

# Blackpool Council

30 November 2022

To: Councillors Burdess, Critchley, Cross, Hunter, B Mitchell, M Mitchell, R Scott, and Stansfield

Co-Optees: Ms G Clayton, Mr M Coole and Ms J Snape

The above members are requested to attend the:

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 8 December 2022 at 6.00 pm  
in Committee Room A, Town Hall, Blackpool

### **A G E N D A**

#### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

#### **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2022** (Pages 1 - 10)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 September 2022 as a true and correct record.

**3 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

To consider any applications from members of the public to speak at the meeting.

**4 FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 11 - 16)

The Committee to consider the content of the Council's Forward Plan December 2022 to March 2023, relating to the portfolios of the Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members.

**5 BETTER START UPDATE** (Pages 17 - 54)

To receive a report the progress on implementing recommendations and an update on the activity within Better Start over the previous 12 months.

**6 YOUNG INSPECTORS** (Pages 55 - 66)

To receive a presentation on Young Inspectors.

**7 LITERACY STRATEGY UPDATE** (Pages 67 - 112)

To receive a report on progress made since the launch of the literacy strategy.

**8 SCHOOL RESPONSE TO PANDEMIC UPDATE** (Pages 113 - 116)

To receive an update on actions since the last scrutiny of schools' response to the pandemic.

**9 PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS** (Pages 117 - 170)

To inform the committee of the extent of the Personal, Social And Health Education programme that is delivered in Blackpool schools.

**10 RESILIENCE REVOLUTION FINAL REPORT** (Pages 171 - 190)

To present the evaluation of HeadStart Resilience Revolution programme 2016-2022.

**11 INDEPENDENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE REVIEW** (Pages 191 - 204)

To receive a report on the outcomes of the Department for Education's (DfE) independent review of Children's Social Care.

**12 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN** (Pages 205 - 220)

To consider the contents of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee's Workplan for 2022/2023.

### 13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday, 2 February 2023 at 6.00pm.

**Venue information:**

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building.

**Other information:**

For queries regarding this agenda please contact John Greenbank, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser, Tel: 01253 477229, e-mail [john.greenbank@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:john.greenbank@blackpool.gov.uk)

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

## MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING - THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

### **Present:**

Councillor Stansfield (in the Chair)

Councillors

Critchley	Hunter	M Mitchell
Cross	B Mitchell	R Scott

Ms Gemma Clayton, Parent Governor Co-opted Member  
Ms Jo Snape, Diocesan Co-opted Member

### **In Attendance:**

Councillor Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth, Schools and Transience  
Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools  
Councillor Jo Farrell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Community Health and Wellbeing

Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services  
Chris Coyle, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Children's Social Care and Tis)  
Paul Tuner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)  
Lisa Arnold, Strategic Head of Service – Community and Wellbeing  
Kara Haskayne, Head of Service Safeguarding Quality Review Service and Principal Social Worker  
Joanne Stewart, Head of Early Help  
Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Services  
Nicky Dennison, Public Health Specialist  
Derek Wright, Catering Service Manager  
Kathryn Morris, Better Start Early Years Co-ordinator  
Margaret Williams, Chair of Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership Executive Board

John Greenbank, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

### **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2022**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 30 June 2022 be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

### **3 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

The Committee noted that there were no applications to speak by members of the public on this occasion.

**MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING -  
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**4 EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

The Committee considered the Executive and Cabinet Member decisions taken since the last meeting.

With respect of Ex19/2022 SEND Written Statement of Action, Councillor Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth, Schools and Transience, informed members that the statement had been submitted to Ofsted and approved.

**5 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan July 2022 to October 2022 and noted the list of upcoming decisions.

**6 EARLY HELP STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

Ms Joanne Stewart, Head of Early Help, presented a report on partnership working in the implementation of the Early Help Strategy. She informed the Committee that although it was early in the implementation of the strategy there had been strong engagement from partner organisations. However a number of challenges had been highlighted, in particular partners' limited resources. The Council therefore was looking at how to support partners achieve their ambitions under the strategy.

Work was also outlined on the analysis of data collection, with Ms Stewart explaining that the Council was looking at how to collect data on partners' early help work. This would assist in giving a clear picture on what work was being undertaken by which partners.

The Committee discussed the response from partners to the early help training offer, with Ms Stewart reporting that it had been very positive. The multi-agency approach had been welcomed by partners, who had stated that the inclusion of people working in a variety of settings in training sessions had improved the experience and gave those taking part an insight into others' work. Ms Stewart added that in addition to the multi-agency training offer the Early Help team also offered individual briefings to partner organisations.

The ongoing cost of living crisis was raised as having the potential to limit partners' resources further. This was noted by Ms Stewart as a concern but she highlighted that the Council had undertaken work to look at how the early help offer was organised and how partners' workforces were structured to enable the Council to support them in the best way.

Members also discussed the Family Workers in schools project that had seen four workers deployed to two high schools. It was reported by Ms Stewart that following some initial reluctance by the schools to take part in the project, both settings had now expressed a desire to continue. The role of the family workers was to upskill and support early help work in schools and connect them to wider services in Blackpool.

The Committee queried how the schools involved in the project had been selected with Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early

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Years), responding that they had been selected based on their central locations within Blackpool and the number of early years referrals they had. Following the success of the project in the two schools that were currently involved, Ms Stewart confirmed that there were ambitions to roll out the project further.

A monitoring tool from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Department for Education had been distributed to the Committee and. Members asked why this had been provided, with Ms Stewart explaining that the tool had to be used to undertake self-assessment of the supporting families programme, and demonstrate the progress that had been made.

## **7 YOUTH JUSTICE UPDATE**

Ms Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Services, presented an update on the work of the Youth Justice Service. She informed the Committee that the report outlined the Youth Justice Team's progress against the recommendations made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Probation (HMIP) following its inspection in the summer of 2021 where the service was rated Good with Outstanding Features. In response to the recommendations the Youth Justice Executive Board had adopted a business plan to assist in guiding service improvement. The Youth Justice Board had graded the plan as Outstanding.

The use of vocational training was discussed with Ms McCartan reporting that the Youth Justice team looked to link young people to employment and educational opportunities including practical vocations, such as construction. In order to further this the service had links with the Responsible Business Network and wider partners via the Employment and Skills strategy partnership.

The help provided to those in alternative provision was discussed, with Ms McCartan informing the Committee that where a young person was known to services a dedicated Youth Justice Education, Employment and Training worker would be assigned to work with the individual and their family to feed into their a personalised plan.

Members of the Committee raised the use of referrals to youth justice services or other diversionary interventions with young people. Ms McCartan explained that the Youth Justice team sought to intervene where possible before an 'at risk' young person became known to the courts. The Youth Justice Team's response to repeat offending by young people, where interventions and assistance had been attempted was discussed.

