

Children and Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children and Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday 12th November 2025.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark (Chair), Cllr Barbara Inman (Vice-Chair), Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Sally Ann Watson and Cllr Katie Weston

Officers: Majella McCarthy, Vanessa Housley, Elisha Dyball, Sharon Stevens, Claire Tiffany, Judy Trainer and Junita Agyapong

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr David Reynard

CYP/26/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CYP/27/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests recorded.

CYP/28/25 Minutes

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CYP/29/25 Scrutiny Review of Additionally Resourced SEND Provision -Feedback from School Visits

Select Committee Members had visited the following schools with ARP provision:

- St John the Baptist Primary
- Billingham South Primary
- North Shore Academy
- Bishopsgarth Academy

Select Committee Members observed the following at the schools visited:

- A strong emphasis on inclusion which benefited the children with SEND but also the other children at the school.
- All children were included on school trips irrespective of disability.
- Efforts were made to integrate the SEND children as far as possible in mainstream activities and teaching
- There was a strong praise culture in the schools visited and high expectations
- Steps were taken to removing barriers to learning and there was a calm atmosphere at all the schools visited
- A child centred approach was in place with children grouped by ability not age
- At primary there was a lot of sensory activity

- Bishopsgarth Academy employed primary phase teachers with particular expertise to support SEND children
- Billingham South Primary and North Shore Academy had satellite provision for Special Schools

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the Government's SEND White Paper expected to be released in autumn 2025 was now likely to be released in the New Year. The Select Committee's review would now be paused to understand the implications of the White Paper with work resuming in the New Year.

AGREED that the information be noted.

CYP/30/25 Scrutiny Review of Children Not in School

The Select Committee received an introductory presentation which covered the categories of Children not in School:

- School Absence
- Pupils accessing part time education - Definition – The amount of education expected that a pupil accesses each week is usually based on 25 hours. There is no legal definition in England of exact hours for each age group
- Pupils accessing non-school alternative provision (NSAP) - Definition - Alternative provision (AP) is education outside school, arranged by local authorities or schools, for pupils who do not attend mainstream school for reasons such as school exclusion, behaviour issues, school refusal, or short- or long-term illness
- Pupils accessing Home and Hospital Tuition - Definition - where a child cannot attend school because of a physical or mental health need, and cannot access suitable full-time education, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable alternative provision
- Pupils who are Electively Home Educated (EHE) - Definition - Elective home education is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of sending them to school full-time
- Pupils who are Children Missing Education (CME) - Definition - CME are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school
- Children who receive Education Other than at school (EOTAS) - Definition - Education other than at school means the education or special educational provision of children or young people outside of a formal educational setting
- Pupils who have moved into the Borough and are awaiting a school place

Key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- The service was working more closely with parents of elective home educated children to build relationships
- Where a child was home educated, they could return to state provision whenever they wished
- Improvement in attendance at schools with ARP provision would be assessed after the first term of operation. It was known that attendance was higher at special schools
- The legacy of Covid was still having an impact on attendance at school. Absence due to mental health was also increasing

- Examples of non-school alternative provision included Billingham Boxing Club and Tutor Trend
- Children missing education was recorded for absences of 3 weeks or more; the absence was quite often due to house moves
- Where a child was not English speaking, they would be educated in main stream schools with appropriate support
- For home and hospital tuition, the service would respond as soon as they received notification; a child could be referred after missing 15 school days. There must also be medical evidence that the pupils is too unwell to attend school from a suitably qualified medical professional
- Absence was highest in KS4

AGREED that the information be noted.

CYP/31/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme

AGREED that the work programme be noted.

Chair: