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Annual Report of Educational Outcomes 2023

Purpose

- 1.1 To report on the academic outcomes of Derby pupils for the academic school year 2022-23
- 1.2 To outline the key academic performance measures for pupils in each key stage
- 1.3 To highlight trends.

Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note 2023 academic outcomes and continued impact of the pandemic on achievement.
- 2.2 To note the Priority Education investment Area programme of work and potential future impact on key areas of progress.

Reason(s)

- 3.1 To support further improvements in pupil outcomes.

Supporting information

- 4.1 Detailed analysis of the academic outcomes achieved in 2022-23 can be found in Appendix A which follows this report.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 N/A

Other options

- 6.1 N/A

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 As the number of academies increases and the school improvement grant decreases, there is a financial consequence in the reduction of the budget for central services. Nevertheless, the LA remains accountable in a range of areas such as risk assessment, statutory assessment, early years, governor services, safeguarding, looked-after children and special educational needs and/or disabilities. The outcomes and well-being of Derby's children and young people inform a future Derby adult population of citizens and workforce.

Legal implications

- 8.1 None directly arising from this report.

Other significant implications

9.1 Equalities Impact

The council's interest in equalities can be best delivered in this case through the recommendations.

Risk Management

School performance can be volatile. The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated this fact. In addition, the effectiveness of leadership can change quickly in the context of turnover of leadership posts. Some schools and academies are more vulnerable to this volatility than others. For example, schools with a lot of unfilled places or high pupil mobility can change quickly if there are a lot of new in-year admissions. Risk assessment is the responsibility of the local authority; it is vital that risk assessment is informed by up-to-date information on all DCC schools, academies and free schools.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

The effective implementation of the council's role with schools in Derby City directly impacts on education outcomes for children and young people. In particular, Derby City is the employer for LA maintained community schools.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	N/A	
Finance	N/A	
Service Director(s)	Sharon Buckby Sharon.buckby@derby.gov.uk	19/03/24
Report sponsor	Andy Smith, andy.smith@derby.gov.uk	19/03/24
Other(s)	None	

Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix A – detailed analysis of 2023 educational outcomes

APPENDIX A

One of the many strengths of the educational community in Derby has been its willingness to work in partnership. All schools and academies work in this way for some or all of their improvement activity. Despite the reduction in the PACE team, the local authority continued to provide a sold services in training, support and challenge, which many schools, academies and MATs commissioned in the academic year 2022/23. The team also ensured that the local authority duties are sustained. The team have risk assessed provision in schools and academies (related to academic outcomes and inclusion), responded to safeguarding and other concerns from a range of sources including Ofsted, and provided support, information and capacity to Derby partnerships such as Primary and Secondary Strategy Groups, Inclusion Group, Designated Safeguarding Leads network, Senior Mental Health Leaders network and the LA Maintained Headteachers Group. Additionally, the PACE team delivered other programmes including the Holiday and Food Activity Programme. At the time of writing (March 2024), there are 36 LA Maintained schools – 33 were judged good or better in their most recent Ofsted inspection and 3 were judged as Requires Improvement.

The achievement outcomes in 2022/23 continued to reflect the ongoing impact of the pandemic. When compared to national or statistical neighbours, outcomes have, in the main, not returned to 2019 levels other than at Key Stage 5. The Opportunity Area had begun to gain traction, but the progress made stalled as a direct consequence of the pandemic. Details outlined below demonstrate the impact of wider environmental issues on rates of achievement.

Critical to addressing the impact of the pandemic is the focused programme of work within the Department for Education (DfE) Priority Investment Area. Derby was confirmed as one of 24 Priority Education Investment Areas (Priority Areas) in 2022. The following local priorities were agreed in May 2023 to be addressed through the Priority Area Local Needs Fund:

- 1. Reading and writing at primary** - improving the teaching of reading and writing in Derby's primary schools in order to increase attainment and improve progress for pupils at the end of KS2, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- 2. Reading fluency and writing stamina at KS3 and KS4** - supporting improvements in reading fluency and writing stamina, at KS3 to improve outcomes at KS4.
- 3. Persistent absence and readiness to learn across primary and secondary** - working closely with the LA to support a strategic city-wide approach for tackling persistent absence and unauthorised absence. Particularly looking to rebuild the social contract with parents and strengthen the pathway back into school for those non attending due to emotional challenges.

