

Newcastle SEND Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) Six-month review meeting



27 April 2023

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Introduction

The [Accelerated Progress Plan](#) (APP) was produced following our SEND inspection revisit in May 2021, it was approved by the DfE and NHS England on 20 August 2021. DfE and NHS England returned to assess our progress in implementing the plan in February 2022 and October 2022 and asked that we demonstrate the following for the 6 monthly review in April 2023.

- The impact of new processes and systems on Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) timeliness.
- Improvement in exclusion and suspension data.
- an update on any delivery support received and further support needed.

Performance scorecard

Our aspiration is that exclusions and suspensions reduce to the national average for England and EHC timeliness increases to the national average.

When we reported in October 2022 we compared our performance to published national data for 2020/21. For our April 2023 update, for suspensions and permanent exclusions, we have compared ourselves with published data from Autumn term 2021/22. We keep our local data under scrutiny as we are determined not to let our progress slip. Current data is causing us concern. Appendix 4 shows anonymised secondary school data that we scrutinised with the Promised Board SEND subgroup leading to an agreement made with schools to prioritise SEMH training (see page 15).

KPI	Baseline	October 2022	April 2023
APP1a % Pupils who were permanently excluded from Newcastle schools is at least in line with the national average.	2018-19, 0.39% of pupils with SEND were permanently excluded from Newcastle schools, which was above the national average of 0.29%. 2019-20, 0.31% of pupils with SEND were permanently excluded from Newcastle schools, which was above the national average of 0.18%	2020-21: 0.14% of pupils with SEND (EHCP and SEN Support combined) were permanently excluded from Newcastle schools which was just above the national average 0.13%.	2021-22 (autumn term): 0.07% of pupils with SEND (EHCP and SEN Support combined) were permanently excluded from Newcastle schools which was below the national average 0.08%.
		Primary EHCP: Newcastle 0.24% were permanently excluded (1 exclusion) above national 0.08%.	Primary EHCP: Newcastle 0.00% were permanently excluded, below the national average 0.05%.
		Primary SEN Support: Newcastle 0.03% were permanently excluded below national 0.04%.	Primary SEN Support: Newcastle 0.00% were permanently excluded, below the national average 0.03%.
		Secondary EHCP: Newcastle 0.00% were permanently excluded below national 0.17%.	Secondary EHCP: Newcastle 0.00% were permanently excluded, below the national average 0.11%.
		Secondary SEN Support: Newcastle 0.33% were permanently excluded above national 0.31%.	Secondary SEN Support: Newcastle 0.22% were permanently excluded, above the national average 0.16%.

KPI	Baseline	October 2022	April 2023
APP1B % Pupils who were excluded from Newcastle schools for a fixed term is at least in line with the national average.	2018-19, 13.9% of pupils with SEND were fixed term excluded from Newcastle schools, which was below the national average of 15.7%. 2019/20, 11% of pupils with SEND were fixed term excluded from Newcastle schools, which was below the national average of 11.2%.	2020-21: 15.9% of pupils with SEND (EHCP and SEN Support combined) were fixed term excluded from Newcastle schools, which was above the national average of 12.1%.	2021-22 (autumn term): 7.9% of pupils with SEND (EHCP and SEN Support combined) were suspended from Newcastle schools which was above the national average 6.3%.
			Primary EHCP: Newcastle 3.0% were suspended, below the national average 5.1%.
			Primary SEN Support: Newcastle 1.6% were suspended, below national average 2.2%.
			Secondary pupils with EHCP: Newcastle 14.0% were suspended, above national average 13.4%.
			Secondary pupils with SEN Support: Newcastle 17.0% were suspended, above the national average 11.8%.
APP4 % EHCP assessments completed within 20 weeks improves to that of national averages.	Published data In 2020 calendar year, 53.6% of EHCPs were issued within the statutory 20-week timescale (including exceptions), which is below the national average of 55.6%.	Target: 80% EHCPs produced in 20 weeks. Update: Published data for the 2021 calendar year: Newcastle: 14.9% England: 57.9%.	Local data for 2022 calendar year. Newcastle: 13% EHCPs issued within 20 weeks

Overview

We believe that we have made significant systematic progress in Newcastle. Across the partnership we are clear what we need to do to improve. Bringing people together to work in an integrated way assumes that all component parts of the system are working effectively. Unfortunately, as leaders we have learnt that this is not always reflective in practice. We have had to take backwards steps, in some respects, to help us to build a solid understanding of relational and person-centred approach built on a core understanding of listening to our families and demonstrating our commitment to ensure that we work to get it right together. True co-production takes time.

We have had some success in challenging exclusions and suspensions, but the rates of several of the measures continue to rise and are a cause of concern. It is disappointing to report that we are unable to report city-wide impact, however we are confident that we are going in the right direction and have many examples of good practice across schools and settings.

We have an excellent partnership with the school's Promise Board SEND Subgroup. But despite encouragement and a robust offer of support there are a small number of schools who are not currently able to adopt a truly inclusive approach.

...From my point of view, the work that is going on is **phenomenal** when faced with exceptional circumstances...

Chair: SEND Sub Group

We have invested significantly in our graduated response and the statutory assessment process. However, the number of EHC assessment requests continues to rise and as a result we are not able to complete EHC plans within the 20-week statutory process. Despite this families report they are satisfied with the support received.

Can I just say wow to all the resources you have set up for families on the early years page! All the info you give families and the "About me" and just everything. I have been sitting with my son's diagnosis since August and all this information I've had to fight for and find myself but here on one page there is **SO MUCH** info for families! You guys are doing a great job!

Parent/Carer moving into Newcastle

In this report we describe our robust city-wide system of support and challenge that aims to increase timeliness of the EHC assessment and reduce exclusions and suspensions.

Reducing exclusions and suspensions and improving % of EHC plans completed within 20 weeks

There is a clear commitment to city wide inclusion in Newcastle led strategically by the SEND Executive Board, and the Promise Board.

The **SEND Executive Board** is our local area partnership which is jointly chaired by the Council and the ICB. Members include the parent/carer forum, and organisations across education, health and social care. The Board is currently consulting on its ambition for children and young people with SEND set out below:

‘Our ambition for all children and young people with SEND is that they get the right support at the right time so that they go on to live rich and fulfilling lives.’

The **Newcastle Promise Board** is a citywide partnership led by Headteachers to shape our approach to sector-led improvement. The promise for Newcastle Children and Young People:

‘A city where we all share responsibility for providing the best educational opportunities for all our children and young people.’

Newcastle Promise Board - SEND sub group sits underneath the Promise Board and all schools in the city are represented at the meetings. It aims to champion a vision for education in Newcastle and support and develop direct action by:

- Overseeing the progress against the agreed outcomes, supporting and challenging others so no school or child is left behind.
- Promoting successes, innovation, and evidenced based practice to benefit all schools.
- Promoting the principles of inclusion within all Newcastle schools.
- Empowering schools to build networks, capacity for improvement and work together to meet the needs of children and their communities.
- Developing an accurate knowledge and oversight of how SEND is working across the city.
- Identifying key strategic priorities for improvement and developing practical ways to drive improvement for children with SEND.
- Using the priorities to influence, develop and contribute towards a comprehensive offer of quality professional development.
- Embedding the voice of parents, carers, children and young people in all of our practice.

The Chair of the SEND sub-group is also a Member of the SEND Executive Board.

We have invested significantly in strengthening the graduated response and have published the support available for mainstream schools on the Local Offer, including an explainer video to explain to people what we mean by the graduated response:

<https://youtu.be/jxHyR2HiE0w>. By doing this we also anticipate it will result on a reduction in demand for EHC assessment requests and will help to reduce exclusions and suspensions. This is part of our overall SEND strategy which is out to consultation. The priorities we are consulting on are set out below:

Proposed Priorities

1: Making sure children and young people get the right support at the right time

This means we will have a consistent approach to identifying and meeting needs as early as possible and that this approach will be well understood by families and professionals.



2: Making sure we are getting it right together

This means strong partnership working where families are placed at the heart of everything we do and together we develop high quality services.



Investment in the graduated response

Exclusions and suspensions are too high for pupils with SEND despite:

- Offer of support from specialist services and individual pupil support funding accessed through **SEND Advice and Support Allocation Panel (ASAP)**
- Targeted support for **Early Years**
- We have co-produced **descriptors of need** which sets out the provision that should be available in schools and settings.
- We are updating the universal guidance for mainstream schools and settings so that headteachers and parents and carers are aware what should be ordinarily available.
- The SEN support plan is now commonly used by Schools.
- SEMH training offer and a new **SEMH outreach service**
- A new **Educational Psychologist Service Core Offer** of support
- We regularly track schools and have developed a **data profile** for each school.
- With the SEND sub-group we have carried out a **deep dive into exclusions and attendance**
- **Local Inclusion Panels (LIPs)** have been established to support secondary and (since September 2022), primary schools.
- We have set up **teams of multi-agency professionals to support all schools in the city.**

More detail about this support is set out in the following paragraphs.

SEND Advice and Support Allocation Panel (ASAP)

Advice and support from specialist teachers has been available to mainstream schools through ASAP since September 2019. ¹ The amount of support available has been

¹ We are currently assessing the impact of the interventions of the ASAP panel and results will be available in June 2023.

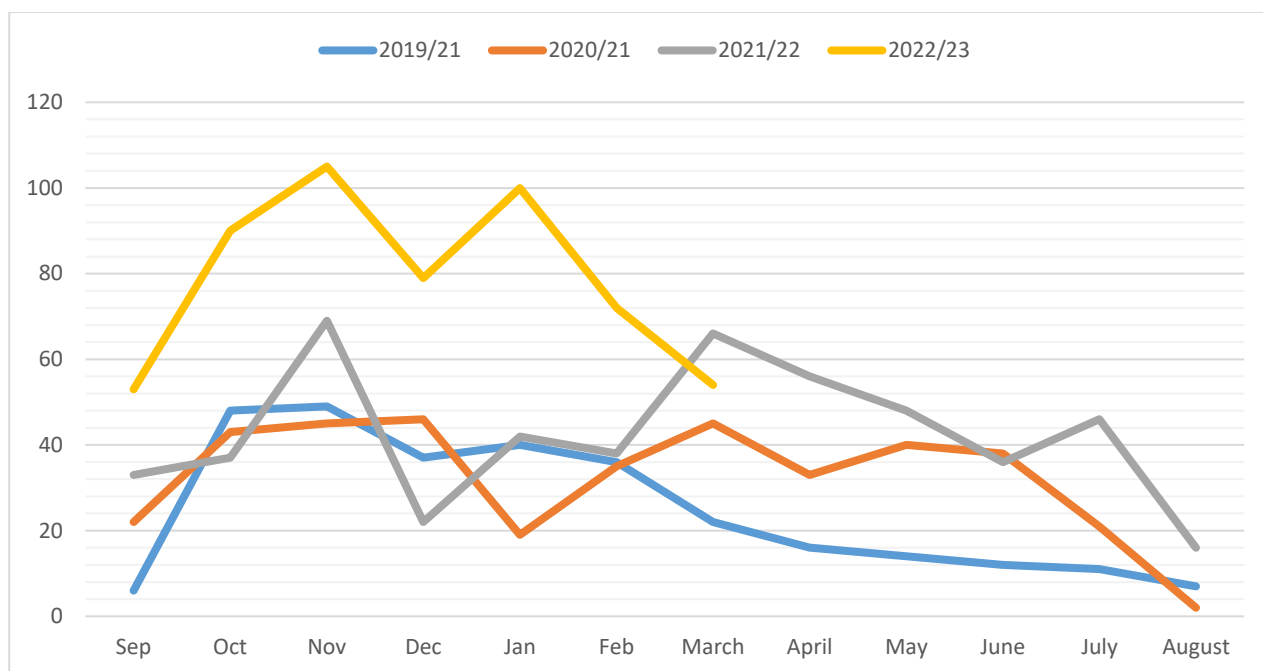
increased and we have made it easier for schools and settings to access additional individual pupil support (IPS) funding and support as soon as a need is identified and are making it easier to reapply if they need funding to continue. From September 2022 we have added to the services available from SEND ASAP:

- An additional FT specialist teacher for communication and interaction (autism) with experience and knowledge of secondary school aged students. The specialist teacher team now has 3.8 FTE.
- A team of 3 FTE SEN support workers providing advice and support to schools for children and young people with social communication needs is in place and from summer 2023 this will be increased to 4 FTE. The purpose is to model approaches and strategies, advise on resources and environment and to upskill staff in schools to meet needs and improve outcomes for children and young people with social communication needs. Some initial feedback:
 - extremely helpful in supporting reception staff with individual children's needs
 - practical solutions to issues
 - demonstrated strategies
 - extremely professional and goes over and above her role when in our setting.
 - setting a good example for how to manage specific children to any less experienced staff.
 - excellent knowledge around communication and interaction
 - identifies triggers and barriers for children quickly
 - works well with all staff, children and parents
 - approachable and an excellent listener
 - upskilled staff to a high level
 - hands on- engaging in all areas of the curriculum
- One of the SEN Support Workers has secondary school expertise and will work closely with the specialist teacher to provide affirmative autism sessions with students, and support transition between primary and secondary school.
- We have also extended our autism training offer:
 - We have signed up to being a provider of Autism Education Trust (AET) training for the post 16 sector as well as early years settings and schools. Feedback to the training provided to post 16 providers has been very positive.
 - The Early Years team are providing Early Bird training (National Autistic Society programme for preschool children) to parent/carers as part of a wider package to be offered including Early Bird Plus (for children aged 4 to 10 years) from Thomas Bewick School.
 - The Educational Psychology Service is providing Teen Life training sessions (National Autistic Society course for parents and carers).

The services that are available and examples of positive outcomes that have been achieved for children and young people were promoted at the ASAP relaunch event in June 2022. Over 200 representatives from schools, parent carers and SEND services attended the relaunch. The work of our panel and case studies of impact can viewed on the local offer: [Newcastle SEND ASAP](#). Following the relaunch of SEND ASAP in June 2022 and extra investment in support available, the number of children and young people allocated specialist support in 2022/2023 has been significantly higher than in previous years as illustrated below. Although there was a dip in March the number of requests

considered by the April panel (18 April) has increased to 65 requests for specialist support and 26 requests for funding.

