

Meeting Title	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Priority Education Investment Area (PEIA) Update
Meeting Date	30 th November 2023

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Nick Lee, Director of Education
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	nicholas.lee@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Summary of issues:

This report provides information and an update to Scrutiny Committee on the partnership work between the Department for Education (DfE), Nottingham City Council and Multi Academy Trusts operating schools in the city, on local education priorities identified and being supported with additional government funding as an identified Priority Education Investment Area.

Recommendation(s):

1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report and presentations that will be made to the committee from LA officers and representatives of partner organisations.

1. Background

Nottingham was confirmed as one of 24 Priority Education Investment Areas (Priority Areas) in March 2022, in the Schools White Paper: Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child.

Priority Areas are a subset of the 55 Education Investment Areas (EIAs) announced by the DfE in the Levelling Up White Paper (Feb 2022), and comprise of the 12 existing DfE Opportunity Areas and 12 other EIAs that have particularly low attainment and high rates of disadvantage.

The stated ambition of government that underpin the establishment of EIA's and Priority Areas is that by 2030:

- 90% of pupils are meeting the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths combined at Key Stage 2, with an increase of over a third in the lowest performing areas.
- National GCSE average grade in both English language and in maths is increased from 4.5 in 2019 to 5

In order to drive this ambition and the programme in Nottingham a local governance board was established by the Regional Director of the DfE working with the Local Authority, Multi Academy Trusts operating in the city and the two local universities. The Board has met on a monthly basis since July 2002 and is chaired by Professor Jane McNeil, Pro Vice Chancellor Education at Nottingham Trent University. Board membership is made up of CEO's of Multi Academy Trusts covering primary and secondary phases and special schools, the CEO of the Nottingham Schools Trust (representing LA Maintained schools) the Director of Education Services at NCC, the DfE's Regional Director, senior representatives from the two city Universities, and professional leads from research schools covering pedagogy and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

The first action of the programme was to undertake a local needs analysis through a "deep dive" of all available and relevant educational data; this was supported by DfE data leads and the LA's Data and Insight team. The result of this analysis was presented to the board in order to inform understanding of key priorities to address, in order realise the ambitions of the programme. Once the key priorities were agreed, working groups were formed to agree delivery plans and a full local needs action plan was produced and submitted for ministerial sign off and allocation of funding, through the Priority Area Local Needs Fund. This latter stage was agreed in the spring and early summer of 2023. All elements of the action plan were costed and resources allocated to those organisations contracted to deliver on specific actions.

2. Nottingham Priorities

The board has agreed the following local priorities to be addressed through the Priority Area Local Needs Fund in Nottingham:

- Cross-phase reading: improving the teaching of reading in all primary schools to increase attainment and improve progress for pupils at the end of Key Stage (KS) 2. Improving reading fluency at KS3 to improve outcomes at KS4.
- Writing at Primary: improving the teaching of writing in all primary schools in order to increase attainment and improve progress for pupils at the end of KS2.
- Attendance and persistent absence: Improving attendance, particularly for those learners who are persistently absent and reducing Nottingham's persistent absence rate, building on the recommendations from the DfE attendance adviser from a school perspective.

The data underpinning these priorities is:

Literacy

Key Stage 2 (Age 11)

- An increase in the percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading at KS2:
Baseline from Academic Year 21/22 is 70% (National 75%)
- An increase in the percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in writing at KS2:
Baseline from Academic Year 21/22 67% (National 69%)
- Nottingham's ranking when compared with LAs nationally
Nottingham is currently **117th (out of 152 LAs) nationally** for writing at KS2
Nottingham is currently **141st (out of 152 LAs) nationally** for reading at KS2

Key Stage 4 (Age 16)

'KS4 local authority data' in East Midlands, England and Nottingham for 2021/22

Move and reorder table headers

		2021/22						
		Average Attainment 8 score of all pupils	Average Attainment 8 score per pupil in English	Average point score in English EBacc subject area including English literature	Percentage of pupils achieving grade 4 or above in Ebacc English component	Percentage of pupils achieving grade 5 or above in Ebacc English component	Percentage of pupils achieving grades 4 or above in English and Mathematics GCSEs	Percentage of pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and Mathematics GCSEs
England		48.9	10.4	5.18	79.0%	65.6%	69.0%	50.0%
East Midlands	East Midlands	47.7	10.2	5.06	78.1%	63.5%	67.8%	47.5%
	Nottingham	44.5	9.5	4.74	73.2%	57.6%	61.0%	41.3%

Attendance

2021/22 Persistent absence (less than 90% overall attendance), was 23.7% of children in Nottingham were persistently absent from school compared to 22.5% nationally and 22% in the East Midlands.