The Derby Priority Investment Area Board was established in 2023 including representatives from the Council, Trusts and wider stakeholders including Derby County Community Trust. Oversight of the Board ends in 2025. All schools are engaged in the work of the Priority Investment Area. Programme implementation gained traction in September 2023 and there is an expectation that impact from the initiative will be visible during the 2024/25 academic year.

Whilst the Priority Investment Area is focused on improving teaching and learning, a wider piece of work is underway to raise aspirations and support all Derby children and young people to be ambitious, under the auspices of the Derby Promise.

Academic Outcomes 2023

Early Years

This measure is the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the early years foundation stage (EYFS), the end of the academic year when the child turns five. The assessment framework consists of 17 early learning goals (ELGs) across 7 areas of learning. EYFS was reformed in September 2021 and so this is the first set of outcomes from the new EYFS profile. There is no published information for 2020 and 2021 because of COVID-19 restrictions.

In 2023, the percentage of Derby schools and settings' EYFS children who achieved a good level of development (63.3% - compared to 62.9% in 2022 and 70.7% in 2019) was lower than the national (67.2%) and our comparator authorities' (64.6%). Derby schools and settings' are nationally ranked 135th LAs in this indicator (down 22 places).

More girls than boys continue to achieve a good level of development (13.7 percentage point gap in Derby and 13.6 percentage point gap nationally). Other pupil groups who achieved relatively well compared to their national counterparts are children who are eligible for free school meals, Black African ethnic background, any other mixed ethnic background, mixed white and black African and mixed white and black Caribbean.

These outcomes were achieved in 67 schools including special schools.

Critical to the achievement of the EYFS are the skills in communication and language and personal, social and emotional skills. All the children assessed at this age stage in 2023 were children whose development would have been affected by their experience of the pandemic. Whilst a national phenomenon, accessibility to pre-school provision directly impacted on school readiness. Most schools report that for this cohort there were a greater number of children requiring additional developmental support. The focus of pre-school provision has been to strengthen executive functioning skills to ensure a better readiness for school, however the issues arising from the pandemic will likely feature for several years. Support for additional needs through the Early Years Inclusion Support Team, development of the curriculum via the PACE Early Years team and management of the local Department for Education funding Experts and Mentors, leadership and curriculum programmes, alongside additional inclusion funding, provides the support infrastructure for pre-school and nursery provision. A new Early Years Strategy to be developed in 2024 will support the development of the workforce, and teaching and learning, including children with additional needs.

Phonics

The use of a systematic, synthetic phonics programme is now well supported by research as the best way for the vast majority of children to begin to learn to read. The 2019 Ofsted inspection framework places a great emphasis on early reading which now has to be inspected specifically in every primary and special school inspection. Children's ability to decode words is tested at the end of Year 1 in the Phonics check, and then again at the end of Year 2. A city-wide phonics improvement programme has been in place since 2015, funded for the first two years through Schools Forum and then by Opportunity Area funding, which has now ended.

Standards in phonics had been rising year on year since 2015, attributed to a Derby City approach to phonics as a high priority. However, the pandemic beginning in early 2020 has had a negative impact on outcomes affecting both national and LA outcomes. Outcomes fell below 2019 nationally and locally.

The majority of schools have adopted a new systematic synthetic programme from the DFE published list of validated schemes. A wider number of phonics programmes are now used than in 2019 when the main two programmes were 'Letters and Sounds' (which did not meet the DFE criteria) and 'Read, Write Inc.' (which does). All schools should publish their chosen programme on their school website. The impact of the new programmes in use now shows improved consistency of practice and resources.

In 2023, 79% of Derby schools' Yr1 pupils met the required standard (up 5% since last year and down 4% since 2019). This is compared to a national percentage of 79% (up 4% since last year). There has been a mixed picture in relation to the last two years of the pandemic – many schools saw their phonics outcomes fall but several actually improved from 2019 suggesting that our focused partnership work in school has mitigated the worst effects. Derby has risen in the national rankings at the end of Year 1 to 68th.

Barriers for some pupils continue but there is a better understanding of what these might be and how to overcome them, particularly in schools where phonics is a high priority. Girls continue to outperform boys both locally and nationally. Other pupil groups who achieved relatively well compared to their national counterparts are mixed white and black African pupils (who significantly performed above the national average by 12%), pupils eligible for free school meals (with Derby's FSM/non-FSM gap narrowed since last year), pupils who do not have special educational needs, SEN support pupils and EHCP pupils. Groups who appear to be struggling are those from a Bangladeshi ethnic background and Indian ethnic background.