The use of Council powers to sanction children or their families for repeat offending was also raised, with Members noting that methods such as Parental Orders could be used. Ms McCartan responded that Parenting programmes were impactful when voluntary and while it was important that young people were aware that their actions would have consequences, the Youth Justice Partnerships Child First approach meant that services treated children as a child first building on supportive relationships and children's strengths to divert children away from offending behaviour. Child First meant that services would seek to wrap support around an individual to support them to engage in constructive work and meaningful activity.

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Noting the Committee's concerns regarding the high levels of reoffending in the Brunswick and Talbot Wards, Ms McCartan explained that these were complex areas where issues such as deprivation contributed to youth offending and that these would need to be addressed as well as engaging with individuals. It was also noted that the use of council powers such as Civil Orders could be counter-productive in reducing youth offending and their use should consider the individual child's circumstance. A decision to arrest and charge a young person was the responsibility of the Police. Ms McCartan added offences committed by children were scaled on a matrix based on seriousness and other factors and ultimately a child could be sentenced to custody and completely deprived of their liberty.

Using ex-offenders with lived experience of the youth justice system was raised as a possible means to engage with young people by the Committee. Members were informed in response that this had not been undertaken and that while appropriate lived experience had been impactful for Young People in the Adolescent drug and alcohol service there was no appetite in the Youth Justice Service to undertake the work. The reason noted that often there was a desire on the young person's behalf not to revisit those experiences.

## **8 SCHOOL FOOD PLAN**

Mrs Nicky Dennison, Public Health Specialist, presented a report on the School Food Plan, Free School Meals (FSM) uptake, Free School Breakfast uptake and fluoridated milk provision.

The School Food Plan had been developed by the Department of Education (DfE) to set the standards for all food served in schools. Although the Council could not enforce against the plan in schools the Department for Education (DfE) and the Food Standards agency had developed a programme of inspections for schools that would link food checks to the plan and benchmark them against it. Mrs Dennison also stated that the Council's Catering Team provided food to thirty-one of Blackpool's schools, which allowed greater influence over the food served in those locations. Where the service did not provide food it would be harder for the Council to influence standards, but the inspection programme would assist in giving a picture of their performance.

It was reported that in respect of FSM, uptake nationally was 65% of those who were eligible in maintained schools, this was a concern for the Council. Ms Dennison explained that the Council only had data for maintained schools, and that Academies would have their own data, but that all schools would be aware of those who would be eligible. Ms Lisa Arnold, Strategic Head of Service – Health and Wellbeing, added that the process of encouraging uptake varied across Blackpool. This complicated efforts to engage parents and highlight their child's eligibility for a FSM.

Ensuring that those in receipt of FSM were not singled out when in schools was discussed. The Committee was informed that schools now operated a variety of electronic systems to pay for school meals with students using pay cards at tills. This meant that those using money from FSM would be indistinguishable from those not.

Free School Breakfast had been offered to all primary schools in Blackpool. The



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programme sought to ensure that the children would receive a healthy meal at the start of the school day. The initial roll out of the programme was being reviewed by Public Health with Mrs Dennison reporting that feedback was being sought from schools and parents. The outcome of this review would further influence how breakfasts were offered in the future and inform plans to introduce them into secondary school settings.

The uptake in fluoridated milk provision was discussed with Mrs Dennison reporting that since the lifting of Covid restrictions uptake had fallen. This was a concern with Ms Arnold stating that a number of schools had gone back to ordering non-fluoridated milk for their children. Consideration was therefore being given to how to re-engage schools and parents and encourage the uptake of fluoridated milk, with a possible opt out scheme instead of the current opt in approach. The benefits of fluoridated milk to children's dental health was noted with the Committee querying how this could be monitored. Councillor Jo Farrell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Community Health and Wellbeing, responded that the Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Community was undertaking a Dentistry Review that would be looking at this and other related issues.

Members raised a concern that the standard of school meals could fall due to the increase in costs associated with the cost of living crisis. Ms Arnold responded that the Catering Team was committed to a high standard of food provisions and that this would be maintained. While recognising the risk that the Catering Service could lose school contracts when tenders are due as private contracts often offered the service at a cheaper rate, Ms Arnold noted that private sector providers would also face similar challenges in relation to the rising costs.

### **9 CHEFS ACADEMY PROJECT**

Ms Lisa Arnold, Strategic Head of Service – Community and Wellbeing, presented a report on the Chefs Academy Project. The project was an alternative provision run by the Catering Service aimed at providing young people with skills in the catering and hospitality sector. The project was launched in 2021/2022 and engaged eight young people all of whom had progressed to higher education. Twenty-eight young people had been signed up for the 2022/2023 school year.

The Committee discussed plans to expand the project with Ms Arnold explaining that although ambitions to do more existed, there was a need for further capital investment to achieve this. Mr Derek Wright, Catering Service Manager, added that it was important also that the project used the right settings such as a professional kitchen where the appropriate catering skills could be taught. Teaching in this setting would allow young people involved to learn skills in a setting that were transferable to employment settings within the hospitality sector.

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years) added that the project had been a risk when established, due to the demand for such a provision being unknown. However, the 2021/2022 year had shown that there was support and the expanded uptake in 2022/2023 confirmed this. He also welcomed the interest shown by Members of the Committee and stated that any who wished to do so could visit the academy to see how it worked with young people.

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**10 EARLY YEARS GRANT FUNDING**

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years), presented a report on the administration of Early Years Grant Funding.

The Committee discussed how eligibility for Early Years Grant Funding for two year olds was determined, with it being noted that means testing could exclude some who were in need. Mr Turner replied that means testing of eligibility was a legal requirement and no other pathway for assessing eligibility was permitted. Although the Council was aware that this would exclude some from receiving funding other methods of assistance existed such as the Child Care Voucher Scheme which employers had been encouraged to sign up to.

**11 THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON EARLY LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Ms Kathryn Morris, Better Start Early Years Co-ordinator, presented a report outlining the impact of the Covid pandemic on early years language acquisition. The report presented data for children under five and showed that there had been no significant rise in children in higher need following the pandemic. The universal dashboard included in the report also showed that there had been a rise in the number of children who did not need speech, language or communication help.

The Committee noted that the graph provided at 6.1 of the report appeared to show a rise in referrals for speech and language, in response to this Ms Morris explained that better identification of speech and language need had meant more had been referred. This had been achieved through training for staff and was not the result of the pandemic.

