

# MIDDELSBROUGH COUNCIL

## SCRUTINY REPORT

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

20 March 2023

### LEARNING AND EDUCATION STRATEGY UPDATE

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#### Summary

To provide the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel with an update on the Learning and Education Strategy.

#### Introduction

1. The strategy outlines our commitment to ensuring the very best education provision in Middlesbrough, working in collaboration, with the aim of providing a framework to support and challenge schools and education providers, and to continue to deliver great outcomes improving the life chances of our children and young people within the current context for learning. We have the vision 'that every child and young person in Middlesbrough has access to high quality education that increases and improves life chances, through achievement of the best possible outcomes at every stage of their learning journey and beyond'.
2. Although schools faced disruption due to Covid absence in autumn 2021, this academic year schools have returned to some sort of normality for young people and school staff. However, the impact of the pandemic on children and their families has proved to be significant. Schools have had to adapt what they do; because many pupils have missed out on learning, more of our young people are struggling in education.
3. The Learning and Education Strategy is based on the premise that all schools seek to continually improve outcomes for their children. It provides: A structure for schools to work collaboratively to innovate and develop practice; the mechanism by which good practice is shared, underperformance is challenged and implementing targeted support to achieve improvement. The Learning and Education Strategy aims to increase attainment and achievement across all schools and settings in Middlesbrough, and for all learners from early years (EYFS) to key stage 4 (KS4).
4. Raised educational attainment and achievement increases personal, social, cultural, and economic opportunities, and ensures that young people are in a position to fulfil their potential and contribute to the improved social and economic wellbeing of children and young people in Middlesbrough.

## Evidence/Discussion

5. School inspections from Ofsted resumed in academic year 21/22. Middlesbrough had 10 school inspections - 93% schools good or better; 7 retained judgements of good; 2 improved judgements from requires improvement and 1 downgraded. The proportion of all schools judged to be at least good in Middlesbrough is lower than the national average which is lower than 2019 results where Middlesbrough was above national average. Whilst we are confident that this will improve over the coming year, improving education in Middlesbrough remains a priority.
6. The 2022 results are the first to be published since 2019:
  - 71% of pupils met the expected standard in reading, down from 72% in 2019.
  - 68.1% of pupils met the expected standard in maths, down from 79% in 2019.
  - 68% of pupils met the expected standard in writing, down from 78% in 2019.
  - 67% of pupils met the expected standard in grammar, punctuation and spelling, down from 76% in 2019.
7. The proportion of Middlesbrough pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in Reception, meeting standards in phonics and meeting the expected standard in key stage 1 were below the national average in 2022 - GLD Gap widened by 8.7% compared to LA data in 2019 meaning that the gap between LA and National has also widened a further by 8.7% since 2019 despite the national score also being lower in 2022.
8. The Learning and Education Strategy set out six thematic areas to support schools and target improvements: Early Years and Childcare, School Improvement, Supporting the Vulnerable, Health and Wellbeing, English as an Additional Language pupils and Transitions and added an addendum to incorporate lock down working restrictions in 2021.
9. The Achievement Team aim to support and work with school leaders to improve pupil outcomes, leadership, teaching, learning and assessment, as well as pupils' personal development, behaviour and well-being; all visits to Schools and Early Years settings are intended to support this improvement and inform future actions.
10. To evaluate the impact of support, Strategic Partners from the Achievement Team undertake activity reviews and monitor overall progress against objectives. They work with leaders to evaluate and challenge achievement of objectives and re-evaluate the direction of travel. For the academic year 2021/2022 there were 87 Advisor, Early Years, Ethnic Minority Team, Safeguarding and Gypsy, Roma Traveller visits to Primary Schools and 29 visits to Secondary Schools. In Primary Schools, 185 attendees have attended training and development (CPD) in 63 schools' sessions, for Secondary 16 attendees in 3 schools' sessions have attended. We established network meetings and for Designated Safeguarding Lead network: 134 attendees; Early Years Foundation Stage network (EYFS) (schools): 39 attendees; English as an Additional Language network (EAL) (schools): 21 attendees. We have undertaken 13 EAL/EYFS audits, had 28 strategic level conversations and formed 1 Monitoring and Support Group, with a school led system, working with leaders to drive improvement and progress outcomes.

## Conclusion

11. Local Authorities retain the statutory duty “to promote high standards so that children and young people achieve well” (2011 Education Act).
12. Schools have engaged positively with LA delivered CPD and Advisor visits - all support and underpin the Ofsted Inspection Framework. The goals for academic year 22/23 are:
  - encourage schools that are good or outstanding to support other schools and develop capacity to bring about system wide and sustainable improvement across Middlesbrough
  - school to school support, placing this at the heart of system wide arrangements to help ensure a good school for every child
  - Identify and create diverse curriculum opportunities to support schools to help pupils to remain engaged in school and in their education
  - to establish learning hubs for Early Years Foundation Stage, English as an Additional Language and to build on the work of the English/Literacy Hub already in place.
  - target funding and resources to facilitate rapid improvement
  - support and challenge schools to remain Ofsted good or outstanding, and improve from Ofsted ‘Requires Improvement’ and ‘Inadequate’ judgments in the shortest possible time
  - support schools in responding to national policy changes and government initiatives