fully in place by August 2021</p> <p>Parenting sessions to be offered to all new parents attending the Ready for School Centre on a rolling basis.</p> <p>Action from April 2021.</p>

<p>5. Cabinet requests that the Director of Children's and Adult Services consults with parents, schools, and private nurseries about early help and being ready for school, including a focus on the size and distribution of any problems in North Tyneside. The findings of this consultation are to be shared with Cabinet and all Elected Members</p>	<p>We have recently entered into a partnership with York St John University to evaluate the Ready for School Offer. As part of this evaluation a needs assessment will be undertaken, and consultation completed with families and key stakeholders.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>External evaluation of the Ready for School offer to be commenced, including an assessment of need across the Authority and consultation with families and key stakeholders, in order to inform future service development.</p> <p>This will be completed by March 2022.</p>
<p>6. Cabinet requests that the Elected Mayor writes to the Secretary of State for Education asking for more funding and resources for local government for early help to ensure all children are ready for school.</p>		<p>Accept</p>	