



Name of Meeting: Children’s Scrutiny Panel

Date: 30th March 2022

Title of report: DRAFT Kirklees Annual Education Quality and Standards Report update

Purpose of report: For information and comment in advance of outcomes being reported back to Kirklees Council Cabinet

This report summarises the challenges faced by the school systems during the Academic year 2021 and the impact on educational outcomes for learners.

For a second year, there is little assessment and examination data to report. Nevertheless, there is still much positive activity to highlight and what data can be reported will enable the system to focus priorities for forthcoming years.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council’s Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Key Decision – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Information only
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Jo-Anne Sanders 18.3.22
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	N/A
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Carole Pattison – Learning, Aspiration and Communities Cllr Viv Kendrick – Statutory responsibility for children

Electoral wards affected: All
Ward councillors consulted: N/A
Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes – the data contained in the report is derived from publicly available sources produced by the Department for Education with some additional internal analyses. Other data sources include Nexus software, Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT) and Statistical First Releases.

Summary

- 1.1 This report is to maintain the continuity of information
- 1.2 All statutory tests for Early Years Foundation Stage, Phonics, Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2 were cancelled due to the continued Covid pandemic and therefore no benchmark data will be made available by the Department for Education (DfE) for 2021. The LA do not hold information relating to progress and attainment for these pupils for the year 2020/21.
- 1.3 The cancellation of exams and the significantly changed method for awarding GCSE grades impacted greatly on the results and led to a set of pupil attainment statistics that are unlike previous years. Comparisons with earlier years are not advised as they are not indicative of changes in underlying pupil performance.
- 1.4 Data is based on the nationally available statistical data and produced at Local Authority level only.
- 1.5 The 2020/21 data should not be directly compared to attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring changes in pupil performance.
- 1.6 Ensuring that vulnerable children and young people were kept safe, remained in education, and were supported to achieve good educational outcomes continued to receive growing national and local attention during 2020/21.
- 1.7 Exceptionally strong partnership work was demonstrated between schools, the Local Authority, and partners to ensure support for vulnerable pupils and their families.
- 1.8 School leaders continued to work together over the last year. School leaders worked tirelessly in partnership with the Council to reshape and adjust priorities considering the Covid 19 context.
- 1.9 The Local Area committed to the development of a learning strategy to guide and focus priorities as we move beyond the pandemic and to agree our approach to learning. Strong partnership engagement with a variety of stakeholders led to the co-authorship of 'Our Kirklees Futures' which is the agreed vision for learning in Kirklees.

2 Information required to take a decision (this paper is for information only)

2.1 The Covid 19 context and implications

- 2.1.1 The continued impact of the pandemic presented challenges for leaders, teachers, parents, carers and the supporting agencies. Their efforts deserve recognition. There was excellent work to be found in the responses of schools and settings. In every institution, leaders

worked exceptionally hard, making rapid but difficult decisions and implementing them at pace.

- 2.1.2** This was a difficult year for education settings and a challenging time to be learning. In all phases of education in 2020/21, most children and young people had to adapt to learning in a different way.
- 2.1.3** For many, the loss of onsite education, disrupted routines and a lack of physical activities led to a decline in wellbeing and allowed gaps in knowledge to develop. A report highlighting the progress of children throughout the pandemic sets out the national picture:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1055351/Understanding_progress_in_the_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf
- 2.1.4.** In Kirklees, we will report on outcome for learners through available data and through our valued and ongoing support and challenge approach which provides intelligence on our school system.
- 2.1.5** The role of the Kirklees Learning Partner was reconfigured in 2020/21. Our learning partners prioritised visits to those school and settings requiring additional support and challenge during the Autumn term 2020. The expectation was that all schools would reopen to all pupils from September 2020 with risk assessments in place.
- 2.1.6** The remote learning offer and the school's ability to identify gaps in knowledge, apply appropriate interventions and monitor the impact of these interventions on pupils' outcomes was the focus of visits.
- 2.1.7** Additionally, school leaders were responsible for continuing to develop their school's curriculum, ensure teachers had access to high quality Continuing Professional Development to enhance and grow subject specific knowledge.
- 2.1.8** Outcomes data has taken less precedence within the Ofsted framework. There is an increased emphasis on formative assessment and evidence from the classroom, gathered through pupil, staff voice and workbooks, to benchmark the school.
- 2.1.9** Inspections carried out under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005 resumed in September 2021.
- 2.1.10** Inspections carried out under Section 8 resumed in September 2021.
- 2.1.11** Section 8 inspections do not fall under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. These include:
- inspections of schools previously judged to be good,
 - inspections of special schools, pupil referral units and maintained nursery schools previously judged to be outstanding,

- monitoring inspections for schools previously judged inadequate or requires improvement,
- inspections where Ofsted have a particular cause for concern (for example, about behaviour and attitudes, safeguarding or leadership).

