

Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

2 February 2022

Report title	Annual Report on Schools' Education Performance	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Dr Mike Hardacre Education, Skills and Work	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
Originating service	Education Excellence	
Accountable employee(s)	Phil Leivers	Head of Education Excellence
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Report to be/has been considered by	Directorate Leadership Team	13 January 2022
	Cabinet Member Briefing (CYPF)	18 January 2022

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

1. Review and comment upon the performance of schools and academies during the academic year 2020-2021.
2. Review and comment on the support provided to schools by the Education Excellence service

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide a summary of school performance during the academic year 2020-2021 and outline the support provided by the Education Excellence service.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The performance of schools during 2020-21 has to be seen against the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures applied. Schools opened fully in September 2020 and remained open for the term against a background of increasing Covid cases. From January 2021 schools were only open to children of key workers and those considered vulnerable. The majority of students were educated at home accessing remote learning. Schools reopened fully in March 2021 and remained open until the end of the Summer term.
- 2.2 The Department for Education suspended all public examinations and assessments for the academic year, replacing GCSE and A level examinations with teacher assessed grades.
- 2.3 Ofsted suspended its regular cycle of inspections for the year, replacing them with monitoring inspections of remote learning and provision for student welfare. Safeguarding inspections were maintained if needed because of any concerns raised.

3.0 School Performance

3.1 Primary Performance Data

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department for Education has cancelled the 2019/20, 2020/2021 national curriculum assessments and associated data collections. There have been no published primary school performance tables.

3.2 Secondary Performance Data

Key Stage 4

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Summer exam series was cancelled in both 2020 and 2021, and alternative processes were set up to award grades. In both 2019/20 and 2020/21 attainment shows increases compared to 2018/19, higher than would be expected in a typical year. This likely reflects the changes to the way GCSE grades were awarded rather than improvements in student performance. This means the 2019/20 and 2020/21 data should not be directly compared to attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring change in student performance. No individual school test or exam data has been published for 2020 and 2021.

3.21 Average Attainment 8 score per pupil

	Average Attainment 8 Score per pupil		Difference
	2020	2021	
England	48.00	48.90	0.9
Wolverhampton	49.20	50.00	0.8
West Midlands Average	49.00	49.50	0.5

In 2020/2021 the Attainment 8 score per pupil is 50.0 which is above both regional and national and ranks the city 87 nationally.

Girls performed well with an Attainment 8 Average Point Score (APS) of 53.8 compared to 46.3 for boys.

Pupils receiving SEN Support had a score per pupil of 37.2 which is above the national of 36.7 and above the regional of 35.9 and ranks the City 57th nationally. Pupils with Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) have an average score of 11.7.

Disadvantaged pupils had a score of 42.2 which is above both national and regional for this group of pupils. This ranks the City 36th nationally in quartile band A.

Attainment 8 is a way of measuring how well children do in key stage 4.

The 8 subjects which make up Attainment 8 include English and maths. Out of the remaining 6 subjects:

- 3 must come from qualifications that count towards the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), like sciences, language and history
- 3 qualifications can be either GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or technical awards.

3.22 Percentage of pupils achieving 9-5 pass in English and Maths

	% of Pupils with 9 - 5 pass in both English and Maths		Difference
	2020	2021	
England	46.3	48.4	2.1
Wolverhampton	44.5	47.3	2.8
West Midlands Average	46.7	48.7	2.0

In 2020/2021 the proportion of pupils in the city achieving a strong (Grades 9-5) pass in English and Maths is 47.3% which is below the national and regional measure and ranks Wolverhampton 115 nationally. 53% of girls achieved this measure compared to 42% of boys.

3.23 English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

The EBacc is a set of subjects at GCSE that keeps young people's options open for further study and future careers. The EBacc is:

- English language and literature
- maths
- the sciences
- geography or history
- a language

	% of pupils entering the EBacc	
	2020	2021
England	36.4	35.6
Wolverhampton	34.0	29.5
West Midlands Average	37.6	35.7

In 2020/2021 the % of pupils entering the EBacc is 29.5 and ranks the City 122nd nationally.