Figure 1: Requests to SEND ASAP allocated to services Sept 2019-March 2023.



Early Years

The table below shows the total number of EHC assessment requests received between September 2022 and February 2023 (6 months), broken down by broad age phase. 77% of requests are for early years and primary aged children.

Age phase	Number	% Of total requests
Early years	108	30.8%
Primary aged	164	46.7%
Secondary aged	65	18.5%
Post-16 (Yr12+)	14	4.0%
Total EHCP requests	351	100%

Our specialist early years teachers have been working with early years SENCOs to ensure they are aware of all the support that is available to them to reduce the need for a statutory assessment, such as:

- Advice in the universally available guidance for early years settings.
- SEND support plans.
- Descriptors of need for the early years.
- Advice from specialist teachers.
- Training.
- Individual pupils support funding.

We are working towards having some early years lead SENCOs in place by April 2023 to support less experienced SENCOs. We have another 27 SENCOs who have signed up for the accredited SENCO training this term, and this has had an impact on the quality of SEND provision.

We have identified 20 children who are due to start in reception in 2023 that are likely to meet the threshold for an EHC assessment. This includes some who are new to the area and some who are late referrals to the SEND outreach service. We are going to provide these children with some interim funding to support them in their mainstream reception class. This will be extended next academic year (in line with the proposed funding changes to IPS) and we will track whether this has met needs and prevented the requirement for an EHCP assessment. This approach is being carefully communicated to schools and parents/carers.

We are also working on establishing a team of six lead SENCOs each delivering 10-12 days per year of support at a cost of £9,000 – £10,000 a year. The aim is to

- Increase the confidence of the early years SENCO.
- Increased engagement with a wider range of settings.
- Improvement in early identification of need and therefore improved outcomes for children.
- Improvement in engagement with parents/carers.
- Improvement in engagement with support services including health services and the 2-year integrated review.
- Improvement in awareness of school readiness, what this means and how it can be supported from an early stage.

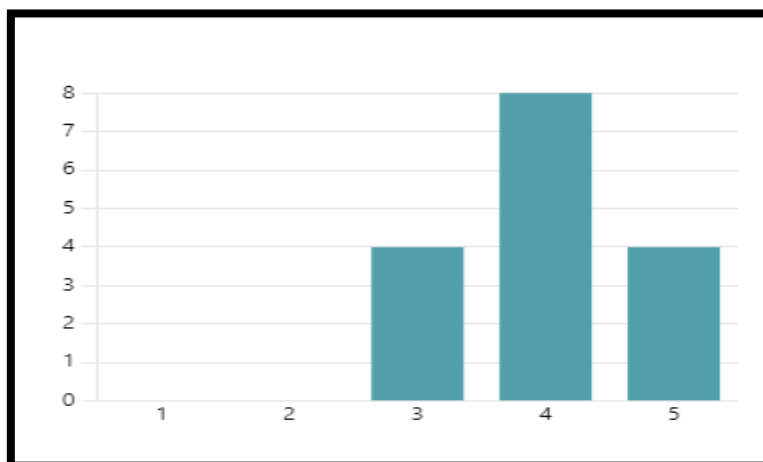
In addition to developing early years placements, we have worked in partnership with Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals (NUTH) and we are working towards a full opening of a SEND Early Years Hub this summer. The space at the Hub is currently being used for pre-school autism assessments and post diagnostic therapies / interventions.

We are working with a group of parents / carers to help us plan the look and feel of the building. They are supporting us with a range of things including colour schemes, resources, and naming the centre. We are planning on having some artwork in the centre of the building which has been produced by children and young people who have SEND, and we have secured support with this from NCC's Art Development Co-ordinator and funding has been agreed from the Holiday Activity Fund. The plan is for a professional artist to work with some groups of children and young people and their families during the 2023 summer holidays to produce some vibrant murals to be displayed around the centre. This is a very exciting project and such a great example of co-production and community engagement.

SEND Descriptors of Need

The SEND Descriptors of Need are now in use across Newcastle, and we are currently carrying out a survey to get feedback for improvement. The survey is still open and so far, (at 27/03/23) 16 schools have responded. An extract of the feedback is shown below:

Figure 2: How useful were the documents in terms of identifying and understanding need? (5 being highest level; n=16 respondents)

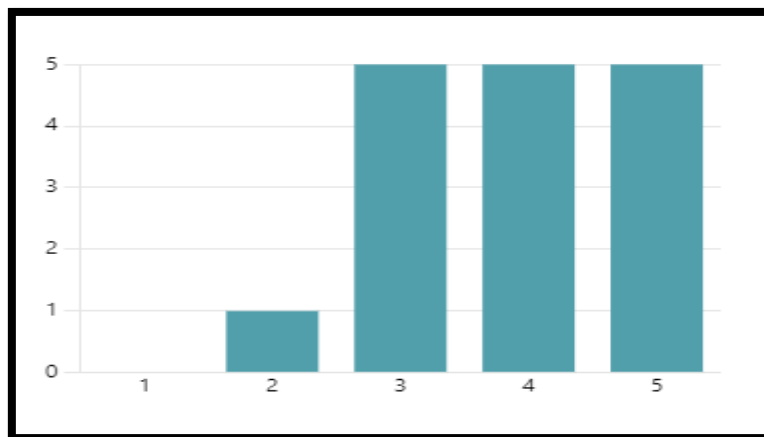


Comments made:

- We used these to help with EHCP referrals/along with action planning for next steps for students identified as needing some support.
- For staff I think it helped expand understanding when we were looking at support plans.
- Useful to share with all staff to understand needs and help identify needs.
- Gives good guidelines to where children are at.
- It was useful to be able to identify which range they fit into
- Staff reported that the documents were helpful during our whole staff meeting on the descriptors of need.
- Children's development is not linear, the ranges are useful when teachers are identifying the level of individual need for pupils. The ranges have helped staff when completing the 'assess' part of pupil's SEN support plans.
- Useful to use with class teachers to support a professional discussion about the level of need.
- Very thorough, need to do more assessments with them to make judgements.
- It helped me identify specifically what children were struggling with and pinpoint what target might be appropriate for them.
- I think it helps to pinpoint / back up when specialist advice might need to be sought.
- I liked how the ranges were then broken down into sub sections and with continued use it would become easier over time.

- Very useful - also clear for staff across the school to see and understand.

Figure 3: How useful were the documents in terms of making provision to meet needs? (5 being highest level; n=16 respondents)



Comments made:

- It was helpful to see what we were already doing and what could be the next step.
- Straightforward.
- Once a range had been identified it was useful to look at provision examples and consider how we could implement them.
- We use Provision Maps, so it was useful to match against the provisions we have and to identify any gaps.
- Helps to plan provision and intervention.
- In my opinion support plans and in turn provision are more specific and we have now categorised our SEN register in terms of waves of provision and this has helped with strategic planning for support and intervention.
- Made it very clear what provision should be in place to support area of need.
- Class teachers reported that the documents have helped them to think about effective provision for individual pupils.
- Used for one child in particular requiring specialist placement. This information has been shared with parents and LA.
- Provided additional ideas of how they could be supported.
- I think we already have the provision in place for these children, but it raised a few questions re referrals needed for 1 child.
- It seems to be a reflective tool which I think will support providing the correct support for children.

SEMH support

We have developed a resource pack and a robust training programme to upskill staff working with children who have **SEMH needs**. This is based on the voice of our children and young people and it is available on the local offer: [Understanding and Developing SEMH Skills](#). We are currently targeting 5 secondary schools with the training, and it will then be rolled out across the city. By completing core training, staff's capacity to support children and young people with social, emotional, and mental health needs will hopefully increase.

Following visits to SEMH provisions, discussions with providers and two pilot schemes in the city, we are developing a new service to support pupils experiencing SEMH challenges. From September 2023 we will have a locality based SEMH outreach primary team of 8 specialist teachers and 12 support staff. These staff will provide part of a universal offer to schools, working alongside school staff and supporting improvements in mainstream school provision. Although their main focus will be on improving provision for pupils facing SEMH challenges, as a 'first port of call' they will also be trained to provide triage and signpost schools to more specialist support. Working alongside family partners and the multi-agency Team Around the School (see below for further detail), they will improve provision across the city and reduce the demand for statutory assessment requests. From September 2024, the service will also include a 24-place turnaround SEMH primary hub, hosted by one of the city's mainstream schools.

New Educational Psychologist Service Core Offer of Support

In September 2022 we went live with a new **Core Offer** of support from the Educational Psychology Service. This offer includes a range of non-statutory, non-traded activities that are free at the point of delivery to schools and settings. It includes early assessment, preventative work, consultation, interventions, and training to develop good practice across schools and settings. There has been a significant commitment of time and resource to the 'Team Around the School' model as well as additional time into SEND ASAP (including for children experiencing Emotionally Based School Avoidance) and for early years work. Specific support is also available to other services such as the Sensory Impairment team, the Youth Justice Service and Children's Homes. The increase in the number of Assistant Educational Psychologists has allowed an increase in the number of schools benefiting from the 'Art Intervention project' and 'Zones of Regulation' training as well as allowing the Service to offer specific interventions agreed through discussion with individual schools.

The **Educational Psychology Service** collate feedback in relation to all aspects of the core work they carry out. This feedback takes different forms, both quantitative and qualitative, including number of training sessions delivered, numbers of schools involved in interventions, surveys, and feedback discussions. Feedback is gathered from children / young people, parent / carers and professionals, as appropriate for each activity. Overall feedback is currently being collated, so that overall conclusions can be drawn, and any gaps identified. This will be presented to SEND Sub Group to help evaluate the impact of the new core offer.

Case Study from teacher feedback form:

<p>Reason for referral</p> <p>J's behaviours were becoming increasingly concerning, negatively impacting his safety and the safety of others. Presentation was also having a negative impact on his ability to access learning and extra-curricular activities. At risk of exclusion.</p> <p>School needed support to better understand need, to be able to meet need and improve outcomes for the pupil more appropriately. Pupil was becoming 'notorious' with other parents and his family were feeling isolated.</p> <p>How successful was the work in relation to the following aspects?</p>

Enhancing understanding of what might be going on for the child / young person 4
(With 4 = Completely successful; 3 = Mostly successful; 2 = Partly successful; 1 = Not successful)

Comments

ASAP EP support helped school and family to better understand J's needs. Ongoing support worked well alongside other assessments taking place simultaneously.

Structured approach was highly beneficial (using the SEMH pen profile).

Outcomes have significantly improved for this pupil due to the support provided via ASAP EPS. Staff and family have been supported to explore and better understand needs and develop strategies for how these can be met.

Pupil has a better perception of self, and this was particularly important following a negative experience as part of the autism assessment process.

Pupil is more regulated and able to better access the curriculum and is again able to access some extra-curricular activities.

Although an individual risk assessment and high level of staffing remain necessary, far few behaviours of concern are noted.

Pupil is beginning to interact better with peers and has recently been invited for a 'play date' out of school.

Pupil is no longer at risk of exclusion.

Appendix 3 contains more detail about the work of the EPS and more examples of the impact that they have had on reducing exclusions in Newcastle.

SEND Sub-Group of the Promise Board: 'Deep dive'

Data at school level on attendance, exclusions and suspensions for children and young people with SEN Support and EHC plans was reviewed.

The data highlighted that there are five secondary schools with a combination of higher rates of suspensions, permanent exclusions and lower attendance for students with SEN Support, and some also showed higher suspension rates for students with an EHCP. It was also noted that SEMH is the primary need for most of the cases where students have SEN support. It was agreed that the five schools of most concern were identified, and they were invited to part of the first round of SEMH training. Individual meetings were also held with the schools to share data and raise awareness of ASAP. This work has led to an increase in referrals to ASAP from secondary schools.

The team also identified the best performing schools and shared the good practice with heads at SEND sub group.

There was a follow up SEND Problem solving workshop in January 2023 to discuss ways to change the number of SEND students being suspended. Two questions were considered using the 6 thinking hats method:

1. How can we reduce the number of SEND CYP being suspended or excluded?

2. How can we culturally, morally and professionally demonstrate we have done everything for the child before engaging in statutory processes?

The head teachers who attended the session came away much more engaged in partnership work and have arranged outreach visits from our specialist schools to see how their individual school will benefit from the commissioned offer of support and several schools are exploring ideas of how they can modify their mainstream environment to support inclusion. Examples of good practice are being shared across the schools.

Appendix 4 shows the anonymised secondary school level data.

Locality Inclusion Panels (LIPs)

In 2021, the ISOS Partnership worked with education leaders across the city to review Inclusion and Bespoke Provision in the city, part of which, was to make recommendations about what needs to be done to reduce the need for suspensions and exclusions. Their findings can be found here: [Access and Inclusion Resources Home Page | Services to Schools](#). As a result, **Locality Inclusion Panels (LIPs)** were set up and panels are held in each local area every month providing support across the primary and secondary sector.

One role of the LIP is to support schools with those pupils presenting the greatest barriers and whose needs do not sit within the statutory EHCP pathway. Schools can request support for those CYP who, despite all their efforts, struggle to manage the school environment and are at risk of permanent exclusion.

Schools submit a request for support which is triaged prior to the panel meeting. Triage panel members include representatives from Health, Educational Psychology, SEND Outreach Service, Youth Justice, Access and Inclusion, Play and Youth, Children's Social Care, Early Help, Careers and Guidance Team, and the Virtual School - the idea is that support can be joined up or identified prior to the panel meeting. There is a pooled budget which schools manage and allocate the funding, and alternative provision can be sourced from a framework. All of the Alternative Providers that are accessed via LIP/ TAS have been quality assured with a tool that has been mapped against the [AP-Quality-Toolkit-2022-compressed.pdf \(integrated.org.uk\)](#). The triage panel will also challenge schools where they could have done more to meet the needs of the child or young person.

