

# **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 17 JULY 2019**

## **PUPIL ATTAINMENT AT KEY STAGE 2: UPDATE REPORT**

### **Summary**

1. Key Stage 2 (KS2) results in 2018 increased for a third year running. The percentage of pupils reaching at least the expected standard in reading, writing, grammar punctuation and spelling (GPS) and mathematics has increased thirteen percentage points between 2016 and 2018 from 48% to 61%. This compares with a national trajectory of an eleven points increase from a higher base of 53% to 64%. Nevertheless, the increase of four points between 2017 and 2018 still leaves overall outcomes below national. Progress scores between KS1-2 for reading, writing and mathematics remain a concern and are Quartile D in comparison with all local authorities nationally.

### **Background:**

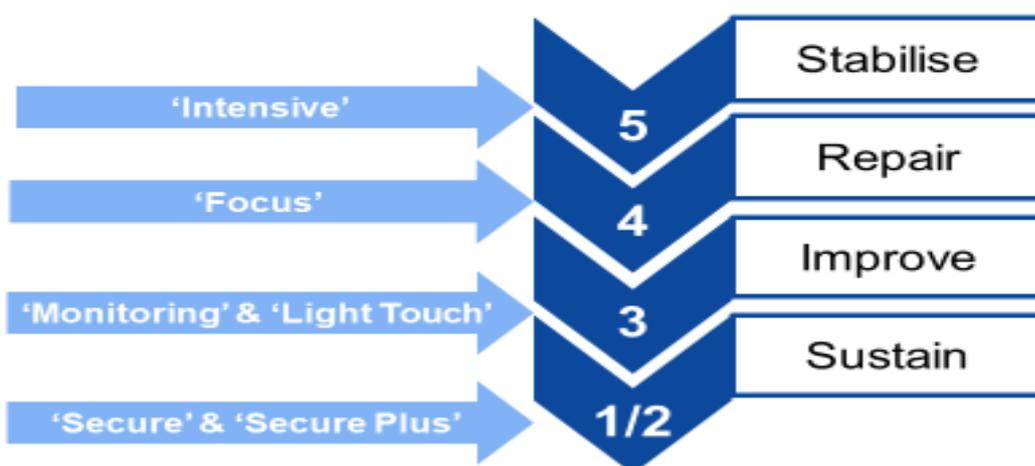
#### **Raising KS2 standards in schools causing concern**

2. Babcock Prime works with an increasingly large group of maintained schools which are initially risk assess as of concern; most of these will have some KS2 provision and so the wider school improvement work described below is relevant when it comes to our theme here of raising KS2 standards. This is the core work of Babcock Prime, given the extent of identified need, with provision of advisory support visits to those identified as low risk schools.

3. These services are for local authority-maintained schools only; it is important to note that local authority do not have statutory powers of intervention in terms of school improvement for **41.3%** of schools in Worcestershire that are academy (or free) schools; that is 100 /242 schools (as of August 2018). This point was recognised by headteachers who met with the local authority in autumn 2018. However, almost all of the 100+ academy schools in Worcestershire are entitled to and do seek our services on a traded basis from Babcock; many book support for multiple activities including NQT, governance and leadership support; in particular, advisory work / training on assessment / moderation at KS2 (and Early Years/Key Stage 1) with many academies. They are also often part of wider standards initiative such as Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF)(see below).

4. We have continued to hone our approach; in particular this year we have introduced a refined **School Improvement Model**, which defines a more graduated set of stages through which higher risk schools must travel in order to reach self-sustained good or better performance. The stages are shown in the diagram below:

# Stages of School Improvement



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**5. Early identification** is vital, and risk assessments of maintained schools are nuanced to take into account prior trends in pupil outcomes but also other factors, such as the stability levels in relation to governance, leadership and teaching and further indicators (such as complaints about the school to Ofsted). Where a school is in particular need, we work to firstly stabilise governance and secure leadership that will, in turn, increase wider **capacity** in school for improvement.

6. Once this is established and the school is ready to take on board **external advice**, each of the schools that require support at Stages 5-4 above receives a mix of both mandatory challenge and support on key themes and a bespoke package too, which reflects their specific issues. Every school gets a mix of external evaluation, for example, through assigned improvement officer visits, but also training sessions and on-site coaching / mentoring, for leaders and teachers alike. Aiming for Outstanding training modules include a specific focus on improving provision in reading, writing and mathematics; these sessions are well regarded by schools.

7. A considerable investment of time is made in convening Project Boards for relevant Focus and Intensive support schools; at these, a clinical assessment is made as to whether or not the school is taking effective action to improve. The headteacher, chair of governors, link adviser, school improvement lead and other key stakeholders, including finance / HR officers and diocesan partners are involved. In this way, the process is one of a 'team around the School' in securing **shared accountability** for securing rapid and sustained progress.

## Impact on schools causing concern

8. As a consequence of the forensic focus described above, the overall direction of travel is a positive one. The chart below shows the extent to which schools we support are making positive progress in moving to the next stage towards stronger performance and increased autonomy.