	Average EBacc APS score per pupil		Difference
	2020	2021	
England	4.17	4.24	0.1
Wolverhampton	4.13	4.16	0.0
West Midlands Average	4.23	4.27	0.0

In 2020/2021 the average EBacc APS score per pupil is 4.16 and ranks the City 113th nationally.

3.3 Key Stage 5

	A Level APS per Entry		
	2020	2021	Difference
England - All state funded students	38.42	40.40	2.0
England - All students	39.51	41.60	2.1
Wolverhampton	35.78	38.48	2.7
West Midlands	37.27	39.41	2.1

The APS per A level entry has increased this year to 38.48 and is below the national and regional figure and ranks Wolverhampton 122nd nationally.

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	Tech level APS per Entry		
	2020	2021	Difference
England - All state funded students	29.76	31.74	2.0
England - All students	29.77	31.76	2.0
Wolverhampton	27.55	31.57	4.0
West Midlands	29.89	31.70	1.8

The APS per Technical level entry has increased this year to 31.57 and is only marginally below the national and regional figure. This ranks the City 73rd nationally.

	Applied general APS per Entry		
	2020	2021	Difference
England - All state funded students	31.21	32.76	1.5
England - All students	31.25	32.82	1.6
Wolverhampton	34.96	33.40	-1.6
West Midlands	32.41	33.44	1.0

The APS per entry for Applied general is 33.40 this year and is in line with the regional average and above national. This ranks Wolverhampton 61st nationally.

	% achieving grades AAB or better at A level at least 2 facilitating subjects		
	2020	2021	Difference
England - All state funded students	21.19	25.35	4.2
England - All students	24.20	28.60	4.4
Wolverhampton	19.50	25.80	6.3
West Midlands	20.30	24.70	4.4

This measure has increased in 2021 to 25.80% placing the City above both regional and national measures. This ranks Wolverhampton 59th nationally.

Further investigation is needed, in collaboration with the Skills Team in the Regeneration Directorate, to explore the destinations of A Level students and relate to the Wolves at Work 18-24 initiative.

3.4 Ofsted Judgements

Currently 87% of schools in Wolverhampton were judged by Ofsted to be Good or better. This indicates a 17% increase since 2014, putting Wolverhampton schools above the West Midlands average of 84% and in line with national. This is an excellent position for schools within the authority and shows that most of our pupils are receiving a good education daily. A summary of Ofsted judgements of Wolverhampton schools is shown in the table below.

Overall Ofsted Judgement as at January 2022

109 schools currently with an Ofsted Judgement	Jan 2022
2 Schools judged to be Inadequate *	2%
12 Schools judged to be Require Improvement	11%
77 Schools judged Good	71%
18 Schools judged Outstanding	17%
95 Schools Judged Good or Outstanding	87%

*The 2 schools that are judged Inadequate have now closed as they have joined a multi academy trust and have not yet been inspected since their conversion.

Overall Ofsted Judgement as at end of November 2021

109 schools currently with an Ofsted Judgement	30 Nov 2021
3 Schools judged to be Inadequate	3%
12 Schools judged to be Require Improvement	11%
76 Schools judged Good	70%
18 Schools judged Outstanding	17%
94 Schools Judged Good or Outstanding	86%

Out of the 12 schools deemed to Require Improvement, four were judged Good for the effectiveness of their leadership and management and one was judged Good for their early years' provision.

Overall Ofsted Judgements by school type	30 Nov 2021
Nursery Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	100%
PRUs Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	100%
Special Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	75%
Primary, Infant & Junior Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	90%
Secondary Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	70%
All types judged either Good or Outstanding	87%

Source: Ofsted Management information report

3.5 Local Primary performance

Local data from schools engaging with support on assessing learning gaps has suggested that, as with the picture nationally, children (because of Covid 19 and lockdowns) have fallen further back in mathematics than reading. On an average based on the Wolverhampton assessment, children are three months further behind in mathematics than reading. With regard to reading, based on a KS2 SATS paper a significant proportion of schools did in June 2021, end of KS2 results in reading were similar (if in fact slightly better) than results in the last KS2 assessment for 2019. Reading for younger children has though fallen back.