The issue of families not wishing to engage with speech and language services was raised by Members. In reply to this Ms Morris explained that between a referral being made and it being considered by the Triage Panel, services would contact a child's parents to identify possible interventions and the appropriate location to undertake them, whether at home, in school or an alternative setting. She also noted that very few parents refused any help but that in the event this occurred then services would try to engage a child through their early years setting.

Mr Paul Tuner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years) informed the Committee that the two year outcomes on language acquisition following the pandemic were expected to be published soon and that the Council did not expect it to show a negative impact on young people. This was attributed to the hard work undertaken by schools and services throughout the pandemic to support children.

Members queried if there had been an increase in the number of speech and language therapists since the pandemic. Mr Turner informed the Committee that the number of therapists for the under-fives had risen from 1 to 1.93 per 1000 children, but was at 0.7 for the 0-19 cohort. This remained below the national average of 2.4 per 1000. He added that these roles were funded through Better Start.

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**12 CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING ASSURANCE PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT**

Ms Margaret Williams, Chair of Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership Executive Board, presented the Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) Annual Report which covered the period 2020 to 2021. The report demonstrated the good work and partnership working that had been undertaken during the Covid-19 Pandemic and showed how services across Lancashire had strengthened their relationships. Throughout this period the CSAP had also provided robust challenges to its members.

Looking forward Ms Williams reported that the CSAP had identified Contextualised Safeguarding, Domestic Abuse and Neglect as its priorities for 2022. A flexible approach to these priorities allowed the CSAP's locality groups to interpret the work required to address them within their individual settings. The CSAP would also be undertaking a Governance Effectiveness Review to determine what work had been done well and where there were areas for improvement.

The CSAP had recognised that the unprecedented challenges of Covid had a significant impact on partners' staff. Therefore the report noted the value of the workforce and the need to ensure their health and wellbeing going forward.

Members of the Committee discussed the various parenting support work that had taken place under the CSAP. Mr Chris Coyle, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Children's Social Care and Targeted Intervention Service) informed the Committee that lots of work with parents had been undertaken and that bringing this together with other family work had been shown to deliver better outcomes. An important thread for this work was the establishment of positive relationships between families and the staff working with them.

Ms Kara Haskayne, Service Safeguarding Quality Review Service and Principal Social Worker, added that the Council had ten Family Group Conference Co-Ordinators who helped create sustainable development around a child. This work included the identification of interventions such as working with dads to encourage them to be better role models. Ms Joanne Stewart, Head of Early Help and Support, added that Early Help also worked with parents as part of its family work and the Committee asked that an item outlining this be added to its work programme for 2023.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. That the update be noted; and
2. That a report on Early Helps work with families be added to the work programme for 2023.

**13 CORPORATE PARENT PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

Ms Kara Haskayne, Head of Service Safeguarding Quality Review Service and Principal Social Worker, presented the Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report which outlined the work of the panel in 2021/2022. She reported that the Panel had undertaken work to revise its Pledges to Our Children, consulting with children and young people, and decided to rename the pledge to "The 5 Promises". This process had been undertaken to demonstrate to children and young people in care that their views and voices had been

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heard by the Panel and changes made to reflect them. The Council was also developing two forms of communicating these promises to young children in care, with the support of a teddy bear and story and a different version for older children and young people in our care. The 5 Promises would be signed by Panel members in October 2022 and a partnership launch would be arranged subsequent to this.

The Your Rock Awards had been held in November 2021 which highlighted and celebrated the achievements of children and young people in care. It was reported that this had been a successful celebration event and had been supported by Blackpool's Winter Gardens staff, to ensure this was a special evening for the children involved. The next event was planned for 25 November 2022.

The Charter Mark for Semi-Independent Homes was also outlined. The Charter Mark and the higher Gold Mark, had been developed with input from young people and could be awarded to semi-independent unregulated settings by Young Inspectors, in recognition of it meeting certain standards. It was hoped that this would assist in driving up standard in currently unregulated semi-independent homes and improve the care offer.

Members queried the number of semi-independent homes in Blackpool and how this compared nationally with Ms Haskayne reporting that the available data could be provided following the meeting. She added that as there was no legal requirement to regulate some semi-independent homes the exact number could not easily be confirmed as providers were not required to be on a commissioning framework. This was an area of concern for the Council, but Ms Haskayne added that it was one that had been experienced nationally and that the National Independent Review of Social Care Report had considered this and made recommendations for the Government to take action to address the unregulated nature of this provision so quality of care can be assured for 16-18 year old young people.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That the availability data on the number of Semi-Independent Homes in Blackpool be provided following the meeting.

**14 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2022/2023 and noted the additional item added during the meeting.

Members also considered the Committee's Recommendation Monitoring chart and noted that there were two items mark as red. These related to the costs of residential placements for children and the impact on Local Authorities and the findings of the Department for Education impact study on out of area placements. Ms Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services, informed the Committee that both of these issues had been incorporated into the Independent Children's Social Care Review being undertaken nationally. Therefore no information could be provided at the meeting but a report could be provided to the November 2022 meeting.

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Ms Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Services, informed the Committee that in respect of Recommendation 3, that the number of Our Children involved with the Youth Justice Team had halved since January 2021.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That a report on the outcome of the Independent Children's Social Care Review, including details on the costs of residential placements for children and the impact study on out of area placements, be added to the work programme for the 17 November 2022 meeting.

**15 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting of the Committee was noted as Thursday 17 November 2022 commencing at 6pm.

**Chairman**

(The meeting ended at 7.55 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
John Greenbank, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser  
Tel: 01253 477229  
E-mail: [john.greenbank@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:john.greenbank@blackpool.gov.uk)

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 December 2022

## FORWARD PLAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the content of the Council's Forward Plan December 2022 to March 2023, relating to the portfolios of the Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 Members will have the opportunity to question the Leader of the Council and / or the relevant Cabinet Member in relation to items contained within the Forward Plan within the portfolios of the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council.

2.2 Members will have the opportunity to consider whether any of the items should be subjected to pre-decision scrutiny. In so doing, account should be taken of any requests or observations made by the relevant Cabinet Member.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To enable the opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny of the Forward Plan items.

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? N/A

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Forward Plan is prepared by the Leader of the Council to cover a period of four months and has effect from the first working day of any month. It is updated on a monthly basis and subsequent plans cover a period beginning with the first working day of the second month covered in the preceding plan.

5.2 The Forward Plan contains matters which the Leader has reason to believe will be subject of a key decision to be taken either by the Executive, a Committee of the Executive, individual Cabinet Members, or Officers.

5.3 Attached at Appendix 4(a) is a list of items contained in the current Forward Plan. Further details appertaining to each item is contained in the Forward Plan, which has been forwarded to all members separately.