Each Locality Inclusion Panel is supported by Inclusion Key Workers (IKW) who are co-located within the Children and Families Newcastle Family Hub. IKW's add capacity to the panel system and offer wrap around support for those who are referred into the system. Each IKW will be linked to the Family Hub and the schools that sit in their patch. The aim is to support the CYP who come to the panels, both in terms of accessing the support and reintegrating back into school if they have been accessing off site provision. They will act as advocates for the CYP as well as identifying wider needs within the family. Impact is there on an individual pupil level, but it is at very early stages.

Team around the school

All schools can access immediate support via the LIP process with the aim of avoiding permanent exclusions and all schools have their own **Team Around the School (TAS)** which supports early identification and intervention by a range of agencies (including

Health, EPS, Locality Hub, Early Help, Family Partner, Police, Access and Inclusion and School Effectiveness as well as CVS). TAS meetings are held in person every ½ term. The Access and Inclusion team works with schools and the SEND team to find an alternative to a suspension or exclusion wherever possible. As part of the LIP process schools are encouraged to access the increasing support available from the SEND teams to support children at SEN support level where appropriate. We have increased capacity with our SEND school advisors to enable additional support for secondary SENCOS.

Over the 2022/23 academic year, all schools will have had the opportunity to participate in **mental health training** on developing a whole school approach.

Taking time to make an impact on a City-wide level

Despite this investment and systemic approach too many children and young people with SEND in Newcastle are excluded or suspended from school.

All of the secondary schools in Newcastle are academies. Six of the largest schools are RI and are under scrutiny / being supported by the DfE. Building delays at Callerton and Great Park are putting immense pressure on the secondary sector. We have oversized year groups in Y8 and 9. These are the years with the most Covid disrupted education and where most of the suspensions are. Of the seven secondary schools serving the highest disadvantage and highest levels of SEMH need, five are RI. Three of these have had more than one headteacher in the past year. This makes it very difficult to secure impact from school support / advice. Improvements have been made in one school where there is more stability, as demonstrated in the case study below.

Case studies to show impact on individual children and young people

Educational Psychology (EP) involvement

EP involvement was sought due to a Primary child's experiences of distress, which were communicated through some emotional outbursts, which could be unsafe. The child was said to be **'at risk of permanent exclusion'**. The EP met with those involved to better understand the child's needs and strengths. It was evident that the child had some issues understanding language and communicating. The EP suggested that this difficulty affected her ability to emotionally regulate, which others had not thought of before. The EP completed some assessment of the child's language and learning needs and strengths and suggested a referral to Speech and Language Therapy. The assessment enabled staff to implement some different strategies, particularly altering the reading age of texts which could be a catalyst for the child's frustration and following outbursts. The EP also suggested targeted intervention which could be differentiated for the child, and which had the aim of supporting her emotional regulation. At the time of closure, the child was still in school full time.

Focus on a Secondary School

Reduction in suspension from last academic year for students with SEND.

This academic year:

- 22 students have been suspended in total (13% of cohort)
- **90% reduction** in incidents suspension from same time last year
- **89% reduction** in days of suspension from same time last year

Area of need identified:

- SEMH accounts for 30% of all SEND suspensions
- Communication and interaction accounts for 24% of all SEND suspensions
- Request for additional training for staff, LSAs and wider pastoral staff from LA SEMH team (this was presented at SEND Executive Board)
- Also, to be raised in School effectiveness audit as an area for development for guidance and support

Governing body:

Recommended that suspensions are an area of focus for a 'deep dive' for the governing body.

Student Case study: Year 10 child with diagnosis of ADHD medicated

- Xx is medicated at home. Side effects - headache, loss of appetite, nausea, tiredness.
- Xx has Speech and Language difficulties which are particularly evident in his slow processing speed
- He needs to be given time to process information
- He struggles to maintain attention and concentration and can be very restless in lessons
- Xx participates in boxing outside of school.

School interventions

- Individual learning plan and provision map reviewed and updated.
- On the Vulnerable Students Register and discussed weekly in Inclusion meeting.
- Time out pass.
- Fidget toy.
- Handwriting intervention.
- Additional mentoring during tutor time.
- EWO home visits.
- Intervention via the NET reading strategy.
- Individual scripted First Day Response calls.
- Daily check-ins with the Learning Manager.
- SLT meetings to re-engage family.
- Key worker to improve home - school – link and communications.
- Bespoke exam access arrangements - small venue, reader, rest breaks, prompts.
- Detentions with deep support when these occur.
- Reasonable adjustments to behaviour policy where needed.
- Use of wider academy life to support positivity in school (going to PROUD, attending enrichments after school).

Support around provision

Xx was given access to the LA commissioned Bridge Additional Resourced Provision (a small group provision with a high staff to student ratio). This allowed Xx to use the sensory room and seek support from a key staff member if he was feeling too overwhelmed or distressed. In this provision additional interventions and strategies to support Xx were used to support a reintegration back into mainstream lessons. Xx then completed this on a blended offer as part of a 'hub and spoke' model. Xx still has the opportunity to access this provision now he has reintegrated back to mainstream lessons for additional intervention or when he needs more discrete support. This has worked particularly well when struggling to regulate his emotions or incidents of misbehaviour. He would check in with a key member of staff to reflect on his

behaviour/actions using scalable factor. Access to the Bridge allowed Xx to understand how to use the tools he was provided with when he was struggling to manage his emotions, e.g., timeout pass/fidget toy and return to lessons and do well.

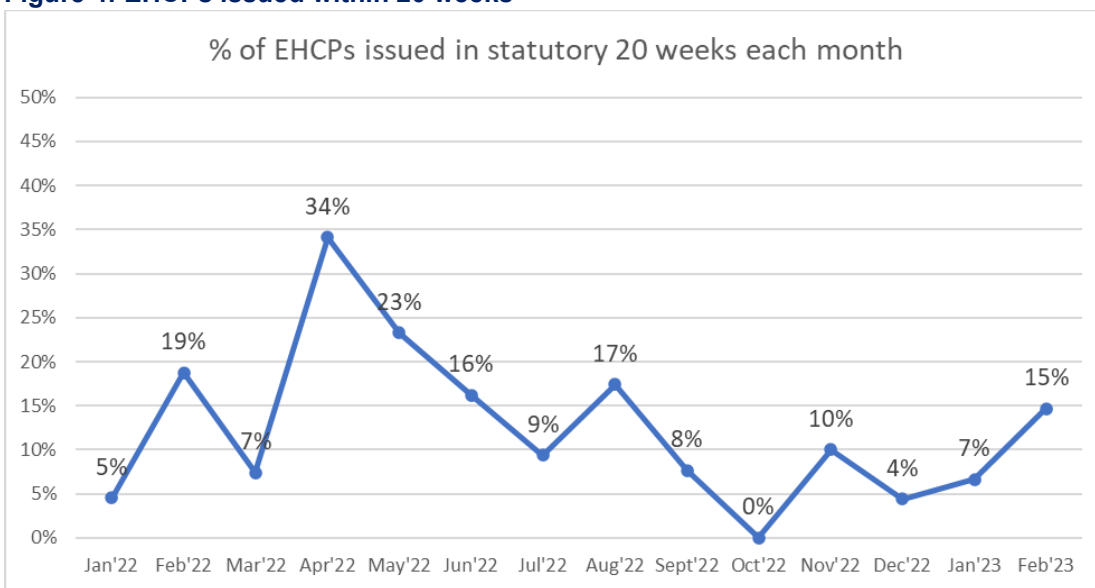
Attendance 21/22	89% (persistently absent to school)
Attendance 22/23	100%
Impact	11% increase.
Suspensions 21/22	8 suspensions 8 days lost learning
Suspensions 22/23	0 suspensions
Impact	100% reduction.

Improving our 20-week timescales for EHCPs

At the October 2022 APP review meeting we reported that we were not meeting our target of 80% for the 20-week-timescale for EHCPs. This was due to the high number of requests for EHC assessments that we have been receiving. The high numbers of assessment requests put pressure on all parts of the system and has meant that professional advices are not always submitted in line with the timescales.

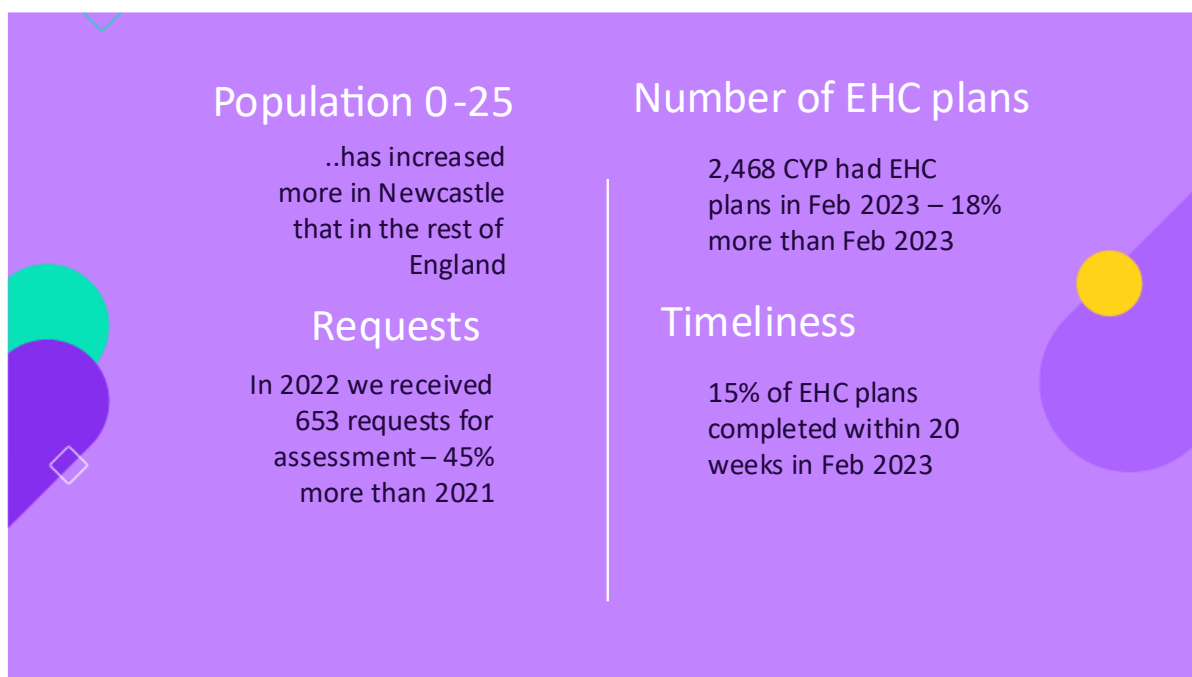
In 2022 (calendar year), local data suggests 13% of EHCPs were issued in the 20-week timescale. However, this has fluctuated over the year, see figure 4 below, including up to February 2023. Source. Local data from Capita.

Figure 4: EHCPs issued within 20 weeks



Investment in the graduated response aims to reduce the need for EHC assessment requests. Unfortunately, we are not yet seeing a reduction in EHC requests as detailed in figure 5 and this has meant we are currently not meeting the 20-week statutory timescale:

Figure 5: EHC Stats



- In 2022/23 we issued more plans each month than in each of the equivalent months in 2021/22. On the other hand, the number of requests we are receiving each month exceeds the number of plans we are issuing, adding to our backlog of open EHCPs.
- Although the number of open assessments is increasing each month, the proportion over the statutory 20-week timescale is reducing - showing progress being made on reducing the backlog of late plans.

In 2022 we received 653 requests for EHC assessments, which is a 45% increase compared to 2021. Recent and currently unverified regional data shows that we have been getting the highest number of requests in the region. Schools and settings do understand the support that is available without the need for an EHC assessment. A small number of schools have advised that they have felt pressure from private services and organisations to submit a referral for an EHCP assessment. When the identification of these services or organisations is known, challenge has been made. Between September 2022 and March 2023, 31 requests for assessments were refused, compared with 16 for the same period in the year before. Unfortunately, however, a number of these have progressed to appeal and we are currently considering how we can proactively intervene at this point to increase parental confidence in the support that their child is receiving.

To meet the extra demand, we have increased the capacity of the teams that support the EHC progress across education, health and care and are working to ensuring there is sufficient specialist provision for those that need it. We have also increased support for schools whilst they are waiting for an EHC assessment to be completed.

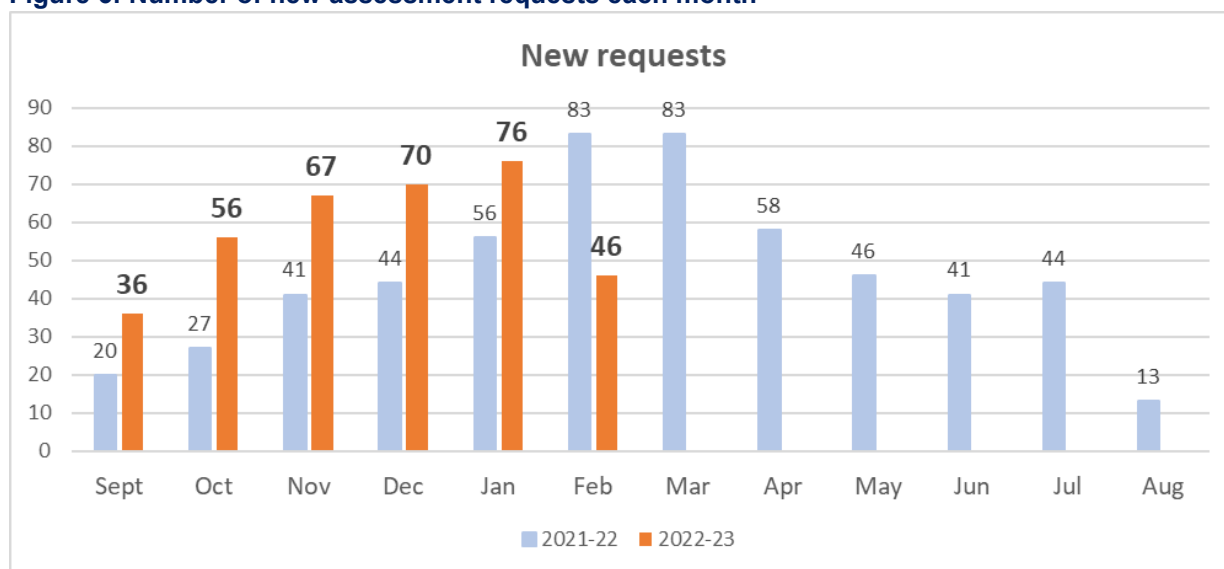
Support available whilst waiting for EHC plan

Where an EHCP has not been completed within the 20-week timescale, schools and settings can request that funding is put in place from when the EHCP should have been finalised and they can also receive Individual Pupils Support (IPS) funding or outreach support whilst the assessment is on-going.

