

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion
Date of Meeting:	20 June 2019

EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS UPDATE

1.1 To provide an update on recent Ofsted inspections of schools, numbers of exclusions, school improvement and the new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To review the update provided, challenging where required and identifying areas for improvement or for further scrutiny.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure effective scrutiny of the new strategy and school improvement.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options considered:

3.3.1 None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Ofsted Inspection

5.1.1 Nine Ofsted inspections have taken place this year –

	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Requires Improvement</u>	<u>Inadequate</u>	<u>Yet to be inspected</u>
<u>Primary</u>	0	2	1	0	0
<u>Secondary</u>	0	2	1	1	0
<u>Special</u>	1	1	0	0	0

5.1.2 Overall, judgements are good and improving.

	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Requires Improvement</u>	<u>Inadequate</u>	<u>Yet to be inspected</u>
<u>Primary</u>	2	27	2	0	2
<u>Secondary</u>	0	4	2	1	1
<u>Special</u>	2	1	0	0	0

5.2 Statutory assessment and moderation

5.2.1 Since the introduction of the revised Testing and Assessment Frameworks (2016) for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, we have ensured that the teachers in Year 2, Year 6, Key Stage leaders and Assessment leaders have received quality professional development alongside personal support programmes to assist them in accurately assessing their pupils. 36 school based teachers have been approved as LA Moderators by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) this year.

<u>EYFS</u>	<u>KS1 and KS2</u>
5	31

5.2.2 All moderators passed their assessment through STA. Such a high proportion has again ensured that there are trained moderators working across academies, trusts and maintained primaries. Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 statutory assessment and moderation has been completed successfully.

5.3 Appropriate Body

39 Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) have been working towards a successful statutory Induction Year. Blackpool Council has retained the ownership of a proportion of this function and the rest is owned by the Teaching School Alliances. Blackpool Council will continue to offer an Appropriate Body function for 2019-2020.

5.4 Inclusion update

5.4.1 44 Secondary permanent exclusions have been issued, similar to last year, but currently rising.

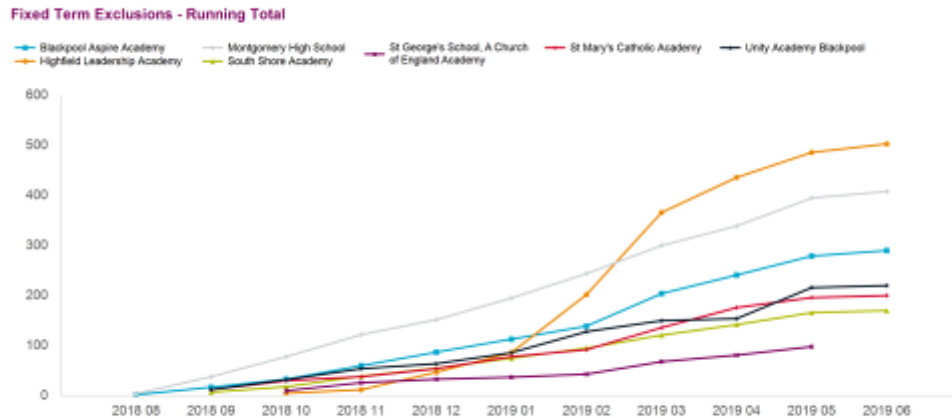
5.4.2 ***NB - Data correct as of 04/06/2019***

Blackpool Aspire	10
Highfield	13
Montgomery	10
St George's	5
St Mary's	2
Unity	7
South Shore	4

5.4.3 Fixed term exclusions have increased since last year. This is the highest figure since 2015. However, Highfield's fixed term exclusions are disproportionately high. The increase in these numbers highlights the lack of alternatives in Blackpool for pupils who struggle in mainstream schools. Support is in place through bespoke funding from the Opportunity Area programme to support Highfield in reducing their exclusion rates and they have been linked to the charity 'Nurture UK' to provide bespoke opportunities for young people with additional needs.

