

Great Educational Outcomes for Worcestershire Children

Review of Education arrangements
in Worcestershire

By Jo Davidson

1.0 Background

The review was commissioned by Catherine Driscoll, Director for Children's Services for Worcestershire County Council in May 2017.

The review was undertaken over a four month period, involving:

- 50 interviews with partners and officers covering the full range of education and skills functions for all phases from early years to adult learning
- Examination of national and local policy and other documentation
- Consideration of financial and performance data
- Consideration of national information about other systems and alternatives
- One workshop and one discussion with senior education officers and participation in a workshop regarding the new Children and Young People's Plan

Thanks go to all those who participated honestly, enthusiastically and so generously with their time and information. Particular thanks are due to Chris Hundley who managed a complicated set of interview arrangements with skill and patience and Jenny Humphries who conducted research into other systems.

2.0 Why review?

Councils have wide ranging and complex duties and powers relating to education and skills functions. Many are undertaking reviews to ensure their arrangements are efficient and effective.

This area of statutory duty is subject to regular change and development in national policy and guidance. The Council needs to ensure that its arrangements are fit for now, and able to respond to national change.

Funding is changing for councils and other parts of the education system. Future arrangements need to be financially sustainable and astute enough to ensure that all funding that should be accessed by the Worcestershire system can be accessed and used to improve outcomes for Worcestershire children and young people.

This requires an education function which understands education and is able to operate strategically as well as secure or provide high quality operational functions.

3.0 Focus of the review

The review considers the way in which the Council is fulfilling its education functions, some of which have been commissioned with organisations such as Babcock, Liberata and the Place Partnership.

The review was asked to consider the following questions:

- What is the council's role in education and skills and how well do people understand this?
- What is the performance of the current system?
- How does Worcestershire compare to other systems?
- What is the capacity, skills and impact like in Worcestershire?
- What is the funding and financial performance like, including sustainability?

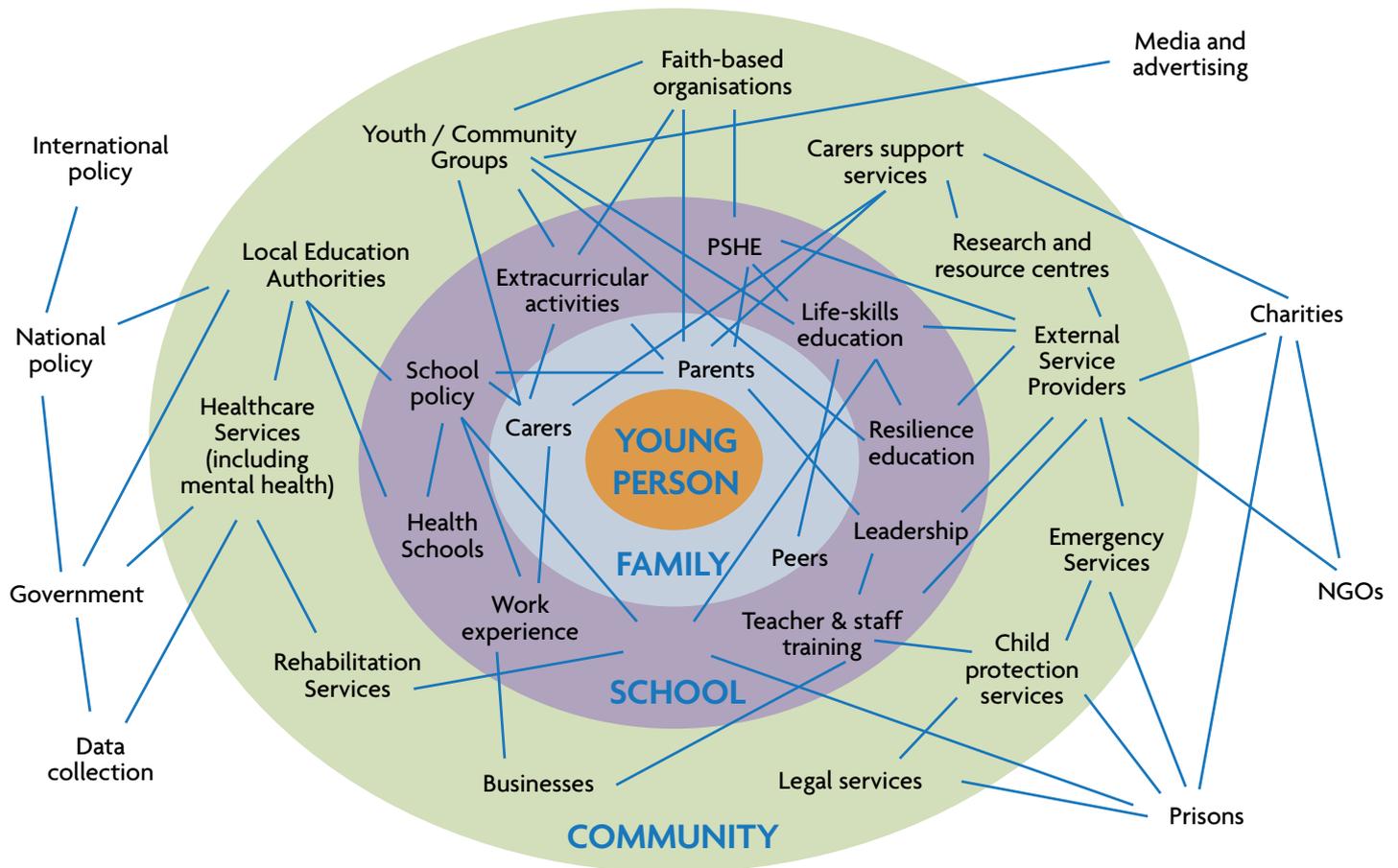
Underpinning all of these aspects was a question regarding the culture, behaviour and relationships within the current arrangements.

4.0 What is the system?

The education system is complicated and complex. The system will vary from authority to authority, and comprises all those organisations and people who have a role to play in ensuring that children can access and participate in a high quality education and achieve good outcomes.

An example of this system is set out below:

A connected Ecosystem



For the purposes of this review, the elements of the Worcestershire system which have been considered are:

- Early years and schools at the leadership and governance level
- Post 16, training and skills providers
- Specific and discrete education functions of the council and others, such as Diocesan Boards of Education

The review has not included consideration of the performance and impact of services such as health services (eg mental health; community paediatrics); social care services; or been able to engage with children, young people and their families in the time available.

The Council may find it helpful following this review, to develop their own map of the education system so that it is well understood and so that strengths and gaps can be identified.

The Council has the responsibility to lead the whole system to harness the best outcomes from the combined efforts and resources of all those who are involved.

5.0 What are the council's functions in relation to education and skills?

Councils have wide ranging duties and powers laid down in a variety of education legislation and accompanying statutory guidance. Responsibilities are laid down in other legislation which have an impact on education functions – for example safeguarding vulnerable children and ensuring good health and wellbeing.

Education legislation is complex, with no single act covering the full range of duties. Any council needs to ensure that staff and members have a good understanding of the legislation applying to their areas of responsibility.

The Staff College and the Association of Directors of Children's Services have worked on simplifying the understanding of the role and function of the local authority in education. In brief, the functions are:

5.1 Place planning – ensuring there are enough early years, school and specialised places and provision for 0-19 year olds and up to age 25 for young people with disabilities and special educational needs.

Councils have to plan enough places of the right type in the right geography at the right time to ensure every child and young person gets their entitlement to a good early years or school/college/training place. Where possible, this has to have a good match with parental preference of schools, although this is balanced by a requirement to make a reasonable use of resources, recognising that there are cash limited revenue and capital budgets.

As education provision is an infrastructure service, councils need to ensure that they are taking an appropriate medium and long term planning view, over the next 5-10 years, sometimes longer, tied into economic and housing plans. This planning is informed by:

- population change
- housing development
- changes in parental preferences, often tied to changing Ofsted judgements
- effective and imaginative use of capital funds

Councils have to ensure buildings are maintained and accessible to children and young people, and that the market responds to the need for places, particularly in the early years where there are new duties to provide up to 30 hours per week provision for 3 and 4 year olds, and that enough places are built.

For academies and free schools, the responsibility to maintain and develop buildings lies with the trustees – councils, as advocates for their residents, need to know if there are issues and if there are, make sure these are addressed by the responsible bodies.

This duty includes a responsibility for stimulating the market, where there is a lack of suitable provision; it also includes taking difficult decisions about changing the shape of the provision in an area, if it is not producing good outcomes, is unsustainable, or is not in the right place to meet place needs.

A similar responsibility applies to ensuring that there is a sufficient focus on developing the right skills to meet the economic requirements of an area. Whilst that may mean capital developments, it is also as much about securing agreement about a range of provision to meet skills demands.

5.2 Standards – ensuring the places that are available are of a high standard and achieving high outcomes for every child

Councils have specific duties under the School Standards and Framework Act 1996 to uphold high standards. This includes the performance of early years settings, schools and post 16 provision. This duty applies to all children in all schools.

It is for councils to determine what they mean by high standards. This includes judgements reached by the regulator, Ofsted, but is not the only standard, as Ofsted inspects schools on a limited frequency over a limited period of time. The Council has to be able to reach its own view of the quality of education being provided and that includes a close analysis of the actual educational outcomes and experiences achieved by settings, schools and colleges.

Councils have responsibility to accelerate improvement where outcomes not improving quickly or where there are differences in outcomes between different groups of children and their peers.

The school improvement system is built on the concept of school-led or sector-led improvement. Councils create the environment where schools are responsible for their own improvement, and are able to draw from a range of coordinated support and challenge, driven through a developing system of teaching school alliances and strategic school improvement funds. The emphasis should be on collaboration, with the ultimate goal of improving individual school outcomes and the performance of the education system as a whole, to achieve strategic education and skills goals.

The Council should set the aspirations it has for the children and young people in Worcestershire, with the system, and hold the system to account for achieving this, supporting, challenging and intervening, where this is necessary.

5.3 Access – ensuring children and young people are able to access provision through transport/disability access/effective admissions arrangements

Councils retain responsibility for home to school transport policies within the legislation and for ensuring that there is sufficient access to provision within a reasonable distance for all children and specifically for children and young people with disabilities.

The council has responsibility for establishing the admissions arrangements for local authority maintained schools and for coordinating the admissions arrangements for all schools. This includes challenging other admissions authorities where admissions arrangements appear not to be legal or fair.

For those children who move school outside the major admissions rounds, Councils must ensure fair access arrangements to ensure children are admitted to schools within 20 school days.