3.6 The strategies Wolverhampton has used to support schools include:

- 3.61 Local assessment (base, mid and endline of all primary year groups) to enable schools to accurately identify gaps in learning for all year groups and progress against those gaps (no other local authority in the West Midlands, from our local intelligence, provided this).
- 3.62 Central and bespoke Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions in settings to support the teaching of these gaps; in particular, the use of pre-teach and overlearn strategies and the development with schools of a more efficient curriculum to enable schools to focus more effectively on areas where there were gaps in learning.
- 3.63 Targeted support to vulnerable schools which data was showing there was a greater loss in learning.

3.7 Education Excellence Strategy 2021-2024

A revision of the School Improvement Strategy was undertaken during 2020-21 working with schools and settings collaboratively to produce the Education Excellence Strategy which was launched September 2021.

The aim of the Strategy was to maintain and build upon the effective working relationships with schools and settings to facilitate the development of strong, local peer-to-peer support networks through a systems leadership and partnership working approach, that involves all relevant stakeholders in the education improvement work across the City. This was achieved by implementing a robust and effective challenge and support programme to all schools and settings across the City, through a staged and differentiated approach based upon each setting's individual position with a view to hold them fully to account for education improvement and inclusion.

CYPF Scrutiny Panel endorsed this Strategy June 2021.

Since September 2021 all maintained schools have had an Autumn Conversation with the School Improvement team to review previous performance and identify improvement targets for this academic year. Highlights from these conversations include:

- Schools and leaders have been working on curriculum development to ensure 'intent, implementation and impact' references are suitably understood by all and embedded

- Schools are reviewing and modifying their offer, taking into account pupils' needs and how Covid-19 has impacted upon attainment and progress
- Many schools are understanding of the progression model and the need to make explicit a knowledge rich curriculum which is built upon over time, which is applicable to all subjects and is mapped from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) right through to sixth form
- Provision in early reading has high status across all settings, including secondary where necessary, and basic skills in maths are also prioritised
- Subject leadership remains a focus for many schools, including the return of quality assurance activity to determine if the intent is being implemented and to inform school improvement activity
- Provision for SEND and Pupil Premium remains a high priority and on-going support and activity from the Local Authority is enabling pupils' needs to be more readily met
- The use of additional monies is being strategically used to enable pupils to catch up and keep up
- Equalities is more routinely referenced (following a focus for the Core Visit in Summer 2021) resulting in a significant shift in leaders' thinking, ensuring resources and curriculum activity reflects the diversity of their unique school community; this had also led to improvements in 'cultural capital'
- Some pupils have needed additional support to settle and return to working with larger groups, and leaders have been swift to allocate support
- Attendance is improving and returning to typical levels, where this is not the case, there is a tenacity to improve
- PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) is in place with evidence of consultation with parents, although responses have been low; some are repeating this now school activity has returned to more typical levels
- Schools are aware of latest Ofsted sexual harassment / sexual violence report from July 2021 and routinely report instances through local safeguarding channels. Leaders are making explicit what is and isn't acceptable, so instigating a 'reset' and preparing pupils for everyday life
- EYFS adaptations to meet the new requirements are progressing well
- Subject leadership development is extensive, shown through input from across the Education Excellence team

- Governors demonstrate a proactivity and are developing their knowledge of the inspection framework through training and activity with leaders in school
- Recruitment of governors remains a challenge, but schools make use of support from the Governance Co-ordinator
- SEND provision has an increasingly high status, shown through the uptake of support offered through the LA SENCo induction activity, peer reviews, networks and through SEND provision being routinely referenced in our work with schools, but there is still more to do.

3.8 Support for Early Years

During 2020 -2021 support was given to the 25 schools who chose to partake as an Early Adopter new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework. This supported EYFS leaders in the implementation of the new framework to ensure high quality teaching and learning and assessment. As a consequence, there was increased collaboration with EYFS leaders across the city to consistently implement the new framework.

A significant proportion of Early Adopter schools have reduced workload in terms of assessment and are ensuring purposeful evidence gathering, allowing more time to support children's needs through a variety of different methods, including co-play.

Participating schools are aware of the need to support children's play through an enabling environment and a balanced approach to child-led and adult-led learning opportunities.

Many Early Adopter schools are working to devise personalised curriculum plans that are relatable and relevant to the individual school's cultural capital and identified needs.