**5.4 Witnesses/representatives**

5.4.1 The following Cabinet Members are responsible for the Forward Plan items in this report and have been invited to attend the meeting:

- Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care and Schools
- Councillor Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth and Transience

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 4(a) - Summary of items contained within Forward Plan December 2022 to March 2023.

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 None.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None.



**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

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## **EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS**

**DECEMBER 2022 TO MARCH 2023)**

**\* Denotes New Item**

<b>Anticipated Date of Decision</b>	<b>Matter for Decision</b>	<b>Decision Reference</b>	<b>Decision Taker</b>	<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>
December 2022	To agree the Special Educational Needs strategy for the local area until 2026.	14/2021	Executive	Cllr Hobson
January 2023	Update of the Children's Services Medium Term Financial Strategy	12/2002	Executive	Cllr Hobson
December 2022	Proposed Expansion of Highfurlong Special School	16/2022	Executive	Cllr Campbell
January 2023	To consider the principles that will form the basis of the Safety Valve agreement between Blackpool Council and the Department for Education.	20/2022	Executive	Cllr Campbell

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Annette Algie, NSPCC, Better Start Project
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	8 December 2022

## BLACKPOOL BETTER START ANNUAL UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the annual update on the Better Start Project and progress against recommendations of the Better Start Scrutiny Review.
- 1.2 Blackpool Better Start was reviewed in 2020/2021 by a working group of the Committee, following the review five recommendations were provided to the Better Start Partnership, summarised in 6.1.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 Better Start to continue to provide Councillors with regular updates on the programme and to provide the updated strategies when relevant.
- 2.2 Better Start to continue to work across partners to implement the recommendations from the report.
- 2.3 The Committee is asked to determine whether any/all of the recommendations can be signed off as complete.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The recommendations of the review are still relevant.
- 3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No
- 3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? NA

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

- 4.1 None.

## 5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

## 6.0 Background information

6.1 Since 2015 the Blackpool Better Start Partnership has been delivering services for early years children and families, a working group was formed from the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee in 2020 to review the programme, the review concluded April 2021.

The review identified five recommendations

### **Recommendation One**

That Better Start should target funds to the seven wards originally identified for funding and in cases where residents of these wards are failing to access Better Start provisions the services on offer should be reviewed to ensure they are suitable and accessible.

### **Recommendation Two**

That Better Start works in conjunction with the Council’s Performance, Systems and Intelligence Manager to target future interventions where appropriate more specifically to those parents identified as being at risk of having their children taken into care, with a periodic review of the subsequent impact on the data of children born into care.

### **Recommendation Three**

That Better Start should produce a Communication Strategy within the following six months outlining how best practice will be better shared locally, with the aim of raising awareness of the positive outcomes of Better Start interventions and of upcoming events. This should address how communication will be improved with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector.

### **Recommendation Four**

That Better Start should introduce within the next six months a regular update bulletin to Councillors informing them of recent achievements and forthcoming events, as well as information on how they can get involved in any programmes.

### **Recommendation Five**

That the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee receives annual updates from Better Start on the progress of sustainability planning of Better Start programmes.

6.2 **Recommendation One** – National Lottery Funding remains targeted on the identified Better Start Wards, however though the Better Start approach partners have scaled up the provision across the town, an example of this being with antenatal provision through Baby Steps.

Due to the scale up of Better Start services and approaches across the town, children and families in the Better Start Wards and outside the Better Start Wards access the provision. Providers of services are required to prioritise children within the Better Start Wards and where additional capacity allows then open up provision to those outside the Better Start Wards. In addition, some services continue to offer an enhanced provision within the Better Start wards, for example the Henry infant feeding service, the Community Connector service and universal early years support. Appendix 5(a) provides the Annual Dashboard which details the activities, reach and beneficiaries over 2021/22.

- 6.3 **Recommendation Two** – Work is ongoing around linkage of town wide data to enable analysis of population level impact and monitor outcomes for those that receive services and those that do not. This work is being led by Oxford University and has involvement from both the Council and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals.

In addition a large piece of work is underway with partners in the council and with Lancaster University to work with parents who have had children removed at birth, the Born into Care project will provide recommendations for systematic changes to support reductions in the number of children subject to care proceedings at birth. Better Start is providing support and resource to enable the work to move at pace and additionally the work is now being governed through the Better Start governance structure.

- 6.4 **Recommendation Three** – Through the Better Start boards regular reporting is undertaken on previous communication activities and future priorities. The programme has over the previous 12 months had a full rebrand and renewed its Vision and Pledges with partners and the community, Appendix 5(b). Over the next few months strategies are to be developed on how to achieve each of these pledges which will involve communications activities.

A key communication activity over the year has been undertaken with partners to establish a quarterly Family Activity Timetable of support for children and families which is circulated through Health Visitors, Social Care, Voluntary and Community Sector Partners and promoted through social media, <https://blackpoolbetterstart.org.uk/families/>

- 6.5 **Recommendation Four** – A councillor newsletter, Better Connected, has been developed which is circulated quarterly, Appendix 5(c). This has links in it to the Family Activity Timetable and Learning Event Timetable and any current promotions for early years families which can be promoted through wards.

- 6.6 **Recommendation Five** –

The Better Start Partnership has already mainstreamed some services across the town, this includes Baby Steps Antenatal support which is delivered through Blackpool Teaching Hospitals and the scale

up of the evidence-based services of VIG, SafeCare and Survivor Mums through the Early Help team.

The CECD is currently working with partners to explore the possibly opportunities for mainstreaming of more services which have proven to be impactful on children's outcomes and sustaining the approaches to town wide commissioning of early years services which ensure joint accountability and decision making. This will build on the work of the partnership to scale universal antenatal education and the provision of evidence-based support for children at risk of neglect and for mothers who may be experienced post-traumatic stress disorder. These services have been tested within the wards and are now part of the wider Early Help offer within the council with 22 practitioners trained in these approaches.

In addition, there is currently a review of the governance structure which proposes a Sustainability Board which will ensure over the final years of funding that services and approaches are embedded across the partnership. Attendance at this board will enable annual reporting on this progress and current priorities for the programme.

The Centre for Early Child Development, as a catalyst for place-based transformation in the early years has also undertaken work to review its current function and develop a strategy for continuing beyond the Lottery funded period. This will ensure that Blackpool continues to lead the way nationally, whilst also retaining a local focus for years to come. The plan is being presented to the Better Start Executive Board on 30<sup>th</sup> November with a final plan being confirmed prior to the next financial year.

