

Children and Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children and Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday 14th January 2026.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark (Chair), Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Lynn Hall (sub for Cllr David Reynard), Cllr Barbara Inman (Vice-Chair), Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Emily Tate and Cllr Katie Weston

Officers: Vanessa Housley, Elisha Dyball, Sharon Stevens, Claire Tiffany, Amit Law and Judy Trainer

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr David Reynard and Cllr Sally Ann Watson

CYP/38/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CYP/39/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests recorded.

CYP/40/25 Minutes

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

CYP/41/25 Monitoring - Scrutiny Review of Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment

The Select Committee received progress updates in relation to its previous review of Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment.

The review had been carried out using an Appreciative Inquiry Approach. The benefit of the approach had been in the awareness raising of the issues. It had also brought all stakeholders together at events and secured support for agreed objectives and future action.

The Select Committee received progress updates in relation to the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1 Improve attendance

Support schools to improve attendance:

- Encourage school leaders' use of the Attendance Self Evaluation Toolkit to identify what is working well, and areas which could be developed
- Promote an inclusive and relevant curriculum - where a young person wants to attend
- Work with the Team Around the School Service.
- Ensure that schools are equipped to deal with health issues.

- Identify individual barriers to attendance to better target support and intervention with specific reference to young carers

Key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- A range of actions were being introduced which sought to ensure greater consistency in attendance management practice
- Attendance was improving across all schools and phases. Further details would be included in the forthcoming Cabinet report on vulnerable groups
- A strengthened careers offer sought to drive forward aspirations and engagement

Recommendation 2

Forge positive relationships

Ensure that school culture proactively forges positive relationships between pupils, staff and parent/ carers:

- Promote respectful behaviours from all partners including teachers.
- Involve parents in school life.
- Extend opportunities for enhanced transition.

Key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- Recruitment to Transitions Team was now complete and Health and Care Lead had been appointed
- To support continuous professional development, a training programme and transitions workshops were scheduled

Recommendation 5

Managing emotions

Strengthen environment and opportunities for pupils to manage emotions:

- Engage with the Healthy Schools Programme and Healthy Settings Programme
- Design and delivery of courses to meet pupil need and support parents, with specific reference to:
 - managing behaviour effectively.
 - supporting mental health and wellbeing – especially to de-escalate heightened behaviour or to reduce stress levels.
 - positive parenting skills.
- Strengthen the use of pupil voice to support development of school environments which better support them to manage their emotions.

Key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- A school support booklet had been drafted and included with the agenda pack for the meeting
- Work going forward would examine learning from best practice and support with mental health

Recommendation 14

Review behaviour policies

Review behaviour policies to ensure that they are appropriate and proportionate and that inclusion policies align with behaviour policies:

- What happens when a young person is removed from the classroom. Where do they go? What teaching takes place?

Key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- An extensive audit of every behaviour policy and its impact on pupils had been carried out. The research was generating interest nationally and revealed that certain factors were critical to have in a policy, including clear pupil expectations and support with emotional, social and mental health wellbeing
- The outcome of the research had been shared with senior leaders and would be shared with all schools
- It was acknowledged that practice as well as policy needed to be considered
- Some schools had higher exclusion rates but there wasn't a geographical pattern
- Pupil voice from the Appreciative Inquiry had emphasised the importance of the quality of relationships and the need for pupils to feel respected

AGREED that the updates be noted and assessments of progress be confirmed.

CYP/42/25 Scrutiny Review of Children Not in School

As part of their review of Children Not in School, the Select Committee received further evidence in respect of children falling under the categories of Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS) and Alternative Provision (AP).

The Education Other Than at School Process booklet had been circulated to the Select Committee with the agenda for the meeting.

The Select Committee received a presentation which outlined:

Educated Other Than at School

Definition - Education other than at school (EOTAS) means the education or special educational provision of children or young people outside of a formal educational setting

- EOTAS is not Elective Home Education
- EOTAS is provided for under Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which gives local authorities the power to arrange special educational provision outside of a school if they are satisfied that it would be "inappropriate" for the provision to be made in a school or college setting.
- Responsibility and Funding: If EOTAS is agreed upon, the local authority remains legally responsible for securing and funding the provision.

Who Accesses EOTAS?

