

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	22 OCTOBER 2020	AGENDA ITEM:	113
TITLE:	SCHOOL STANDARDS AND ATTAINMENT: 2018/19 (VALIDATED)		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR A PEARCE	PORTFOLIO:	EDUCATION
SERVICE:	BFFC	WARDS:	ALL
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report updates ACE on the 18/19 school standards/attainment figures in order for ACE to determine progress for children and young people in Reading Schools. The information on standards in this report is based on validated data for academic year 2018/19 as no data is available for 2019/20. The previous report based on unvalidated data was brought to the Committee in October 2019.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the progress that has been made in raising standards across Reading Schools be noted and teachers, support staff, governors, children and their families thanked for all their hard work;
- 2.2 That all schools who have achieved a good or outstanding Ofsted rating be congratulated;
- 2.3 That the work of BFfC in raising attainment and supporting Reading schools continue to be supported.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Services in Reading are delivered by Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC), a not-for-profit Company which is wholly owned by, but independent of, Reading Borough Council. As part of the services, BFfC support schools in raising standards.

- 3.2 In particular, the contract key performance indicators for BFfC (education) include:

- KPI 18: Reduction in secondary school fixed term exclusion
- KPI 19: Key Stage 2 results (Reading, Writing and Maths expected level+) gap in attainment for disadvantaged pupils.
- KPI20: Key Stage 4 results (Attainment 8) gap in attainment for disadvantaged pupils.
- KPI21: Increased percentage of schools rated good or outstanding (locally maintained only)

3.3 The responsibility to raise standards is a responsibility for everyone involved in the education service. In particular, whilst school leadership teams have responsibility for driving school improvement in their own school, the local authority can provide support and challenge to schools within its area and create the conditions for schools and their pupils to 'thrive'. However, the Government has emphasised the importance of a 'schools-led' system where schools look to each other to develop system leadership, provide support and challenge, and, drive improvements in standards.

3.4 Part of this 'schools led' system is the growth of academies, free schools, and teaching school alliances. Such schools are funded directly from the DfE and are accountable to central rather than local government. This leaves local authorities with limited ability to influence, support and challenge schools other than locally maintained one.

3.5 The national increase in academies has been mirrored in Reading. In Reading the majority of secondary schools (all except Blessed Hugh Farringdon) are academies. As such, these schools have a 'looser' relationship with the local authority and there is no obligation on them to work in partnership with the authority- there are, however, some areas where academies are encouraged to work with the local authority (safeguarding, post-16 and education and health care plans). The responsibility for school standards though rest with the academy school, it's sponsor and the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Department for Education.

3.6 Overall schools in Reading have been just below the national average for standards. In all key stages Reading continues to mirror the national position in terms of the gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantage children. Our work in Key Stages 1 and 2 continues to decrease the gap compared with England averages. Whilst at Key Stages 3 and 4, in some of our secondary schools, we have some of the best performance in the country, we also have a substantial proportion of young people leaving schools without the requisite skills for the world of further education and work. The majority of primary schools are good or outstanding, whilst at secondary the picture is more mixed.

3.7 Despite this mixed picture, there have been notable success in:

- School engagement on curriculum projects particularly:
 - Curriculum change
 - Oracy and writing
 - The Therapeutic Thinking approach and school to school support which has impacted on significant reductions in exclusions (bucking the national trend)

For 2020/2021, as there has been a greater focus on 'Black Lives Matter' and the government's COVID strategy to improve children's health we will be adding two new projects to work with schools on:

- Developing an anti-racist curriculum
- Active participation programme

We will also be embedding our work on Climate Change.

This report analyses Reading schools performance against the key education performance indicators for Brighter Futures for Children.

4. THE PROPOSAL

Members note the progress that has been made in raising standards across Reading schools and thank teachers, support staff, children and their families and governors for their hard work and continued commitment.

Members congratulate all schools achieving good or outstanding Ofsted ratings.

Members continue to support the work of BFfC in raising attainment and supporting Reading schools.

4.1 Current Position:

Current Position: Achievement against KPIs

(Please note all data sourced from the Local Authority Data Matrix and LAIT published by DfE)

KPI 18: Reduction in secondary school fixed term exclusion

Fixed term exclusions in Secondary schools are measured by rate (as a proportion of the schools' population) and by number in the national tables. Data is published in August for the previous year. 19/20 figures will be available in August 2021.

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19
Rate of Fixed term exclusions from secondary school England	9.4	10.13	10.75
Rate of Fixed term exclusions from Reading secondary schools	10.79	8.7	7.49 (quartile band B)
Number of fixed term exclusions from Reading secondary schools	788	651	581

The percentage of fixed term exclusions in Reading secondary schools has continued to decrease over the last 3 years.