Figure 6 shows the number of new assessment requests each month in the academic year 2022-23 to-date and compared with the number of requests in 2021-22. The number of new monthly requests rose from 36 in September 2022 to 76 in January 2023. The number of requests decreased to 46 in February 2023.

In the academic year so far (Sept' 22 to Feb' 23) there have been 351 new requests compared with 271 for the same period last year – a 30% increase. (In last report we reported a 60% increase, now down to 30% increase because we received a reduced number of requests in February 2023, compared to a significant increase in requests in February 2022 of 83).

Figure 6: Number of new assessment requests each month



Ensuring sufficient capacity in the Support, Assessment and Review (SAR) Team to meet demand

We have increased the capacity of the SAR team. To demonstrate the scale of this investment we now have 23 dedicated SEND Caseworkers, three senior practitioner and two PFA leads. We previously had six caseworkers, one senior practitioner, one PFA lead and some allocated time from the former Connexions team (now Careers and Guidance Team) to complete the assessments and plans for those who were post 16. The team is supported by a team of three service improvement assistants and six business support staff.

The SEND SAR team have reviewed the EHC process and have rewritten the SEND Caseworker 'handbook' to ensure that processes are as efficient as possible and that it is clear 'who does what and when.'

Schools started to make requests for assessments via the SEND portal from September 2022 and from April 2023 we will only accept requests made via the portal. It is anticipated that this will also speed up the process.

The recently co-produced EHC template is now in use and is supporting improvements in both quality and timeliness as it will ensure:

- preparing for adulthood discussions from the earliest years
- that only provision above that expected in mainstream school is included in the EHC
- a clear link between outcomes and provision
- that families can put forward their views in whatever format they choose.

The plan template will be built into the SEND portal on the Capita case management system, which will help to speed up the planning process.

Additional capacity

We are currently (March 2023) recruiting 2 SEND Placement Planning Officers to help plan, manage, and coordinate all educational placement consultations and support short- and longer-term capacity planning in specialist provision.

Managing the back log

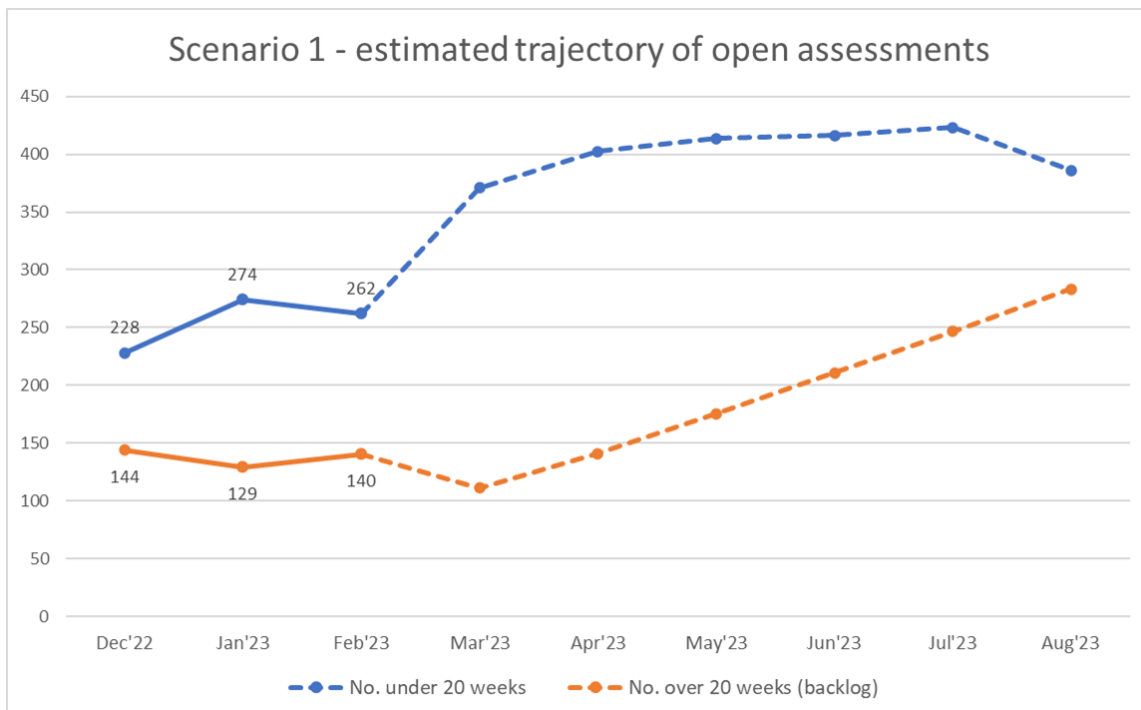
We have developed a data model to help understand future demand and address the assessment backlog. We have looked at two scenarios.

Scenario 1 - assumptions include,

- Meeting a national target of 60% straightaway – by March 2023. (We recognise the initial 80% target stated in the scorecard was overly ambitious and we have used the latest published national average (rounded) as our target here).
- 50 EHCPs are issued each month.
- To estimate the future number of monthly requests (demand) we have applied a 1.37x increase on the monthly figures in the previous 12 months. This is based on the average monthly increase over the previous 12 months.

Figure 7 shows the trajectory of open assessments based on the above assumptions.

Figure 7: Estimated trajectory of open assessments – scenario 1

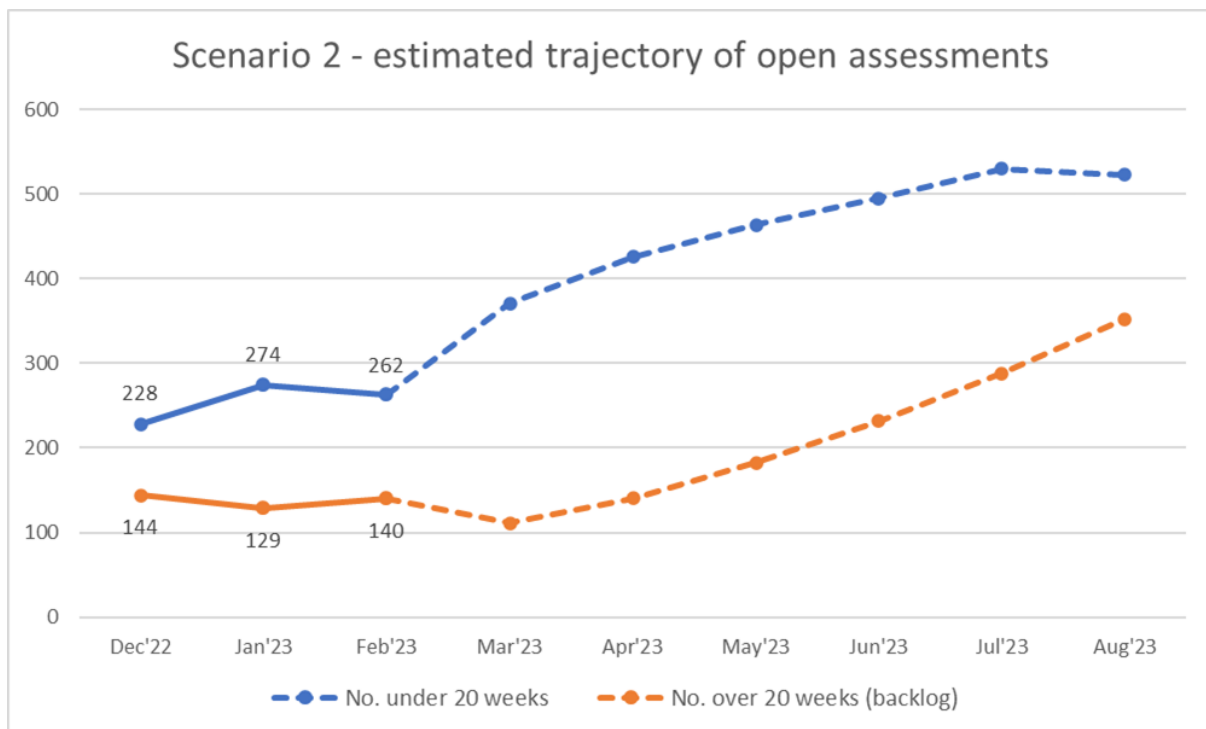


Scenario 2 - assumptions include,

- Equal number of assessments are completed for those under 20 weeks and over 20 weeks (backlog).
- 50 EHCPs issued each month.
- To estimate the future number of monthly requests (demand) we have applied a 1.37x increase on the monthly figures in the previous 12 months. This is based on the average monthly increase over the previous 12 months.

Figure 8 shows the trajectory of open assessments based on the above assumptions.

Figure 8: Estimated trajectory of open assessments – scenario 2



We are keeping this under constant review and trying to provide equity between clearing the back log and work on the new assessments to ensure fairness.

Whilst the number of open assessments is increasing each month (figure 9), the proportion over the statutory 20-week timescale is reducing (figure 10) and is lower than in 2021-22 - showing progress being made on reducing the backlog of late completions. At the end of January 2023, 32% of open assessments were over the statutory 20-week timescale compared with 53% in September 2022, and below 39% in January 2022.

Figure 9: Open assessments

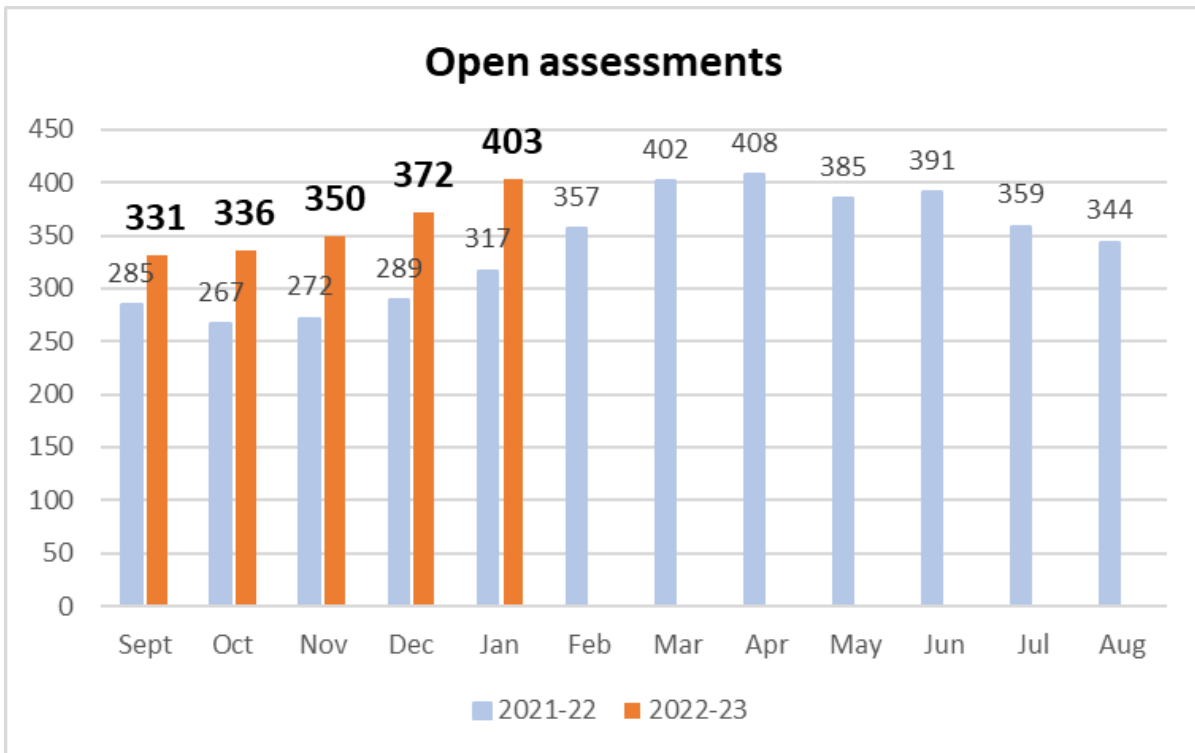
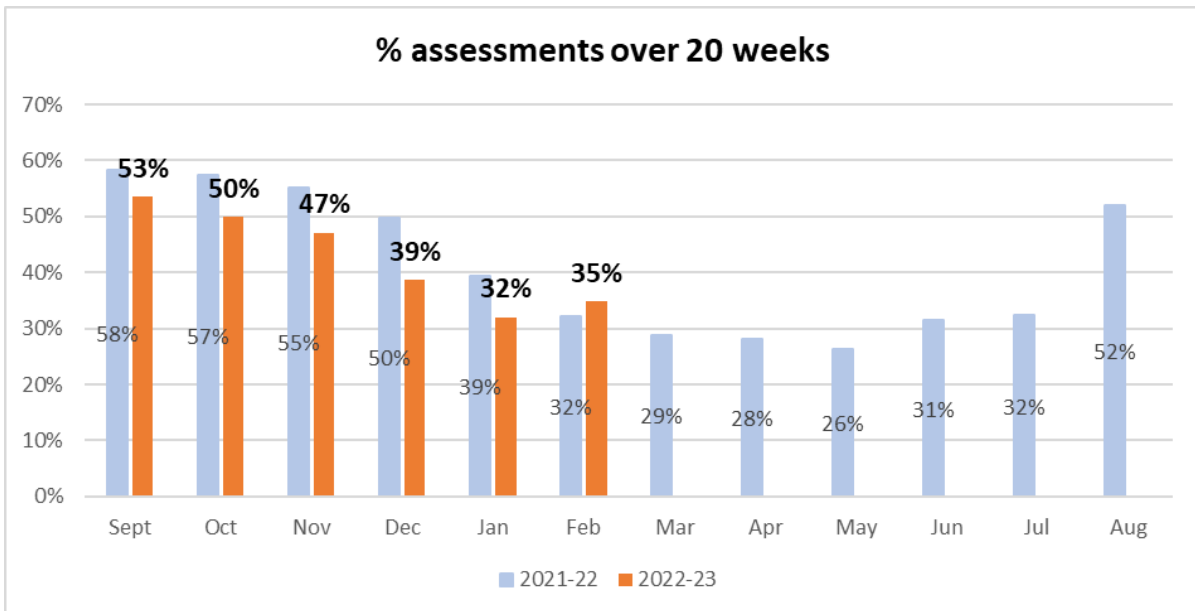
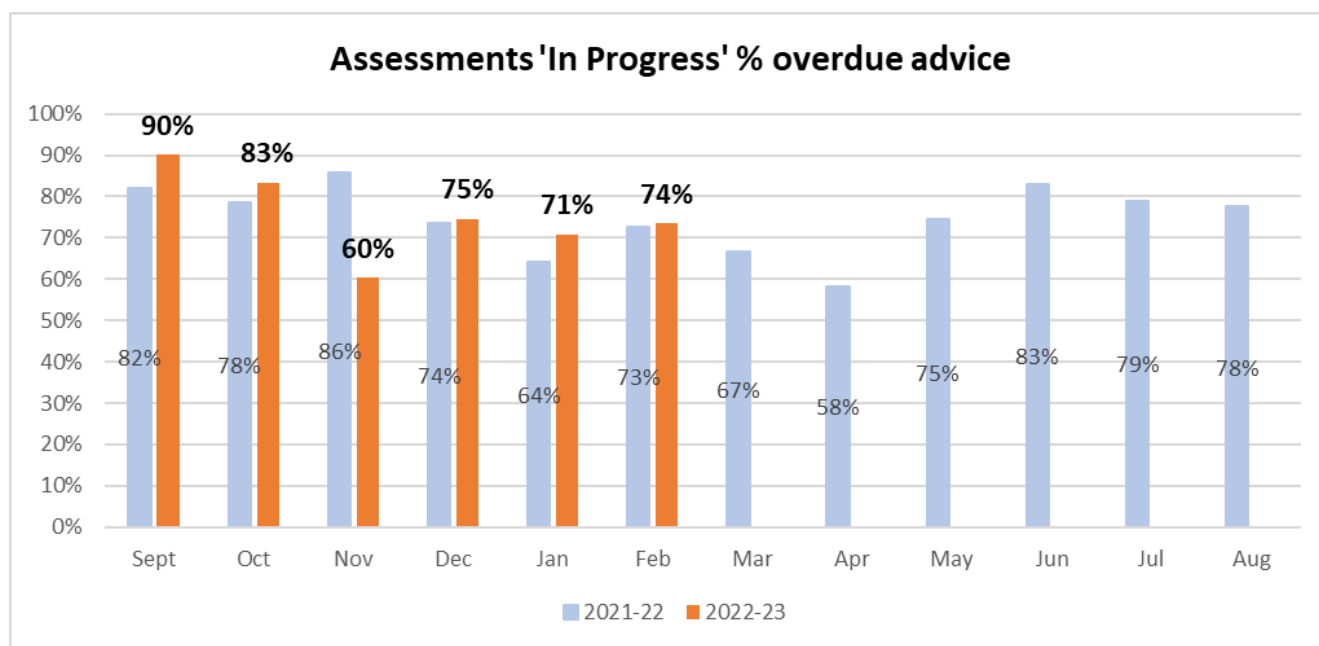