- 2.1.12** The need to observe classroom practice, review books and speak to stakeholders was more pronounced than ever, and provided extremely challenging because of the pandemic. Robust quality assurance opportunities were limited both internally and with external partners as public health measures took precedence over site visits.
- 2.1.13** In spring 2021, school improvement visits were significantly impacted by the school closures, with planned monitoring activities conducted either remotely or postponed to the summer term.
- 2.1.14** Face to face visits resumed during summer 2021, which allowed learning partners to quality assure school improvement activities, and triangulate evidence collated with self-evaluation judgements.
- 2.1.15** Networks and training continued to be offered to schools. A new standardisation and moderation package was offered to all Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 schools in the spring and early summer of 2021.
- 2.1.16** The pause on primary assessment and the schools' abilities to engage in internal and external professional dialogue identified the need for this offer.
- 2.1.17** Schools continued to have access to high quality professional development to enable them to develop their curriculum offer.
- 2.1.19** Recognition of reduced transition activities between schools identified the need to provide a bespoke package for the first and middle school settings in the LA, where the children transition at the end of Year 5. The opportunity to bring professionals together, albeit virtually, from the two phases was welcomed and well attended.
- 2.1.20** Moderation and teacher assessment was prioritised and strengthened in secondary schools throughout the pandemic. The change in the GCSE awarding methodology, meaning that teacher assessed grades were awarded rather than outcomes based on exams, meant that an increased amount of training, standardisation and school-based quality assurance was expected as part of the teacher assessment process.
- 2.1.21** A summer data capture in 2021 to support school self-assessment was offered to all schools. Analysis of data in 2019, Phonics data from Autumn 2020 and KS4 data from 2020, identified Oracy, early reading and reading comprehension as curriculum areas of focus.

- 2.1.22** Schools Forum, in collaboration with the Education Improvement Committee of the Education and Learning Partnership Board, supported a small-scale project with Voice 21, a national charity. We recognised through our data analysis that reading is a key area to improving outcomes. There are ten schools participating in the project, including one with specialist provision and a range of primary and secondary schools.
- 2.1.23** Throughout the pandemic, Kirklees learning partners worked closely with safeguarding teams ensuring that where attendance was low, support was offered to the school and family.
- 2.1.24** There were periods of lockdown where children were not required to attend school and remote learning was in place. Kirklees learning partners supportively challenged schools to ensure that their remote learning offer was in line with government guidance and that wellbeing checks were in place for children learning at home, with provision for the most vulnerable made available on school site.
- 2.1.25** During 2020/21, there was a much larger focus on home-learning during lockdown. As part of the Department for Education initiative, Kirklees rolled out a programme of providing IT devices to the children and young people who need them the most to ensure pupils received an IT device to access online lessons. Kirklees supplied over 5,300 pieces of IT equipment making Kirklees one of the leading authorities in the country for accessing this support.

2.2 Educational Outcomes for the Academic Year 2020 / 2021

- 2.2.1** We are unable to report on Early Years Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 2 outcomes as formal teacher assessments or exams did not take place in summer 2021.
- 2.2.2 Key Stage 4 results**
- 2.2.3** The sector consensus is that the increases seen in the headline statistics reflect the changed methodology used for awarding grades rather than demonstrating a step change improvement in standards.
- 2.2.4** The government published local authority data for GCSE results for 2020 and 2021 but not individual schools' data.
- 2.2.5 Key Stage 5 results**
- 2.2.6** Following the use of Centre Assessed Grades and Teacher Assessed Grades in 2019/20 and 2020/21, KS5 performance in Kirklees has dipped relative to national benchmarks. This was signalled as an issue within partnerships and networks prior to the 2020/21 results.

