

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 18th January 2018

School Attainment and Improvement

Recommendation

1. That the Select Committee notes the progress of Educational Achievement in Staffordshire for the period September 2016 - August 2017
2. That the Select Committee provides comment and recommendations in regard to the approach set out in the report.

Report of Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Cllr Philip White, Cabinet Support Member for Learning and Employability

Summary

3. Staffordshire shows a positive direction of travel in terms of the percentage of schools judged as Good or Outstanding (and the percentage of all pupils that attend these schools). As at 1st September 2017 89% of Staffordshire schools were judged as good or outstanding, an increase of 3 percentage points since the same point in 2016 and the fourth highest year-on-year improvement of our statistical neighbour local authorities.
4. The 2017 target of 92% was not met; however Staffordshire improved at a faster rate than the national average during 2016/17. The percentage of pupils attending schools graded good or outstanding has increased from 82% in August 2016 to 85% in August 2017.
5. The new primary and secondary accountability measures introduced in 2016 and the further changes to Key Stage 4 in 2017 with the introduction of '9-1' reformed GCSEs in English and maths continue to limit trend comparisons over time.
6. Levels of attainment and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage One (KS1) remain strong and continue to outperform national levels of performance.
7. In 2017, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (the primary phase) improved by more than the improvement seen nationally. Staffordshire results are now above national in all key measures.
8. Our focus in 2017/18 will continue at Key Stage Two (KS2), Key Stage Four (KS4) and Key Stage Five (KS5) where there remains variation in attainment and progress of schools. Further improvements are required to gain ground in the rates of attainment and progress achieved by our statistical neighbours and nationally particularly at KS4 and KS5. Staffordshire schools also need to

continue to do more to tackle variations in attainment and progress between localities and for different pupil groups, such as those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) or Disadvantaged pupils (DA).

9. Education and skills is a key priority that will be developed in the county council strategic plan 2018/2022 and will set out how working with all our partners we will:
10. “Offer Staffordshire parents and their children high performing early years provision, schools and colleges to attend. Encouraging and helping parents to become more involved in and ambitious for their child’s education, whilst influencing early years settings, schools, colleges and universities to support each other to improve, excel and contribute fully to their communities.”

Report

Background

11. Education in Staffordshire (and across the country) continues to change. Schools are becoming more independent from local authorities and as a result, there are new roles and responsibilities around school improvement. As at October 2017, 39% of schools have academy status and are ‘free from local authority control’. Within the secondary sector there is a larger proportion of academy schools (61%) than maintained schools (39%).
12. Staffordshire’s headteachers and school governors are responsible for the performance of their schools and have access to a network of support and positive challenge to ensure that their school’s strengths are maximised and that any areas for development are addressed.
13. Support for school improvement comes from the school governing body and from the formal partnerships that schools are part of, be that trust, federation, diocesan group or through an academy sponsor – but schools can also expect the county council to monitor school performance and until March 2018 commission support for local authority maintained schools from our joint venture company Entrust to accelerate their efforts to improve. The county council can use legal powers to intervene in any case where we find failure.
14. During the academic year 2016/17 the key developments in regard to school improvement in Staffordshire were further embedded through the county council’s categorisation process which sets out how, working together with all mainstream schools, Staffordshire aims to identify, support and challenge schools about which the local authority has concerns.
15. Through this process the council undertakes the statutory responsibility of the “duty to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential” (Education Act 1996 s13A). Working with Entrust, the county council has continued to deliver actions to promote improved standards and performance in all Staffordshire schools – both maintained and academies.
16. The county council has continued to review and evaluate the impact of Staffordshire’s school improvement approach, which is managed and monitored

through the council's Education Standards and Performance Board. This board has the remit and membership to enable effective management and monitoring of educational achievement across all ages and stages of learning.

17. This report is an overview of school performance and standards in Staffordshire. It shows how Staffordshire's schools have performed in the 2016/17 academic year and outlines how working in partnership with schools, Entrust and other partners further action to develop and accelerate school improvement outcomes in 2017/18.