- Children with special educational needs who cannot access any educational setting owing to their needs
- Small minority of children with the most complex needs
- Agreed by SENDMAP based on evidence
- Monitored by both SEND and Vulnerable Learners Teams – November 2025 process

Numbers of EOTAS

- 7 children currently in Stockton who are registered as EOTAS
- 4 ordered by or as a result of the SEND Tribunal Service
- 3 agreed by the service via its SENDMAP, decision making panel
- Short term intervention

Alternative Provision

What is Alternative Provision?

- Alternative Provision (AP) refers to education arranged for pupils who cannot attend mainstream school for reasons such as exclusion, illness, or other circumstances
- It provides tailored learning in settings like pupil referral units, specialist schools, or independent providers, ensuring students continue to receive education suited to their needs

Non School Alternative Provision

- There are many Non School Alternative Provisions (NSAP's) that schools and the Local Authority can access to support Stockton children. They are able to support pupils from KS1 to post 16. They can provide this in different ways including:
 - Face to face education in a venue
 - Tuition in different venues that are appropriate to the pupil including their home on occasion
 - Online education both live and recorded
 - Therapeutic support for neurodiverse pupils
 - Outdoor and physical activities

Data snapshot Autumn 2025:

- There were 20 requests for AP advice from schools (60% primary and 40% secondary)
- Of the notifications we received in the Autumn term from schools:
 - There were more requests for advice about AP for boys than girls (75% boys and 25% girls)
 - There were 43 pupils who accessed AP from Stockton framework during the Autumn term (86% secondary and 14% primary) and 4 of them returned back to school
 - 14 children who have been permanently excluded this academic year are accessing LA organised AP

Stockton on Tees AP Framework:

- 2021-2023 – First Framework published with a number of providers on. This was used as a school directory for schools to commission providers from an agreed framework. This Framework lasted for 2 years and had 29 providers on the framework at the start
- 2023-2033- A new framework was agreed. It is open for 10 years and has the ability to add new providers if they meet the criteria at regular intervals. Between 2023 and 2025 there were 12 providers on the framework. Following successful applications in summer 2025 there are now 29 providers on the framework
- To be approved on the framework providers must meet a set of criteria and go through a moderation process completed by a number of LA Officers. Once approved all providers will have an annual quality assurance visit. Providers may request to leave the framework or Stockton council can end the agreement if they feel the provider no longer meets the criteria set.

Pathway Development Centres – LA Commissioned AP:

- Short Term provision for children who have been permanently excluded in Key Stage 1-4

- 12 week placements in either a mainstream primary or secondary school or an SEMH special school
- 6 places in total in mainstream primary school
- 10 places in secondary school (from January 2026)
- 80 place Pupil Referral Unit – Bishopton PRU
- 10 places in specialist provision for children with ongoing EHC Needs Assessment

Quality Assurance of AP including Non School AP:

- An annual visit takes place to quality assure alternative provision.
- LA officers who also have qualified teacher status complete the quality assurance of provisions
- Quality assurance involves a visit either face to face or online (if an online provider)
- Providers must also provide documents and a range of up to date policies, e.g. safeguarding certificates, insurance, policies, first aid etc.
- Until recently the QA visit focused on 64 different measures
- Following the publication of the new DFE voluntary standards guidance we have reviewed the QA document. It is now organised into the 4 recommended areas for assurance: Health and Safety, Quality of education, Safeguarding and welfare and Admissions, Guidance and Support
- Whilst some providers have been given further advice to add even further improvements to their provision, only 1 provider (not on the framework) has not achieved a satisfactory quality assurance judgement within the last year

AP Networks:

- Networks happen each half term and attendees include schools, Local Authority Officers, AP providers, parents, health and 3rd sector representatives
- Networks provide national updates and legislation , share good practice and facilitate co production of guidance for stakeholders in Stockton
- A recent network marketplace event saw 14 AP providers attend for a day to meet with schools and talk about what they can offer schools. Feedback was positive from the event from both AP providers and school staff and LA officers
- Feedback from the event praised:
 - Face-to-face conversations and networking.
 - Variety and breadth of providers in one space.
 - High-quality information and clear overviews.
 - Professional, well-organised setup.
 - Bespoke offers tailored to learner needs

AGREED that the information be noted.

CYP/43/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme

AGREED that the work programme be noted.

Chair: