
Meeting of the Children's Services Select Committee – 16th November 2023

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Education Report

Purpose of report

1. To provide an update on Education Outcomes to Children's Services Select Committee

Recommendations

2. The Select Committee are asked to note and comment on the contents of the report.

Background

3. The report contains updates on the work of the Education Outcomes team as follows:
 - Primary Data Overview
 - Attendance 2022/3
 - Suspensions Data
 - Education Strategy Themes
 - AP Strategy Update
 - Poverty Proofing
 - Inspections

Primary Data Overview

4. KS2 headline measures include progress and attainment measures. These are:

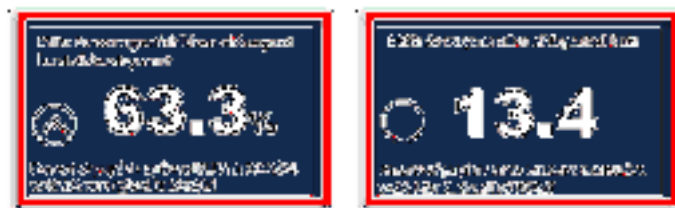
- the percentage of pupils achieving the 'expected standard' in English reading, English writing and maths at the end of KS2
- the pupils' average scaled score in:
 - English reading at the end of KS2
 - maths at the end of KS2
- the percentage of pupils who achieve at a higher standard in English reading, English writing and maths
- the pupils' average progress in:
 - English reading
 - English writing
 - maths.

- 5 The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard is a combined measure across the three subjects. To be counted towards the measure, a pupil must have a scaled score of 100 or more in reading and a scaled score of 100 or more in maths; and have been teacher assessed in writing as 'working at the expected standard' or 'working at greater depth'.
- 6 The percentage of pupils achieving at a higher standard is also a combined measure across the three subjects. To be counted towards the measure, a pupil must have a 'high scaled score' of 110 or more in reading and maths; and have been teacher assessed in writing as 'working at greater depth'.
- 7 Unlike the expected standard, which was determined by the STA's standard-setting teacher panel, the high score was determined by the department solely with reference to the distribution of pupils' test results, to identify the pupils who achieved the highest marks on the tests.
- 8 In addition, there is also a range of measures, which covers attainment and progress in individual subjects and for various pupil groups. For example, the percentage of pupils gaining the expected standard in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, and breakdowns showing performance of pupils with particular characteristics, such as disadvantaged pupils, or those for whom English is an additional language.
- 9 DfE shares detailed information on performance measures with school leaders, governors, and other relevant stakeholders (including local authorities, academy trusts, dioceses, and Ofsted) via Analyse School Performance ('ASP') - a secure platform providing users with restricted access to performance data relevant to their role and/or function.

10 Key Stages EYF5 Outcomes for Children in Dudley

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EYF5



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Key Stages KS1 Outcomes for Children in Dudley remains below England in most indicators but is improving year-on-year



Key Stages KS2 Outcomes for Children in **Dudley** remains **below** **England** in most indicators but is improving year-on-year



Attendance Overview 2022/23

13 National Picture

Since the relaxation of restrictions on schools imposed during the height of the Covid pandemic, there have been concerns about increased absence from school, and in particular an increase in the proportion of pupils with high levels of absence.

- 14 **At the time of writing, the estimated absence rate for the 2022/23 academic year was 7.5%. This is not directly comparable to final data that has been published for previous years.**
- 15 The most recent final Department for Education attendance statistics for a complete academic year is for 2021/22, when the absence rate for any reason was 8.5%. This is much lower than the previous year when absence was affected much more by the pandemic (25.9% absence rate for any reason in 2020/21). However, it is higher than in the six years prior to the pandemic (when absence ranged between 4.5% and 4.8%).
- 16 In 2021/22, 22.5% of pupils were recorded as “persistently absent” (defined by the Department for Education as missing 10% or more of possible school sessions).
- 17 Some groups of pupils are more likely to be absent or persistently absent than others. For example, in 2021/22, 37.2% of free school meal eligible pupils were persistently absent compared with 17.5% of pupils that were not eligible.

18 Dudley Picture 2022/23 (National statistics currently unavailable)

- 40,961 children in Dudley schools eligible for counting (YR to Y11)
 - 9332 Persistently Absent in 2022/3 – 23%
 - 843 Severely Absent in 2022/3 – 2%
- 19
- Overall, School Attendance slightly worse than National and Regional levels (92% vs 92.5%)
 - Attendance still not back to pre-covid levels (92% vs 95%)
 - Increased numbers of children in Dudley absent from school, without a school place (CME) or receiving unsuitable Electively Home Education (EHE).
 - EHE from 160 to 500 since 2018 (weekly average)
 - CME from 60 to 300 since 2018 (weekly average)
 - DFE assigned support via Attendance Advisor
 - Significant issue with parents taking children out of school
 - Significant increase in 'medical' based absence but without formal diagnosis
 - Statutory Duties widening for all LAs as focus on attendance intensifies

Suspensions Data 2022/23

- 20
- 3318 individual suspensions – more than previous year
 - 1738 CYP – 686 were repeated individual children
 - 85% were from secondary children – 63% of total from year 8, 9 and 10
 - Year 1 and Year 6 highest years for primary
 - 52% of suspensions FSM
 - 65% male
 - 39% with SEND
 - 17% EHA, CiN, CP or previous involvement
 - 46% for persistent disruptive behaviour – 50% of all suspensions during summer term
 - 17% for pupil-on-pupil assault
 - 21% for verbal / threatening abuse

- 21
- **Latest National Data – 21/22 released at end of July 23**
 - National – 0.08%
 - West Midlands – 0.11%
 - Dudley – 0.14%
 - **128 actual** (110 - 21/22)
 - **88 upheld** (82 - 21/22)
 - 2021/22 – 75% were upheld from initial

 - 2022/23 – 69% were upheld from initial – a reduction from previous year

22 **Reasons:**

- 34.41% of PEx was for PDB – **48.3% Dudley 22/23 (upheld)**
- 12.64% for Assault on pupil – **18.% Dudley**
- 12.50% for Assault on adult – **7.9% Dudley**
- 11.49% for Verbal/Threatening abuse – **11.2% Dudley**
- 15.7% for Weapon related – **13.5% Dudley**
- 10.14% for Drug / Alcohol related – **1.1% Dudley**

23 **Analysis**

- 78.6% of all upheld PX are within Years 8, 9 and 10
- 48.3% have no SEN identified
- 57% are on FSM – 52% of suspensions are FSM
- 57.3% are male – this is against suspension data of 64.6% of suspensions
- 42.7% are female – against 35.4% of suspensions – why is the gap narrower at PEx level?

Education Strategy Themes

- 24 The Education Strategy for 2023-2026 sets out our ambition for our children and young people and how we intend to fulfil our responsibilities in providing them with everything they need to go forward and do fantastic things with their lives.
- 25 We are making it our mission to improve access, quality and outcomes for all children and families in our local area in the next three years. By working with our partners, we will do all that we can to drive educational excellence and get all schools to, at the very least, an Ofsted judgement of 'good'.
- 26 We want to align services, schools and settings to address barriers to learning and recognise the individual needs of both children and communities to tailor the educational support we provide.
- 27 In Dudley, we have high aspirations for all our children and young people, whatever their starting point. Access to a quality learning pathway, from childhood through to adulthood, enabling them to thrive and develop the life

skills that will support them into a productive and happy adulthood, is at the root of our ambition to ensure that children of all abilities do well in our schools and colleges gaining important skills and expertise for life. Fundamentally, we recognise the importance of impacting life chances.

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Game Changing Themes	
What needs improvement?	
1	Ensuring children coming into our system or returning to our system have suitable provision which is meeting need and inclusive
2	Ensuring a suitable education that works for all children regardless of ability, behaviour or background
3	Ensuring that all children are attending full time education
4	Ensuring children transition between the different points in their educational journey in a coherent and supported way
5	Bringing teams together to ensure children and families are supported holistically
6	Maximising our impact on children's outcomes at all levels through robust Quality Assurance, Intervention and Support

AP Strategy Update

29 The Alternative Provision strategy is now being redeveloped to ensure that it is fit for purpose and meeting the needs of CYP across the local area. This was launched in September 2023 with an internal meeting of LA Officers, Health, Social Care and other stakeholders to outline a clear rationale behind the direction of travel. On 12 October there was a Secondary Headteacher Workshop with every school represented and a clear sense of purpose and collaboration to ensure that our new strategy is fit for purpose and future proofed. A Primary Headteacher Workshop takes place on 20 October followed by a meeting of our AP Leadership Group (those responsible for AP across the area). Once these workshops are complete, a draft strategy will be released for consultation and collaboration.