Figure 10: % assessment over 20 weeks



The number of assessments at the ‘In progress’ stage, i.e., where advice has been requested, is increasing each month from 214 in September 2022 to 280 in February 2023 – and is higher than the same time last year (172 in February 2021). However, as shown in figure 11, the proportion of these assessments over the statutory 6-week timescale for advices is reducing from 90% in September 2022 to 74% in February 2023.

Figure 11: Assessments in Progress:



A key part of the EHC assessment process is to seek and receive advice from services within a 6-week period. The high number of requests have impacted on all parts of the system resulting in a back log of advice from all services. We continue to track Notice 2 outstanding advice as part of SEND Managers performance dashboard providing a regular overview of advices that are overdue and which teams they apply to.

In March 2023 we have overdue advice for 150 students where the assessment was 'In Progress' (excluding parents and SENDOS). The outstanding advices are evenly spread across education, health and social care with high degree of overlap.

Health advices

The ICB has put in place the following steps to improve the quality and timeliness of advices:

- **Recruitment:** We have recruited an additional 0.6 whole-time equivalent (WTE) SEND nurse coordinator who is now in post and is very experienced in working with children with disabilities
- **Teaching Programme:** Training provided by the SEND nurses has taken place on the content of EHCPs for multi-agency staff including health staff
- **Health Audit Tool:** We have supported the development of a health template for gathering health information to improve the quality and standard with regards to information gathering
- **Audits:** Termly audits of EHCPs
- **Health Steering Group:** this group has been developed and will meet bimonthly to look specifically at health information. There will be SEND leads for each profession who will self-audit their EHCPs. This information will then be fed back to the steering group with the aim of increased standardisation, and the opportunity to share good practice and implement improved quality information from health.

We continue to review our systems to ensure they are as lean as possible and ensure that advices are received on-time. We have developed a clear escalation process when advice is at risk of being late. For example, the DMO receives a weekly report of outstanding advices and is following up with services directly. The SEND Nurse coordinator provides advice and guidance on the quality of health advice and coordinates a steering group to ensure late health advices are escalated on a bimonthly basis or individually directly with services.

From April 2023, the families of children and young people who are not known to a community paediatrician will be asked to complete a physical health screening form at the EHC request stage. These will be reviewed by the DMO in order to streamline the medical advice process, allocating children and young people to remote or face-to-face consultation in a more-timely fashion.

The DCO has written to all health advice providers to reinforce the message that on receipt of a request for advice there must be a response from the service outlining what is currently known about the child, from the referral forms even though a formal assessment has not taken place. It has been communicated to health advice providers that is not acceptable to simply say that a child is being on the waiting list and that delays in meeting the 6-week timescale risks a referral to the Ombudsman and possible financial penalties for the Hospital Trust and ICB.

Social Care advices

Social care are experiencing a high demand for their services and are struggling to recruit sufficient staff. EHC advices are processed by the Screening Social worker who deals with all contacts to Social Care of approximately 450-500 a week. They receive about 30-40 requests for EHC advice each week.

To help reduce the backlog, student social workers were given time to work on EHC advice alongside the Designated Social Care Officer, but despite this we currently have a significant number of advices outstanding. A Child and Family worker is being appointed specifically to manage the advice required for EHC plans.

Educational Psychology (EP) advices

On 8 March 2023, the EP service had 137 overdue advices and based on current trends this will likely increase to 189 by August 2023.

We have suspended our traded work into schools until we are able to meet the demand for statutory advices. This is preventative work which is highly valued by schools and is considered key to improving outcomes for children and young people (CYP) and fostering a culture of inclusivity within our educational settings towards these CYP. We want to be able to deliver this work as soon as we can.

We have reviewed the staffing capacity that we need to meet the demand and clear the backlog. We have invested in the EPS over the last few years and have recruited two additional specialist senior practitioners and four EP assistants. The recruitment of EPs is extremely competitive, and we are trying everything we can to recruit, including the recruitment of two additional EPs who are still in training, and who are due to join us in September 2023.

We have also tried to recruit agency EPs over the last year, but we were only able to recruit one person who was able to complete 2 advices over 3 months at a cost of £1,200 per assessment. The quality assurance of this work took a significant amount of EPS management time.

Solution

We have however secured additional funding to commission an external service provider to help clear the back log. We are currently testing out their quality of service with a small number of advices, and if we are satisfied, we will contract them to help clear our back log with aim of starting September 2023 with no backlog.

Quality Assurance: Parent/Carer feedback

Each term SEND Managers call 10 randomly selected families who have recently been through the EHC process to find out what they thought and what we could do to improve. Comments made at the Autumn term audit are summarised below:

What really worked for you?

- My views and my child's views were included. I was grateful for my views being considered and heard.
- Feedback and communication from the school and SEND dept has been really good.
- Built up good relationship with SENCO and caseworker and the EP. They were all easy to contact by either phone/emails, answering my questions/queries. Caseworker very supportive over the summer holiday when the SENCO was not available. Couldn't fault the support I received.
- Felt like I got somewhere. Felt listened to and people acted on things. SENCo was helpful.
- Case worker was available via email, quick replies. Communication overall good. Simple, straightforward process and the report was understandable with clear language.
- The Caseworker was fantastic. It was hard to get anyone to talk to, but when we did speak to her, she handled the case really well.
- SENDIASS have been brilliant, and school is great as well!

What didn't work and what could we do differently?

- Everything has worked well. The process has been brilliant.
- Mum feels like there should be better communication between daughter's Caseworker and the admissions team.
- Parent was not aware of local offer website.
- The whole nightmare of postcode when you live on a border. This must affect loads of families like ours.
- I would want more face-to-face meetings or Zoom/Teams calls rather than phone calls.
- The transition from getting the EHCP and getting to the new school provision could have been better.
- Conversations for the future have not yet taken place.

These findings were reviewed by our 'Getting it right together' workstream in February 2023 and plans to improve put in place.

Investment in specialist provision

Whilst inclusion in mainstream is a priority, we are also doing everything we can to ensure there are sufficient specialist placements for those that are assessed as needing it. To this end, we are continuing to closely monitor the number of specialist placements required and are considering short-term and medium-term options to address the demand for specialist provision, such as creating Additional Resourced Provision (ARP) spaces, reviewing our offer of support for those with SEMH needs in primary and secondary provisions, and expanding our specialist schools. We were extremely disappointed that our business case for a free special school was not successful despite the case being “approvable”. However, we are looking for other sources of funding so we can proceed with this much needed extra provision.

Parent/Carer Forum view

TBA

Schools View

TBA

Training, support and impact

In addition to the training and support reported in October we:

- Commissioned the CDC to facilitate the production of our SEND strategy. This work included a workshop attended by all partners and the parent/carer representatives that identified the main priorities for Newcastle's SEND Strategy.
- Are part of the regional project facilitated by IMPOWER that aims to promote better outcomes and more inclusive support for children and young people with SEND. IMPOWER presented some initial benchmarking work to the ADCS on 10 March 2023, and which included results of surveys and benchmarking. Whilst the data is not validated it suggests that:
 - Newcastle has the highest EHC growth rate
 - Newcastle has the third lowest rate for initial requests denied, and the range across the region in respect of this is from 40% to 1.5%

We have also reviewed a number of EHC cases with a focus on those with autism in the mainstream sector to identify areas of improvement.

- Considering support from RISE to review and improve the neurodevelopmental pathway.

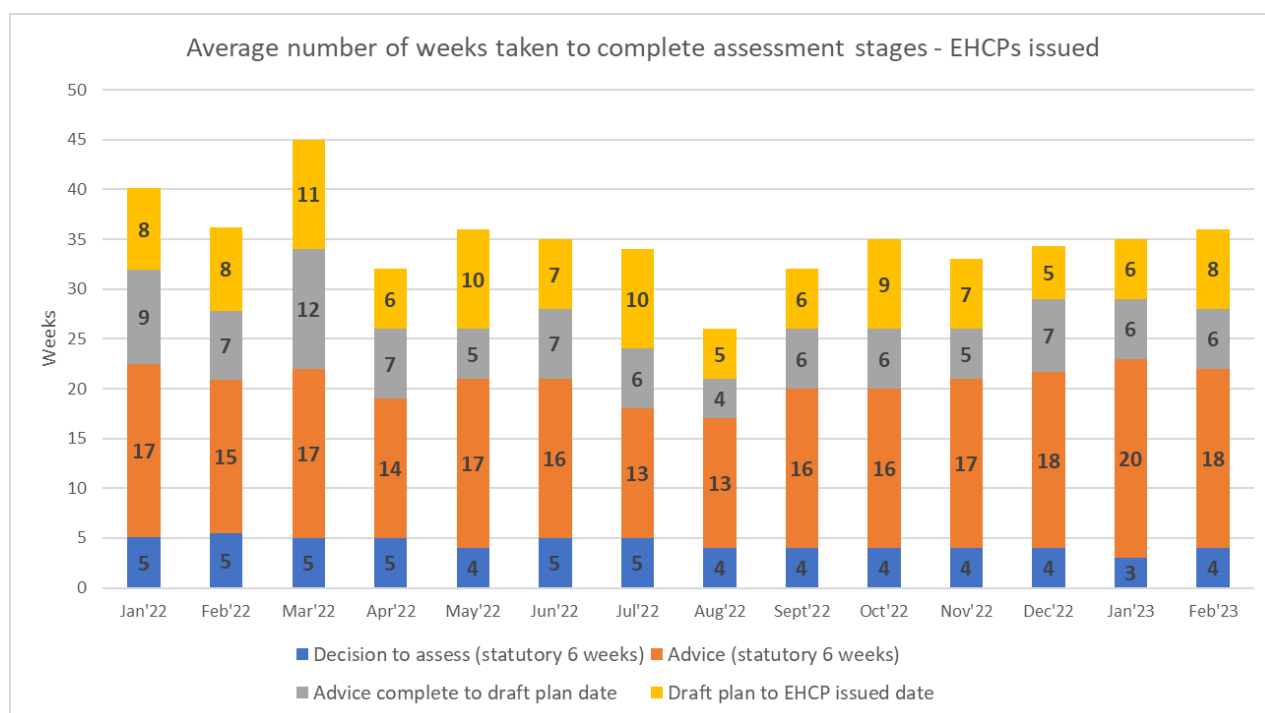
Appendix 1: EHC Timeliness

Weeks taken to complete assessment stages

At the end of February 2023, the average number of weeks taken to issue an EHCP was 36 weeks (Figure 12). This includes

- 4 weeks – between the referral date and the start of the advice gathering stage
- 18 weeks - for the advice gathering stage
- 6 weeks - between end of advice gathering stage and draft plan date
- 8 weeks – between draft plan date and EHCP issue date.