Between 2016/17 and 2018/19 the rate of fixed term exclusions in Reading secondary schools decreased compared to an increase in England. The rate of fixed term exclusions for 18/19 in Reading secondary schools is below the England average. Reading is now in quartile band B.

What worked:

Our work to influence schools' behaviour and inclusion policies has continued to be successful. Our training on Therapeutic Thinking with schools and colleges including nursery, primary, secondary, and special and higher education settings (such as Reading College) has continued. This has been well-received by all settings that have been involved. Brighter Futures continue to be part of a national steering group for this approach represented by our Senior School Standards Officer, Alice Boon.

51 schools have committed to the programme - out of 59 schools in Reading. We have trained over 120 senior tutors in schools and BFfC. We have also had a commitment from six schools to act as System Leaders, tasked with providing support and sharing innovation as part of our school to school approach.

In primary schools the number of incidents of fixed term exclusion decreased from 2.34% in 2017/18 to 1.60% in 2018/19. Permanent exclusions in primary have also reduced and is in quartile band A.

However, the exclusion rates for Special Schools has continued to rise over the last 3 years, rising from 12.50 in 2016/17 to 36.10 in 2018/19, approximately 3 times higher than the national figures of 11.32 in 2018/19.

- **KPI 19: Key Stage 2 results (Reading, Writing and Maths expected level+) gap in attainment for disadvantaged pupils.**

Attainment in RWM at the end of KS2 in 2018/19 shows a small decrease in the attainment gap compared with the England national average. Our work is beginning to narrow the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children.

% of children reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths combined (RWM)						
	England All children		Reading All children			
	EXS	HS	EXS	Quartile	HS	Quartile
2017	61%	9%	59%		12%	
2018	64%	10%	60%		10%	
2019	65%	11%	63%	D	10%	C

Children in Reading achieved below the national standard in 2017, 2018 and 2019, however, combined results increased in Reading by 3% while the England average improved by 1% in 2018-19.

	Reading		Grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS)		Maths		Writing	
	EXS	HS	EXS	HS	EXS	HS	EXS	HS
England 2019	73	27	78	36	79	27	78	20
Reading 2019	72	27	78	36	78	27	77	17
Gap with national average	-1	0	0	0	-1	0	-1	-3
England 2018	76	28	78	34	76	24	78	20
Reading 2018	73	29	77	38	71	25	74	18
Gap with national average	-3	+1	-1	+4	-5	+1	-4	-2

Overall increases in attainment are closing the gap with national results. Further work is still needed to raise attainment above national results. Projects to boost attainment in Maths, writing, oracy and curriculum design are continuing this year to embed improvements made by schools.

The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged children and those who are not disadvantaged has reduced over the last two years and is now in line with the national gap of -20. Though this indicates an improvement, the gap means 51% of

disadvantaged children are not ‘secondary ready’ at the end of KS2. This is similar to the national picture.

	Disadvantaged pupils % reaching expected standard in RWM	Not disadvantaged % reaching expected standard	Gap between disadvantaged children and not disadvantaged nationally
England 2019	51	71	-20
2019 Reading	49	69	-20
2018 Reading	40	69	-29
2017 Reading	41	67	-26

Children looked after (CLA) were closely monitored and supported by the Virtual School. In 2018/19 there were 15 children in the cohort, 10 of whom were looked after for more than 12 months. 5 children attended Reading schools. 10 children had an identified special educational need, 6 of whom had an EHC Plan. Of the 5 children who did not have a special educational need, 3 achieved the standard in reading, writing and maths with one child working at greater depth and achieving the maximum scaled score of 120 in reading. The other two children achieved the standard in writing and maths and were just below the standard in reading.

What worked:

We have offered inclusion in our projects to all schools at the same discounted costs and offer free pupil premium reviews to targeted schools. We collaborate beyond our borders with other Berkshire local authorities to bring national innovation and approaches into our schools and support system collaboration.

The impact of the Virtual School continues to bear fruit for children looked after. For such children, their performance is some of the best in the country. The strength of advocacy and the quality of leadership for these children is a key aspect of raising their attainment.

- **KPI20: Key Stage 4 results (Attainment 8) gap in attainment for disadvantaged pupils.**

The majority of secondary schools are academies and therefore Brighter Futures have a limited role. We are in touch with the Regional Schools Commissioner to raise concerns about attainment and to celebrate success in these schools where appropriate.

In addition, we have provided traded support on request through consultancy to locally maintained and academy secondary schools.