Through these arrangements, the council is able to assure the residents of Worcestershire that:

- there enough places for children and young people to access their entitlement to early years and education provision
- there is transport available where children are eligible for free transport to school
- children with disabilities are able to access appropriate places
- there are fair and transparent admissions arrangements so parents can see where they are most likely to access a school place, and how any over-subscription will be dealt with
- when children move schools, their education is largely uninterrupted
- the system is fair and is accessible to all, as a universal provision

5.4 Vulnerable children – ensuring that children who are vulnerable to poor education outcomes have their needs appropriately met.

The phrase ‘vulnerable children’ means identified groups of children who are often likely to have poorer outcomes than their peers. This includes:

- children from black and minority ethnic communities
- children with special educational needs and disabilities
- children eligible for pupil premium
- children in care
- service children
- young offenders
- young carers
- children with medical needs

Councils must identify those groups plus any other groups within their area who are not doing as well as they should be. This also includes knowing whether gifted and talented children are making the progress and achieving good outcomes.

Councils have the responsibility to know whether vulnerable children:

- access places with high standards
- can attend those places
- have their needs identified, assessed and met
- are achieving good outcomes

If not, councils are responsible for exercising their powers to effect change. This does not always mean councils themselves have to provide something – but it does mean the council has to try to do something about it.

5.5 Championing children

Councils have an overarching responsibility to champion children and young people and their outcomes. In the same way that Worcestershire council champions Worcestershire as a place that is Open for Business, the council has a responsibility to champion the good experiences and outcomes for children and young people. This moral purpose is a corporate and political responsibility, not just an issue for the specialist Children’s Services department, although often they will take the lead.

Councils have the duty to seek and obtain the cooperation of all partners, including education providers, to achieve good outcomes. This is laid down in the statutory duties of the Lead Member and the Director for Children’s Services and the Children Act 2004.

5.6 Other duties

Councils have responsibilities to ensure the fair, efficient and reasonable use of resources, through their own revenue and capital budgets and through the efficient use of the Dedicated Schools Grant and any other government funding sources.

Ultimately, Councils set the ‘tone’ for the education system and lead it. They lead with conviction with a clear moral purpose relating to the importance of education and skills for the good of their area. Councils are place shapers, and therefore do not ‘do’ all of it themselves. . They do though have to ensure that education functions are performed effectively – no matter who is providing it at an individual institution or organisational level.

In common with other strategic functions of councils, education functions are as much about influence as they are about control. This requires councils to establish a good understanding of their role in education and what they are trying to achieve for the people of Worcestershire; to establish excellent relationships between the 'players' in the system and to secure clarity about what will happen if there is potential or actual failure.

6.0 Academy and free schools

Although academies and free schools operate under different arrangements to local authority maintained schools, they are very much part of the public education system which councils oversee.

If an academy is not delivering a good standard of education; has buildings issues which could lead to potential closure; has poor safeguarding arrangements and so on, this is an issue for councils, because it means there is the potential for a council to be unable to meet its statutory duties for securing high quality school places.

Conversely, good and outstanding academies and free schools enable councils to meet their duties well.

Councils must therefore have arrangements in place which include engagement with academies and free schools to know how well or otherwise they are meeting the current and future needs of the children in Worcestershire. Good relationships also enable the council to influence more effectively change which benefits all children, not just some.

7.0 How well do people understand the role of the council in education?

Through examination of material provided by the council and the interviews, there is not a clear understanding of:

- the breadth of the council role and responsibility
- what the council stands for
- how the council is undertaking its education functions
- who is doing what.

There is not yet a clear education strategy or statement which sets out how the council will achieve its purpose, across all its functions through the leadership of the whole system.

The arrangements to commission a number of different providers have further complicated the situation.

7.1 Standards

This collective lack of understanding is marked in relation to duties for high education standards. Many people have assumed that the council does not have a role in the effectiveness of schools, on the assumption that a sector led improvement system and a system involving academy schools has written out the role of the council. This view is held by some people within the council as well as by some partners.

Whilst the expectation is that schools and early years providers are responsible for their own improvement, the council is accountable for ensuring that every child is getting the best education outcomes and is accessing provision which is of a high standard.

If that is not the case, the council does have to do something about it – whether that is by exercising its powers to direct and/or intervene, or by escalating the issues to the bodies that can direct and intervene, such as trustees, the Regional Schools Commissioner or the Secretary of State.

7.2 Place Planning, Access and Vulnerable Children

The responsibilities relating to place planning, access and some aspects of vulnerable children are better understood.

The Education Sufficiency Plan 2015 includes this statement:

1.0 Vision and principles

Strategic Vision for Education in Worcestershire

Worcestershire County Council believes that all children should have the opportunity for the best possible education to allow them to fulfil their full potential. That local solutions are the best way to meet the needs of all children and therefore, will encourage schools and settings to work together to build partnerships and support each other in the interests of the children. The County Council will work with all types of providers to ensure there is a sufficiency of good school places in Worcestershire.

Core Principles

Where additional places are required the LA will apply the following core principles:

- Improve the learning experience of pupils
- Improve educational outcomes for all children and young people
- Support good or outstanding schools
- Be sustainable in the long term
- Be cost effective

Working with Partners

In the changing landscape of education the Local Authority believes that working with a number of different partners is the best solution to achieving its aims. These include, but are not exclusive:

- Children and young people
- Parents
- Early Years settings and providers
- Community Schools, VC and VA Schools, Academies and Free Schools
- Post 16 providers
- Diocesan Boards
- NHS
- Department for Education
- Education Funding Agency
- Regional Schools Commissioner
- District Councils
- Developers

When working with partners, the Local Authority will put the best interests of all children and young people at the heart of the process.”

This statement does not appear to be in other policy documentation and was not referred to by interviewees. Most people understood the council’s aim to be one of maximising parental preference in their choice of school and to have good and outstanding schools.

The Fair Access Protocol contains an effective list of many of the vulnerable groups in the County – however there does not appear to be any systematic reporting of the educational progress and attainment of all of these groups, or any analysis of their access to early years provision and schools.

What is evident is that there is real confusion about the relationship and accountabilities between:

- the council and the regional schools commissioner
- the council and Babcock
- the council, schools and Liberata
- the council, schools and Place Partnership

Councils are grappling with clarifying the council/regional schools commissioner relationship and role, so it is not surprising that Worcestershire should be in the same position.

However, the other contracts have been established by the Council. It is for the Council to ensure arrangements are clear, understood and unambiguous.

A clear shared narrative and ambition developed by the council **with** stakeholders within the education system, with clarity about roles and responsibilities, would go a long way towards securing a collective sense of responsibility and momentum.

This would enable the council to perform more effectively its roles of champion, convener of partnerships and commissioner of places and provision.

8.0 Current council arrangements

The current council arrangements for education are confusing for the rest of the system - and within the council itself.

The Council needs to engage in some better communications to ensure that early years providers and schools understand who is responsible for what. There is a need to do this within the council itself, where there is some evidence of silo working. Many councils have moved, or are moving to an alliance model of working with schools and others, with some kind of partnership board arrangement to oversee the collective efforts of the system.

Schools are used to working with different suppliers, through their own contractual arrangements. However, by sharing out education functions between the Council, Babcock, Liberata and Place Partnership, the council has layered a further degree of complexity into the system.

As part of the review, comment was made by both Babcock and the Council about the complexity and operation of those arrangements. Having reviewed the contract and considered some of the day to day operational activity, it is clear that changes need to occur to the way in which the contract is managed, and also the way the relationship is conducted between the two organisations. Specifically the following matters need to be considered:

- The division of responsibilities between the two organisations needs to be considered.
- The council is responsible for determining policy, yet in some aspects – early years for example – the council has not retained the expertise to do this.
- The mix of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and specifications creates an unhelpful tension between outcomes based commissioning and contract management and detailed involvement in day to day decisions. Key performance indicators should be reviewed.
- The KPIs are limited so leave the council at possible risk of not knowing whether its delegated duties are being met. For example, it is not clear whether the council knows whether it is on track to achieve the duty to provide 30 hours of free child care per week.

The arrangement with Babcock has also created a split in the education senior leadership. This has the potential to create a disjointed set of policy and practice messages. This has already been noticed by schools with some more recent examples being given regarding confusing messages about safeguarding responsibilities.

The way the arrangement is currently working also potentially leads to decisions being made without the right expertise around the table.

9.0 Culture/behaviour and impact

Given the critical influencing role of the council, the review has also considered the quality of the relationships between different elements of the system.

Strengths

Positively there is a lot of high regard for individual officers throughout the council and in the other contracted bodies, particularly Babcock.

Other positives include:

- Recent evidence of wanting to make significant change
- Recent involvement of schools' expertise by the Council
- Energy and focus of the Director of Children's Services
- Developments by commissioners in several reviews, such as High Needs and Alternative Provision which has been marked by some perceived good engagement with other parts of the system to think through what the issues are and how to resolve them.

The council has some very good practice in the skills area. This area is highly thought of, with partnership working, clarity of objectives, energy and imagination being referenced and evidenced. Worcestershire is seen as an area of national good practice, particularly in relation to the development of apprenticeships. This is borne out by the documentation and by some of the performance of this area. The Council could learn from the approach in its other areas of business.

Areas to develop

Almost universally partners and other stakeholders are of the view that officers are doing their best in a difficult situation of reducing numbers, high activity and lack of clarity of role and direction.

Common areas of concern:

- Lack of clarity about the role of the council and the role of members in education policy. The role of members is not currently well understood or visible.
- Very slow decision making – there are several examples of decisions about Babcock issues which have taken many months to resolve, which has impacted on effectiveness and cost. This is particularly the case in relation to special educational needs
- Lack of clear and regular communication from the council about education issues– the use of district head teacher leads to pass information on to colleagues is a particular weakness and risk
- Lack of education expertise within the council and concerns about how up to date some of the expertise is in Babcock
- Poor management of change when commissioning services –Liberator contracts were raised by numerous people

- Lack of unified decision making about school building changes involving schools, Place Partnership and the Council
- Lack of willingness to tackle difficult but important issues – the three tier/two tier school system is one example given.

There are three particular elements which seem to be having a major impact on how the council can perform its education functions well.

9.1 Involvement of stakeholders

The pervading view amongst those interviewed, is that the council does not involve the other elements of the system, particularly schools, in the way that it should. The perception and experience is one of a council which decides on a course of action and then consults on it and/or enacts it.

The council can choose to operate in this way.

By doing this, however, it is building resentment, missing out highly relevant expertise, and implementing change poorly. One of the most recent examples of this is the Liberator contract – whilst the council is itself reviewing the learning from this, it is a useful illumination for other aspects of education policy:

- Schools are customers of the services in the Liberator contract. They pay for the services, and the services have direct impact on the day to day functioning and effectiveness of schools. Schools have to be able to implement the product and be able to use it effectively.
- Although there was some engagement with schools at the outset, there does not seem to have been ongoing involvement of schools in shaping up the procurement; considering implementation; advising on training; preparing for the change and monitoring the first few stages.
- Schools, like the council, have experienced a very poor implementation which is testing the relationship severely. As well as having staff who have not been paid accurately, there has been reported immense strain placed on business managers in schools who have not been adequately or appropriately trained. As at July, schools were still struggling to access accurate financial reports.