Risk category	Change since September 2018
Secure	12 more schools
Light Touch	6 fewer schools
Focused	2 more schools
Intensive	4 fewer schools

**This will be reviewed for September 2019, and it is expected that 2019 SAT results will confirm further positive movements.**

9. Our first lens in establishing the impact of our school improvement work is to look at the changes between 2017 and 2018 in KS2 results for schools with which we have had a close involvement. The chart below shows that KS2 attainment in Cat 3/4/5 schools; that is those we deem in need of 'Light Touch', 'Focussed' and 'Intensive' support saw outcomes improvements that outstrip those nationally and locally in writing and combined. Improvements in reading were less marked with all schools and those which receive particular support. Writing has been a predominant focus of our work as it was previously the bigger issue. The pass mark for reading at KS2 has gone up 7 marks in the last 3 years. In 2018 the pass mark went up 5 points and this caused lots of schools to have an unexpected dip.

### **KS2% increase by type of school/level of support**

	Reading % increase from 2017	Writing % increase from 2017	Maths % increase from 2017	Combined % increase from 2017
National	3.7%	2.1%	0.7%	3.2%
Worcestershire	2.7%	3.0%	1.8%	3.6%
Maintained	1.5%	3.4%	2.0%	2.8%
Academy	4.1%	2.5%	1.4%	4.8%
Babcock SSIF	3.5%	6.7%	9.2%	7.5%
SSIF	4.2%	5.0%	6.7%	6.4%
Babcock Cat 1	3.0%	1.5%	-1.7%	1.6%
Babcock Cat 2	-3.5%	-1.9%	-5.2%	-5.2%
Babcock Cat 3	2.6%	2.5%	5.1%	5.0%
Babcock Cat 4	1.7%	4.9%	2.5%	3.3%
Babcock Cat 5	3.2%	8.9%	9.3%	8.4%

### **Key Stage 2 outcomes for vulnerable pupils**

#### **Disadvantaged pupils**

10. Of particular concern has been attainment for disadvantaged pupils in the county. The chart above gives some information about the impact our work with selected schools is having for this group of pupils. Babcock Prime led work to bid for DfE grant funding for an improvement programme through the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF). We

were successful in securing £498,500 in funding to help the Teaching Schools and Babcock work with schools where outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were a particular concern.

11. The chart above shows that the 32 schools which were part of SSIF and especially the 12 / 32 high risk schools within that group which Babcock supported, made strong gains too. Please note that whilst Cat 1 / 2 (stronger performing schools) saw smaller year-on-year increases, their results were generally starting from a higher baseline and still compare favourably with national.

12. The Department for Education, which funded the programme and received final evaluations recently, is fully satisfied that the impact is positive in terms of strengthening leadership, improving quality of provision and improving core subject outcomes. It recognises the validity of the particular model of improvement that was utilised and considers it beneficial to replicate the approach in future initiatives.

13. 85.7% of middle schools involved in the project can evidence the impact of SSIF in improving outcomes for their disadvantaged learners in improving either outcomes at the end of KS2 in RWM combined or in their progress data.

14. 82% of First Schools involved in the project (1 school did not complete all five terms of the project) are able to evidence improvements in outcomes for KS1 RWM combined between 2016 –18. 18% of the schools have very small cohorts.

15. 100% of the Primary schools involved in the project can evidence improvements in RWM combined at KS1 and phonics Year 1 for disadvantaged learners.

### **Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability**

16. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of KS2 are well below average for those receiving SEN Support. Outcomes are below average for children with an Education Health & Care Plans.

17. Across Worcestershire, progress scores between KS1-2 in reading, writing and mathematics for **children with special educational needs** are too low.

18. Babcock improvement advisers run careful checks at the risk assessment stage and when schools are identified as at risk. Officers examine the attainment and progress of specific groups. Where this is established as a concern for children with SEN, specialist advisory support is part of the package of measures we put in place.

### **The need for further partnership working**

19. Headteachers who attended the meeting with the local authority in autumn 2018 concurred that partnership working will be crucial going forwards; establishing mutual trust, the full commitment of all, good relationships and robust partnership working. We agree with this and also concur that peer review is a very useful tool, already deployed by some schools. To date, structures to underpin a school-led system remain under-developed in the authority.

20. The plan is in 2019-2021 to develop closer networks between schools. At termly District Briefings, we have begun this dialogue with school leaders. Guidance has been drafted on how models of this type might be merited and developed. here are already

particularly successful examples of school networks that go beyond informal collaborative work, networks which ensure shared accountability by leaders for the quality of provision and outcomes across groups of schools.

21. In recent years, the **moderated peer-review** between middle schools has been supported across Worcestershire. Through this, senior and middle leaders in a school gain an external perspective on performance from colleagues, with advisers moderating the process for consistency and rigour. Peer reviews, along with joint practice development between leaders, have two particular benefits within a mature locality approach to a school-led system. These reduce any over-reliance on external services in carrying out periodic checks.

### **Purpose of the Meeting**

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

- consider the information in the report
- 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

### **Contact Points**

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### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children, Families and Communities) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.