Phonics must remain a priority for the schools in Derby as a key part of early reading. Being able to read and read confidently is a key to future academic success and life chances.

Key Stage 1 Assessments

Assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 are carried out by the pupils' teachers rather than in any formal tests and so it is very important that judgements are reliable regardless of which teacher and which school or academy. Teachers assess their pupils' reading, writing and mathematics judging whether they have reached the 'expected standard' or 'higher standard'. For pupils below the national standards, assessments are made using the 'Engagement model' (replacing P scales which were used until 2019) or using 'Pre-key stage' statements.

As in the phonics work described above, assessment and moderation processes are led by the PACE team Key Stage 1 Assessment Leader who ensures that statutory moderation processes are carried out reliably in a sample of schools and academies each year. Over time, this has led to an increasingly knowledgeable Derby teacher population and secure assessments which indicate pupils' strengths and weaknesses for their transition to Key Stage 2.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic from early 2020 onwards has impacted on outcomes for 2021-2022 and 2022-23. In 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 all statutory assessments were cancelled due to periods of closure and some remote learning. In 2021-2022 statutory assessment resumed but the pandemic has remained. This particular group of pupils have had gaps in both Foundation stage 2, year 1 and year 2 provision.

In reading, expected standard is 66% (up 3% since last year but down 6% since 2019). Derby schools are ranked 112nd nationally (up 15 places). Both locally and nationally, girls continue to outperform boys. Other pupil groups who performed relatively well are any other black ethnic background pupils and EHCP pupils. Groups where performance was less positive compared to their national counterparts are pupils from a Chinese ethnic background, pupils from a black Caribbean ethnic background, pupils for whom English is not their first language and pupils eligible for FSM.

In writing, expected standard is 57% (up 4% since last year but down 10% since 2019). Derby schools are ranked 114th nationally (up 17 places). Both locally and nationally, girls continue to out-perform boys. Pupil groups who performed relatively well are any other black ethnic background and EHCP pupils.

In mathematics, expected standard is 67% (up 1% since last year but down 7% since 2019). Derby schools are ranked 128th nationally (down 30 places). Both locally and nationally, girls continue to outperform boys. Other groups whose outcomes are strong are pupils from an Asian background and pupils from a black background.

As in phonics, some schools managed to improve from 2019 despite the obstacles created by the pandemic.

Key Stage 2 test results and teacher assessments

At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils sit externally-set tests in reading and mathematics, whilst their writing is assessed by their teachers. All of these subjects are judged against an expected standard and a higher standard. There is an externally-set test for grammar, punctuation and spelling which can also shed some light on pupils' writing accuracy. As with the Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, a KS2 statutory assessment leader from the PACE team worked with school-based moderators to oversee the consistency of standards in writing. At Key Stage 2, we also start to look at how pupils achieved in their combined reading, writing and mathematics standards. These provide a strong indicator of pupils' readiness for secondary school. Improvement programmes have been in place since 2015.

In 2023, percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is 53% (59% nationally). This is the same as 2022 but down 8% since 2019. Derby schools are ranked 142nd nationally (down 2 places). Groups whose performance was particularly strong are those pupils of black Caribbean ethnic background and EHCP pupils. Groups of concern are pupils from a white and black African ethnic background, any other black ethnic background, those whose first language is not English, pupils eligible for FSM or in the last 6 years and those with SEN Support. This combined standard can be split into the three elements.

In reading, percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard is 66% (73% nationally). This is a decrease by 3% since 2022 and 2019. Derby schools are ranked 148th nationally (down 1 place). There is a progress score based on what the pupils achieved at the end of Year 2. For reading, Derby's score is -1.0 which is lower than in 2019.

Reading has been identified as a priority for the Priority Education Investment Area.

In mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard is 69% (73% nationally). This is an increase of 2% since 2022 down 7% since 2019. Derby schools are ranked 129th nationally (up 6 places). The progress score is -0.5, down by 0.2 from 2019.

The general picture is that standards of attainment in Derby rose in line with changes seen nationally during 2016-19 and saw similar falls as a result of disruption to pupils and their learning since March 2020.

In writing, percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard is 66% (71% nationally). This is an increase of 1% since 2022 but down 8% since 2019. Derby schools are ranked 141st nationally (down 5 places). The progress score was -0.3, down from 0.0 in 2019.

Training for moderators supports colleagues across the City to understand best practice in end of key stage assessment. Through the city's approach to moderation, we are involving as many colleagues as possible in the process.