30 The Alternative Provision Strategy is being developed to be consistent with the principles underpinning the SEND Strategy and our Inclusive Pathways programme in order to:

- increase the number of children and young people supported in mainstream provision
- reduce the number of exclusions from schools
- address the rising number of young people receiving home tuition
- stop off-rolling, leaving young people without education

- reduce the increasing use of specialist provision
- ensure specialist provision is in the right locations.
- increase the number of young people in education, employment and training, therefore reducing our NEET statistics.

31 OUR END GAME

1. Clear Ethos & Vision for Alternative Pathways
2. A change in 'language' from AP to 'Educational Pathways' which meet childrens' needs.
3. New Inclusion Strategy and development of Inclusive Pathways
4. A comprehensive review and implementation of new AP Places/Alternative Curriculum – with good physical space and buildings
5. A focus on Behaviour Outreach/development of relationships
6. Development of a 'behaviour curriculum' in schools
7. Effective Transition in AND out including date stamped exit points.

Poverty Proofing

32 We are planning to pilot the ***Children North East's Poverty Proofing the School Day programme*** in 8 of Dudley's Primary Schools over this academic year.

33 Children North East's Poverty Proofing the School Day Programme aims to make sure no activity or planned activity in schools identifies, excludes, treats differently, or make assumptions about those children whose household income or resources are lower than others.

Schools participating in the pilot will go through an audit experience whereby Children North East staff:

- Come into school for a week.
- Have a whole school day experience alongside the pupils.
- Consult with all students.
- Consult with parents.
- Consult with all staff.
- Write a report on their findings.
- Support schools in action plans to support those children and families living in poverty, or under cost-of-living pressures.

34 **Previous audits across the country have revealed children struggle with some of the following elements of a school day:**

- being easily identifiable through their FSM status or brown paper bag containing their lunch on a school trip
- not being served at lunch if the bill had not been paid.
- non- uniform days
- the cost of new uniform/ replacing lost items
- not affording sweets to bring in on their birthdays.

- feelings of embarrassment for show and tell
- being picked on for having holes in their clothes, or looking scruffy
- losing playtime because they haven't read at home, or had their book signed.

35 **The Newcastle University Evaluation of the Poverty Proofing the School Day Programme showed:**

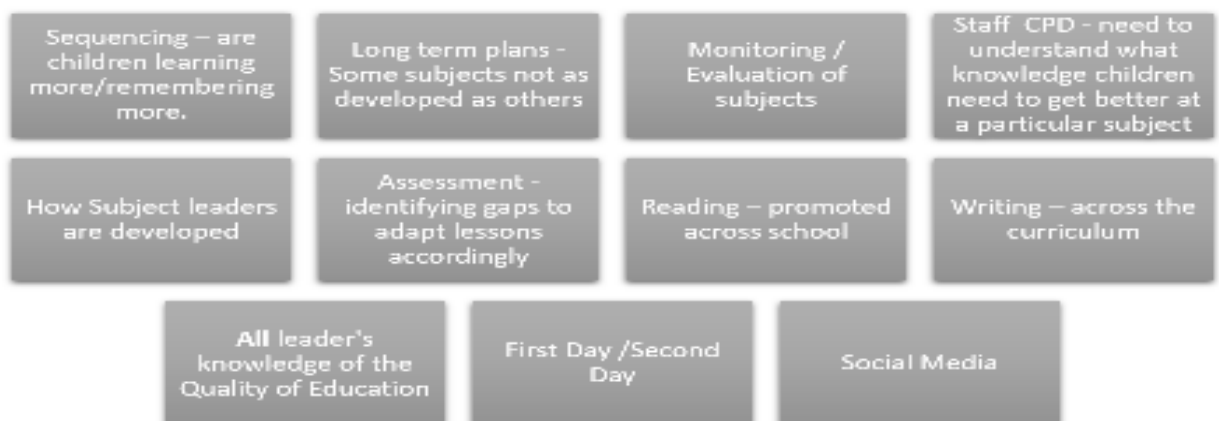
- This is a high impact programme that shifts whole school ethos.
- There was evidence of improved attendance and attainment as a result of removing barriers to learning.
- Greater take up of free school meals.
- More effective use of pupil premium
- Less costly school day
- Increase in uptake of school trips and music tuition by the most disadvantaged pupils.
- Improvement in pupil mental health and wellbeing
- Increase in communication and improved relations with parents.