The feedback from the Early Adopter schools has been shared with all Early Years provisions and on-going support is being provided this year to ensure the smooth introduction of the revised EYFS framework.

3.9 Support for Inclusion

To support the Culture of Belonging programme Education Excellence has developed Whole School SEND Reviews in 2020 -21. This was to work with NASEN in introducing SEND Reviews across mainstream schools in Wolverhampton. This is an offer for all schools in staged phases, including maintained, academies, free schools and independent.

Training was received from the West Midlands NASEN (National Association for Special Educational Needs) Team in March 2021 for potential reviewers, including School Improvement Advisors, special and mainstream school headteachers. The programme has been split into various phases. Following the planning phase, 13 schools took part in Phase 1 which included volunteer schools and those who received a grade 3 or 4 in their last OFSTED. Phase 2 is begun in the Autumn 2021 term, targeting schools in the imminent OFSTED window and schools with resource bases.

Phase 1 has provided an overview of strengths, areas of development, patterns and themes across our mainstream schools and provision for SEND. These have been shared across LA departments, including Inclusion and Empowerment (specialist teachers, Education Psychologists etc). The findings and on-going reviews have shaped training offers to schools, including headteacher, governor and SENCOs. Reviewed schools have individual reports following the review, which feeds into their overall school development plan. A follow up is taking place 12 months after the individual review. Engagement from schools is high with additional schools outside of the named planned phases, requesting reviews from the local authority.

4.0 Priorities for Education Excellence Service 2021-2022

- 4.1 working with schools and academies across the city ensuring more children achieve national expectations across all phases of education, therefore advancing equality of opportunity.
- 4.2 working with schools, academies and PVI's across the city increasing the proportion of children attending Good or Outstanding educational provision.
- 4.3 working with schools and academies across the city to close gaps which exist for children in vulnerable groups, therefore advancing equality of opportunity.
- 4.4 working with schools and academies across the city to improve the performance of SEND pupils in mainstream and special schools advancing equality of opportunity promoting higher attainment.
- 4.5 ensuring effective oversight of governance, including appointment of governors, auditing of provision and, support for senior school staff recruitment.
- 4.6 delivering a CPD offer which is high quality and appropriate in relation to: Assessment and moderation, English, and maths provision, Early Career Teachers (ECTs), Governors and Early Year providers.
- 4.7 promoting Early Years quality and sufficiency of provision to increase take up for 2 year olds, improving Ofsted outcomes in Early Year settings to at least national averages ensuring school readiness.

5.0 Reasons for Decision

- 5.1 Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel are asked to note the continuing improvement in school and setting performance and endorse the Education Excellence approach to further support and challenge.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The DfE published in January 2022 *Reforming how local authorities' school improvement functions are funded*. This will remove the grant over the course of Financial Year 2022-

23, and (2) include provision in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations for Financial Year 2022-23 which would allow councils to de-delegate for all school improvement expenditure, including all core school improvement activities, from maintained schools' budget shares. The grant will be ended with effect from the start of Financial Year 2023-24, phased so that it would be reduced to 50% of the current amount on a per school basis in Financial Year 2022-23 to give councils and maintained schools time to adjust to these new arrangements. To ensure that councils remain adequately funded to exercise their statutory intervention powers councils have the power in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations to fund all school improvement activities, including core school improvement activities, via de-delegation of funds from maintained schools' budget shares, with the agreement of their local Schools' Forum or the Secretary of State.

6.2 The implication for Wolverhampton Council is that the amount of the Grant will reduce by approximately £0.08 million in 2022-2023 and then by a full reduction of approximately £0.16 million in 2023-2024.

6.3 In order to continue the services to schools currently funded by the Grant, the Council would need to raise an additional £0.08 million in 2022-2023 by raising the de-delegation amount by 68% from £9.28 to £15.56 per pupil and then by a similar percentage increase in 2023-2024 to cover the cost.

Finance code [TS/14012022/K]

7.0 Legal implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the report. (TC/12012022A)

8 Equalities implications

8.1 The performance of groups of pupils identified with protected characteristics is routinely monitored at termly school improvement adviser meetings with school leaders.

9 Appendices

Education Excellence Strategy 2021-24