This is at odds within the local governance of schools arrangements. The impression given is one of the council having a disregard for schools as respected organisations delivering a core service for the Worcestershire residents.

This lack of involvement of schools and respect for them, is perceived as pervading the ways of working in the council, and there is a desire to change. Other than the schools forum and the skills aspects there is not currently a place for partners involved in education to shape the strategic direction of the education system.

The council is also aware that it has not been able to engage the education system as well as it should do, in the development of the Children and Young People's Plan and is actively considering how to address this.

9.2 Pride

The second significant cultural issue is about pride of those working within education in Worcestershire.

Many interviewees reflected on how they used to feel proud to work for Worcestershire. Many said they no longer feel proud, and they cited the attitude of the council, the failure to effectively commission some contracts, the lack of clarity about the direction the council wanted education to take and a general sense of confusion as reasons behind that lessening of pride.

A quote which encapsulates the spirit of many is:

"I came to Worcestershire many years ago, because what they were doing was exciting. I always felt proud to work for Worcestershire. I don't now. And I want to get back to feeling proud of what we do here"

Reassuringly, they wanted to get back that sense of pride, coupled with ambition and success for what is possible in Worcestershire by working with the council with a clear sense of direction. There was a very strong desire to be involved in this work, helping to shape and drive it.

9.3 Courage and moral purpose

The third aspect about culture related to the view that people have about the council being a weak leader in relation to education and its championing children role. To be an effective system leader, the council has to, at times, challenge unacceptable practice or thinking.

It is difficult to do this if there is no unified statement of intent or guiding direction for people to shape and work towards. However, even at an operational level, there are indications that the council is not challenging where it should be. Examples include:

- Formal warning notices regarding school standards – very limited use
- Directions to schools to admit students – no evidence of any, despite the number of children without school places
- Challenging requests for statutory assessments for special educational needs – significant growth in requests but no evidence that there is any assessment of the way in which schools are utilising their resources to determine whether an intrusive assessment approach is necessary.

The education system is looking for leadership, clarity and a clear sense of moral purpose – this is the role of the council.

10.0 Performance, capacity and skills

Overall, Worcestershire is currently punching below its weight. At relatively low levels of deprivation overall (122/152 in the country), the education outcomes are not as robust as they should be.

10.1 Place Planning

The council has a small established place planning function with responsibility for the full range of place planning and school organisation arrangements.

Strengths

- On national data, the council is fulfilling this function relatively successfully, on costs for providing new school places – 77/147 nationally or 3/11 against statistical neighbours – and slightly less well on the proportion of those new places in good or outstanding provision– 120/143 or 8/11 against statistical neighbours. Forecasting accuracy is also reasonably good. Appendix 1 provides more detail.
- The council currently has a plan establishing the strategic principles for place planning; it is also attempting to develop a place and funding plan to 2030 to ensure that school places keep pace with housing growth. This is all appropriate action to be taking.

Areas to develop

- The school place planning arrangements in Worcestershire are complicated by the split in responsibilities between the county and district councils. From the material seen, whilst the council is securing some clarity about the place planning issues, this is not yet in place across the whole county. This issue needs to be owned by the whole council as lack of provision of good school places will affect the economic and housing growth plans.

- The council is not clear about how it will finance the developments it needs to meet its place planning duties. The council is potentially facing a significant funding gap, which could be up to £25m. This is unlikely to be closed by relying on government grant or developer contributions alone. The council will require an energetic political and managerial approach to opportunities such as site rationalisation and proceeds of land sales and other sources of funding.
- The council is in breach of its statutory duties currently by not ensuring sufficient school places for vulnerable children who require alternative provision. During the review, the numbers quoted fluctuated between 153 to 59 children who did not have a school place at all. Although this situation should be alleviated by September 2017 the place planning arrangements and policy and practice development arrangements for meeting the needs of vulnerable children differently are not sufficiently developed to address this and plan ahead for it.
- The council reduced the size of its place planning team following the advent of academies. The reality is that the council is facing significant activity in relation to place planning and realisation, which require significant amounts of officer time to develop, negotiate and deliver. The council would be well advised to recalculate the amount and type of officer time required on a project basis to deliver the places necessary

10.2 Standards

The Council is currently not performing as well as it should be in relation to education standards. The Council needs to have arrangements which not only address the failure, but also speed up the rates of improvement overall.

In terms of national quartile performance, this review was undertaken before validated results are available for 2017. The 2016 Local Authority Data Matrix (Appendix 2) provides the council with a simple picture of attainment and progress measures over the past three years, compared to statistical neighbours and against the national position.

Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

Overall, at this key stage, the education system is performing at the second or third quartile performance. There is one top quartile measure, which is the narrowing of the gap in progress between disadvantaged groups and their peers.

The majority of measures showed deterioration compared to statistical neighbours in 2016.

Writing and Maths attainment are bottom quartile nationally

Key Stage 2

The council and most people interviewed are well aware that key stage 2 performance is very weak. In 2016, Worcestershire is in the bottom quartile nationally for 16 of the 20 Key Stage 2 attainment measures. The remaining four are in third quartile. In Key Stage 2 progress measures, 3 out of 9 are bottom quartile, 4 third quartile and one, Key Stage 2 Level 4+ reading, at second quartile.

Of the bottom quartile ratings, the council was in the bottom 20 in the country in relation to the expected levels for reading, writing and maths; maths; and grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Performance deteriorated against statistical neighbours in every measure in 2016.

Key Stage 4

Many people interviewed believe that performance at Key Stage 4 is good, and addresses the long standing challenges at Key Stage 2. Although Key Stage 4 is clearly performing better than Key Stage 2, it is still not performing at a level which it should and could be.

Of 27 progress and attainment measures, only 4 are top quartile performance (A* - C in English and Maths; Expected progress from Key Stage 2 in Maths both attainment and progress; progress in English Baccalaureate). Whilst the majority of other measures are second quartile, there remain some third and bottom quartile outcomes. This places Worcestershire children at a disadvantage compared to their peers elsewhere.

There are some measures where there has been erratic or little progress over the past three years – children leaving with no passes has worsened; as has expected progress in English.

There are however some strengths to build on – for the headline measures such as five good passes including English and Maths, Worcestershire is within the top third of council areas; and improvement in this key stage has been better than statistical neighbours.

Key Stage 5 and attainment at Age 19

The outcomes for this key stage (A levels/other Level 3 qualifications) are worse than Key Stage 4, with all but two attainment measures being in the third quartile. Of the remaining 4, one is top quartile but is now discontinued as a national measure (Average points score) and the other 3 are bottom quartile (New measure, Average points score – Technical, and the gap between children eligible for free school meals and their peers obtaining level 2 and level 3 qualifications). These latter two place Worcestershire just above the bottom 20 authorities in the country.

Progress measures at Key Stage 5 are better, with 4 measures being in top quartile (level 2 at age 19 and the discontinued average point score measure and the gap between children eligible for free school meals and their peers for Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications). However, progress over time is bottom quartile and is worse than statistical neighbours.

Progress has been made in reducing the number of young people not in education, employment and training with particularly low levels of young people whose status is not known.

Skills

Through the LEP mechanism, there is a clear plan of activity in relation to skills, with a particularly strong focus on apprenticeships. The most recent quarterly monitoring data available reported that the general qualifications base in Worcestershire has seen good growth across the board. In particular 86.6% individuals possess a NVQ1+ (compared to the regional 80% and national 85.3%) and 39.3% of individuals possess a NVQ4+ (compared to the regional 31.5% and national 38.2%).

An area of challenge remains people without any qualifications. Information is not currently available to confirm whether a reduction to 8% from the historic average of 10% is a sustained and ongoing improvement.

Progress and attainment of vulnerable groups

Progress and attainment for vulnerable groups is weak and there is little effective analysis of this which has been made available for this review. There appear to be no frameworks which analyse performance and set out how the council is going to address the issues.

Of the data which is available, other than for Key Stage 2 Level 4+ reading which was top quartile, outcomes for children in care are in the third quartile but appeared to deteriorate in 2016. Provisional results for 2017 are reported as showing some improvement.

Children with special educational needs do particularly poorly at Key Stage 2, with all measures in the bottom quartile. At other key stages, the best performance is second quartile, but many are in the third quartile.

Middle Schools

Analysis which has been undertaken by the council's data team shows that the middle school system is the worst performing in the country, overall. There is a notably better performance of the schools in Bromyard compared to the other areas with middle schools which provides some areas of strength to build on within Worcestershire.

Ofsted outcomes

The profile of good and outstanding judgements for Worcestershire schools has deteriorated in 2016. This relates to a number of primary/first schools who have not had a good self-awareness of weaknesses, including in relation to their safeguarding responsibilities. This is being tackled.

As of November 30th 2017, Ofsted management information shows that;

- 90% of all providers were judged good or outstanding at their last inspection (89% nationally).
- 100% of Nursery providers (98% nationally)
- 89% of primary providers (91% nationally)
- 96% of secondary providers (80% nationally)
- 100% of special schools (94% nationally)

2017 results

The analysis of the 2017 results.

- EYFS outcomes have improved but remain behind national levels and in the third quartile with 69.7% of children achieving a good level of development.
- Key Stage 1 outcomes have improved with expected achievement for each of reading, writing, maths and science all 1% above national levels.
- Key Stage 2 outcomes have improved for all children achieving expected levels in reading, writing and maths by 9% to 57%, against a national rise of 8% to 61%.
- Where there has been a 'challenge area' approach taken on a geographic patch, outcomes in those areas have improved faster than the rest of Worcestershire.
- Key Stage 4 outcomes show a slight decline in average attainment 8 scores, however this is reflected nationally. Worcestershire remains 2% higher than national levels and in the second quartile.
- Key Stage 5 outcomes declined and are behind national levels for average point score per A level entry, placed in the bottom quartile.
- Data available from the last monitoring meeting between the Council and Babcock shows that some of the declining trends of the previous three years is being reversed

Strengths

- Worcestershire has a significant opportunity in relation to the access it has to data, and the expertise of some of the data team, which is currently used to advise national bodies.
- The capability through the 'One' system to combine information across the education and social care systems mean the council is in a better position than many to make a significant difference to outcomes for vulnerable children because it has potentially better unified data than other councils.
- The developing peer to peer support arrangements between schools and the use of techniques similar to London challenge give some better capacity to secure improvement

Areas to develop

- The education system needs to have an honest dialogue about performance in order to address some of the stagnation in some of the key stages. The education system needs to have an honest dialogue about performance in order to address some of the stagnation in some of the key stages.
- Subject to outcomes, the council needs to identify with schools and Babcock how to accelerate improvement.
- The Council needs to develop a more robust performance culture for education – there is limited use of the data and analytical skills available.