Ofsted Update

36 Ofsted inspections continue in line with the expected schedule. Maintained schools continue to perform well and over the last 6 months five of our long term RI (Requires Improvement) schools have moved to good gradings. 86% of maintained primary schools are now good or outstanding along with 100% of secondary and special schools. In terms of academy schools, conversations are held with the DFE where concerns are raised about inspections or performance, although the LA has little jurisdiction over their improvement journey.

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Patterns from recent inspections



PHASE	LA				Trustees				Devolved LA
Primary/ Nursery	45				33				78
	Continuing	Good	RI	Good	Continuing	Good	RI	Good	
	3	27	6	5	2	18	7	4	
	7%	60%	13%	11%	3%	55%	16%	12%	
Good or Better	70%				68%				69%
Secondary	1				18				19
	Continuing	Good	RI	Good	Continuing	Good	RI	Good	
	3	4	0	5	1	6	0	1	
	100%	100%	0%	100%	6%	33%	0%	5%	
Good or Better	100%				90%				95%
Special / AP	0				1				1
	Continuing	Good	RI	Good	Continuing	Good	RI	Good	
	2	4	0	5	0	1	0	1	
	100%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	
Good or Better	100%				100%				100%

Finance

- 39 There are no direct financial implications arising from the proposals outlined in the report.

Law

- 40 The law governing Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's (the Local Authority) statutory duties in relation to education in its area is provided by the Acts of Parliament, Regulations and Statutory Guidance regularly published and updated by Central Government.

In particular, the Education Act 1996 obliges the Local Authority to:

"... ensure that their relevant education ... and ... training functions are ... exercised ... with a view to ... promoting high standards, ... ensuring fair access ... and ... promoting the fulfilment of [the] learning potential by every person to whom this subsection applies." sub-section 13A(1)

AND

"... establish primary schools and secondary schools ... maintain primary and secondary schools, whether established by them or not; and ... assist any primary or secondary school which is not maintained by them [for the purpose of fulfilling their functions under this Act] ..." sub-section 16(1)

The Local Authority must therefore have policies and procedures that enable it to collate, interpret and act upon data regarding the social and educational needs of local children and young people, as well as the progress of local schools. This will enable the Local Authority to improve the educational provision available and the attainments and outcomes of the pupils and students in its area.

Consequently, because this report summarises the data being collated and describes the work being done by officers within Education Outcomes, it demonstrates how they are ensuring that the Local Authority is complying with the statutory duties cited above.

Risk Management

41 There are no deemed risks as this report is provided for information purposes only.

Equality Impact

42 The HR/OD Business Partner is fully engaged with officers within the Childrens Services Directorate to support the delivery of the key principles of this strategy

Human Resources/Organisational Development

43 The HR/OD Business Partner is fully engaged with officers within the Childrens Services Directorate to support the delivery of the key principles of this strategy.

Commercial/Procurement

44 There are no direct commercial or procurement implications associated with this report, however improved relationships with Dudley schools does create opportunity for increased trading.

Environment/Climate Change

45 The report is for information only and there is no perceived impact on climate change or environmental factors.

Council Priorities and Projects

46 A place where everybody has the education and skills they need, and where outstanding local schools, colleges and universities secure excellent results for their learners.

A place of healthy, resilient, safe communities with high aspirations and the ability to shape their own future.

Catherine Driscoll

Catherine Driscoll
Director of Children's Services

Report Author: Martyn Palfreyman
Telephone: 01384 816276
Email: martyn.palfreyman@dudley.gov.uk