5.4.4

Fixed Term and Permanent Exclusions - Secondary



- 5.4.5 A review of the Pupil Referral Unit and alternative provision to enable high quality teaching and curriculum for all pupils has been completed and an improvement plan is being developed to change the commissioning model and the offer to young people and schools. On 2 May 2019 283 children were on roll at the Pupil Referral Unit. A significant proportion of these pupils are dual registered with mainstream schools.
- 5.4.6 There is still a problem securing prompt admission to some Blackpool schools, including for Our Children or Children who are Looked After and are placed in Blackpool. We are working towards a system of distinct Service Level Agreements and specialist provision, procured through the High Needs Block. Multi Academy Trust Chief Executive Officers and the Local Authority are working on a revised In Year Fair Access protocol and agreements related to managed moves and reintegration.
- 5.4.7 Attendance in Blackpool is a serious issue and has been poor for many years. The safeguarding risks attached to young people not being in school and the level of educational neglect is significant. Over the past few years investment by schools in the Pupil Welfare Service has increased, complex casework, hand in hand with increased use of legal proceedings, has made a significant improvement. Blackpool as a Local Authority has traditionally always been in the bottom 6 Local Authorities. Over the last two years the impact of the increased focus and provision is starting to show and Blackpool for the first time ever has outperformed national averages in primary schools and closed the gap in secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units.

2017/2018: 5.0%

2016/2017: 4.9%

2015/2016: 4.7%

5.4.8 Elective Home Education numbers have risen again. At the North West regional Elective Home Education meetings, all Elective Home Education officers reported an increase of children who are on the register. There is no specific increase in groups over recent years: the general pattern remains the same that secondary aged young people account for the majority of the numbers on roll. For all new Elective Home Education requests the parents were informed of alternative educational provision and availability of places at other schools and academies which they were able to consider. In all cases parents have been clearly informed about the requirements of Elective Home Education. There have been efforts to dissuade parents from opting for Elective Home Education in many cases. Blackpool Council has appointed a 0.4FTE additional Elective Home Education worker on a fixed term contract until Spring 2020.

5.4.9

Monthly Analysis on Elective Home Education												
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	
Register 2016-17	121	138	141	144	157	151	172	175	181	158	161	
Register 2017-18	162	166	179	188	195	206	207	204	211	183	185	
Register 2018-19	187	195	212	221	226	233	244	256				

5.5 Virtual School

5.5.1 The Virtual School team consists of five full-time staff.

- 1 x Virtual School Head Teacher (full time), Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Case Worker
- 1 x Education Officer/Personal Education Plan Coordinator and Post-16 Case Worker (term-time only)
- 2 x Pupil Achievement Support Officers (Primary and Secondary)
- 1 x Administration Officer

5.5.2 Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion rates have risen this year to 97.5% although the quality is variable, with some poor. This is a strategic focus for this year and training will be increased. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding will not be released to schools unless the quality is of a sufficient standard. Some PP+ funding is already retained centrally and this may be increased if the quality of PEPs does not increase

quickly. Post-16 destinations for Our Children are of variable quality and this is an ongoing concern. Continued work in this area is necessary to ensure that all pupils have a considered and appropriate pathway Post-16.

- 5.5.3 Attendance within the Virtual School is now 93% and rising, but this requires considerable input from the Virtual School staff and ongoing monitoring. Fixed term exclusion and permanent exclusion rates are too high. Where permanent exclusion is a possibility, the Virtual School works with all schools to avoid this, but too often it is left to the Virtual School to find an alternative placement. 6.5% of Our Children are still educated in Pupil Referral Units. This is too high.
- 5.5.4 An external consultant is working with the Virtual School for the foreseeable future. Tony Gallagher is an ex-Her Majesty's Inspector of Education.