Figure 12. Average number of weeks taken to complete each stage of the EHC process



Requests for assessment

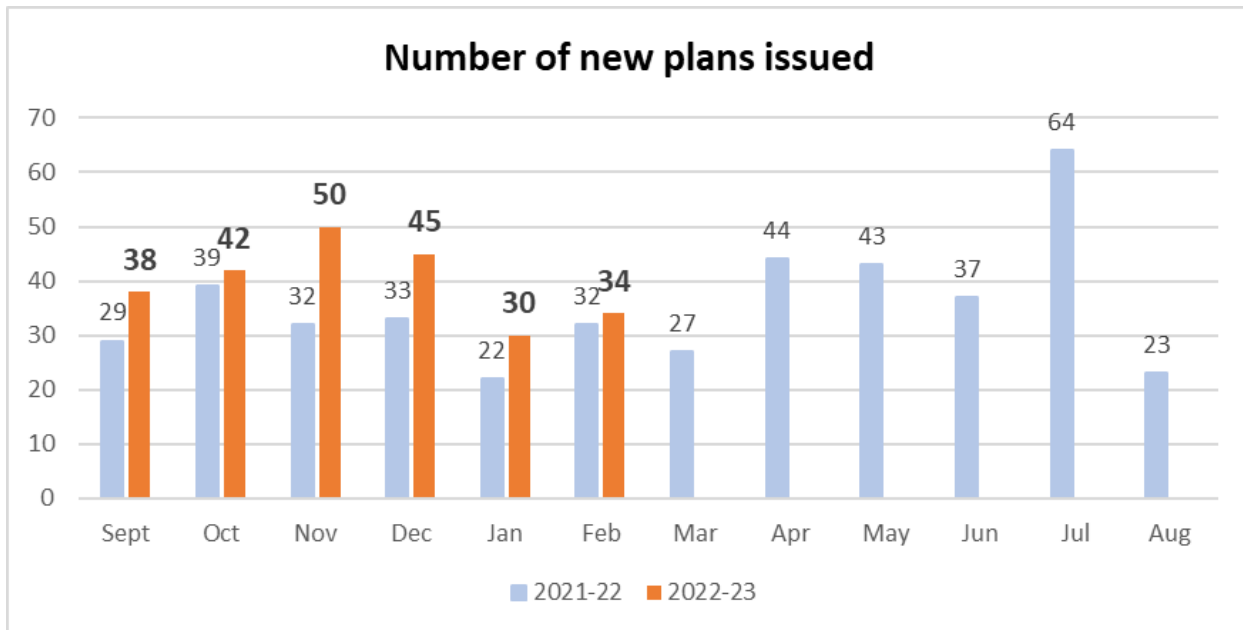
- In 2021, Newcastle had 448 initial requests for an EHC plan - up 21.7% from 351 in 2020 and a 73.0% increase compared with 259 requests in 2016 (trend fluctuates). This is above national (68.9%), North East (44.1%) and Statistical Neighbour (58.1%) averages. Source SEN2 2022.
- Local data for 2022 calendar year suggests Newcastle had 653 new assessment requests – an increase of 45% compared to 2021.

Number of EHCPs issued

Figure 13 below shows more plans are being issued each month in 2022-23 compared with 2021-22. However, the number of plans being issued each month is less than the number of new requests coming in. For example, in January, 30 plans were issued, but we

received 76 new requests for assessment, resulting in an increase in number of open assessments each month. Whilst we have seen a reduction in new requests in February (46), this is still higher than the number of plans that were issued (34).

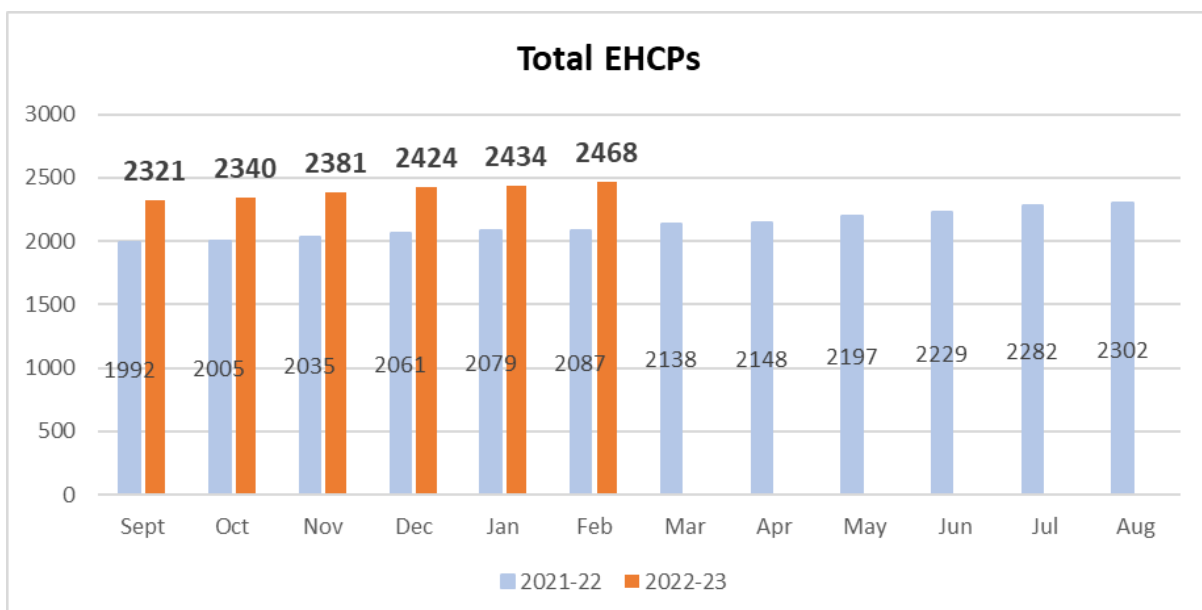
Figure 13: Number of new EHCP issued per month



EHCPs

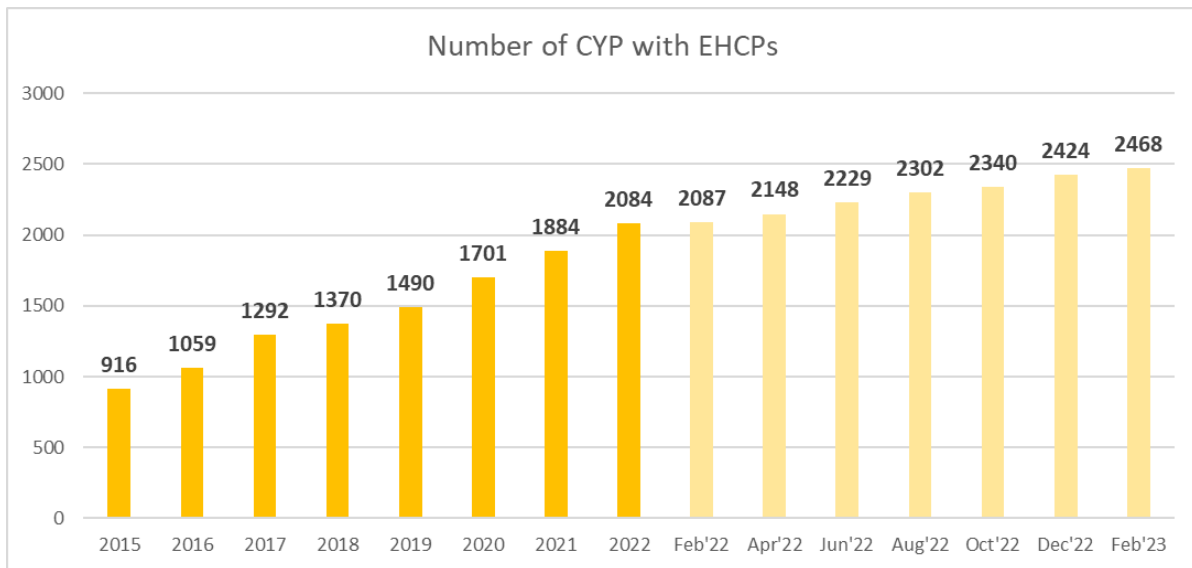
The total number of EHCPs continues to grow (Figure 14). In February 2023, there were 2,468 CYP with an EHCP. This compares with 2,321 at the start of the 2021-22 academic year and 2,087 in February 2022 – an 18% increase.

Figure 14: Number of CYP with EHCPs.



The growth from January 2021 to January 2022 as well as the longer-term growth is above national, North East and Statistical Neighbour averages (Figure 15: Source SEN2 2022).

Figure 15: Number of CYP with EHCPs January 2015 to February 2023.



Population trends

Table below shows the population age 0-25 years has increased more in Newcastle than other local authorities in the North East region and England.

Area	2011	2021	% Difference from 2011 to 2021
Newcastle	107374	111504	3.8
North Tyneside	58140	57185	-1.6
County Durham	156279	151395	-3.1
South Tyneside	44769	41392	-7.5
Northumberland	88146	81276	-7.8
Gateshead	60185	55151	-8.4
Sunderland	85686	77829	-9.2
England	17,037,078	17,153,473	0.7

Source: ONS Census

Appendix 2: Exclusions and suspensions data

Summary of Newcastle's permanent exclusion data compared to the latest national data and local data for 2021-22 and 2022-23:

Permanent exclusions

Overall, permanent exclusion rates for Newcastle pupils with SEND (EHCP and SEN Support combined) have reduced from 0.39% in 2018-19 to 0.14% in 2020-21, where Newcastle was just above the national average (0.13%). See below for published annual trends for EHCP and SEN Support pupils.

The latest published data for the Autumn term 2021-22, suggests permanent exclusions were **below national levels** (0.07% compared with 0.08%) for pupils with SEND.

At this point, Newcastle exclusion rates were,

- **Below national levels** for EHCP pupils in primary and secondary schools
- **Below national levels** for SEN Support students in primary schools (no exclusions).
- **Above national levels** for SEN Support in secondary schools. See performance scorecard.

Figure 16: Newcastle permanent exclusion rates for pupils with EHCPs compared to the North East and England average 2017-18 to 2020-21

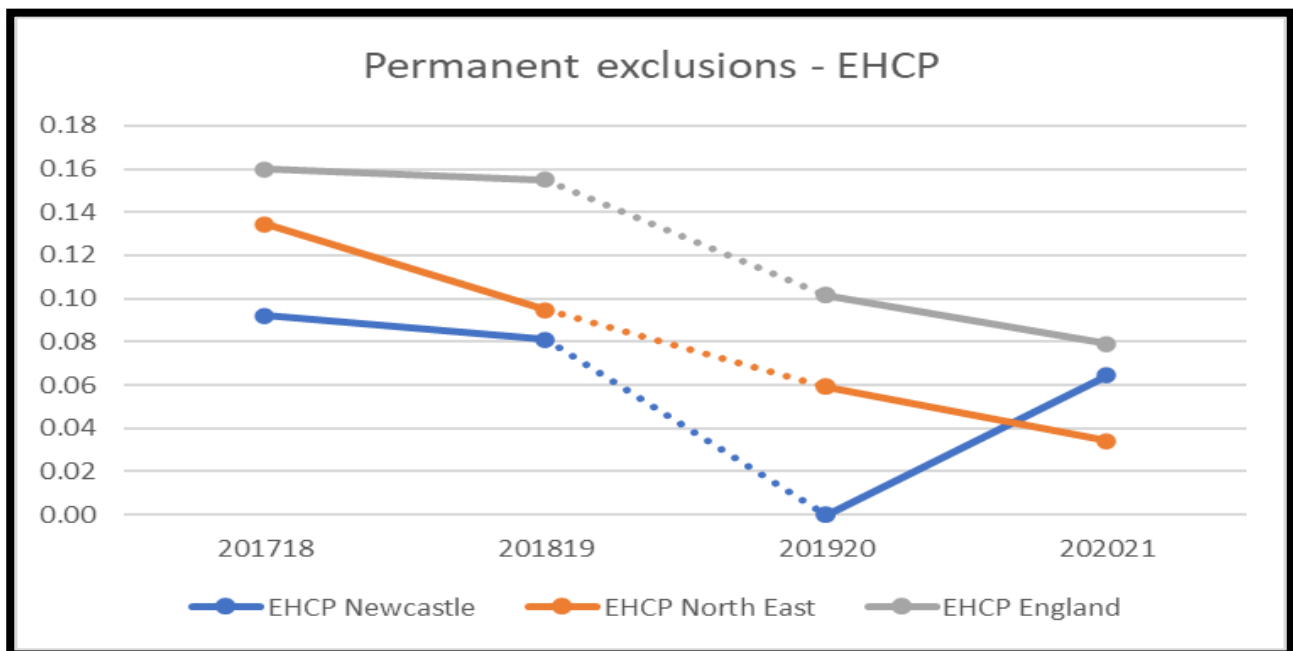
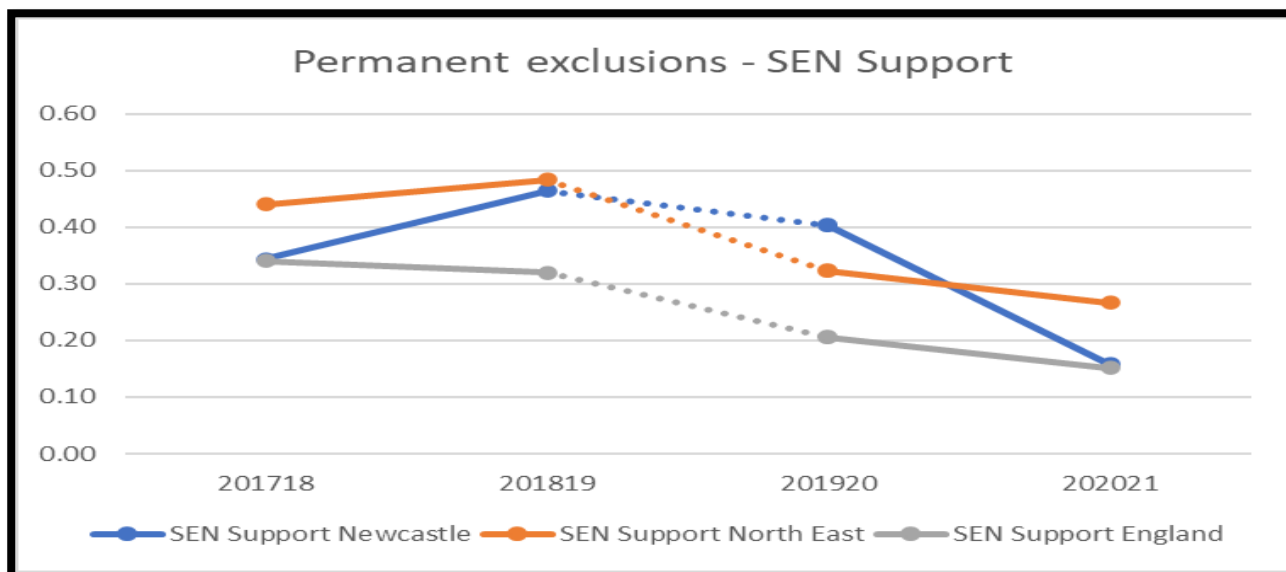


Figure 17: Newcastle permanent exclusion rates for pupils with SEN Support compared to the North East and England average 2017-18 to 2020-21



Note: This data is the number of permanent exclusions (over year) as a proportion of cohort pupils (as of Jan Census)

Suspensions

Overall suspension rates for Newcastle pupils with SEND (EHCP and SEN Support combined) were above the national average in 2020-21 (15.9% compared with 12.1%). However, for primary pupils with SEN Support suspension rates had reduced to the national average level (4.4%). See charts below for published trends.