Strategic Overview of Educational Achievement Staffordshire 2015

18. This report summarises high-level performance and where possible trends for educational attainment and progress across Staffordshire which is reported fully in Strategic Overview of Educational Achievement 2017 in appendix A.
19. This analysis shows that pupils generally start well, with high levels of attainment recorded at EYFS and KS1. Staffordshire is showing improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in the EYFS and at a higher rate than that recorded nationally.
20. The difference between those eligible for FSM and their peers, in terms of the proportion achieving a 'Good Level of Development', has remained static at 17pp in 2017. Nationally the gap narrowed by a percentage point to 17pp. Differences still remain in district level performance; however all districts reported improvements since 2016 and are all above both the national and statistical neighbour averages.
21. Staffordshire performs above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at KS1. In Staffordshire the increases recorded in writing and maths were greater than the increases seen nationally. In all three subjects Staffordshire's rank improved compared to 2016. Reading and writing results now place the authority in the top quartile compared to the second last year. The difference between those eligible for FSM and their peers has remained static in reading but increased by 2 percentage points in writing and mathematics.
22. 2017 KS2 results indicate that Staffordshire pupils have recorded improvements in reading, writing and maths results at the expected level. In all cases these improvements were greater than those seen for all pupils nationally and statistical neighbours. Staffordshire's rank against all authorities improved in all four measures compared to 2016 with writing, maths and the combined reading, writing and maths measure placing Staffordshire in the second quartile nationally compared to the third in 2016.
23. In 2017 attainment at the expected standard is now above similar authorities and the national averages for all measures.
24. At the time of writing, Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 progress results are not available; these are likely to be published by the Department for Education in December 2017. The difference between those eligible for FSM and their peers in


terms of the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics increased again between 2016 and 2017.

25. Staffordshire's outcomes at KS4 (GCSE) remain inconsistent. Using the new 2017 performance indicators, Staffordshire's result in the Attainment 8 measure is marginally above the England all schools result but below the state-funded result. Staffordshire results in both EBacc measures and the grade 5 or above passes in English and maths measure are below both sets of national results.
26. Improvement at a faster pace is needed as progression between KS2 and KS4 in Staffordshire remains below similar authorities and the England average. Staffordshire's results in the five attainment and progress measures place it in the 3rd quartiles for each measure. At the time of writing, detailed Key Stage 4 data is not available, as a result it is not possible to provide results for this key stage by FSM eligibility.
27. Performance at post-16 (A level & equivalent) for state-funded students (including FE colleges) are also inconsistent with A level and Academic average point score (APS) per entry placing Staffordshire in the bottom quartile nationally, but Tech and General APS per entry place Staffordshire in the second and first quartile nationally respectively. Staffordshire's ranking against all authorities has declined in the A level and academic APS measures but improved in the Tech and General measures.

Attainment Summaries

28. The following section provides an overview of performance within Staffordshire at each key stage in 2017. 'Quartile' relates to Staffordshire's position nationally (with the 1st, or top, quartile being the best position).

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

Subject/Level	Change in Rank (2016 to 2017)	2017 Results				National Quartile (1st = top)	National Rank (out of 151)
		Staffordshire	Statistical Neighbours	England (All Schools)	England (State-Funded)		
Good Level of Development		74.5%	70.6%	70.7%	NA	1st	23

29. In 2017, the percentage of Staffordshire pupils achieving a Good Level of Development improved and results were again ranked within the top quartile nationally. Ranking, compared to all Local Authorities, declined from 21st to 23rd. Staffordshire had the highest proportion of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development out of all of its statistical neighbours; a pattern also evident in 2016.