10.3 Access to education

Through the Annual Report to the Schools Adjudicator, the Council reports on how effectively children are accessing school places through the admissions arrangements.

The Council is not reporting any specific issues of concern in the most recent report. However, there is a question about the efficacy of admissions arrangements in the light of the number of children without a school place and waiting for alternative provision.

The Council is also reporting financial pressures with home to school transport for children with special educational needs and disabilities. This is an area of national challenge, with many councils reporting difficulties in managing the costs due to the growth in the number of children being assessed as requiring specialised places. However, the Council has not been using data effectively to forecast demand and to make appropriate arrangements. This lack of forecasting is likely to mean that the current arrangements are not as cost effective as they could be.

Whilst overall the Council appears to be performing adequately in this area, there is room for improvement if a more strategic approach is taken.

10.4 Championing children

The culmination of all the points above mean that the Council is not yet fulfilling its role in championing children as well as it could be.

During the course of the review, the Council was finalising its Children and Young People Plan. This creates an excellent opportunity and framework within the overall context of children's outcomes for a new education strategy to be developed.

11.0 Funding and resources

Councils receive the majority of funding for the provision of education via the Dedicated Schools Grant and, until this year, an Education Services Grant. All councils are expected to use their general revenue resources to augment these grants in order to perform their statutory education functions.

11.1 Overall funding

Worcestershire is a low funded authority. As a long standing member of F40 (the 40 lowest funded authorities in the country), Worcestershire has used its lobbying powers well. There is good evidence that through effective leadership and partnership working, Worcestershire has played a key role in assisting in developing and gaining national political support for changes to the national funding arrangements for education. Worcestershire has benefitted from the National Funding Formula changes, which are now being implemented by the DfE through LAs.

This will bring some welcome additional overall resource to early years settings and schools. However, early years settings are challenged with the introduction of 30 hours per week free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds; schools face funding pressures over the next three years of between 6-12%. The additional resource from the NFF will potentially leave some schools at a standstill position at best and some still under funded.

11.2 Benchmarking

Use of benchmarking data is limited in Worcestershire. The only information which has been provided so far on benchmarking is high level CIPFA benchmarking data.

From this data, Worcestershire is spending below the average in all areas of education funding. Most central education function spend should be within the Education other activity. From the data available, Worcestershire spending places it 11/16 against statistical neighbours and 20/27 against all counties.

The council is also a much lower spender on early years, than at the other key stages. However, early years quality and outcomes are currently better than primary outcomes which, conversely, are comparatively better resourced.

One of the risks for Worcestershire, which emerged to some extent in the interviews, is a view that improving education outcomes depends entirely on more resource. Whilst undoubtedly additional resources can assist in many situations, the council, its providers and its early years settings and schools need to continue to transform the way they do things as well as the way they are structured, in order to live within the resources they have available to them overall.

It has not been possible to do any analysis of spend at the detailed activity level due to the lack of available information. If Worcestershire is not already in benchmarking clubs then this would be a useful activity to engage in for the short and medium term.

From the information which has been shared however, it is recommended that the council consider with its providers, particularly Babcock:

- The level of subsidy which the council may be providing for services provided free or at below market rate for academy schools
- Whether the council is funding activity which should be funded wholly by schools. As an example, the school improvement advisor role is one which needs clearly delineating so that the council is resourcing its monitoring function to understand how well schools are performing and schools are funding the support function. The balance of who funds what is not currently clear.
- Costs of services – school services operate in a market place. Babcock are considered to be an expensive provider of services to schools. With the ongoing pressure in school budgets, it is possible that Babcock will price themselves out of the market. The council would benefit from a better understanding of the unit costs of activities.
- The sustainability of the Babcock funding model – this is related to the point above. As the contract is based on a reduction of council resource and an increase in trading resource, unless the services are remodelled to represent an effective and efficient use of resources for schools, they may become unsustainable. As the Council has currently delegated some statutory functions to Babcock, this presents a risk to the council.

11.3 Sustainability of the Dedicated Schools Grant

Some councils are beginning to express concerns about the sustainability of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

In Worcestershire, with the pressure on the High Needs Block and the current challenge providing sufficient alternative provision places, the Schools Forum needs to engage in some further modelling regarding the sustainability of the DSG if there is no change in the way needs are responded to.

From the interviews and the material provided, the Schools Forum has a good understanding of the resources available, is competently overseeing the operation of the funding formula, and has engaged in effective lobbying for resource.

The funding challenges facing the system however, do require a strategic and long term plan for reshaping the use of resources to meet need. Creating more alternative provision places is, on its own, unlikely to be affordable in the long term, or address need at the earliest stage.

Some useful work has commenced through the Children's Plan development, using national tools, to show how much revenue resource could be saved, through a different approach to EHC planning and supporting missing children. This thinking needs to fully engage schools and the schools forum, as well as providers.

11.4 Culture of financial management

One of the factors which may be making the financial management more complex and challenging than it needs to be, relates to the clarity about budget holding responsibility and accountability.

During the review, one of the common frustrations was how people with responsibility for decisions do not have the budget holding responsibilities which enable them to undertake those responsibilities effectively. Examples included commissioners not being clear of the budgets because those are held by finance officers; home to school transport and property decisions being taken separately from the budget holders.

Whilst it is for the Council to determine its financial management arrangements, it is difficult for effective decisions to be taken if the human and financial resources are managed by others. As part of a refreshed realignment of responsibility and accountability, it may be beneficial to align budget power with policy responsibility.

12.0 Other systems

The final element of this stage of the review was a comparison with other systems. Through benchmarking data, the council can compare its performance to its statistical neighbour group.

This shows that regardless of the organisation and structure of the education functions, Worcestershire is not performing as well as the majority of its statistical neighbours. In some measures, it is performing amongst the worst in the country; and in some others, is amongst the best in the country.

To look at how other councils were performing with different arrangements, 8 councils were identified as a mix of statistical neighbours; similar characteristics and/or different arrangements to deliver education functions:

Lincolnshire – outsourced to CfBT from 2002-2017. No longer outsourced and now provided through the Lincolnshire Learning Alliance

Surrey – Joint Venture Company with Babcock, low level deprivation

Devon – Joint Venture Company with Babcock and similar deprivation levels

Northumberland – rural and includes middle schools

Warwickshire – rural neighbour with some challenging areas

North East Lincolnshire – highly rural/high deprivation

Islington – outsourced model

East Sussex – urban/rural with similar levels of deprivation

The data matrices are attached at Appendix 3.

Only Surrey has significantly lower levels of deprivation than Worcestershire. The rest are all similar to, or have significantly higher levels of deprivation.

Comparing the overall education attainment and progress outcomes at headline level, only North East Lincolnshire is performing at a lower level than Worcestershire.

Worcestershire, Lincolnshire and Surrey all perform at a broadly similar level, with the remaining 5 performing better. Worcestershire may find it helpful to look at Northumberland and Warwickshire to learn how they are achieving their outcomes. With the urban nature of the city and towns in Worcestershire, there is also potential learning from places like Islington, which is ranked 22 in the country for deprivation. Whilst funding levels are different in London, there is still learning from approaches taken.

Each of these councils has a different history and set of arrangements. Appendix 4 sets out some of the arrangements for each council. These show that there is no one model which works best. As with any service, a combination of features needs to be in place to achieve success.

Lincolnshire has made very recent changes, ending a 15 year outsourcing arrangement and establishing the Lincolnshire Learning Alliance. These changes have been brought in, in part to address underperformance in their education system, and also to position arrangements for the new world of education.

Key Recommendations:

- 1.** Use the development of the Children and Young People's Plan as the focal point and drive within which to develop a clear, long term education strategy with clear ambitious outcomes for Worcestershire children through a co-produced partnership approach
- 2.** Establish a mechanism to work on a partnership/alliance basis with schools, early years and post 16 providers
- 3.** Through specific financial activity and membership of benchmarking clubs consider how to align financial resources with responsibilities and secure more detailed unit costings of specific functions
- 4.** Establish and communicate a more coherent understanding of the split of duties between the council and the different providers who have been commissioned and people's roles and responsibilities. This may involve a rebalancing of staff between the council and the provider organisations as well as working arrangements which ensure the organisations are working as an alliance to deliver good outcomes
- 5.** Re-establish a direct and regular relationship and communication between the council and its education providers
- 6.** Engage in some further development of senior member and officer development to ensure a good understanding of the council's full role in education
- 7.** Develop the capability and competency of staff and members in overseeing the performance of the education system.

Conclusion

There is a strong desire to make significant improvements to the way the education system is working within Worcestershire. By taking a more planned approach drawing in the skills and resources across the system, the council is in an excellent position to reassert the importance of education and skills to the future of Worcestershire and gain significant momentum in achieving better outcomes for children and young people.

| School Name | % of Pupils reaching Expected Standard at End of KS2 ¹ | | Latest Full OFSTED inspection ² | |
|--|---|------|--|----------------------|
| | 2017 | 2016 | Date | Overall Outcome |
| Abberley Parochial VC Primary School | 79% | 69% | 27/02/2014 | Good |
| Abbey Park Middle School | 45% | 40% | 20/03/2014 | Good |
| Alvechurch CofE Middle School | 67% | 62% | 14/09/2012 | Good |
| Astley CofE Primary School | 50% | 57% | 09/03/2012 | Good |
| Aston Fields Middle School | 78% | 65% | 26/06/2014 | Outstanding |
| Bayton CofE Primary School | 71% | 58% | 06/12/2012 | Outstanding |
| Beaconside Primary and Nursery School | 92% | 67% | 09/06/2011 | Good |
| Belbroughton CofE Primary School | 69% | 68% | 20/11/2015 | Good |
| Bewdley Primary School | 60% | 43% | 20/05/2015 | Good |
| Birchen Coppice Primary School | 19% | 9% | N/A | |
| Birchensale Middle School | 57% | 37% | 13/12/2013 | Good |
| Blackminster Middle School | 46% | 38% | 08/11/2013 | Good |
| Blakedown CofE Primary School | 64% | 71% | 09/06/2016 | Requires Improvement |
| Bredon Hill Academy | 53% | 43% | 04/03/2015 | Outstanding |
| Broadheath CofE Primary School | 53% | 75% | 24/05/2017 | Good |
| Broadwas CofE Aided Primary School | 73% | 64% | 07/07/2016 | Good |
| Burlish Park Primary School | 56% | 54% | 13/07/2017 | Inadequate |
| Callow End CofE Primary School | 93% | 55% | 08/02/2012 | Good |
| Castlemorton CofE Primary School | 45% | 44% | 11/01/2017 | Requires Improvement |
| Catshill Middle School | 61% | 52% | 30/11/2016 | Good |
| Chaddesley Corbett Endowed Primary School | 71% | 68% | 28/06/2017 | Requires Improvement |
| Cherry Orchard Primary School | 58% | 53% | 28/06/2012 | Good |
| Church Hill Middle School | 31% | 24% | 01/02/2013 | Good |
| Claines CofE Primary School | 79% | 50% | 05/03/2014 | Good |
| Clent Parochial Primary School | 80% | 76% | 24/04/2013 | Good |
| Clifton upon Teme Primary School | 50% | 50% | 14/12/2012 | Good |
| Comberton Primary School | 76% | 66% | 16/05/2012 | Good |
| Cookley Sebright Primary School | 45% | 50% | 16/03/2012 | Good |
| Coppice Primary School | 78% | 75% | 21/09/2012 | Good |
| Cranham Primary School | 65% | 34% | 25/10/2012 | Good |
| The De Montfort School | 49% | 19% | 11/05/2017 | Requires Improvement |
| Dines Green Primary School | 22% | 26% | 08/02/2017 | Inadequate |
| Drakes' Broughton St Barnabas CofE First and Middle School | 52% | 36% | 11/01/2017 | Requires Improvement |
| Eldersfield Lawn CofE Primary School | 80% | 71% | 31/05/2012 | Outstanding |
| The Fairfield Community Primary School | 31% | 24% | N/A | |

