

## EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE MEMBER: EDUCATION AND CULTURE - COUNCILLOR PHILIPPA STOREY

#### DATE OF MEETING 16 October 2024

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members on areas of activity within my portfolio including performance against strategic priorities.

#### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Improve outcomes for children and young people
- Support Cultural assets and events

#### SERVICE PRIORITIES

##### Education:

- Supporting schools to improve the attendance of all children, particularly those who are most vulnerable.
- Improve early years parenting support and the home learning experience to support children's learning, development, and school readiness.
- Reduce the number of children and young people who are suspended or excluded.

##### Culture:

- Encouragement of grass roots participation
- Increase income generation events at the town hall
- Consolidate cultural offer
- Make events sustainable

#### HIGHLIGHTS

##### Education

##### **Achievement**

2. Educational outcomes this year are showing the following overall trends for Middlesbrough schools compared to national averages (it must be noted these are still unvalidated datasets and therefore maybe subject to change):

- a) **Early Years and Phonics:**
    - There were improvements in early years development and phonics outcomes which whilst behind national average is closing the gap to national
  - b) **Key Stage 2 (KS2) Results:**
    - Performance in reading, writing, and mathematics showed positive trends
  - c) **Phonics Scheme:**
    - Multiple phonic schemes have seen impact with 'Sounds Write' having a really positive impact.
  - d) **GCSE Performance:**
    - Overall GCSE performance had some good success stories but also indicated areas of concern for those most disadvantaged pupils showing disparities in attainment and progress scores (non-disadvantaged pupils generally performing better)
3. These trends suggest that while there have been some great improvements and a big congratulations and thank you is required for school staff and pupils across Middlesbrough, particularly in phonics and early years, there are still significant areas that require focused efforts to close the gaps and improve overall educational outcomes.

### ***Attendance and admission***

#### **Attendance**

4. School attendance in the town is 91.5%, work continues to improve this and it has already rose from 90% in the previous year, this is a significant increase and represents 390 children attending school every day who previously were absent. Nearly every measure of attendance has improved; most notable is the reduction in secondary persistent absence (children who are absent more than 10% of the time) which has fallen from 51% to 34%, and the improvement in primary attendance which has increased by more than a full percentage point and is rapidly approaching the national average. There is much more work still to be done and school leaders are embracing the challenge, helped by the various layers of support provided by the Local Authority and I would like to thank again, our schools and council officers who have helped drive these improvements.

#### **Admissions**

5. The autumn term is traditionally the period that parents and carers set about applying for secondary school places for their children. The vast majority will be offered a place in one of their preferred schools but parents are encouraged to express a preference for all of the schools they would be happy for their child to attend (parents can express a preference for up to 4 schools). This greatly increases the chance of being offered a place in a preferred school. Expressing a single preference for a school and leaving the other preference slots blank does

not boost chances of success and may result in a school being allocated that is not a preferred choice.

## **SEND**

### **Inclusion and Specialist Support Services**

6. The High Needs Budget which is provided to the Local Authority to support children and young people with SEND by the DfE is under significant pressure. This is a national issue with the SEND system being overwhelmed across the country– as many parents attempting to navigate the system will know. Middlesbrough is part of the Delivering Better Value programme to try and reduce the pressures on the High Needs Budget and work is ongoing to address:
  - Workforce development
  - Transitions
  - Review of out of area placements
  - Early identification of need
  - Inclusion within mainstream.
7. The biggest pressures within Middlesbrough are
  - Number of children in special schools
  - Number of children who are excluded
  - Need to improve inclusion within mainstream settings
8. Within Middlesbrough the SEND system received the highest grade within the joint Local Area SEND Inspection in October 2023. As a result of this achievement Middlesbrough has been approached by the DfE to be a sector led improvement partner and will be providing support to other LAs who received the lowest grade within the inspection framework.
9. That does not mean that everything is perfect. SEND is heavily oversubscribed with the SEND needs increasing by 50% since 2020. No council will be able to address this growing need without the resources needed.
10. Middlesbrough's exclusion rates are notably higher than national averages, this is a challenge shared by regional neighbours too– strategies are in place for schools and the Local Authority to work together to reduce exclusions and improve inclusion for our children.
11. I welcomed the Inclusion statement from NE ADCS (copy available on request) on this specific issue. There are broad issues causing our averages to be higher, poverty is a primary one and so too is the narrowing of the curriculum. Our schools have done amazing jobs in creating an after-school offering that includes many of the subjects not prioritised by regulators and therefore not taught in 'school-time'.
12. The Childrens Society recently published a report ([The Good Childhood Report 2024](#)), which states that in the UK children's mental well being (children aged 6 to 16) has deteriorated by 40% since 2017. This is particularly worse for girls aged 10

to 15 in the UK. The Childrens Commissioner said ‘it reflects a troubling gap in our ability to protect and support some of the most vulnerable members of our society. Local authorities, despite their best efforts, are struggling with insufficient resources and inadequate powers to track and support these children.’

