

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 22 January 2024

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director – Children

PORTFOLIO: Children & Young People

SUBJECT: Summary of Validated Halton Educational Performance, summer 2023 (outcomes published outcomes by DFE, December 2023)

WARD(S) Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To receive a summary report on the validated outcomes for Halton’s Children and Young People educational performance from summer 2023 in comparison to Validated National, regional and statistical neighbour data.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) Members receive the report; and
- (2) Members ask any questions about the educational performance across Halton and implications of these results

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Children’s, Young people and Families Policy and Performance Board have an overview and scrutiny role for children’s services across Halton.

3.2 The Operational Director for Education will provide a summary of the validated educational performance and results across Halton in summer 2023-see Paper One. This includes attainment and progress outcomes from the summer 2023 statutory assessment and exam period for all pupils; cohorts of children and young people with SEND and cohorts of children and young people who are eligible for Free School Meals. The performance measures include Early Years Foundation Stage Good Level of Development (GLD);Phonics outcomes; end of Key Stage One outcomes; end of Key Stage Two outcomes and End of Key Stage Four (GCSE English and Maths outcomes).

3.3 The EYFS Framework changed from 1st September 2021 (2022

published outcomes) and so no prior comparisons can be made. The EYFS profile indicator is the Good Level of Development (GLD) indicator which is achieved when pupils achieve the expected standard in the prime early learning goals communication and language; physical development and personal social and emotional development and also the expected standard in the literacy and mathematics early learning goals.

- 3.4 Halton's GLD is improving but is still below national and is a key priority for the region, with communication and language, reading and writing and maths being key areas of development. These areas are being prioritised as part of the Priority Education Investment Area work (PEIA) which are overseen by a Strategic Board Chaired by DFE. The four key strands of development within PEIA are EY's, English, Maths and attendance, with a focus on inclusion throughout all pillars (Details will be shared following all performance updates).
- 3.5 It is pleasing to note improvements in GLD and it is evident that tracking key cohorts and specific groups through the Ready for Reception tracking tool and GLD tracking tool are enabling schools and settings to target children in specific areas of delay and thus intervene early to build on next steps. This is particularly evident in GLD outcomes for those with an EHCP; boys and GLD and those eligible for Free school meals and identified as 'disadvantaged.' These young people have achieved better than their peers across Liverpool City region, North West and statistical neighbour regions with year on year rises in all measures from 2022 to 2023.
- 3.6 In relation to phonics performance at the end of Year One, all Halton pupils perform in line with national and this cohort have improved on 2022 cohort outcomes, by 6%. In relation to SEND support pupils there has been a 10% increase on 2022 outcomes; boys performance increased by 5% from 2022 to 76% achieving the expected standard (in line with national) and 69% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard against a national average of 66% for this measure. Phonics work across schools is a strength of Halton due to quality first teaching and a range of early intervention programmes used successfully.
- 3.7 Key Stage One is historically an area where outcomes in Halton have been lower than national. This has been partly attributable to some low starting points and whilst strong progress is made in schools this does not always have sufficient time for pupils to make the rapid progress required to reach the expected standard by the end of Year Two. However, the strong foundations developed during this time pay dividend as pupils progress through primary school and historically outcomes by the end of Key Stage Two narrow the gap to national. As a region, we are ambitious for our young people and are working together as a system using skills from across the sector; working with Teaching School Hubs and acting on evidenced

based programmes backed up with action research such as EEF programmes, in order to improve outcomes further and build on progress made. For summer 2023 all pupils cohort, reading, writing and maths outcomes were slightly down on 2022 cohort, but broadly in line with performance across the Liverpool City region. Children and young people at SEND support did demonstrate improvements on 2022 performance in all reading, writing and maths indicators, with the highest increase seen in maths with 36.1% achieving expected in comparison to national 36.7% for this cohort. Pupils eligible for free school meals achieved above national in reading 55.1% (national 53.7%); above national in writing 45.5% (national 44.4%) and improved on 2022 maths outcomes with 55.1% achieving the expected standard.