Published results	Attainment 8	Progress 8	% E&M GCSE grade 9-5	Attainment 8		Gap	Progress 8		Gap
				FSM	Non-FSM		FSM	Non-FSM	
England 2018	44.5	-0.02	40	34.5	48.4	-13.9	-0.53	0.05	-0.58
Reading 2018	49.0	-0.04	46.5	30.7	51.0	-20.3	0.69	0.04	-0.73
England 2019	44.7	+0.04	40.1	35.0	48.8	-13.8	0.53	0.06	-0.59
Reading	50.50	+0.02	47.1	31.2	52.8	-	-	0.13	-0.94

2019	Quartile A	Quartile B	Quartile A			21.6	0.81		
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Though attainment 8 is above the national average there continues to be significant variation in outcomes between Reading secondary schools.

Disadvantaged results are of concern. Only 31.2% of disadvantaged children leave school in Reading with good enough results in their GCSEs to give them access to further education, employment and training. This is 3.8% below national figures. Disadvantaged pupils in Reading also make less progress than non-disadvantaged pupils. Progress 8 for disadvantaged pupils is also significantly below national figures.

The Virtual School team closely supported and monitored children looked after at the end of KS4. There were 32 children in this cohort, 21 of whom had been looked after for more than twelve months. 4 children attended Reading schools. 23 children had an identified special educational need, 15 of whom had an EHC Plan. There were 3 unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, one of whom attained an A grade in Persian. Of the remaining 5 young people, 4 attained between 5-10 passes at GCSE/BTEC level, one of whom attained a level nine in French.

KPI21: Increased percentage of schools rated good or outstanding

84% of schools in Reading or Good or better, 25% are outstanding.

Four inspections have taken place since September 2019.

- Thameside - maintained GOOD
- The Avenue - maintained OUTSTANDING, however areas were identified that needed to be improved
- Thames Valley School - maintained GOOD, however areas were identified that needed to be improved
- Moorlands - the inspection was incomplete. Inspectors will revisit to complete it in Spring 2021

The table below shows the current position of Reading schools as of September 2020.

Locally maintained Schools	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Special Measures
Nursery (5)	5 (100%)	0	0	0
Primary (27)	3 (11%)	22 (81%)	2 (7%)	0
Secondary (1)	0	1(100%)	0	0
Special (1)	0	1 (100%)	0	0
% good or better	94%			
Not locally maintained	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Special Measures
Nursery (0)	0	0	0	0
Primary (12)	3 (25%)	6 (50%)	1 (8%)	2 (17%)
Secondary (9)	3 (33%)	3 (33%)	2 (22%)	1 (11%)
Special/ PRU (4)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	0	1 (25%)
% good or better	72%			
All schools (59)	15 (25%)	35 (59%)	5 (8%)	4 (7%)
% good or better	84%			

What worked:

Our Senior School Standards Officer Mo Galway is a Lead Inspector for Ofsted and brings much of her knowledge and expertise to the strategic work undertaken by the team with local schools.

A new education inspection framework has been introduced from September 2019. This significantly changes the way schools are inspected and the criteria they are judged on. Brighter Futures have been working with schools for the last year to prepare them for the change and are focusing support this term on schools expecting an inspection in 2020/21.

The new framework may lead to some changes in the grading of schools. Schools which are currently outstanding may be judged 'good' in the new framework, whilst some 'good' schools may find themselves judged 'requires improvement'.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 Brighter Futures work with schools, children and young people contributes in the following way to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities:

1. Securing the economic success of Reading and provision of job opportunities
Our work to improve key stage 4 results are specifically focused on ensuring children and young people leave school equipped to take advantage of the local job market
2. Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs
Not applicable
3. To protect and enhance the lives of vulnerable adults and children
The work of the Virtual School specifically focuses on ensuring vulnerable children achieve at school in readiness for their transition to adulthood.
4. Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
Not applicable although our work on climate change and supporting teachers to teach this area will contribute indirectly to this priority.
5. Ensuring that there are good education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading
Our work supporting locally maintained schools has meant more Reading children and young people have access to a good or outstanding school.
6. Ensuring the Council is fit for the future
Not applicable.

5.2 State here how the decision contributes to the Council's strategic aims. The strategic aims are:

- To Develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley
Access to an appropriately skilled workforce is a key element of Reading's local economy. Ensuring high educational attainment is at the centre of this. Our work with schools on climate change is also a contributory factor in the Council's work.

- To establish Reading as a learning City and a stimulating and rewarding place to live and visit
Parents and carers value access to high quality schools and our locally maintained schools provide that as seen by the proportion receiving good/outstanding Ofsted ratings
- To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all
Brighter Futures work to narrow the gap between educational outcomes for the disadvantaged compared with outcomes for the advantaged is a key element to promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 *The education work of Brighter Futures for Children is funded through the Direct Schools Grant and is agreed annually by the Schools Forum.*

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 *List here all documents that you have relied upon to a material extent in drafting the report. NB - THIS IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT*

Local Authority Interactive Tool:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>

The Local Authority Data Matrix August 2020