13. We will not be able to tackle exclusion in schools, until both schools and LAs are adequately funded and child poverty is seen an important issue nationally. That is why I welcome the Governments open discussion on the Curriculum and the establishing of The Child Poverty Taskforce.
14. With all this, the fact that Middlesbrough has some the highest child poverty rates in the country, must be acknowledged. I welcome the Government’s decision to provide Free School Breakfast for all primary schools – however the scheme would need to provide a level of flexibility, as many of the children who desperately need that breakfast will not get into school early to have that meal before the start of the school day, as such meals need to be included with the first lesson of the day and we will be asking this of Government.
15. Councils’ response to children’s mental health needs:  
[Mental Health - Middlesbrough Children Matter](#)

## Culture

16. **Middlesbrough Art Week (MAW)** took place from 26 September to 5 October at various locations across the town centre. Organised by The Auxiliary Project Space, this year’s festival was inspired by the theme ‘In the Now and the Far’ and saw incredible artworks from local, national, and international artists displayed in galleries, empty shops and the public realm. The festival also put a spotlight on North East artists through the North East Open Call programme and New Graduate Award. Alongside the exhibitions, visitors also enjoyed artist talks, walks, workshops, a comedy night, gigs, and a wonderful family programme (Summat for the Bairs). As the event only concluded on 5 October, visitor numbers will be reported next month.
17. As part of MAW on Sunday 29 September, Nuovo Cinema Neo Cinetico and Eden Arts presented **Legal Alien**; a story of love and resilience, produced in collaboration with Middlesbrough’s asylum and refugee communities. The event combined cinema, photography, visual arts and live performance which took audiences on a physical journey through the town centre, starting at the Town Hall and culminating at the Train Station. The project was supported by Arts Council and Middlesbrough Council.
18. The final **Orange Pip** of the outdoor season, sponsored by Perco Foods, took place in Centre Square on Saturday 28 September and featured the usual combination of tempting food and drink, free live entertainment and independent gift stalls. We welcomed between 5,000-6,000 visitors and 35 traders including the following who were first-timers at the market – Grog & Flagon, Groovy Paws, Steel River Drinks, Sumo Bento and The Cocktail Box. There was a special

collaboration with Middlesbrough Pride on the Pride/Pip Stage, plus Newcastle Eagles dropped by the give visitors the chance to shoot some hoops. Orange Pip will be back for its festive edition at Middlesbrough Town Hall in December.

19. On the same day as Orange Pip, **Middlesbrough Pride**, organised by Curious Arts, took place with the biggest programme to date including events at Middlesbrough Town Hall, Orange Pip (Centre Square), Holiday Inn Express, MIMA and Teesside University Students Union. Curious Arts estimate a total of 5,000 people took part in Pride across the various venues (2,000 of which at the Town Hall).
20. MAW and Middlesbrough Pride both received grant support from our **Cultural Ambassadors Programme**. A special event to thank the four companies who supported this year's programme – and I'd like to thank Leonardo Hotel, Holiday Inn Express, Stagecoach and Teesside University for their generosity and kindness in supporting arts and culture in Middlesbrough – will take place in the Fire Station on 17<sup>th</sup> October.
21. September also saw the installation of the first four artist commissions at Middlesbrough train station. The artworks are part of the **Most Creative Train Station** project, supported through the Cultural Development Fund and managed by Navigator North. A special event took place at the station on 26 September to celebrate the installations with the four artists who created them – Rachael Clewlow, Adam Shaw, Beth Johnson and Emma Bennett. A further four installations of a similar scale will be installed over the coming weeks. The project has also commissioned visual artist Catherine Bertola to undertake a larger scale commission which references the opening of the original station in Middlesbrough, and sound artist Nell Catchpole to undertake a residency at the station between now and the end of March next year. Nell will co-create work with the different communities who use the station, so lots to look out for over the coming months.

### ***Town Hall Highlights***

#### **September**

22. ITV Filmed in the Council Chamber & Old Courtroom for their new series starring Sheridan Smith  
Show highlights: Big Country, Maisie Adam, The Three Degrees, Matt Reed & The Beat  
Hosted NCNC Legal Alien Screening as part of Middlesbrough Art Week  
Hosted & Organised Middlesbrough Pride Town Hall Takeover with Curious Arts & collaboration with Orange Pip Market on Centre Square

#### **October**

23. Hosted International Older People's Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> October organised by MBC Public Health Team  
We will be hosting Public Living Rooms again from 18/10 through the winter months

Taste Of Africa are holding their TOA Showcase event on 25<sup>th</sup> October in the Main Hall

TedXTeesside Women are holding their event in the Crypt on 16<sup>th</sup> October  
Show Highlights: Twisterella Unconference and headline stage for first time at Middlesbrough Town Hall, The Vaccines, Matt Forde, Troy Hawke, Simon Brodwin, From The Jam, Kenton Cool

### **Upcoming**

24. November Highlights: Lennox Lewis, Scouting For Girls, Paddy McGuinness, Animex Festival, Middlesbrough College Graduations, Jeff Stelling  
December Highlights: Hungarian Radio Orchestra, PP Arnold, Orange Pip  
Christmas, The Southmartins

