

# Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No. 06/18

Date: June 2018

Briefing paper to: All Members of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Purpose: To provide an update on the situation regarding schools affected by the storm of 29 May 2018 and to ensure future resilience against similar events.

## Update on schools affected by the storm

The severe weather conditions experienced across much of the South East on 29 May 2018 hit a number of schools across Medway. Those most affected were generally in the Walderslade, Lordswood and South Rainham areas, although not exclusively.

The storms took place during the half term period; this meant that despite a number of schools being affected in some way most managed to clear the water and take appropriate action to be able to open as usual when the half term break ended.

Quick thinking by staff on the sites helped to minimise damage, and the head teachers and staff worked tirelessly to ensure that all schools were back to normal as quickly as possible.

Three schools however, were unable to open either partially or fully. These were;

- 1) St Augustine's Roman Catholic Primary School, which was completely closed during the week after half term but was able to open to all children from 11 June.
- 2) New Road Primary School, which was able to open for foundation and key stage 1 immediately after the half term, but closed for key stage 2 during that week. They too were fully open for 11 June.
- 3) Hempstead Infants School, which was able to open for reception classes from 4 June, but closed for years 1 and 2. The school was fully open from 11 June, with classes being taught in the hall and dining areas initially whilst remedial work was completed.

Medway Council's insurance team has lead the recovery process and appointed a Loss Adjuster to manage and oversee the emergency work across all schools affected.

Some of the work undertaken is temporary and the permanent work will take place during the summer holiday period. All work, both temporary and permanent is covered by insurance.

It is difficult to predict if, where and when these extreme weather conditions may occur again, however, we must do what we can to mitigate the potential impacts.

Our programme of roofing repairs and replacements has worked as generally these were not the cause of water ingress. We are looking at the effectiveness of the doors at some schools, as this is where much of the water came in.

As part of the condition work undertaken across maintained schools, we will assess the potential risk at schools and take appropriate action with the intention of minimising this risk in the future. However, the location, strength and timing of a storm in the future will determine the success of those measures.

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