5.6 Blackpool School Improvement Board

- 5.6.1 The revised Blackpool School Improvement Board Strategy Group has been successful and will be integrated into the Continuing Professional Development offer for next year. The Continuing Professional Development programme delivered through the Strategy Group has focused upon literacy, with inputs from -
- Alex Quigley
 - Gary Wilson
 - National Literacy Trust
 - Sue Cowley
- 5.6.2 This has been provided for free to all schools. Over 175 people have attended the four sessions.
- 5.6.3 The Blackpool School Improvement Board Inclusion Strategy has been re-written and an April update issued. Revised governance arrangements for the Blackpool School Improvement Board will be in place from September 2019. A fully school-led system will be operational from September 2020.

5.7 Opportunity Area Projects

- 5.7.1 There is an ongoing drive to improve attainment and progress in maths at Key Stage 2 through the Strategic School Improvement Fund Maths Bid that aims to produce a quality programme of study and curriculum for maths that bridges the gap between Primary and Secondary. This attracted over £750,000 of funding from the Department for Education in August 2017. The maths project through the Strategic School Improvement Fund has now been completed.
- 5.7.2 The Leadership Project through the Strategic School Improvement Fund has now also

been completed and engagement has been good, with funded qualifications such as National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for Middle Leaders, National Professional Qualification for Senior Leaders, National Professional Qualification for Head Teachers and National Professional Qualification for Executive Leaders being taken by a number of Blackpool leaders. Funding for up to 67 teachers to take up the NPQ offer was made available.

- 5.7.3 At Key Stage 3 and 4 projects have been established to improve maths, literacy and English at GCSE and also to support the most disadvantaged pupils through the new school “Family Groups” that will promote cross-phase working and breaking down social barriers to attainment and progress. The KS3 Literacy project is ongoing. The KS4 English project has completed and we are awaiting the Summer GCSE English results. Engagement has been good and the review of the project suggests that outcomes should improve across Blackpool this year, although the gains may only be small.

5.8 Team Around the School

- 5.8.1 A successful tendering process has been completed and the contract was awarded to the charity School to Home Support. Chris Ibbotson, formerly Deputy Head Teacher at St George’s school, has been leading on the establishment of a cohort of pupils and working with schools and the Blackpool Admissions and Inclusion teams to establish a way of working. Over 60 children are currently working with School to Home Support staff. Inclusion leads have been identified in nearly all of the Secondary Academies.
- 5.8.2 A number of other projects are ongoing, but are at the developmental stages or have just begun. A number of schools who have very specific, urgent improvements, have been given funding to develop bespoke school improvement strategies.
- 5.8.3 Recruitment of quality staff is still an issue. Too many staff still leave the profession in Blackpool. A “Teach Blackpool” OA funded initiative has been commissioned by the Department for Education and will begin in Autumn 2019.

5.9 Upcoming Meetings and Initiatives

- 5.9.1 A revised Blackpool School Improvement Board governance framework and programme of meetings is being devised and rolled out for the 2019-2020 school year.
- 5.9.2 A new Chief Executive Officer / Multi Academy Trust leaders meeting which feeds into the Blackpool School Improvement Board has been established to work on town-wide areas of need at a strategic level.

6.0 Expected Outcomes Summer 2019

6.1 We are expecting small improvements at Key Stage 2 and GCSE level, but not significant.

6.2 Free School

6.2.1 To note the new Social Emotional Mental Health Free School for Blackpool will be open for September 2020. When Blackpool Council originally submitted an expression of interest to the Department for Education for a new special free school, the business case was based on the assumption of an opening date of September 2019. It had been assumed that this would allow the school to open with 24 pupils at that time, rising to full capacity of 48 pupils by September 2020. Despite the expression of interest being submitted in November 2016, the approvals process with the Department for Education was protracted, and proposer interviews were not held until January 2018. As a result of further delays at the Department for Education, including the appointment of a new Secretary of State, approval for the self-delivery of the building by Blackpool Council was not secured until July 2018. This meant that the planned opening date of September 2019 was no longer achievable, and the building will now not be ready for handover until March 2020.