### Adult Education

#### **Surgery Drop ins - Multi Media Exchange**

25. Surgery to be held at MME from 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024 every two months. This is to support learners who are feeling less safe since the riots. It will give learners more opportunity to become familiar with Council reporting processes and meet local Councillors

#### **Bespoke Employer Led Courses in October:**

26. Programmes have been developed in partnership with Employers to make sure people have the right skills to be successful in their chosen Employment. All courses have a guaranteed interview on completion

Next Start Dates:

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October, Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025

1. Cleaning Academy
2. Hospitality Academy
3. Care Academy

For further information, contact Lisa Smith, 01642811400 [Lisa.smith@mcls.ac.uk](mailto:Lisa.smith@mcls.ac.uk)

#### **Employment Hub – October Activities**

27. Wide range of activity happening within the Employment hub, have attached the October timetable.

#### **Lingfield Learning Centre**

28. A busy start to the term, numbers and funding has increased from last academic year to meet the demand. Last year funding was provided for 22 young people now increased to 31. The service is at full capacity for this academic year, already we are seeing young people engaging and accessing meaningful workplacements across the council and local employers. Giving our young people a great experience of then world of work. Many of the young people accessing the Lingfield Learning Centre have a diagnosed learning need and have Education Health and Care Plans. Learners are enjoying their programme and reporting that “Lingfield is




a safe place and its Brill” Parent feedback “Cant believe how my son has changed, thank you so much he is a different person”

### EDI Awards Nomination Tees Valley

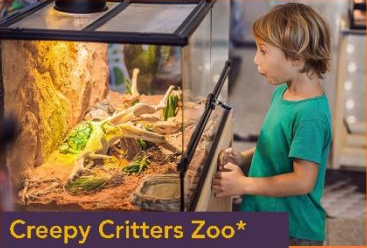
29. We have been nominated for the Education Award. The award recognises individuals, schools, or organisations that demonstrate excellence in promoting learning and supporting personal and professional development to BME individuals. Results will be announced 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024

# OCTOBER HALF TERM


2024




DORMAN  
MUSEUM



**Creepy Critters Zoo\***  
26 October, 10.30am - 3.30pm




**Spooky Science\***  
27 October, 11am / 1pm / 2.30pm




**Halloween Crafts\***  
26, 29 & 30 October, 10.30am - 3.30pm



**The Dorman School for Ghouls\***  
31 October, 10am - 4pm




**Dorman After Dark\***  
1 & 2 November, 5 - 8pm



**Spooky Halloween VR Ride\***  
5 October - 3 November, 10.30am - 3.30pm

🕒 Open Tuesday - Sunday, 10am - 4pm  
 📍 Museum admission free, activity charges apply  
 📍 Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, TS5 6LA

Discover more family events and activities  
[www.wearemiddlesbrough.com](http://www.wearemiddlesbrough.com)



**Scan to purchase  
museum tickets**

\*Additional charges apply



**DORMAN MUSEUM**




**DORMAN**  
**AFTER DARK**

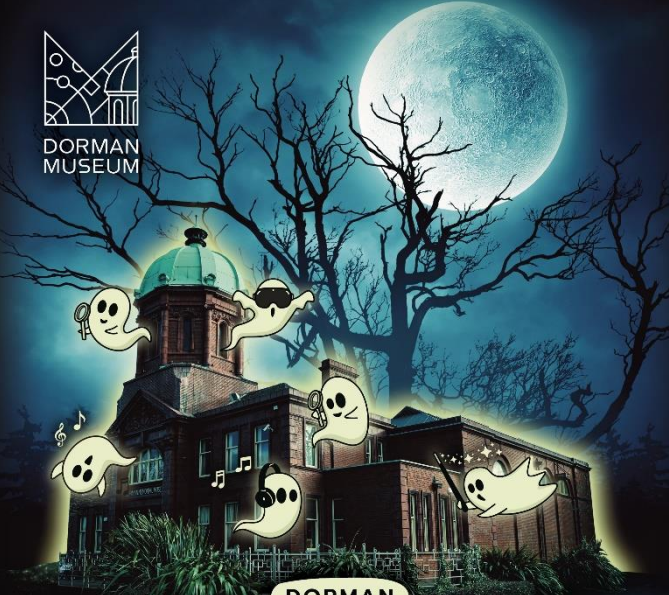
**FRIDAY 1 & SATURDAY 2**  
**NOVEMBER**

Get ready for an unforgettable after-hours illuminated experience and encounter magical lights, delightful surprises, puppetry, and interactive workshops

**DORMAN MUSEUM**  
Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, TS5 6LA  
f /DormanMuseum



**DORMAN MUSEUM**




**DORMAN**  
**SCHOOL FOR GHOULS**

**THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER**

*Join us for a frightfully fun Halloween at the Dorman School for Ghouls!*

Spooky Silent Disco · Hocus Pocus Magic Show  
Magical Wand Making · Creepy Creatures Trail  
Mysterious Halloween VR Ride

**DORMAN MUSEUM**  
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**NAME:** Cllr Philippa Storey  
**DATE:** 16 October 2024