6.7 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 5(a): Year 7 2021-22 Annual Dashboard and Timeline  
Appendix 5(b): Better Start Vision and Pledge  
Appendix 5(c): Better Connected Newsletter

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 National Lottery Community Funding is in place until March 2024, the Executive board is currently undertaking a piece of work on sustainability including mainstreaming the activities which are both acceptable to communities and showing positive outcomes.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 N/A

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 N/A



**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 N/A

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 N/A

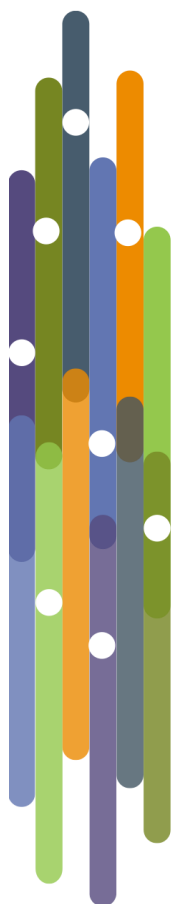
**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 N/A

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 Blackpool Better Start Scrutiny Review – Final Report (April 2021)

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Blackpool Better Start  
**Annual Dashboard  
Report**  
YEAR 7 2021-22

 **Blackpool Better Start**  
Supporting Families, *Improving Outcomes*

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# Introduction

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The **Blackpool Better Start** Partnership is committed to improving outcomes for babies and young children in three key developmental outcome areas:

- **Speech, language and communication**
- **Social and emotional development**, and
- **Diet and nutrition**

Focusing on systems change and implementing long lasting improvements to early years services will ensure the legacy of Better Start, the National Lottery Fund investment is supporting Blackpool communities to have the right tools and advice that they need to ensure babies and children, from pregnancy to starting school are supported to achieve their best potential.

The collection of good data and evidence are at the heart of **Blackpool Better Start** ensuring that the best interventions are delivered which meet the identified needs of communities and achieve the required impact. Ensuring the culture of knowledge generation is embedded will support the sustainability and legacy of Blackpool Better Start.

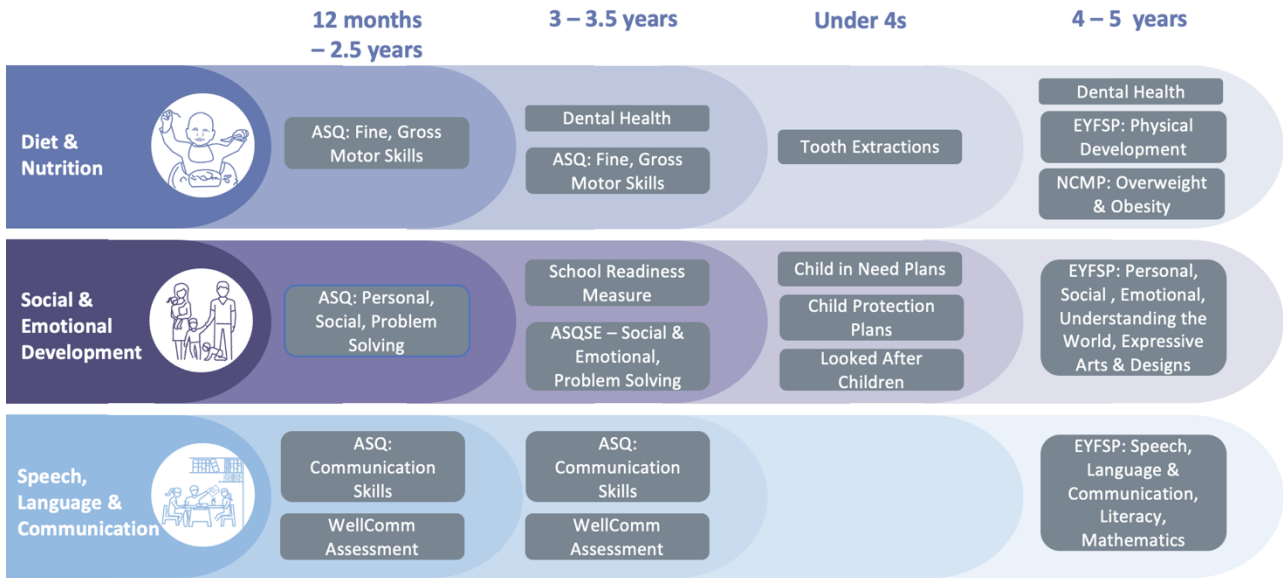
The Annual Dashboard presents a summary of:

- the activities undertaken within the year,
- who has benefited from services,
- support to the Early Years workforce,
- an overview of the selected population level Outcomes and Drivers giving insight into the landscape of needs of our community.

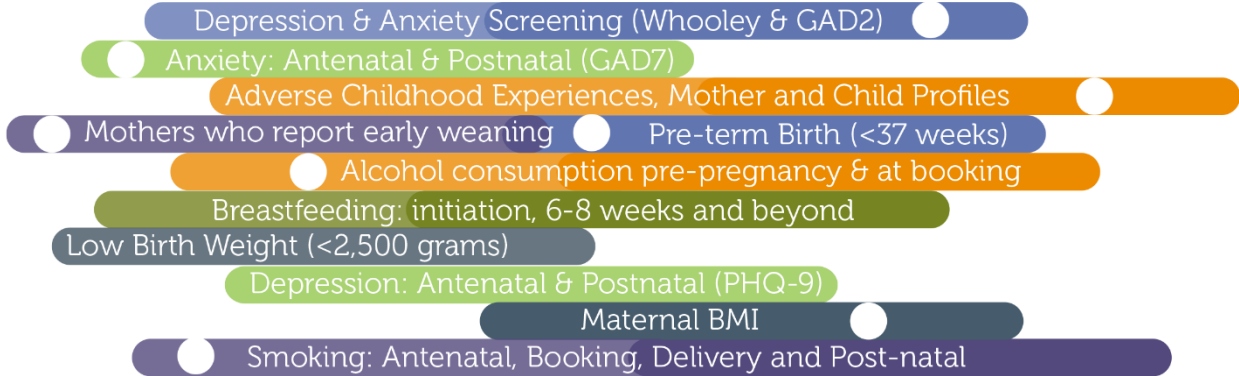
The **Better Start Outcomes** reported in this dashboard were selected as indicators which measure child outcomes within the three overarching areas. **The Drivers**, indicators which contribute towards child outcomes. All indicators were chosen based on the accuracy of data collection methods and availability of data. Some of the indicators are based on new measures which do not have baselines pre-2018 and due to the disruption of the Covid 19 pandemic some indicators have not been routinely collected or collected at smaller samples, thus impacting on the data presented.

# Outcomes and Drivers

## Outcomes



## Drivers



# Year 7: 2021-2022

---

Through Year 7 the Better Start Partnership have implemented across all areas their **Covid recovery plan**. Working alongside changes in government restrictions the provision of services and support has changed and adapted to encourage and enable more face-to-face support for children and families whilst still using digital and virtual methods of engagement and support which have proven successful.