| School Name | % of Pupils reaching Expected Standard at End of KS2 ¹ | | Latest Full OFSTED inspection ² | |
|---|---|------|--|----------------------|
| | 2017 | 2016 | Date | Overall Outcome |
| Far Forest Lea Memorial CofE Primary School | 60% | 45% | 09/02/2017 | Requires Improvement |
| Foley Park Primary School and Nursery | 50% | 32% | 03/12/2015 | Good |
| Franche Primary School | 64% | 59% | 23/04/2015 | Good |
| Great Malvern Primary School | 45% | 58% | 13/02/2014 | Good |
| Great Witley CofE Primary School | 60% | 57% | 13/06/2013 | Good |
| Grimley and Holt CofE Primary School | 73% | 73% | 16/01/2014 | Outstanding |
| Grove Primary School | 35% | 44% | 09/11/2016 | Good |
| Hagley Primary School | 67% | 67% | 12/12/2014 | Good |
| Hallow CofE Primary School | 81% | 77% | 06/02/2013 | Good |
| Hanley Swan St Gabriel's with St Mary's CofE Primary School | 73% | 57% | 23/01/2014 | Good |
| Hartlebury CofE Primary School | 67% | 50% | 20/09/2013 | Good |
| Héronswood Primary School | 48% | 47% | 20/09/2017 | Good |
| Hollymount School | 67% | 66% | 13/09/2012 | Good |
| Holy Redeemer Catholic Primary School | 92% | 100% | 30/06/2009 | Outstanding |
| Holy Trinity School | 48% | 65% | 07/06/2017 | Good |
| Holywell Primary and Nursery School | 61% | 42% | 21/03/2014 | Good |
| Honeybourne First School | 81% | | 30/05/2012 | Good |
| Ipsley CE RSA Academy | 60% | 37% | 18/09/2014 | Good |
| Kempsey Primary School | 71% | 59% | 22/10/2014 | Good |
| Leigh and Bransford Primary School | 93% | 71% | 21/02/2008 | Outstanding |
| Lickey Hills Primary School and Nursery | 74% | 71% | 20/11/2014 | Good |
| Lickhill Primary School | 85% | 27% | 08/02/2013 | Outstanding |
| Lindridge St Lawrence CE Primary School | 85% | 50% | 12/09/2014 | Good |
| Lyppard Grange Primary School | 67% | 53% | 27/03/2014 | Good |
| Madresfield CofE Primary School | 47% | 53% | 31/01/2013 | Good |
| Malvern Parish CofE Primary School | 62% | 39% | 28/11/2012 | Good |
| Malvern Wells CofE Primary School | 79% | 76% | 06/02/2014 | Good |
| Malvern Wyche CofE Primary School | 86% | 60% | 13/05/2009 | Outstanding |
| Martley CofE Primary School | 61% | 58% | 11/05/2017 | Good |
| Northleigh CofE Primary School | 44% | 29% | 31/01/2013 | Good |
| Northwick Manor Primary School | 72% | 53% | 12/09/2014 | Good |
| Nunnery Wood Primary School | 69% | 56% | 11/05/2012 | Good |
| Oasis Academy Warndon | 61% | 45% | 20/05/2015 | Good |
| Offmore Primary School | 57% | 44% | 29/01/2016 | Requires Improvement |
| Oldbury Park Primary School | 66% | 60% | 06/07/2017 | Good |
| Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary | 82% | 57% | 23/01/2014 | Good |
| Parkside Middle School | 65% | 64% | 28/02/2014 | Good |

| School Name | % of Pupils reaching Expected Standard at End of KS2 ¹ | | Latest Full OFSTED inspection ² | |
|---|---|------|--|----------------------|
| | 2017 | 2016 | Date | Overall Outcome |
| Pendock CofE Primary School | 56% | 50% | 09/10/2014 | Good |
| Perdiswell Primary School | 50% | 52% | 13/06/2014 | Good |
| Perry Wood Primary and Nursery School | 56% | 43% | 07/07/2016 | Requires Improvement |
| Pitmaston Primary School | 64% | 67% | 08/06/2017 | Outstanding |
| Powick CofE Primary School | 74% | 55% | 12/07/2012 | Outstanding |
| Red Hill CofE Primary School | 60% | 73% | 30/01/2013 | Good |
| Ridgeway Academy | 61% | 44% | 16/05/2013 | Good |
| Romsley St Kenelm's CofE Primary School | 60% | 60% | 11/11/2015 | Requires Improvement |
| Rushwick CofE Primary School | 59% | 63% | 16/01/2014 | Good |
| St Ambrose Catholic Primary | 55% | 65% | 25/05/2012 | Good |
| St Anne's CofE VC Primary School | 50% | 49% | 09/03/2016 | Good |
| St Barnabas CofE Primary School | 63% | 36% | 19/09/2012 | Good |
| St Bartholomew's CofE VC Primary School | 70% | 78% | 08/11/2013 | Good |
| St Bede's Catholic Middle School | 55% | 39% | 15/06/2017 | Good |
| St Catherine's CofE (VC) Primary School | 42% | 49% | 18/11/2011 | Good |
| St Clement's CofE Primary | 70% | 55% | 09/11/2012 | Outstanding |
| St Egwin's CofE Middle School | 48% | 45% | 06/06/2013 | Outstanding |
| St George's Catholic Primary School | 80% | 73% | 30/01/2014 | Good |
| St George's CofE Primary School | 62% | 44% | 11/12/2014 | Good |
| St George's CofE Primary School and Nursery | 57% | 53% | 26/01/2017 | Inadequate |
| St James' CofE Primary School | 47% | 35% | 21/10/2011 | Outstanding |
| St John's Church of England Middle School Academy | 70% | 50% | 15/03/2012 | Outstanding |
| St John's CofE Primary School | 37% | 18% | 10/02/2017 | Inadequate |
| St Joseph's Catholic Primary, Droitwich | 77% | 62% | 10/06/2015 | Good |
| St Joseph's Catholic Primary, Malvern | 25% | 17% | 07/07/2016 | Requires Improvement |
| St Joseph's Catholic Primary, Worcester | 53% | 60% | 23/01/2013 | Good |
| St Mary's Catholic Primary, Broadway | 82% | 64% | 12/12/2012 | Outstanding |
| St Mary's Catholic Primary, Evesham | 63% | 67% | 13/02/2014 | Good |
| St Mary's CofE (VA) Primary School | 37% | 19% | 07/06/2017 | Good |
| St Matthias Church of England Primary School | 33% | 29% | 07/02/2014 | Good |
| St Nicholas' CofE Middle School | 60% | 40% | 08/06/2016 | Good |
| St Oswald's CofE Primary School | 38% | 16% | 11/06/2014 | Good |
| St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School | 76% | 72% | 06/12/2013 | Good |
| Somers Park Primary School | 72% | 85% | 11/12/2007 | Outstanding |
| Stanley Road Primary School | 44% | 52% | 24/01/2014 | Good |
| Stourport Primary School | 65% | 36% | 26/09/2013 | Good |
| Suckley Primary School | 63% | 42% | 31/01/2014 | Outstanding |

| School Name | % of Pupils reaching Expected Standard at End of KS2 ¹ | | Latest Full OFSTED inspection ² | |
|--|---|------|--|----------------------|
| | 2017 | 2016 | Date | Overall Outcome |
| Sutton Park Community Primary School | 63% | 19% | 24/03/2017 | Requires Improvement |
| Sytchampton Endowed Primary School | 89% | | 13/01/2009 | Outstanding |
| Tenbury CofE Primary School | 55% | 57% | 30/01/2013 | Good |
| Upper Arley CofE VC Primary School | 91% | 47% | 05/10/2016 | Requires Improvement |
| Upton-upon-Severn CofE Primary School | 59% | 50% | 30/01/2015 | Good |
| Walkwood Church of England Middle School | 46% | 42% | 12/11/2014 | Good |
| Welland Primary School | 65% | 71% | 05/03/2014 | Good |
| Westacre Middle School | 50% | 52% | 28/02/2013 | Good |
| Whittington CofE Primary School | 60% | 43% | 15/11/2017 | Requires Improvement |
| Wilden All Saints CofE Primary School | 83% | 90% | 24/01/2014 | Outstanding |
| Witton Middle School | 46% | 33% | 15/06/2016 | Good |
| Wolverley Sebright VA Primary School | 83% | 85% | 20/09/2013 | Good |
| Woodfield Academy | 35% | 46% | 27/06/2013 | Good |
| Wythall, Meadow Green Primary | 55% | 50% | 13/07/2017 | Good |

¹ Obtained from DfE School Performance Tables and available from www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/download-data

² Obtained from School inspections and outcomes: management information and available from www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/monthly-management-information-ofsted-school-inspections-outcomes