Key Stage 4

The main methods for judging outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4 are to first use Attainment 8, which gives the scores of pupils in English, mathematics, 3 subjects from the English Baccalaureate list (sciences, history, geography, languages) and 3 from the open list (the other subjects). This is then compared to scores for pupils nationally with similar key stage 2 results from which a Progress 8 score is calculated. A progress 8 score of 0 would mean that the school or academy pupils' progress is exactly in the middle of that made by pupils in all schools nationally. In reality, the majority of schools have progress scores bunched around 0 and, of course, half of schools have negative progress scores.

Given the unprecedented change in the way GCSE results were awarded in the summers of 2020 and 2021, as well as the changes to methods of assessment for 2021/22 and 2022/23, users need to exercise caution when considering comparisons over time, as they may not reflect changes in pupil performance alone.

The changes seen in the headline statistics are likely to reflect the changes in methodology for awarding grades and in calculating the measures, rather than demonstrating a difference in standards.

Whilst year on year comparisons are not valid for estimating school improvements they do provide context to the trends seen within the data. More detailed national information can be found at [Key stage 4 performance, Academic year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/key-stage-4-performance/academic-year-2022-23)

For Progress 8, Derby schools' average has improved by 0.07 to -0.17. Nationally the result has remained at -0.03. Derby schools are now ranked 112th nationally (up 17 places since 2019).

For Attainment 8, Derby schools' average has dropped by 2.4 to 42.4 since last year and by 0.9 since 2019. Nationally the result has dropped by 2.5 to 46.3. Derby schools have dropped by 2 places in the national ranking to 139th

For the percentage of pupils achieving English and mathematics at Grade 5 or above (known as a strong pass), Derby schools' average dropped by 2.9% to 38.9% on the previous year but was up by 0.8% since 2019. Nationally the result has dropped by 4.5% to 45.3%. Derby schools have improved by 14 places in the national ranking to 124th and have improved by 3 places to 8th against our comparator authorities.

For the percentage of pupils entered into Ebacc, Derby schools' average has dropped by 3.8% to 35.1% since last year and by 4.3% since 2019. Nationally the result is up by 0.6% to 39.3%. Derby schools are ranked 95th out of 153 LAs nationally (down 27 places since last year).

English Baccalaureate average points score (APS), Derby schools' average has dropped by 0.28 to 3.72 since last year and by 0.11 since 2019. Nationally the result has dropped by 0.22 to 4.05. Derby schools have dropped by 12 places in the national rankings to 123rd and have dropped by 2 places to 9th against our comparator authorities.

This is generally what we would expect given Ofqual's approach to grading for 2022 and 2023 exams which broadly reflected a midpoint between results in 2019 and 2021.

Attainment at the end of KS4 varies between different ethnic groups. Derby school pupils from a White Irish ethnic group achieved better than the national average (by 4.9) in Attainment 8. Caution should be taken with this figure as the cohort size is very small. More Derby school pupils from 'any other black background', white Irish, 'any other mixed background' and Pakistani ethnic groups were entered into EBacc than the national average (by 22.8%, 12.8%, 7.0% and 5.1% respectively).

Groups where performance was less positive compared to their national counterparts are pupils whose first language is other than English, pupils eligible for FSM or in the last 6 years and SEN pupils.

Key Stage 5

A Level:

2022 saw the return of the summer exam series, after they had been cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 and 2021, alternative processes were set up to award grades in a similar way to key stage 4 (centre assessment grades, known as CAGs, and teacher assessed grades, known as TAGs) and outcomes from these were not published, although the students themselves were able to use them and move on. As with key stage 4, these outcomes have not yet been validated.

In 2023, the average points score per entry was 33.61 (grade C+) compared to 34.16 nationally (grade C+) and 32.91 compared to our comparator authorities' average. This is a 3.35 point drop since last year but a 3.75 improvement on 2019. Derby schools are ranked 73rd nationally (up 6 places since last year).

Applied general:

Derby schools and colleges APS was 29.51 (grade Merit+) compared to 29.52 nationally (grade Merit+) and 29.47 compared to our comparator authorities' average. This is a 2.74 point drop since last year but a 2.91 improvement on 2019. Derby schools are ranked 77th nationally (down 10 places since last year).

Technical:

Derby schools and colleges APS was 27.94 (grade Merit +) compared to 28.50 nationally (grade Merit+) and 27.22 compared to our comparator authorities' average. This is a 0.89 point drop since last year and 0.81 on 2019. Derby schools are ranked 88th nationally (up 20 places since last year).