- 3.8 Results at Key Stage Two in 2023 demonstrated that whilst there was a decline for all pupil cohort in reading from 2022, (this was true nationally and all comparator areas) and Halton had 73.3% of children achieving the expected standard, in line with national and above that of the North West and Liverpool City Region. Similarly, writing performance was strong and our key area to develop being maths which is evident throughout all key stages. The performance of maths did improve by 2.3% from 2022 to 72.3% achieving the expected standard. Children with SEND both at SEND support and EHCP made year on year improvements from 2019 and in KS2 Reading, children with an EHCP performed higher than national both at the expected standard and the higher standard. Also important to note is the strong performance of Key Stage Two children who were eligible for Free School Meals whom outperformed the national average in reading at the expected and higher standard.

Progress from Key Stage One to Two was ahead of national in reading and writing progress for all pupils; SEND support pupils and those eligible for free school meals. This further evidences the strong progress from starting points made during a child's educational journey in Halton. Maths remains the key area of focus to prioritise.

- 3.9 Key Stage Four must only be compared with great caution from previous years due to GCSE exam protective features, centre assessed and teacher assessed grades used during and post pandemic. Whilst exams did resume to a more typical pre covid experience in 2022, several of the grade boundary protections were removed and therefore this is the first year that can truly be compared with pre pandemic typical GCSE exam sessions of 2019. Whilst DFE measures GCSE performance in basics (English and Maths combined), results are collected for individual Maths and English GCSE's. Performance in English is stronger than maths with 70.6% pupils achieving 9-4 standard in English and 53.6% 9-5; whilst maths had 65% achieving grades 9-4 and 44.4% achieving

grades 9-5 in maths. This summer young people with SEND achieved well and Halton appears in the top 6% of young people with an EHCP achieving grades 9-5 in basics. Progress for disadvantaged young people was above that of statistical neighbours, Liverpool City Region and North West Region.

4.0 **What are our priorities?**

Our key educational performance priorities are to continue to improve outcomes in Early Years GLD, English (both Reading, Writing) and Maths across all Key Stages. We currently have robust data and tracking systems which is shared with our schools through specialist analysis, advice and support from an educational data analyst and applied to school improvement practices through challenge and support from our Associate School Improvement Advisors (ASIA's). These services from 1st April 2024 will now all need to be funded moving forwards through a service level agreement, due to the removal of the School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering (SIMB) Grant by Central Government. There is a potential risk that if schools elect not to buy into these service level agreements, then schools may not receive the robust analysis, local intelligence and contextual knowledge of the region and collective working across the region. Plans are in place to try to mitigate such risks including the work of the PEIA supporting the above identified priorities and schools establishing a Local Area Cluster network arrangement to build capacity across the system and sharing of effective practice. However, this will require all schools to participate and work together collectively and may not receive the borough wide overview and analysis if not all schools opt in.

In relation to the 4 priority areas, the Early Years aspects will include the roll out of Wellcomm screening used across all primary schools to continue the work already undertaken across the PVI sector through the TALK Halton initiative and support transition through into school age. This will also include TALK Boost programmes carried out across Family Hubs. Additionally, there will be specific training for teachers and TA's to deliver specific English and Maths interventions. English work will be led by Childer Thornton Literacy Hub and The Literacy Company in Wirral and Maths priority work will be led by Cheshire and Wirral Maths Hub. This includes sharing subject specialist knowledge; developing curriculum leader skill, knowledge and capacity to lead a subject across a school/department and will support collaboration and effective transitions. English work will include EEF recommended programmes such as Embedding Formative Assessment and also support teacher development and monitor professionals undertaking Leading Literacy National Professional Qualifications. (NPQ's).

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Educational outcomes inform priorities within Children & Young People's Plan; Education, Inclusion and Provision Priorities and Starting Well Strategy.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None for the council, although removal of School Improvement monitoring and Brokering Grant is having a financial impact on schools who will need to purchase support and advice moving forwards.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton** – Educational Outcomes for Children & Young People impact on future independence, happiness and well-being

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**-Positive educational outcomes impact on employability and progression into employment, education and training

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**-Achieving well improves mental health and wellbeing

6.4 **A Safer Halton** -None

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**-None

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Reduced support from the local authority educational and data colleagues will occur if schools do not purchase a service level agreement due to removal of SIMB grant. This could result in less local and contextual knowledge to support the local community and education sector, if schools elect not to buy in. Risks are being mitigated by close consultation with the sector; offering a range of offers and price options and identifying the gaps that may occur and sharing with the sector. This is being monitored closely.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

Equality of opportunity is offered for all and considered in all educational planning and analysis.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

None

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.