3. Key Actions to deliver against the priorities

Presentations from PEIA partners will be made to the committee to provide full detail of the actions being delivered in the Literacy and Attendance strands of work, but in summary the following activities have been commissioned for delivery:

Literacy Strand

Invest up to £900,000 (jointly with Derby) to deliver a literacy programme to support improvements in reading and writing.

The programme will include:

A universal Continuing Professional Development (CPD) offer for leaders and teachers (by phase) in order to share what works and support all schools to share and embed best practice and ensure improvements are embedded, sustained and continuously built upon. A targeted support offer, which will be offered to priority schools based on a data driven methodology (up to 45 primaries and 12 secondaries). This will include:

- An initial diagnostic conversation with school leads/literacy leads, followed by a bespoke support package to develop, implement and embed whole-school literacy strategies.
- Facilitation of a cohort in the Leading Literacy National Professional Qualification with additional input based on the specific needs of local schools, coaching and mentoring, workshops, facilitated professional learning community sessions, training sessions, webinars and online learning. Face-to-face workshops, training sessions, webinars and online learning.
- Working with secondary heads to identify how knowledge sharing from primaries could be improved; and to compare KS3 assessments with KS2 outcomes at pupil level to identify common themes.
- Targeted work with pupils to develop a culture of reading, with a focus on the bottom 20%, in particular white disadvantaged boys and those with SEND. Building on existing work in Nottingham and linking with local/national literacy events, we will develop a specific programme of activity to encourage reading for pleasure - working with sports clubs, the university and community organisations to inspire an interest in reading including volunteer reading programmes, tailored reading challenges with accompanying books, author events, role models/mentors resources and teaching materials.

Attendance Strand

Invest up to £1.6m to improve attendance and persistent absence at primary and secondary. The programme will include:

Developing a network map/toolkit and online resource bank, based on research into best practice/what works.

- Creating a universal CPD/knowledge-sharing offer, identifying, sharing and embedding 'what works' including attendance conferences, events, attendance networks, workshops and regular professional development for staff.
- Engage parents, families and children through a city-wide attendance campaign and targeted family engagement events and activities, including engagement activities, info-graphic videos and resources (including addressing particular cultural issues and using community languages)
- Targeted work with clusters of schools in the wards with the worst persistent absence and serving the same communities. This will include establishing 4 clusters covering the target wards, based on the communities/families/common challenges to share knowledge and best practice - to facilitate improved collaborative working and peer support between schools/Trusts and with the local authority.

- Funding 6 x Attendance Family Support Workers focussing on support for families where persistent absence (PA) is an issue (currently PA or at risk) - to boost capacity and facilitate collaborative, cross-phase working between school leaders/attendance support staff from schools within these clusters
- Appoint an additional Education Welfare Specialist to assist with embedding the new guidance with schools.
- Appointment of an attendance data analyst to provide support to target activities to key groups, areas and identify trends/issues
- Supporting more inclusive practice in schools e.g. a team around the school model. Funding the development of better in-school provision in target schools – based on the best provision and most effective models.
- Sharing learning from the “Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce” model and Djanogly/LA attendance pilot.
- Bringing in experts to assist in identifying and embedding ‘what works’ for specific communities e.g. Gypsy Roma Traveller communities – building on relevant research including Education Endowment Foundation.

The Nottingham PEIA was formally launched on October 19th 2023 at a full day event at Trent Vineyard Conference Centre to which school leaders from all city schools and academies and other key stakeholders were invited to hear from the delivery partners and engage in workshop discussions to inform the delivery of activity.