In April 2021 the **Baby Steps antenatal service** was successfully transferred over to Blackpool Teaching Hospital, as part of the scale up of services. The transfer has resulted in an increase in the number of parents signing up through their midwife, over the year 270 pregnant women accessed the service, giving birth to 186 babies.

Working closely with the **Early Help and Support Service**, Family Hubs over the year started to open up for families, with the reintroduction of baby clinics and early years groups. Consultation with families has highlighted that families miss community activities, over the year park rangers and libraries delivered face to face sessions which have had **3,757 children and their families** attending.

The **Community Connectors** over the year have identified the increasing impact of poverty on early years families, resulting in a specific **Money Saving Connector** role being created who focuses on ensuring that families are aware of what support is available, such as vitamins, Healthy Start Vouchers and Food banks.

Taking a public health approach to raising awareness of the dangers of drinking in pregnancy, the **'Superbabies' campaign** was delivered across the town, online the campaign reached over **1.1million** and bus advertising ensured a high proportion of the population were frequently exposed to messages. The **Supervised Toothbrushing Scheme** has been relaunched, ensuring consistent messaging to children and their families around oral health. In response to low numbers of families accessing Dentistry, Optometry and Pharmacy services over the last few years, Community Connectors are supporting the **Blackpool Together Integrated Care** pilot which encourages access. Four literacy events over the year have been attended by **178 children** and **3,801 books** have distributed through book drops and gifting schemes.

The popular letters from Father Christmas were offered to families through December, **1,035 applications** were received, and further support offered to 112 families, 77 families receiving food hampers, 187 gifts provided for children, and 161 children attending grotto events.

The approach taken by Blackpool through Better Start has continued to have national interest. In July **Dame Rachel De Souza, Children's Commissioner**, visited Blackpool to understand the early years integrated working approach to delivering quality services. Parents from Blackpool were included in round table discussions chaired by **Dame Andrea Leadsom** in August as part of development of The Start for Life vision, Dame Andrea then visited Blackpool in March to speak to professionals and parents about their experiences of services.

# A: Programme Delivery

At the end of Year 7 there were **27 funded** services across the town actively being delivered. There were additionally **6 services** in development, or under review.

## Implemented Projects



Community Connectors



Health Connectors



Dads Engagement



Early Years Park Rangers



Early Years Volunteer Academy



Learning to Feed



Early Years Literacy Framework



Participatory Budget



Supervised Toothbrushing



Behavioural Activation



Early Years Speech and Language Home Visiting Service



Early Years Speech and Language Community Sessions



Empowering Parents Empowering Communities



Enhanced Health Visiting Service



Family Nurse Partnership



For Babies Sake



It Takes Two to Talk



HENRY



Video Interaction Guidance



Target Word



'Superbabies' Campaign

## Projects in

### Development/Review

- Birth Registration in Family Hubs
- Early Years Settings Support
- Born into Care
- Parent Infant Relationship Service
- Safe Care
- Survivor Mums Companion

## Projects Scaled-up

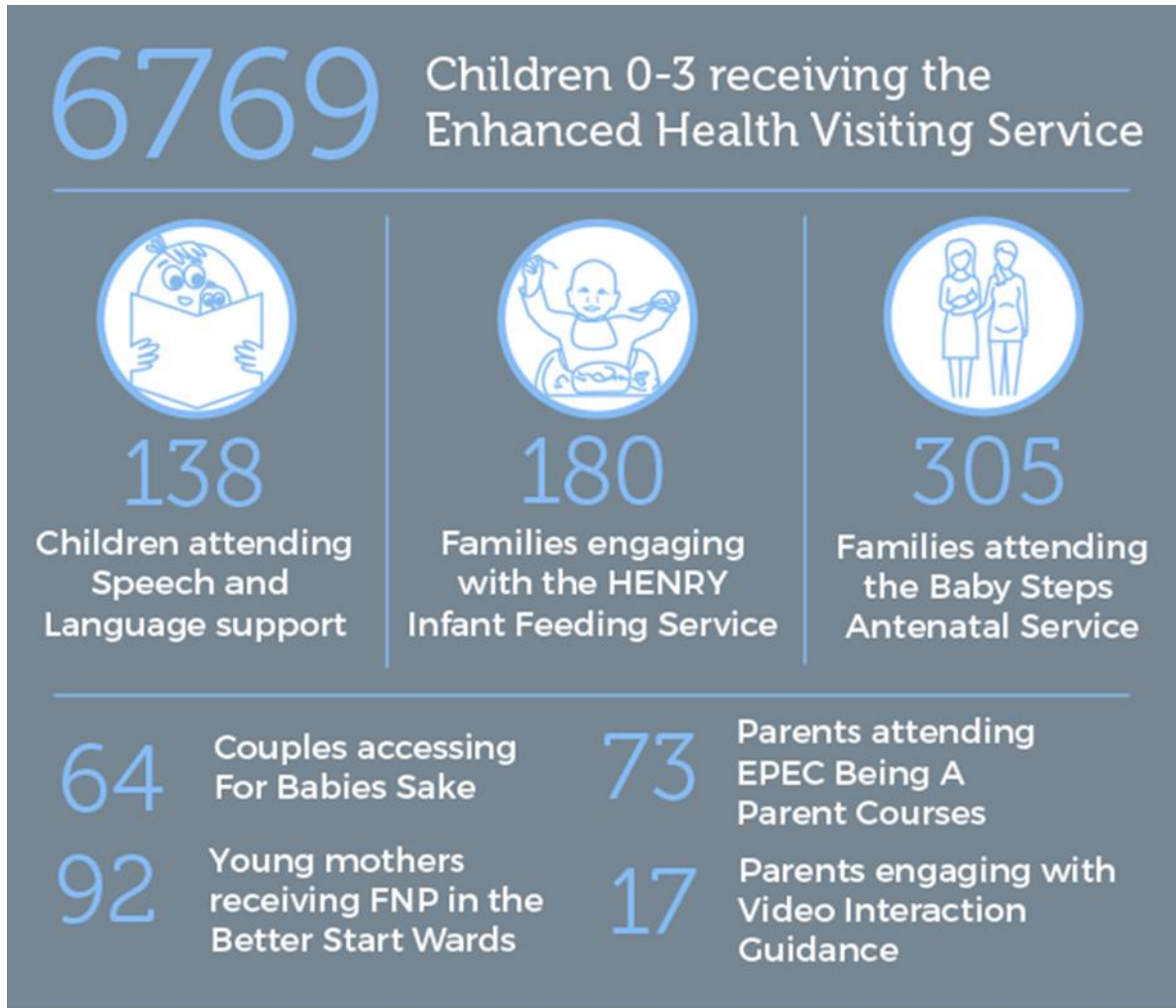
- Baby Rover
- Baby Steps

## Paused

- Big Book of ideas
- Mellow Dads
- Early Years Quality Mark



## A1: Active Projects



## A2: Beneficiaries

A beneficiary for the purpose of this report is defined as a Pregnant Woman or Child aged 0-3 who has accessed a National Lottery Community funded service. The scale up of Better Start funded activities across Blackpool is shown through the reach of services in both the Better Start Wards and non-Better Start Wards.