6.2.2 Discussions have taken place with Champion Education Trust and the Department for Education regarding the potential to open the school as originally planned in September 2019, but from a temporary home at the Oracle until the new school building is completed. This building will be vacated in summer 2019 when Educational Diversity move pupils into the newly extended accommodation at Pegasus. The Trust and the Council's education consultant have visited the Oracle and deem it to be fit for purpose to house the new school, with a small number of minor adjustments. The Department for Education officials are not minded to agree to the early opening at the alternative site, but have invited us to submit a business case setting out the reasons for the request, to include responses to some specific queries.

6.2.3 Given the limited savings that could be delivered by opening in the Oracle, combined with the likely unviable position in which this would place the Trust, it is recommended that plans to open in September 2019 are not taken forward. A significant amount of work would be required to enable this to happen and any savings that could be realised would be negligible.

6.2.4 It has been agreed the opening date be put back from April 2020 to September 2020, given that the earlier date is unlikely to be financially viable for both the Council and the Trust. The later date will allow for a better planned lead in time, with the best chance of success for the pupils and new school.

6.3 SEND Strategy

- 6.3.1 Since the introduction of the Children and Families Act in 2014, the Local Area are required to publish on their Local Offer a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy. The strategy must be consulted on with wider partners and stakeholders. It must include arrangements on how the Local Area plan to meet the needs of young people. Those aged 0-25 years will have their needs identified and support if they have a Special Educational Need.
- 6.3.2 The SEND Strategy vision is:
'For all young people in Blackpool, particularly with SEND or are looked after, to have the right support and opportunities at the right time. So that they become resilient, happy and successful in their adulthood.'
- 6.3.3 We want to achieve this by doing the following:
- To support early year's providers and mainstream schools to improve inclusion and education for all children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
 - To develop a continuance of local provision and services to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
 - To improve post-16 education, employment and training.
- 6.3.4 Children and young people with SEND to enjoy good physical and mental health and wellbeing emotional health.
- 6.3.5 The Local Area are required to publish a strategy detailing how the needs of young people with Special Educational Needs will be met. This new strategy will replace the current strategy that ended in December 2018. The strategy has been out for public consultation since November and closed on 4 January 2019. The draft strategy has also been shared with parents and the Young People's Voice forum for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The Young People's forum has produced a child friendly version. The draft Strategy requires sign off but has been delayed due to recent elections.
- 6.3.6 The SEND self-assessment is being reviewed and will be available for the next Scrutiny Committee meeting with a robust action plan.

6.4 Early Years

- 6.4.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, the Children and Families Act and the Early Years Workforce Strategy published by the government place a requirement on Local Authority areas to follow the frameworks and plan and monitor the quality of Early Years education. This new strategy will support meeting these requirements and will detail the Local Authority priorities for the next 3 years. The

Early Years strategic objectives will be:

- Improve health and wellbeing for children in Blackpool and reduce inequalities
- Support and Increase parents' knowledge and skills
- Children ready for school and schools ready for children
- Support the development of high quality leadership together with a highly skilled and responsive workforce
- Integrated working and system change

6.4.2 The Local Area is required to publish a strategy detailing how the local area will support and educate early years children and support their family in supporting their children for school readiness. The strategy is in the early stages of development and the Local Authority are still meeting with partners to discuss the strategy and its content. The draft Strategy requires sign off but has been delayed due to recent elections.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 5(a) - SEND Strategy
Appendix 5(b) - Young People Friendly version
Appendix 5(c) – Early Years Partnership Strategy

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 None

9.0 Human Resources considerations:

9.1 None

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 The Education division overspent by £371,000. Special Educational Needs Transport pressures of £612,000 were offset by savings on direct payments and staffing underspends. Staffing, supplies and services underspends in the Early Help and Business Support & Resources divisions partially offset the pressure by £392,000 and £59,000 respectively.

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 None

14.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

14.1 The SEND strategy will need to be agreed at the SEND Board. Health and other partners sit on the SEND Board. The Strategy has been out for public consultation and has also been through the Young People's Voice forum for SEND.

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None