- 2.2.7** The patterns of results in the provisional 2021 data fits the expectation due to the grade inflation seen in the majority of Local Authorities with smaller school sixth forms and fewer sixth form Colleges.
- 2.2.8** It is highly unlikely that all regions improved their underlying quality or performance to this extent in these years, and there has been no indication of internal drop in quality at any A level institution.
- 2.2.9** It is likely then that when rigorous externally assessed grades return for the summer 2022 exams that Kirklees will return to its position above region and national averages and in its historic position within the A and B quartiles.

2.3 Priorities for 2021/22 and beyond

- 2.3.1** The focus for the 2021/2022 academic year is to work in partnership with the Education Learning and Partnership Board and its committees to support schools to continue to operate safely and recover to the best of their abilities to help all pupils catch up any identified lost learning.
- 2.3.2** The Learning Strategy, 'Our Kirklees Futures' sits at the heart of our ambitions. <https://civico.net/kirklees/13361> It has been co-produced with stakeholders across the district and sets out the following key priorities for learners:

By 2030, Kirklees is a place where children and young people have the best start in life and are:

Safe: Children and young people in Kirklees are safe and feel safe from harm, benefitting from nationally recognised, exceptional safeguarding practice.

Healthy: Children and young people live healthy lifestyles and maintain these into adulthood.

Achieving: All learners across Kirklees make outstanding progress, access a high performing education system and achieve well in external examinations. They enjoy a curriculum offer that celebrates cultural, creative, sporting and social pursuits that are amongst the best in the country. Gaps in achievement for those deemed disadvantaged or with additional needs are significantly and consistently reduced, with inequalities addressed.

Happy: Children and young people report being happy and optimistic for their future.

Attending: Attendance across our education system is higher than national average, with all Kirklees learners able to access their local school, setting or college.

And our system is:

Inclusive: There is no need to use permanent exclusion in Kirklees because learners, families and schools are supported in a timely and effective way.

Sustainable: The education and learning infrastructure will work towards being carbon free and actively promotes understanding of the science of climate change.

- 2.3.3** Raising outcomes at all phases across schools and settings in Kirklees is a priority based on the Learning Strategy.

3 Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

Working together with our families, we encourage every child to be ambitious, hold high aspirations and to strive to reach their potential as well as helping them to be kind, brave, compassionate, tolerant and reflective.

3.2 Working with Partners

It is imperative that the council and wider partners work together to ensure they are able to provide world class educational opportunities that support children, young people and their families to realise their potential and succeed in adult life.

This year we have continued to collaborate with sector specialists and the local research schools and Teaching School Hubs to provide evidence-based interventions, bespoke professional development for our leaders and strengthen pedagogy for our educational professionals.

Our Kirklees Futures and the SEND transformation plan <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/special-education/pdf/send-transformation-plan.pdf> brought together representatives and system leaders from across Kirklees, listened to learners, evaluated data, and engaged with evidence-based research.

3.3 Place Based Working

Our schools, and settings work collaboratively as part of our learning family and understand the children and their families whom they serve well. The diversity and scale of the district requires a commitment to place based working and to meeting the differing needs of local communities. Our Schools and learning settings play a vital role in delivering this place-based approach and supporting children, their families, and the wider

community. Strong partnerships are well established and together we have a shared commitment to meet the aspirations of all children, young people and families within our communities

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

3.5.1 All our educational settings are part of the Kirklees learning family. Collectively, these settings serve a large, diverse population.

3.5.2 It is the intention that the limited data available is used by officers to add further value to our joined-up approach to ensure every learner, regardless of circumstance, has the very best educational opportunities available, as measured by a range of outcomes including, but not exclusive to, performance data.

3.6 Other (e.g., Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions

N/A

4 Next steps and timelines

4.1 A full report will be brought forward in order to establish a shared understanding about priorities for improvement.

5. Officer recommendations and reasons

5.1 This report is submitted for information.

6 Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

N/a

7 Contact officer

Chris Jessup – Head of Educational Outcomes

chris.jessup@kirklees.gov.uk

Emma Brayford Acting Senior Kirklees Learning Partner

Emma.brayford@kirklees.gov.uk

Dr. Phil Mark – Head of service post-16

Phil.mark@kirklees.gov.uk

Narinder Kaur – Kirklees Learning Partner

Narinder.kaur@kirklees.gov.uk

8 Background Papers and History of Decisions

N/A

9 Service Director responsible

Jo-Anne Sanders Service Director, Learning and Early Support