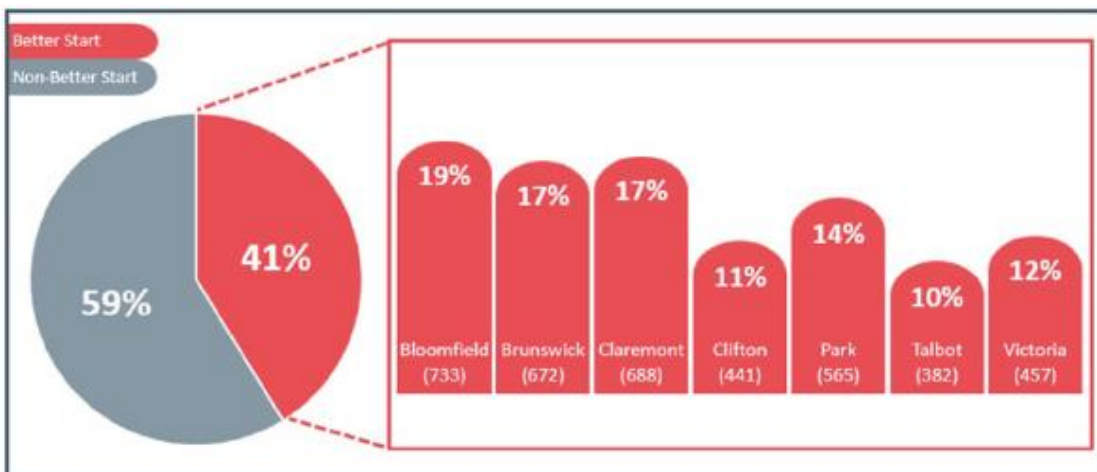


Figure A2.1: Primary Beneficiaries by Ward, Year 7

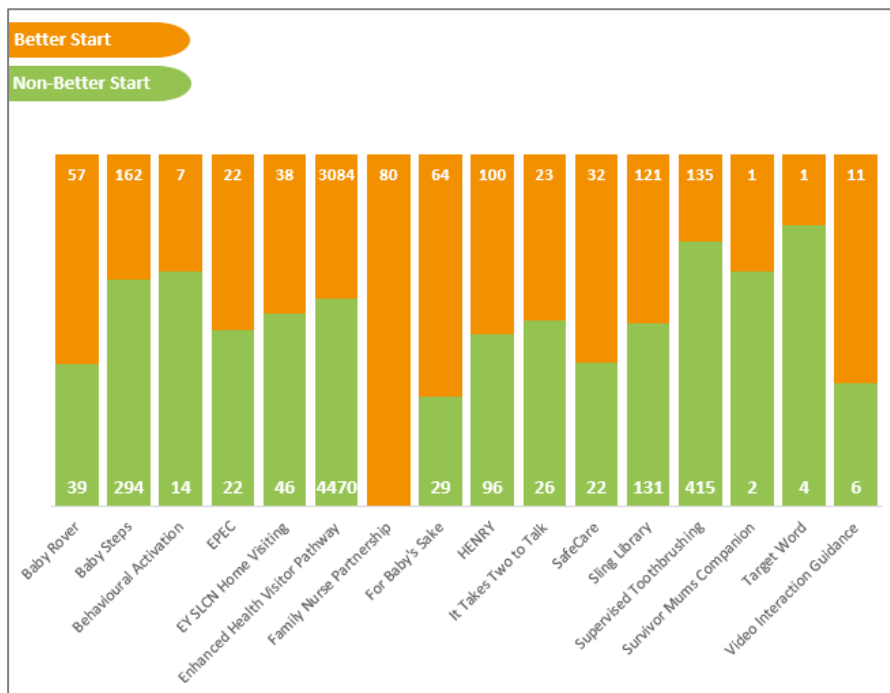


Figure A2.2: Number of Beneficiaries by Intervention

### A3: Reach

Unique beneficiaries are linked together across all targeted NLCF funded services through the Local Authority, Communicate SLC, and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals. Since the launch of Better Start in April 2015 our services, including the Enhanced Health Visiting Service, have reached **36.6% of pregnant women and 76.6% of children aged 0-3**.

In Year 7 there were **842 unique beneficiaries, 331 Pregnant Women and 511 Children aged 0-3** (excluding the Health Visiting Service).

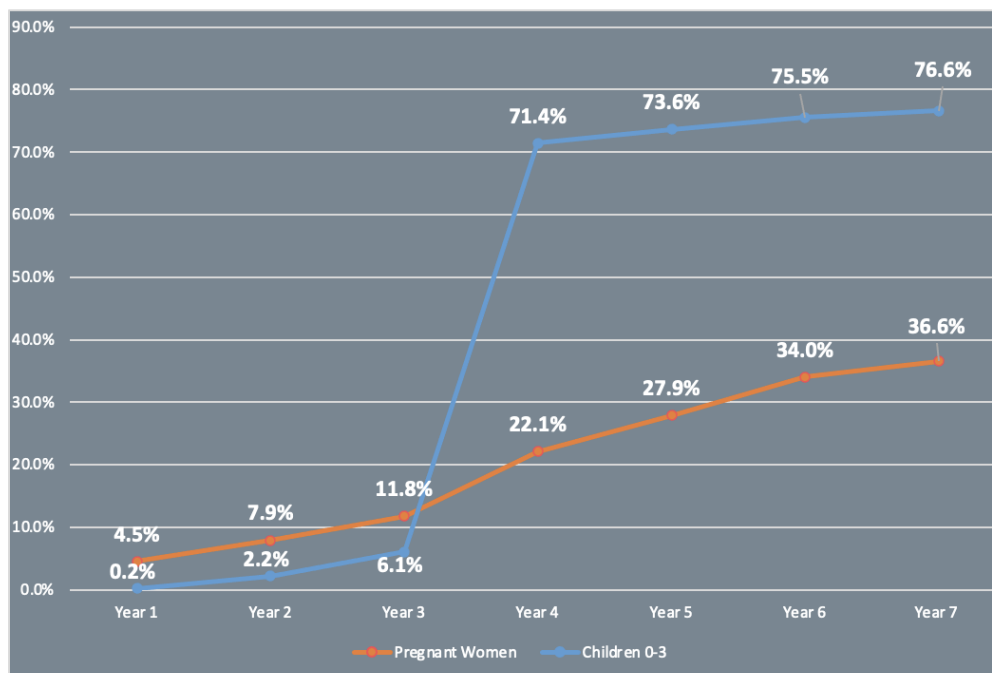


Figure A3.1: Cumulative reach of services to unique beneficiaries (Year 7)

