

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 16 MARCH 2021

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES 2020/21 UPDATE

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills and the Director of Children's Services have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on educational outcomes for:

- a) the academic year 2019/2020, in particular the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the measurement of educational outcomes; and
- b) the academic year 2020/21 including the impact of Covid-19 and next steps.

2. The Headteachers of Upton upon Severn Primary School and North Bromsgrove High School have also been invited to attend the meeting to give a school perspective. A presentation by the Headteacher of Upton upon Severn Primary School is attached as Appendix 1.

Background

3. This report usually provides an annual overview of the county wide performance, rather than that of individual schools. The reporting period 2019/20 is greatly impacted by the pandemic.

Educational Outcomes

4. In 2020, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs, phonics and multiplication tests were cancelled, and Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 outcomes were based on Teacher Assessment. Performance tables were suspended for the 2019 to 2020 academic year and no school will be judged on data based on exams and assessments from 2020. Until a new data release is available, all those working with schools, including Ofsted and Department for Education (DfE) regional teams, should refer to the 2019 data.

5. This is repeated for the 2020/21 academic year. Although the requirement for statutory moderation is also removed, the School Improvement Team are developing professional development opportunities to support teachers in making accurate assessment judgments for internal purposes.

Inspection Outcomes

6. In September 2019 a new Ofsted framework was introduced for the inspection of schools. Under this new framework inspections will focus on the curriculum,

spending less time looking at test data, and more time looking at what is taught and how it is taught. Hence Ofsted grades will assess the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, and leadership and management.

7. Due to the pandemic, no routine inspections have occurred since 23 March 2020. Inspection outcomes as at July 2020:

	Maintained Schools (125)			Academies (118)			All school (243)	
Outstanding	24	19%	87%	17	14%	79%	17%	83%
Good	85	68%		76	64%		67%	
Requires Improvement	10	8%		10*	8%		8%	
Ofsted category	6	5%		14*	12%		8%	
No Ofsted judgement				1	1%			

8. In July 2020, 83% of Worcestershire schools were judged Good or Outstanding, which is below the national average of 86% (August 2020). In July 2020, nationally compiled data showed that 84% of Primary pupils, 75% of Middle school pupils and 83% of Secondary pupils in Worcestershire attend a Good or Outstanding school. 89% of state funded special schools in Worcestershire are Good or Outstanding. Held within this data are fifteen schools (*) who have converted to an academy since an inspection judged them to be less than Good but are now technically a new school with a full inspection expected within three years of conversion. Due to the suspension of inspections three of these schools would under normal circumstances have been inspected.

9. In the Autumn term 2020, Ofsted undertook school visits. The aim of these visits was to talk about the barriers that the school faced in managing the return to opening fully, how pupils were getting back into expected routines and their behaviour, and the school's safeguarding arrangements. Inspectors also spoke to school leaders about how remote learning fitted into their wider curriculum plans. As these visits were not inspections, they did not result in a grade, but a short letter published on the Ofsted reports website. The 18 visits included schools of different types and of all Ofsted grades: 1 'outstanding' school, 5 'good' schools, 3 'requires improvement' schools and 9 schools in an Ofsted category were visited.

10. From January 2021, Ofsted resumed monitoring inspections of schools judged inadequate at their previous inspection and some schools graded as requires improvement. These will not result in a grade, but a judgment as to whether the school is taking effective action. At the time of reporting there have been 2 inspections with the outcome that the schools are 'taking effective action'.

11. Emergency inspections of schools will continue as they have done throughout the pandemic, in response to any serious concerns raised with Ofsted. For the academic year 2019/20 and 2020/21 to date no emergency inspections have been triggered in Worcestershire.

12. We await confirmation regarding the resumption of routine inspections, which result in a school being awarded a new grade or being confirmed in its current

grade. There are 59 schools who would have expected an inspection during the period 23 March 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Raising standards in schools

13. Weekly meetings with DfE representatives have been taking place since 23 March 2020 to discuss concerns and address barriers. In addition, throughout this period weekly meetings have also taken place with phase representatives and Worcestershire Children First (WCF) officers as a mechanism for sharing concerns, identifying risks and addressing them.

14. Support was provided to schools in the summer and autumn terms of 2020 through the DfE National Leader of Education support programme. Schools were identified as a result of their Ofsted category and WCF knowledge of their need. Twenty schools have been supported through this programme and informal feedback indicates this support has been of benefit to these schools.

15. The School Improvement Team works with all maintained schools, and this has continued during the pandemic. The focus of this work has adjusted as schools react and respond to the impact of the pandemic. Previously the extent of this work was defined from an initial risk assessment based on KS2 outcomes, the period since last inspection and wider intelligence, which is then adjusted once an initial visit has been undertaken. Although in the period 2019/20 this approach was utilised, the School Improvement Team have moved to a model that allows for more support to schools during the pandemic. Academies have also been offered a point of contact, a School Improvement Advisor during the pandemic and WCF officers meet with the Worcestershire DfE Team weekly. In order to support all schools (maintained and academy), the School Improvement Team have developed advice and guidance documentation for:

- The development of a recovery curriculum to support the full reopening of schools (June 2020)
- Planning remote learning provision required for pupils having to isolate due to collapsed bubbles (September 2020)
- Ensuring the quality of a school's remote education offer (January 2021)

16. In the absence of end of Key Stage data outcomes, the extent of the work with individual schools has been continued from 2019/20 and will be reviewed once schools reopen on 8 March 2021.

Impact on Learning – Autumn 2020

17. Qualitative feedback from schools, and that of Ofsted from their Autumn visits in 2020 indicated that three groups of pupils emerged as a result of the initial lockdown:

- Those who coped well in the pandemic because they benefited from strong support at home and more time spent with family
- Those who did not benefit from strong support, sometimes because parents or carers were juggling work commitments and childcare
- Children in the early years who missed out on interaction with their peers and slipped back in their development.

18. Schools found that the gaps in pupils' learning took time to identify as the initial focus was to ensure a normalisation of the new routines in school necessary to ensure a Covid secure environment, and an emphasis on health and wellbeing to ensure a suitable learning environment. Many schools invested in additional pastoral support staff, with often a health and wellbeing champion staff member being identified.

19. Most school leaders considered their sequencing of curriculum content to best support pupils' progression, and prioritised accordingly. For example, many schools with early years focused on phonics. Those with Key Stage 1 found that handwriting skills required increased emphasis. Schools with Key Stage 2 pupils reported that sustained writing was an area they were prioritising. Mathematics progress generally appeared to have been less impacted, but most schools committed curriculum time in the Autumn term to ensure a sound understanding before moving to age expected curriculum content.

20. The School Improvement Team are planning to intensively work with schools to identify pupil needs and gaps in learning upon the return of pupils on 8 March 2021. The recovery curriculum advice and guidance will be reviewed and updated to reflect current needs.

Purpose of the Meeting

21. The 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 Education and Skills.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Presentation Slides Impact of Covid-19 on Children's Learning
Worcestershire Headteacher Response – to follow

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children's Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and minutes of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on [14 February 2020](#)

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)