KEY STAGE ONE (KS1): TEACHER ASSESSMENTS

Subject/Level	Change in Rank (2016 to 2017)	2017 Results				National Quartile (1st = top)	National Rank (out of 150)
		Staffordshire	Statistical Neighbours	England (All Schools)	England (State-Funded)		
Expected Standard Reading	↑	79%	76%	76%	76%	1st	19
Expected Standard Writing	↑	72%	69%	68%	68%	1st	22
Expected Standard Maths	↑	78%	75%	75%	75%	2nd	26

30. When comparing the proportion of pupils achieving the new expected standard in 2017, and the percentage achieving the expected standard in 2016 Staffordshire's rank against all authorities improved. Reading and writing results place Staffordshire in the top quartile nationally.

31. In reading, writing and mathematics, Staffordshire results were above the national average at the expected standard and the gap between Staffordshire and national results remained static.

KEY STAGE TWO (KS2): PROVISIONAL TEACHER ASSESSMENTS AND TESTS

Subject/Level	Change in Rank (2016 to 2017)	2017 Results (provisional)				National Quartile (1st = top)	National Rank (out of 150)
		Staffordshire	Statistical Neighbours	England (All Schools)	England (State-Funded)		
Expected Standard Reading	↑	74%	72%	71%	71%	2nd	37
Expected Standard Writing	↑	78%	77%	76%	76%	2nd	42
Expected Standard Maths	↑	76%	75%	75%	75%	2nd	55
Expected Standard Reading, Writing & Maths	↑	63%	61%	61%	61%	2nd	46

32. In KS2, local authority unvalidated results indicate that when comparing the proportion of pupils achieving the new expected standard in 2017, and the percentage achieving the expected standard in 2016 Staffordshire's rank against all authorities improved in all measures.

33. Outcomes at the expected standard show that in 2017 Staffordshire results are now above national and statistical neighbour averages in all key measures.

KEY STAGE FOUR (KS4): GCSEs AND EQUIVALENT PROVISIONAL RESULTS

Subject/Level	Change in Rank (2016 to 2017)	2017 Results (provisional)				National Quartile (1st = top)	National Rank (out of 150)
		Staffordshire	Statistical Neighbours	England (All Schools)	England (State-Funded)		
Attainment 8	↓	44.6	46.4	44.2	46.1	3rd	101
Progress 8	↓	-0.13	-0.06	-	-	3rd	105
English Baccalaureate Entry	↑	33.4%	35.4%	34.9%	38.2%	3rd	103
English Baccalaureate (inc grade 5 or above in E&M)	-	17.7%	19.9%	19.5%	21.2%	3rd	103
Grade 5 or above in English & Maths	-	38.6%	43.2%	39.1%	42.4%	3rd	104

34. In addition to the changes made in 2016, when the new secondary accountability system made changes to the main headline measures, there have been further changes in 2017. As a result, the headlines measures in 2017 are; Attainment 8, Progress 8, English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entry and achievement (including a grade 5 or above in English and mathematics) and attainment in English and mathematics at grade 5 or above. There is also a further non-attainment/progress measure related to pupil destination post Key Stage 4.

35. The local authority does not yet have access to a complete KS4 dataset due to

the changes made by the DfE and the resultant delay on the data/software supplier (NCER) that provides data to local authorities.

36. Staffordshire's result in the Attainment 8 measure is marginally above the England all schools result but below the state-funded result. Staffordshire results in both EBacc measures and the grade 5 or above passes in English and maths measure are below both sets of national results.
37. Staffordshire's rank declined in Attainment 8 and Progress 8 and improved in the EBacc entry measure. Staffordshire is placed in the 3rd quartile for all measures.