Does not include schools which have closed (e.g. Birchen Coppice and Fairfield) or inspections carried out since 31st December 2017

| School Name | Progress 8 2017 ¹ | | Latest Full OFSTED Inspection ² | |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Score | Description | Date | Overall Outcome |
| Arrow Vale RSA Academy | -0.29 | Below Average | 01/05/2014 | Outstanding |
| Baxter College | -0.41 | Below Average | N/A | |
| Bishop Perowne CofE College | 0.09 | Average | 08/02/2017 | Inadequate |
| Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College | -0.03 | Average | 08/02/2013 | Good |
| Christopher Whitehead Language College | 0.14 | Average | 10/05/2013 | Good |
| Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre | -0.1 | Average | 22/11/2012 | Good |
| Dyson Perrins CofE Academy | 0.05 | Average | 29/01/2015 | Good |
| Hagley Catholic High School | -0.15 | Average | 13/10/2011 | Outstanding |
| Hanley Castle High School | 0.23 | Above Average | 03/05/2013 | Good |
| Haybridge High School and Sixth Form | 0.31 | Above Average | 10/12/2008 | Outstanding |
| Holy Trinity School | -0.57 | Well Below Average | 07/06/2017 | Good |
| King Charles I School | 0.26 | Above Average | 13/10/2011 | Good |
| North Bromsgrove High School | -0.62 | Well Below Average | 03/12/2014 | Good |
| Nunnery Wood High School | 0.25 | Above Average | 10/12/2015 | Good |
| Pershore High School | 0.15 | Average | 17/07/2013 | Good |
| Prince Henry's High School | 0.48 | Above Average | 01/05/2013 | Outstanding |
| South Bromsgrove High | -0.04 | Average | 24/10/2012 | Outstanding |
| St Augustine's Catholic High School | 0.98 | Well Above Average | 16/05/2017 | Outstanding |
| Tenbury High Ormiston Academy | 0.15 | Average | 12/07/2017 | Good |
| The Bewdley School and Sixth Form Centre | -0.39 | Below Average | 26/01/2012 | Good |
| The Chantry School | 0.05 | Average | 09/07/2009 | Outstanding |
| The Chase | -0.18 | Below Average | 13/07/2016 | Good |
| The De Montfort School | -0.51 | Well Below Average | 11/05/2017 | Requires Improvement |
| The Stourport High School and Sixth Form | -0.27 | Below Average | 27/09/2012 | Outstanding |
| Trinity High School and Sixth Form Centre | -0.02 | Average | 25/03/2015 | Good |
| Tudor Grange Academy Redditch | -0.2 | Average | 10/10/2013 | Good |
| Tudor Grange Academy Worcester | -0.15 | Average | 20/11/2013 | Good |
| Waseley Hills High School | -0.48 | Below Average | 22/01/2015 | Good |
| Wolverley CofE Secondary School | -0.07 | Average | 23/06/2016 | Good |
| Woodrush Community High School | -0.05 | Average | 14/11/2013 | Outstanding |

¹ Obtained from DfE School Performance Tables and available from www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/download-data. Two schools with the same score may have different descriptions due to the widths of their confidence intervals.

² Obtained from School inspections and outcomes: management information and available from www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/monthly-management-information-ofsted-school-inspections-outcomes. Does not include closed schools or inspections carried out since 31st December 2017

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

XX February 2018

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES 2017 INCLUDING OFSTED UPDATE

Summary

1. This report provides a summary of the educational outcomes for children and young people educated in Worcestershire schools for 2017. It gives an overview of county wide performance, rather than that of individual schools. Individual school results can be found at www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=phase®ion=885&geographic=la&phase=primary&for=primary&datasetFilter=final.
2. Outcomes are now fully validated, and are for learners in all state funded schools in Worcestershire, i.e. maintained schools, academies, colleges and free schools.
3. The report also provides an overview of Ofsted inspections of Worcestershire schools.

Educational outcomes

4. National examination results at all Key Stages have been validated, and so it is possible to confirm outcomes together with comparisons with benchmark figures, for example national averages.
5. Appendix 1 shows a summary and provides a commentary on results at each Key Stage.
6. Performance in the Early Years has risen for the fourth year running and is now closing the gap with that nationally. The percentage of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) has increased by 1% in the last year to 70%. Performance at Early Years Foundation Stage, whilst increasing, is still below national at 71%.
7. Key Stage 1 results showed an 8% improvement and at 65% are above the national figure of 64% for the first time.
8. At Key Stage 2, there has been a 9% improvement and the gap between Worcestershire outcomes and national data has closed by 1% but there is still a significant amount of work to do. Worcestershire outcomes are 57% compared with national at 61%. Targeted work through the Aiming for Outstanding Strategy (Appendix 2) is designed to secure continued improvement.
9. In 2017, whilst overall Key Stage 2 performance increased by nine percentage points, (from 48-57%), that of middle schools increased by eleven percentage points, albeit from a lower starting point, (from 44-55%). Primary school performance increased from 53-60%, meaning that two-tier performance is closer to national but improving less quickly in 2017.
10. At Key Stage 4, 65% of pupils achieved a standard pass in both English and mathematics GCSE, compared to 58.5% nationally. 43.7% secured strong passes in these subjects at GCSE, compared to 39.1% nationally.

The percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate with standard passes (grades 9-4) in both English and maths and A*-C grades in the remaining element was 23.5%, compared to 21.7% nationally, whilst the proportion securing strong passes was 21.1%, compared to 19.5% nationally. Attainment 8 was 46.3, compared to 44.2 nationally and 45.8 for statistical neighbours. Our Progress 8 score, at -0.02

11. Key Stage 5 the percentage of students achieving grade AAB (A Level / Applied / Double Award) was 15.5, compared to 21.8 nationally, the average point scores per entry at A Level was 28.9, compared to 32.1 nationally and the percentage achieving grades AAB+ at A Level in at least two facilitating subjects was 10.4, compared to 16.6 nationally. The average point score per entry at A Level was 28.9, compared to 32.1 nationally.

12. The performance of children entitled to free school meals is a concern in the Early Years. 49% reached a good level of development in 2017, compared to 56% nationally. This proportion is below that of the averages for both the West Midlands (56%) and statistical neighbours (54.8). This performance is Quartile D. In Key Stage 1, 43.6% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined in 2017. Whilst this remains below the national figure of 48.7%, there was an eight percentage point gain on the 2016 figure. In Key Stage 2, 38.2% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, compared to 46.7% nationally. There was a 9.2 percentage point increase on 2016. In Key Stage 4, the Average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils, in 2016, was 37.4, compared to 39.1 nationally, whilst the average Progress 8 score for disadvantaged pupils was -0.51, compared to -0.46 for this group nationally. We await validated data for 2017.

13. Looked after children. There has been an increase in the percentage of LAC achieving expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths from 15% in 2016 to 20% in 2017, with peers at 57%. In Reading, 36% achieved expected standard (25% in 2016), in Writing, 46% achieved the expected standard (40% in 2016) and in Maths, 49% achieved the expected standard (28% in 2016). At Key Stage 4, 29% of LAC achieved Grade C+/4+ in English and Maths compared to 10% in 2016.

Ofsted update

14. In September 2015 a new Ofsted framework was introduced for the inspection of schools. The school inspection handbook was updated in October 2017. Since then, the approach to Short Inspections, for schools previously judged 'good' has been adapted.

15. 90% of Worcestershire schools are judged Good or Outstanding, which is above the national average of 89% (Oct 2017). In July 2017, nationally compiled data showed that 89% of Primary pupils and 95% of Secondary pupils in Worcestershire attend a Good or Outstanding school. 100% of state funded special schools in Worcestershire are Good or Outstanding.

16. In 2017, the performance of active early years registered providers in terms of their most recent inspection, remained strong. As of October 2017, 96% of providers were either good or outstanding, compared to 93% nationally, and 94% in the West Midlands. At 27%, the proportion of outstanding providers was much greater than seen nationally and regionally, (both at 17%).

17. Since 2010 the proportion of schools providing a good or better education as judged by Ofsted has increased by twenty five percentage points compared to twenty one points nationally. In particular, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of schools being rated as outstanding from 9% in 2010 to 20% in 2017. This now brings Worcestershire broadly in line with the national picture (at 21%) for the first time regarding the proportion of outstanding schools.

Key priorities

18. The majority of education services are delivered by Babcock Prime, the contract is in its third year. While these services are being provided by a commissioned provider, the local authority retains accountable for educational outcomes.

19. The contract with Babcock is being monitored against a set of key performance indicators, many of which are directly linked to educational outcomes for children and young people.

20. Key priorities for services directly related to educational outcomes are:

- to raise standards of attainment and improve rates of progress, with a focus on Key Stage 2;
- to close the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils at all Key Stages;
- to further increase the proportion of schools that are providing a good or better education for their pupils;
- to further strengthen partnership arrangements to increase school to school support, and
- to continually review services with Babcock Prime.

Purpose of the Meeting

21. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- consider the information in the update
- determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny, and
- agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children, Families and Communities

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 - Worcestershire educational outcomes 2017 – summary report
- Appendix 2 - Aiming for Outstanding Strategy

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

Worcestershire County Council - [01905 763763](tel:01905763763)

Worcestershire Hub - [01905 765765](tel:01905765765)

Email: worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk

Specific Contact Points for this report

Nick Wilson Interim Assistant Director – Education and Skills: [01905 844914](tel:01905844914)

Email: Nwilson2@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

Department for Education Performance Tables

www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=phase®ion=885&geographic=la&phase=primary&for=primary&datasetFilter=final

Minutes and Agendas for all County Council meetings are available [here](#).

Worcestershire Educational Outcomes 2017

Summary

Attainment

The overall attainment of Worcestershire children and young people has improved at all key stages Early Years -KS4 when comparing results for 2017 with those from 2016, where data is available.

Early Years

Performance in the Early Years has risen for the fourth year running and is now closing the gap with that nationally. The percentage of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) has increased by 1% in the last year to 70%. Performance at Early Years Foundation Stage, whilst increasing, is still below national at 71%. This performance is Quartile C in relation to all local authorities. The 2017 score is higher than the West Midlands average of 68.6, but lower than that of statistical neighbours at 73.4. The current local authority ranking is 98th.

Key Stage 1

Key Stage 1 results showed an 8% improvement and at 65% are above the national figure of 64% for the first time. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard and working at greater depth in each of reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average. This performance is generally Quartile B in relation to that of all local authorities.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, there has been a nine percentage point improvement and the gap between Worcestershire outcomes and national data has closed by one percentage point but there is still a significant amount of work to do. Worcestershire outcomes are 57% compared with national at 61%. This performance is Quartile D. 8% reached the higher standard. Pupils are achieving at a higher standard if they achieve a scaled score of 110 or more in their reading and mathematics tests, and their teacher assesses them as 'working at a greater depth within the expected standard' in writing. In Worcestershire, 9% reached the higher standard in each subject area compared to 10% nationally. This performance is Quartile C. Progress rates in reading, writing and mathematics, at -0.4, -0.6 and -1.2 respectively, are below the national median.