The latest published data for the Autumn term 2021-22, shows suspension rates were **above national levels** (7.9% compared with 6.3%) for pupils with SEND.

At this point, Newcastle suspension rates were,

- **Below national levels** for EHCP and SEN Support pupils in primary schools
- **Above national levels** for EHCP and SEN Support pupils in secondary schools.

See performance scorecard.

Figure 18: Newcastle suspension rates for primary aged pupils with EHCP compared to the North East and England average 2017-18 to 2020-21

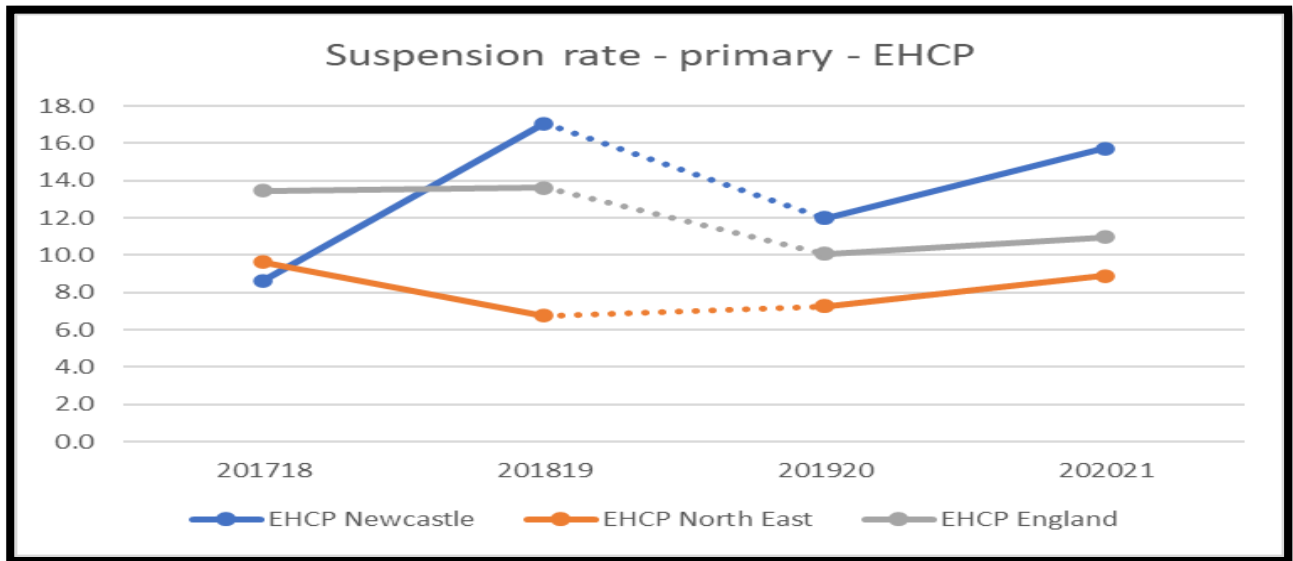
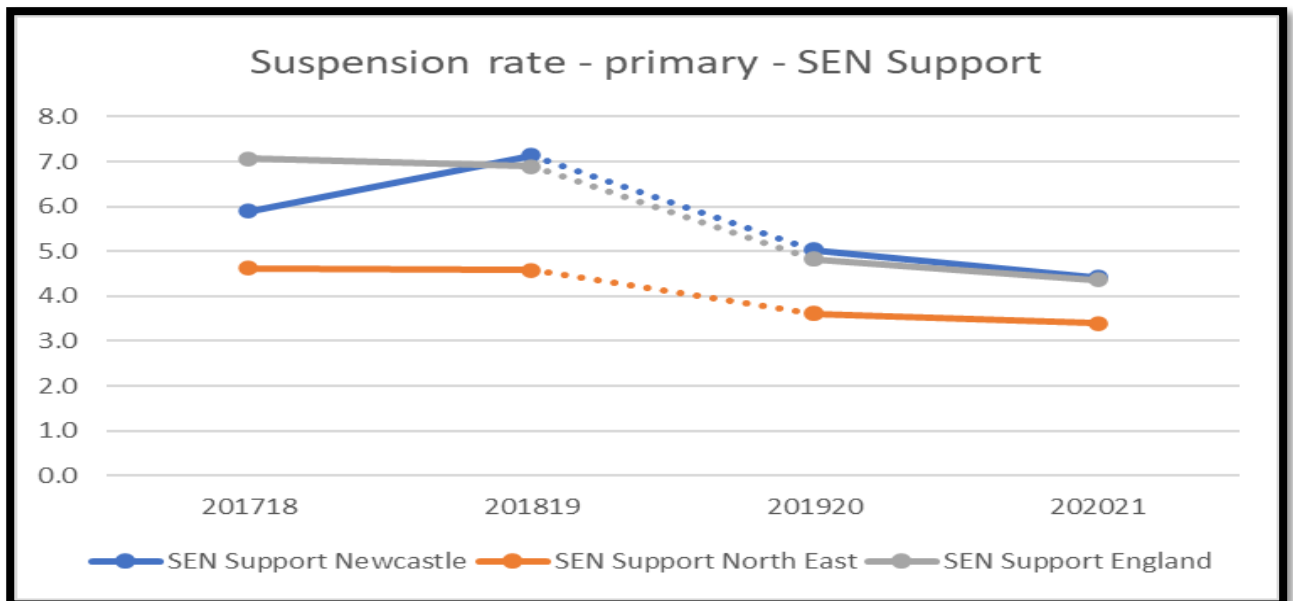


Figure 19: Newcastle suspension rates for primary aged pupils with SEN Support compared to the North East and England average 2017-18 to 2020-21



Note: This year's data includes the period in Spring term 2020/21, where restrictions meant that only key worker and vulnerable children were attending school in person, with others were educated remotely.

For secondary aged pupils, suspension rates are above the national levels for EHCP and SEN Support, however both are lower than the North East averages.

Figure 20: Newcastle suspension rates for secondary aged pupils with EHCPs compared to the North East and England average 2017-18 to 2020-21

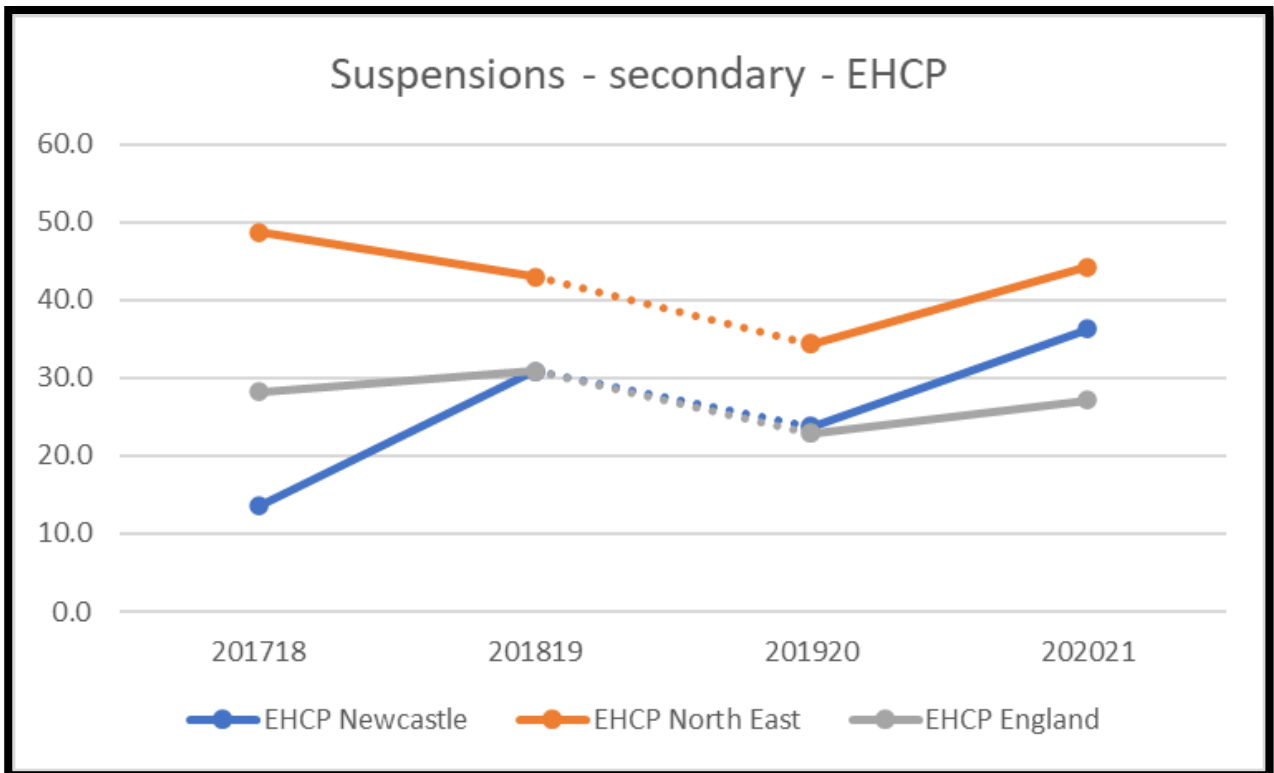
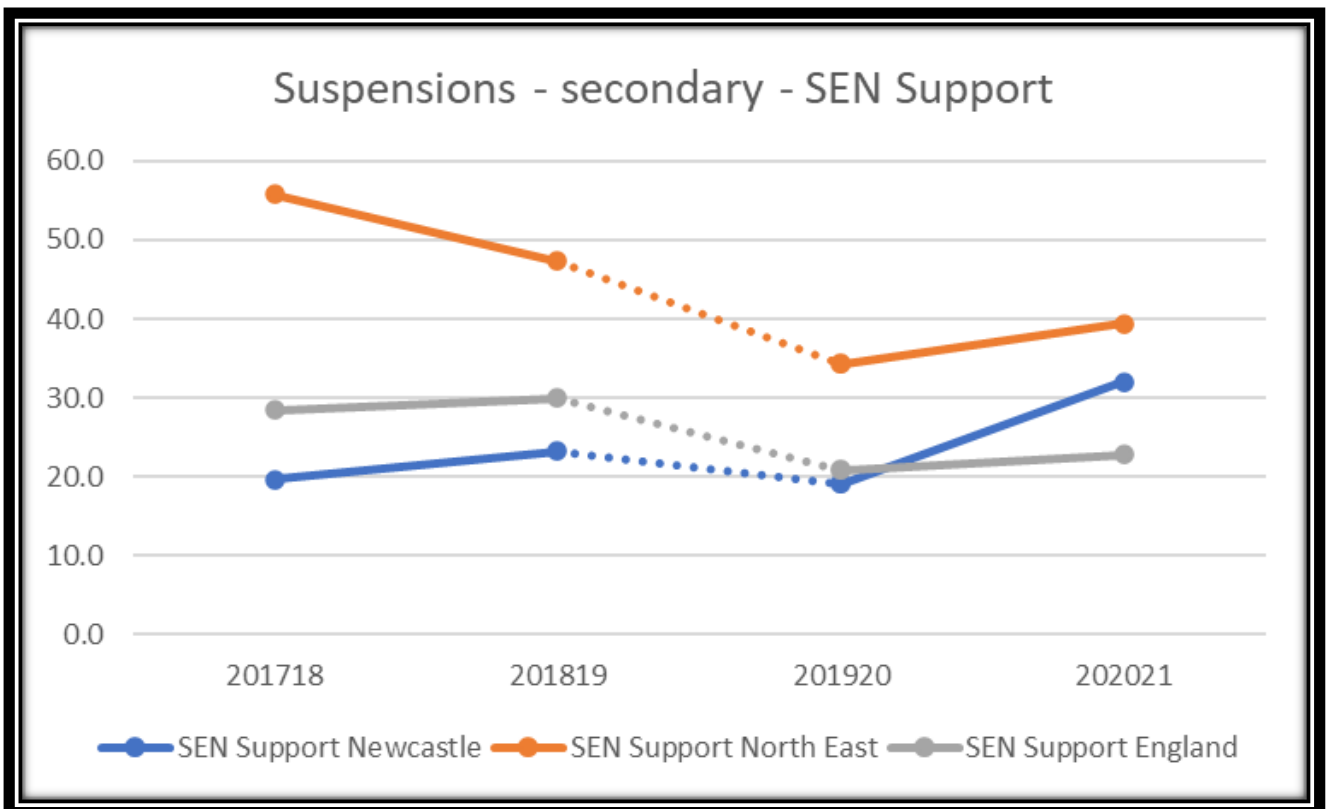


Figure 21: Newcastle suspension rates for secondary aged pupils with SEN Support compared to the North East and England average 2017-18 to 2020-21



Appendix 3: Educational Psychology Work: Evidence of Impact on Exclusions

Background:

Evidence suggests that the following factors promote children's inclusion and reduce exclusions:

1. Robust understanding by stakeholders (particularly school staff) of children's needs and strengths, particularly in the area of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and factors (or SEN) which might underly SEMH.
2. Early identification of SEMH needs as a Special Educational Need (SEN), appropriate person – centred target setting, intervention and evaluation against targets.
3. School staff feeling confident, empowered and competent that they can support children with SEMH needs.
4. Children feeling understood and involved in decisions affecting their lives.
5. Authentic involvement of families in 'plan, do, review' cycles to support children with particular SEMH needs.
6. Successful transition between placements.