KEY STAGE FIVE (KS5): A LEVEL AND EQUIVALENT

Subject/Level	Change in Rank (2016 to 2017)	2017 Results (provisional)			National Quartile (1st = top)	National Rank (out of 150)
		Staffordshire (State-Funded Students)	Statistical Neighbours (State-Funded Students)	England (All Schools)		
A Level APS per Entry	↓	28.10	30.27	32.12	4th	129
Academic APS per Entry	↓	28.19	-	32.43	4th	128
Tech APS per Entry	↑	33.22	31.34	32.24	2nd	50
General APS per Entry	↑	38.10	35.00	35.64	1st	25

38. Similarly to Key Stage 4, the local authority does not yet have access to a complete Key Stage 5/Post 16 dataset due to changes made by the DfE. Therefore it is not possible to produce the normal analysis at this time.
39. Staffordshire's results for A Level and Academic APS per Entry place the local authority in the bottom quartile with results ranking Staffordshire lower against all other authorities than last year.
40. Tech and General APS results however place Staffordshire in the second and top quartiles respectively with improvements in rankings compared to 2016.

Priorities for 2017/18 Business Planning Year

41. The priority that Staffordshire has placed on increasing the number of schools graded as good or outstanding by Ofsted is a positive achievement in 2016/17, with 89% of schools judged as good or outstanding compared to 86% in 2016. Although Staffordshire remains below the national and statistical neighbour averages; both at 90% of schools graded good or better, the pace of improvement in Staffordshire has been a faster rate than the national average during 2016/17.
42. Attainment and progress in mathematics and English at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 continue to be a priority for improvement. Tackling variations in achievement between localities and different pupil groups is a further priority highlighted through this report.
43. The local authority continues to categorise schools based on the performance indicators available. Those local authority maintained schools identified as category 2 (some concern) and category 3 (high concern) are targeted for support focussed on the specific areas of need. Ofsted inspection outcomes continue to

demonstrate this targeted approach is focussed appropriately on those requiring support. Further analysis is being undertaken to evaluate the impact of the targeted support in the maintained schools.

44. The local authority commissions the joint venture company Entrust to utilise funding to continue to support, challenge and intervene in schools through our categorisation process. The focus on support and challenge is targeted at leadership and management in those maintained schools about which we have concerns (and liaison with the regional schools commissioner (RSC) where we have concerns about academies).
45. The support and challenge provided by Entrust focuses on the work of school senior leaders to address key priorities and actions required to bring about improved outcomes in attainment and progress.
46. The local authority has supported the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Teaching School Alliance in an application to secure Strategic School Improvement Funding (SSIF) from the DfE to further tackle the variations in achievement between schools. The focus of the application is improving outcomes in reading and writing at the end of KS2 and improving outcomes in English at the end of KS4.
47. At the meeting of the schools forum in October 2017, School representatives agreed that the funding which was previously retained centrally to provide school improvement support for maintained schools will be devolved to individual schools from April 2018.
48. The local authority will continue to provide statutory school improvement functions which are set out in Section 13A of the Education Act 1996. This states that the local authority must exercise education functions with a view to promoting high standards. In addition, DfE statutory guidance on 'Schools Causing Concern' also sets out expectations that the local authority will, in partnership with the regional schools commissioner (RSC), identify vulnerable schools, implement appropriate intervention strategies, including powers of intervention, develop effective relationships with all school leaders and governors and facilitate a school-led improvement system.

In order to deliver these statutory responsibilities, the local authority will continue to:

- a. Analyse the performance of Staffordshire schools and, through the school categorisation process, use this information to identify maintained schools that require improvement and intervention;
- b. Work with the RSC, to ensure swift and effective action is taken when underperformance occurs in a maintained school, using intervention powers available to improve leadership and standards;
- c. Liaise with the RSC where we have concerns about an academy school;
- d. Encourage good and outstanding maintained schools to take responsibility for their own improvement and to support other schools, and enable other schools to access such support.

49. The local authority is currently reviewing options available to use the school improvement grant (SIG) received from the DfE to monitor the effectiveness of maintained schools. This will feature as part of the Education and skills priority that will be developed in the county council strategic plan 2018/2022.
50. The Select Committee is invited to provide comment and feedback to further shape our way forward.

Link to Strategic Plan – Staffordshire County Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity –

Appendices:

Appendix A - Education Annual report

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