Key Stage 4

Standards in Worcestershire's secondary schools are, overall, above national averages again in 2017. The proportions of pupils securing standard passes (grade 4, equivalent to an old GCSE grade C and above) and achieving strong passes (grade 5 and above) were both higher than the national. Attainment 8 focuses on the results of a pupil's best eight GCSE results including English and maths. Again, at school level, the Attainment 8 score is above that seen nationally. The proportion of schools below the government's floor standard is below average. Pupils are being well prepared for later life. The majority of Progress 8 scores for mainstream secondary schools and academies are either in line with or above the national. As these school performance measures are still new, calculations of Progress 8 have been worked out this year using a combination of the new 9-1 and old A*-G grading systems. This has meant a wider range of Progress 8 scores this year. Overall, performance at Key Stage 4 is Quartile B.

Key Stage 5

Standards at Post-16 are generally below those seen nationally. The percentage of students achieving grade AAB (A Level / Applied / Double Award) was 15.5, compared to 21.8 nationally. The percentage achieving grades AAB+ at A Level in at least two facilitating subjects was 10.4, compared to 16.6 nationally.

At A Level, the proportion securing three+ A grades (A Level / Double Award) was 9.3%, compared to 13% nationally. This performance was Quartile C. However, the average point scores per entry at A Level was 28.9 in 2017, compared to 32.1 nationally. This performance was Quartile D.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEND)

Outcomes have improved at both Key Stage 1 and 2 for pupils with special educational needs and / or disabilities. Attainment for SEN Support pupils by age seven in reading, writing and mathematics combined is now higher than is the case for this group nationally. By age eleven, attainment for this group has improved significantly on 2016 but still remains below national.

However, for pupils with a statement / EHCP, the figure is above national for the same group. 2016 Attainment 8 and Progress 8 for SEND pupils in Worcestershire compare favourably with national figures. 2017 local figures* provisionally demonstrate improvements in progress for SEND pupils with an EHCP however the national data is not yet available in order to make a wider comparison.

Performance of Looked After Children

At each key stage, outcomes for looked after children have risen markedly since 2016. Whilst there is much more to do to narrow attainment gaps with their peers, proportions reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics increased in Key Stage 1 and 2. In Key stage 1, 44% of looked after children achieved expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths compared to 16.7% in 2016. 20% of looked after children in Key Stage 2 achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths in 2017, with peers at 57%, compared to 15% in 2016. In Key Stage 4, 29% of looked after children achieved Grade C+/4+ in English and Maths compared to 10% in 2016.

Performance of Disadvantaged Pupils

The performance of children entitled to free school meals is a concern in the Early Years. 49% reached a good level of development in 2017, compared to 56% nationally. This proportion is below that of the averages for both the West Midlands (56%) and statistical neighbours (54.8).

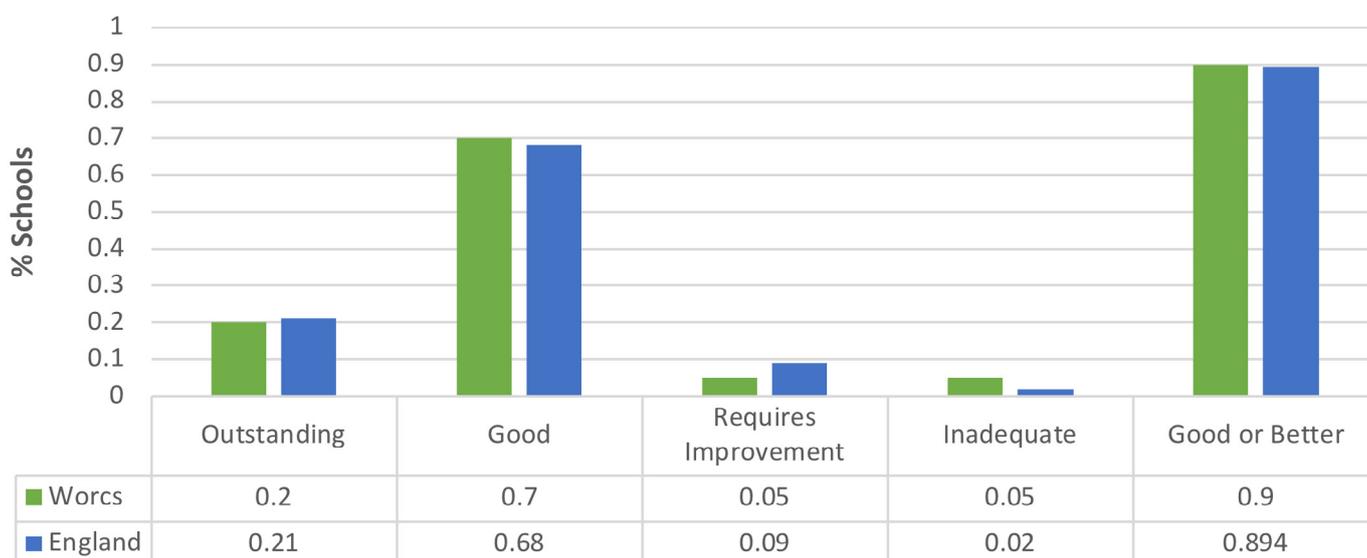
This performance is Quartile D. In Key Stage 1, 43.6% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined in 2017. Whilst this remains below the national figure of 48.7%, there was an eight percentage point gain on the 2016 figure. In Key Stage 2, 38.2% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, compared to 46.7% nationally.

There was a 9.2 percentage point increase on 2016. In Key Stage 4, the Average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils, in 2016, was 37.4, compared to 39.1 nationally, whilst the average Progress 8 score for disadvantaged pupils was -0.51, compared to -0.46 for this group nationally. We await validated data for 2017.

Quality of Provision and Standards – Schools

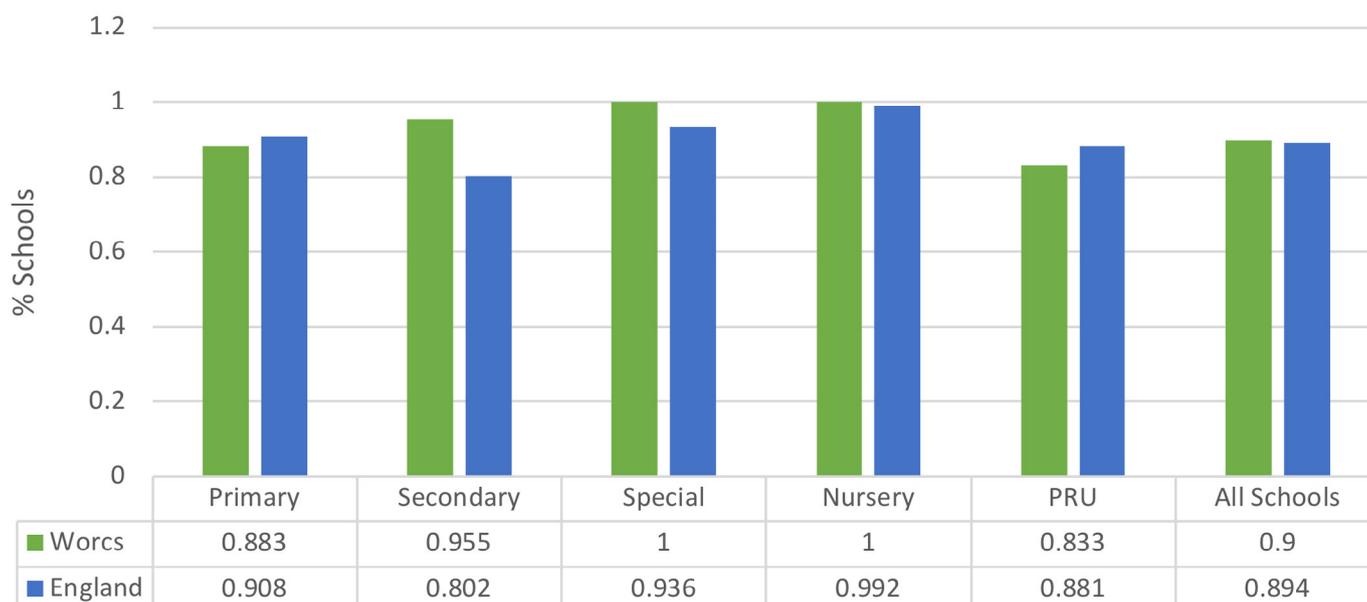
90% of Worcestershire schools are judged Good or Outstanding, which is above the national average of 89% (Oct 2017)

School Inspection Outcomes Inspection Outcomes - October 2017

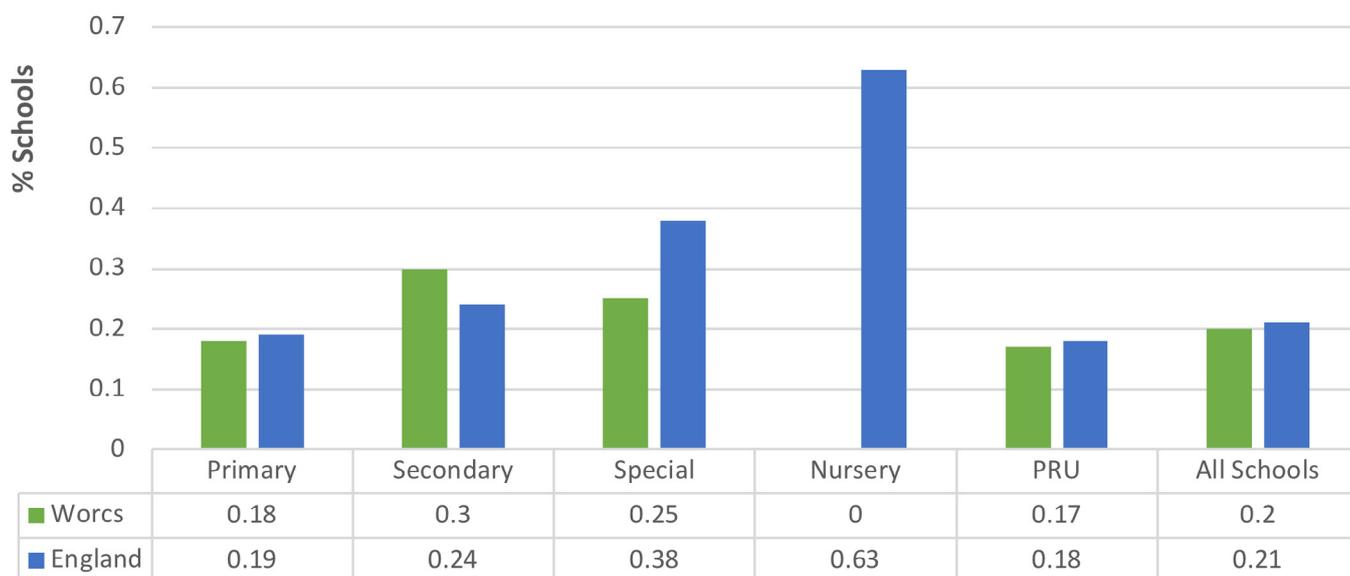


In July 2017, nationally compiled data showed that 89% of Primary pupils and 95% of Secondary pupils in Worcestershire attend a Good or Outstanding school. 100% of state funded special schools in Worcestershire are Good or Outstanding.