For these reasons, Educational Psychology which has an aim of promoting inclusion and reducing exclusions has focused on these 5 areas. This is through:

1. Core time being put into Newcastle's SEND Advice and Support Allocation Panel [Newcastle SEND Advice and Support Allocation Panel \(SEN ASAP\)](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk) ([newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk)) over the last two academic years (and via the Single Point of Contact panel before this). In the last two years, Educational Psychologists on the team have worked with 28 pupils (including their families and staff) in the academic year 2021 – 2022 and with 31 pupils (and their families and staff) this academic year so far. Last academic year, none of the pupils we worked with received a permanent exclusion, despite their significant SEMH needs. This academic year so far, one pupil has received a permanent exclusion before we became involved. This shows the impact of our work on supporting children, staff and families. See appendix 1 for a sample of our evaluation feedback.
The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist for SEMH has also been involved directly in complex casework with a range of students with particularly complex SEMH needs over the last two academic years. These pupils were often referred via the Local Authority Inclusion Panel, the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) panel or ASAP (as above). From being involved with twelve pupils, two of these pupils have since been permanently excluded, to the best of our knowledge. One of these pupils is a Looked After Child who is now settled in a long-term specialist SEMH provision and long-term foster placement, and the other permanent exclusion is being appealed. The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist has also been involved less directly in support of other pupils with identified SEMH SEN, but no data has been captured for this involved due to many other factors impacting inclusion/exclusion.
2. The ASAP team of Educational Psychologists created and trialled an SEMH profile (see appendix 2), which staff in schools can use in a person – centred meeting to identify students' SEMH needs, strengths and how to support them. This is something which is being used regularly by ASAP Educational Psychologists and the schools they

work with and is commented on in positive feedback we receive (see appendix 1). Educational Psychologists have also added valuable input into developing the Local Authority's Descriptor of Needs [SEND Descriptors of Need | Newcastle Support Directory](#) and mainstream guidance as means to ensure that staff and others understand what provision is likely to promote inclusion and reduce exclusions. The evidence of impact of these documents and associated training is ongoing and facilitated by a range of professions, not just Educational Psychologists.

3. The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist, along with other professionals, is facilitating bespoke training and support for schools in Newcastle who have the highest rate of exclusions (and poorest attendance). Five Secondary Schools are accessing the offer here: [Understanding and Developing Social, Emotional and Mental Health Skills \(SEMH\) | Newcastle Support Directory](#). This training offer was planned last academic year and has been rolled out since January 2023. So far, evaluation feedback suggests that staff are increasing in their capacities to identify students who have SEN in SEMH within the context of a whole school relational approach. See appendix 3 for examples of feedback so far. This feedback also sits alongside Designated Mental Health Lead Training in Newcastle and training to support staff to understand SEMH through the pandemic. See appendix 3 for evaluation feedback. Staff in the SEMH ARPs have also received training around meeting the needs of students with significant SEN in SEMH. No pupils have been permanently excluded from an SEMH ARP since this training (and other initiatives) began. There is also a core offer of training and support with the aim of promoting children's inclusion, outlined here: [Newcastle EPS Collaborative Document \(newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk\)](#). Universal support to school staff is also offered to schools as part of the Local Authority's Team around the School approach. Evaluation of impact is ongoing.
4. Children's voices are integral to any work which aims to support them. They offer adults valuable insights into what is working and not working for them. Children were consulted directly in the creation of Newcastle's training and support package. Educational Psychologists always work in person – centred ways with the child at the centre and this is reflected in the tools we use in the casework cited above and when we use the SEMH profile, for example. Our work tends to be co constructed with the child in terms of what they might find helpful to know about themselves, which will lead to their inclusion (and not exclusion).
5. Educational Psychologists usually work with parents/carers in each piece of casework we carry out. Understanding the family context is integral to our formulation and support we might offer, along with others'. Parents/carers' views were sought in the creation of the type of training that would be offered to school staff. They were also represented and co -constructed the SEMH descriptor of needs approach.
6. Educational Psychologists are involved in numerous pieces of work which aim to promote inclusion during transitions, directly in casework and through sharing evidence based good practice: [School Transitions | Newcastle Support Directory](#). The Day 6 transition paperwork has been used successfully between Day 6 and mainstream: [Sixth Day Provision | Newcastle Support Directory](#). Evaluation of impact is ongoing.

Examples of impact of EPS work:

Example 1 from teacher feedback form:

How successful was the work in relation enhancing understanding of what might be going on for the child / young person: **Teacher rated the work as 4 – completely successful.**

Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The EP team have been brilliant. Providing support for school and the family.• Training for the whole staff team has been really useful.• It confirmed the work the staff were already doing and gave them strategies to use to support.• The work has been really useful and supported the school in helping the family. The staff now feel confident in the work they are doing supporting the children.

Case Studies

EP input has included: therapeutic work with the child/child and family, staff training, facilitating group consultation/problem solving meetings, staff supervision, case work, sharing of evidence-based intervention, particularly targeted intervention which promotes children's SEMH development.

Case Study 1:

EP involvement was sought to support family and Nursery's understandings about the child's needs, in particular triggers for some "tantrums". The EP facilitated a solution focused consultation with key stakeholders and family members participating. This allowed the team around the child to share understandings and combine their knowledge of what was working well and what needed further support. A number of clear, specific and measurable outcomes were negotiated. The EP scribed the meeting and sent to all involved so everyone was clear about what they were working towards: a) to help the child to feel psychologically safe when her mum left her, b) to help the child to understand what is happening next by using a now and then board and giving her 1 – 1 support during transitions and c) implementing an evidence-based intervention to support her friendship with a chosen peer. The case was reviewed via a multiagency and family meeting and progress against targets had been met. The tantrums had decreased (evidenced through quantitative and qualitative data collected by setting staff). The case was closed.

Case Study 2:

EP involvement was sought due to a Primary child's experiences of trauma in the family home. The child was distressed to the point where he was not able to attend school beyond an hour a day. The EP firstly participated in a multiagency meeting to better understand the child's needs and strengths. It was felt that there was a gap in school staff's understanding about Emotionally Based School Non - Attendance and how to support children who experience this. After facilitating some training with school staff, the EP facilitated some group consultation sessions with key staff supporting the child to plan

what effective support might look like. Alongside this, the EP worked with the carer and child to hear about their perspectives about what might work. At the time of case closure, the child had increased their time at school to full mornings, with a view to extending this further.

Case Study 3:

EP involvement was sought due to a Primary child's experiences of distress, which were communicated through some emotional outbursts, which could be unsafe. The child was said to be 'at risk of permanent exclusion'. The EP met with those involved to better understand the child's needs and strengths. It was evident that the child had some issues understanding language and communicating herself. The EP suggested that this difficulty affected her ability to emotionally regulate, which others had not thought of before. The EP completed some assessment of the child's language and learning needs and strengths and suggested a referral to Speech and Language Therapy. The assessment enabled staff to implement some different strategies, particularly altering the reading age of texts which could be a catalyst for the child's frustration and following outbursts. The EP also suggested targeted intervention which could be differentiated for the child, and which had the aim of supporting her emotional regulation. At the time of closure, the child was still in school full time.

Complex Casework Case Study:

The year 7 student was referred to the specialist EP through the Local Inclusion panel. They were said to be at risk of permanent exclusion. The EP met with family, student and school staff to understand reasons for some underlying emotional needs. It materialised that the child had low self-esteem and confidence and was avoiding lessons due to a belief that they would not be able to cope. Some individual work was carried out with the student and some training with the staff around 'anxiety'. This pupil has since successfully transitioned to High School from the Middle School.

Appendix 4: Tables showing secondary school level (anonymised) data.

Table 1: Secondary schools - SEN Support students

School	Phase	Census				Suspensions						Permanent exclusions		Attendance		Part time timetable as at 31-10-22	AET	Happiness Survey participation
		Jan'21		Jan'22		No. of students		No. of suspensions		Rate		2021-22	2021-22	2021-22	2021-22			
		No. SEN Support	% of pupils	No. SEN Support	% of pupils	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22**							
####	Secondary	127	7.8	153	9.6	76	68	348	406	274.0	265.4	1	5	76.6	78.3	7	Y	
####	Secondary	167	17.1	125	12.0	23	47	46	110	27.5	89.0	0	2	87.5	78.7	3	Y	Y
####	Secondary	122	6.7	146	8.0	36	46	75	125	61.5	85.6	1	4	84.6	83.8	1	Y	Y
####	Secondary	158	13.1	160	13.3	24	47	36	103	22.8	64.4	0	1	90.6	87.4	0	Y	
####	All-through	376	24.8	363	23.6	38	54	63	130	16.8	35.8	0	2	89.1	86.2	4	Y	
####	Secondary	165	8.6	152	7.6	17	18	51	52	30.9	34.2	1	2	85.3	82.3	0	Y	
####	Secondary	196	17.1	241	20.2	7	42	11	78	5.6	32.4	1	6	83.7	85.7	8	Y	
####	Secondary	213	10.8	219	10.9	22	29	57	70	26.8	32.0	0	2	86.4	85.5	2		
####	Secondary	168	11.8	178	12.5	11	11	18	31	10.7	17.4	0	1	90.4	86.0	0	Y	
####	Middle deemed secondary	56	7.4	65	8.6	2	2	4	7	7.1	10.8	1	0	90.0	85.9	1		
####	Secondary	49	24.9	50	24.3	7	4	15	4	30.6	8.0	0	0	89.9	83.0	1	Y	
####	Secondary	94	6.5	101	7.0	8	5	15	6	16.0	5.9	1	0	87.4	92.0	0		
####	Middle deemed secondary	55	10.3	62	11.1	0	2	0	2	0.0	3.2	0	0	95.9	93.7	0	Y	
####	Middle deemed secondary	54	10.5	59	11.5	0	1	0	1	0.0	1.7	0	0	95.3	91.3	0	Y	
####	Secondary	122	29.3	148	28.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	90.0	92.6	0		
####	Secondary	-	-	17	14.2	-	2	-	3	-	17.6	-	0	-	92.6	0		Y
####	Middle deemed secondary	-	-	4	6.7	-	0	-	0	-	0.0	-	0	-	88.3	0	Y	
Total	17	2122	12.2	2222	12.5	270	378	739	1128	34.8	50.8	7	27	-	85.5	27	12	3

Table 2: Secondary schools - EHCP students

School	Phase	Census				Suspensions						Permanent exclusions		Attendance		Part time timetable as at 31-10-22	AET	Happiness Survey participation
		Jan'21		Jan'22		No. of students		No. of suspensions		Rate		2020-21	2021-22	2021-22	2021-22			
		No. EHCP	% of pupils	No. EHCP	% of pupils	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22**							
####	Secondary	17	1.1	22	1.4	5	8	45	37	264.7	168.2	0	0	66.1	65.0	2	Y	
####	Secondary	26	1.3	23	1.1	3	4	8	15	30.8	65.2	0	0	87.8	86.3	0		
####	Secondary	42	4.3	55	5.3	7	10	7	34	16.7	61.8	0	0	80.2	77.1	0	Y	Y
####	Secondary	12	1.0	15	1.2	1	3	1	7	8.3	46.7	0	0	89.0	84.5	0	Y	
####	All-through	25	1.6	28	1.8	2	3	3	11	12.0	39.3	0	0	67.8	87.2	2	Y	
####	Secondary	26	1.4	39	2.1	3	7	13	14	50.0	35.9	0	0	74.5	82.3	0	Y	Y
####	Secondary	24	1.7	23	1.6	2	2	4	7	16.7	30.4	0	0	88.3	84.7	0		
####	Secondary	15	1.3	22	1.8	0	2	0	3	0.0	13.6	0	0	63.5	76.8	3	Y	
####	Middle deemed secondary	15	2.0	16	2.1	0	1	0	2	0.0	12.5	0	0	93.3	88.5	0		
####	Secondary	11	0.8	10	0.7	0	1	0	1	0.0	10.0	0	0	79.1	89.7	0	Y	
####	Middle deemed secondary	10	1.9	16	2.9	1	1	3	1	30.0	6.3	0	0	90.5	93.8	0	Y	
####	Secondary	5	2.5	2	1.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	48.2	78.6	0	Y	
####	Secondary	20	1.0	20	1.0	4	0	8	0	40.0	0.0	1	0	76.2	79.0	1	Y	
####	Secondary	7	1.7	13	2.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	83.4	79.6	0		
####	Middle deemed secondary	4	0.8	6	1.2	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	92.8	83.6	0	Y	
####	Middle deemed secondary	-	-	0	0.0	-	0	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	22.8	1	Y	
####	Secondary	-	-	1	0.8	-	0	-	0	-	0.0	-	0	-	96.8	0		Y
Total	17	259	2.4	311	2.9	28	42	92	132	35.5	42.4	1	0	-	81.5	9	12	3

Notes

Indicates lower performing

Indicates better performing

** all data in table sorted on this field