Schools and Settings % Ofsted Good or Outstanding Judgements - October 2017



Schools and Settings % Ofsted Outstanding Judgements - Oct 2017



Key Stage 1 and 2

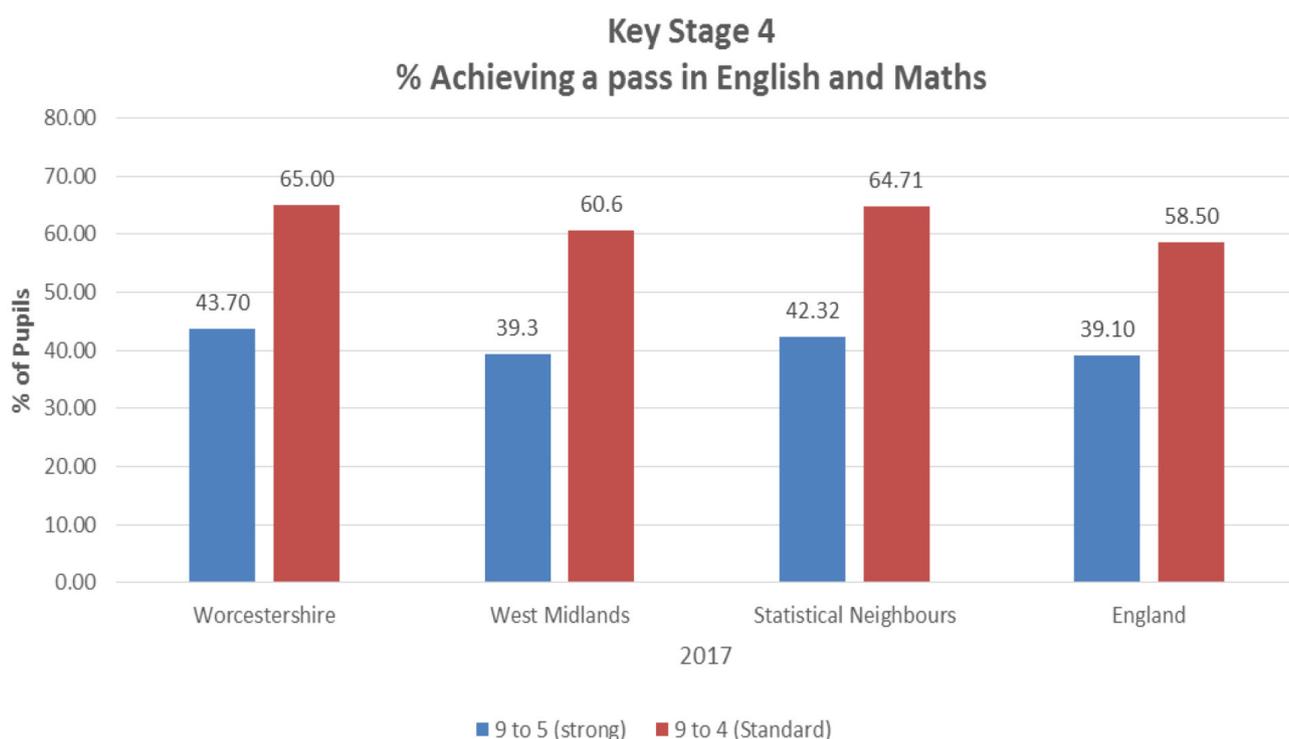
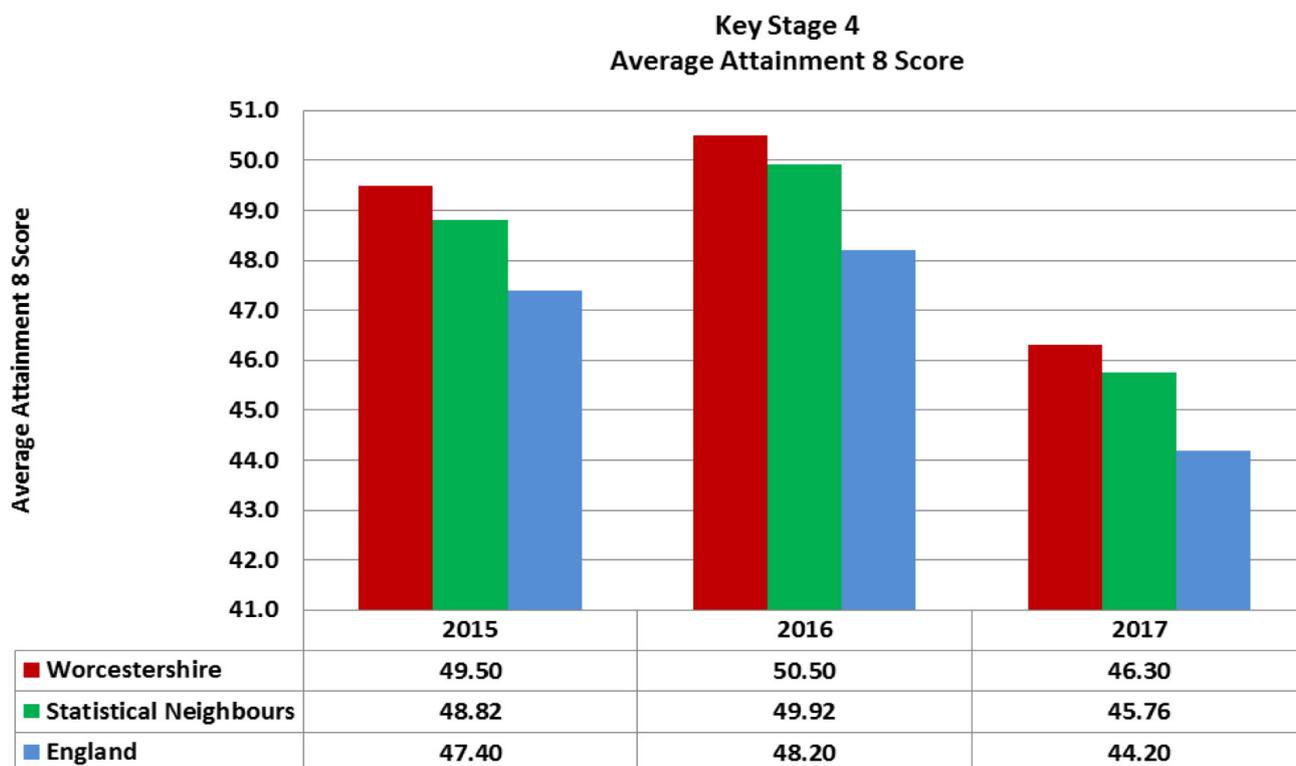
- Key Stage 1 results showed an 8% improvement and at 65% are above the national figure of 64% for the first time.
- At Key Stage 2, there has been a 9% improvement and the gap between Worcestershire and national has closed by 1% but there is still a significant amount of work to do. Worcestershire outcomes are 57% compared with national at 61%, and the LA ranking has moved from 126th to 114th out of 150 LAs.

KS2 % pupils reaching expected levels in RWM



Key Stage 4

- At Key Stage 4, 65% of pupils achieved a standard pass in both English and mathematics GCSE, compared to 58.5% nationally. 43.7% secured strong passes in these subjects at GCSE, compared to 39.1% nationally. The percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate with standard passes (grades 9-4) in both English and maths and A*-C grades in the remaining element was 23.5%, compared to 21.7% nationally, whilst the proportion securing strong passes was 21.1%, compared to 19.5% nationally.
- Attainment 8 was 46.3, compared to 44.2 nationally and 45.8 for statistical neighbours. Our Progress 8 score, at -0.02, was stronger than that of statistical neighbours.



Key Stage 5

- The percentage of students achieving grade AAB (A Level / Applied / Double Award) was 15.5, compared to 21.8 nationally.
- The average point scores per entry at A Level was 28.9 in 2017, compared to 32.1 nationally.
- The percentage achieving grades AAB+ at A Level in at least two facilitating subjects was 10.4, compared to 16.6 nationally.
- The average point score per entry at A Level was 28.9, compared to 32.1 nationally
- The average point score per entry at Tech level was 28.7, compared to 32.2 nationally.
- The average point score per entry at Tech level, General Studies was 36.6, compared to 35.6 nationally
- The average point score per entry at Tech Level, in terms of best three A Levels was 32.3, compared to 34.8 nationally.

Outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- 2017 data for SEND pupils achieving GLD has been broadly maintained - 2017 national figures have not yet been released for comparison.
- 2017 KS1 data for pupils at SEND Support demonstrates a significant increase in Reading, Writing and Maths - attainment for this group is now higher than national figures across all areas. Attainment for SEND pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) demonstrates a slight decrease in Reading and Maths and remains significantly below national figures.
- 2017 KS2 data demonstrates a significant increase for SEND pupils with an EHCP achieving Reading/Writing/Maths combined and this is now 2% above the national figure. The data for pupils at SEND Support demonstrates a significant increase from 2016 but remains 4% below national figures.
- 2016 Attainment 8 and Progress 8 for SEND pupils in Worcestershire compare favourably with national figures. 2017 local figures* provisionally demonstrate improvements in progress for SEND pupils with an EHCP however the national data is not yet available in order to make a wider comparison.

*It must be noted that the end of KS4 points tariff has changed making 2017 scores incomparable with 2016

- Outcomes for Worcestershire pupils with a sensory impairment are excellent, and remain amongst the best in the country.

Performance of Looked After Children

Early Years

- LAC achieving a good level of development has increased slightly from 35.3% in 2016 to 36.4% in 2017 (n.b. Data only available for LAC in in county settings)

Key Stage 1

- 44% of LAC achieved expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths compared to 16.7% in 2016. There remains a gap between LAC and their peers at 64.6%
- In Reading, there has been a significant increase of 38%, from 30% in 2016 to 68% in 2017, with peers at 76.7%
- In Writing, 44% achieved the expected standard in 2017 compared to 20% in 2016, with peers at 61%
- In Maths, 60% achieved the expected standard compared to 27% in 2016, with peers at 76%

Key Stage 2

- There has been an increase in the percentage of LAC achieving expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths from 15% in 2016 to 20% in 2017, with peers at 57%
- In Reading, 36% achieved expected standard (25% in 2016), in Writing, 46% achieved the expected standard (40% in 2016) and in Maths, 49% achieved the expected standard (28% in 2016)

Key Stage 4

- 29% of LAC achieved Grade C+/4+ in English and Maths compared to 10% in 2016

You can contact us in the following ways:

By telephone:

01905 846328

By post:

Worcestershire County Council, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP

By email:

NWilson2@worcestershire.gov.uk

Online:

www.worcestershire.gov.uk