	Bloomfield	Brunswick	Claremont	Clifton	Park	Talbot	Victoria	Non-ABS	Total
Intervention Beneficiaries (excluding Health Visitor Enhanced Pathway)	109	176	118	63	66	48	53	870	1459
Intervention Beneficiaries (all interventions)	664	638	618	385	457	322	452	452	8460
Population as at end of period	555	462	500	322	391	274	399	4098	7001
Babies born in year	133	88	101	56	73	56	96	1002	1605
% of population reached	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Figure A3.2 Reach of services to Children aged 0-3 (Year 7)

	Bloomfield	Brunswick	Claremont	Clifton	Park	Talbot	Victoria	Non-ABS	Total
Intervention Beneficiaries	41	25	27	20	26	23	22	185	369
Pregnant Women in Year	184	117	161	83	104	83	98	1203	2033
% of population reached	22%	21%	17%	24%	25%	28%	22%	15%	18%

Figure A3.3: Reach of Pregnant Women (Year 7)

## B: Community Development

**1663** Parents accessing support through Community Connectors



**1754**

Families attending Park Ranger sessions



**3666**

Total Books gifted



**3097**

Families accessing Early Years Sessions through Libraries (virtual and face to face)

**268** Families receiving new Parent Packs

**1000** Activity cards distributed

**125** Families receiving Toddler Packs

**629** Vitamin packs distributed

**59** Male Carers supported by Dads Community Connector

**181** Children 0-3 attending Forest School

**258** Families receiving Winter Advocacy Support

**740** Bundles of Baby Clothes distributed

**10** Street to Scale projects activated by the community

**165** Baby Slings hired

**936** Parents accessing Community Connector Support

**331** Children attending participatory budgeting activities

# C: Workforce and Volunteers



# D: Diet and Nutrition Outcomes

Due to the ongoing impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic the Oral Health Surveys or EYFSP measures are not available, children classified as overweight or obese is also not currently available at ward level.

Across the ASQ measures a greater percentage of the population reaching the expected level of development is seen in all domains at the 2-2.5 and 3-3.5 development checks across Blackpool. Although the increase in the percentage of children reaching the expected level of development is smaller within the Better Start Wards, it is possible that without any additional services and support more children would not have met the expected level due to the impact of the higher level of family difficulties and vulnerabilities in these wards.

An increase has been seen in the number of tooth extractions in under 4's across Blackpool, the support provided through early years settings based supervised toothbrushing and oral health prevention approaches was decreased due to the pandemic, it is likely this has contributed to poorer oral health outcomes. These schemes are now all reinstated and it is anticipated that the rates of extractions will return to pre-pandemic levels.

## ASQ Fine Motor Skills

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached expected level of development at age 12 months

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	69.8	94.0	93.1	91.5	93.2	91.4	
Non Better Start Ward	69.2	93.0	94.1	95.6	89.6	91.9	
Blackpool	69.5	93.0	93.8	94.0	90.9	91.7	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 2 / 2 ½ years

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	85.4	95.0	92.8	91.3	84.5	88.5	
Non Better Start Ward	83.6	97.0	94.9	93.3	84.1	92.6	
Blackpool	84.3	96.0	94.0	92.5	84.3	91.0	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 3 / 3 ½ years

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	83.9	87.3	78.8	88.1	
Non Better Start Ward	89.0	91.5	75.7	91.4	
Blackpool	87.1	89.8	76.9	90.1	

Figure D1: ASQ Fine Motor Skills

## ASQ Gross Motor Skills

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached expected level of development at age 12 months

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	63.5	80.0	77.6	75.2	83.0	76.5	
Non Better Start Ward	64.4	85.0	79.6	79.8	78.3	82.2	
Blackpool	64.0	83.0	78.9	78.1	80.1	80.0	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 2 / 2 ½ years

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	84.4	94.0	91.9	90.9	84.9	87.7	
Non Better Start Ward	83.0	96.0	94.3	92.3	83.0	92.8	
Blackpool	83.5	95.0	93.4	91.8	83.7	90.8	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 3 / 3 ½ years

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	82.3	87.3	80.4	89.7	
Non Better Start Ward	90.8	91.5	75.2	92.3	
Blackpool	87.7	89.9	77.2	91.3	

Figure D2: ASQ Gross Motor Skills

## Tooth Extractions

Percentage of children under 4 having tooth extractions under general anaesthetic

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.4	
Non Better Start Ward	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.6	
Blackpool	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.5	

Figure D3: Tooth Extractions

## Children classified as overweight or obese

Prevalence of excess weight (including obesity) among children in Reception (%)

	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	28.9	29.3			
Non Better Start Ward	24.8	25.7			
Blackpool	26.4	27.1	28.6	28.6	

Figure D4: Children classified as overweight or obese

# E: Social and Emotional Development Outcomes

Due to the ongoing impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic the EYFSP measures are not available. The BESSI school readiness measure has also only been undertaken with a small percentage of the population (9%) and its future use is being reviewed.

The ASQ measures at the 12-month check indicate that fewer children in the Better Start wards are meeting the expected level of development than across Blackpool. Data showing that at the later development checks there is an increased percentage of children meeting the expected levels of development, both in the Better Start Wards and across Blackpool, with the rate approaching pre-pandemic expectations. This could in part be due to younger children being more affected by the lack of services available in the periods of lockdown, whereas older children have been able to access support through childcare settings. The town wide effort to reopen Family HUBs and provide a higher level of universal community provision will give more opportunities for infants and their families to access support, signposting and services.

## ASQ Problem Solving Score

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached expected level of development at age 12 months

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	72.0	94.0	93.3	89.8	92.3	90.2	
Non Better Start Ward	70.4	93.0	94.3	95.2	89.0	91.0	
Blackpool	71.0	93.0	93.9	93.2	90.2	90.7	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 2 / 2 ½ years

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	85.1	93.0	92.1	88.3	82.2	84.9	
Non Better Start Ward	82.6	96.0	94.2	91.2	83.6	91.2	
Blackpool	83.5	95.0	93.4	90.1	83.0	88.8	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 3 / 3 ½ years

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	72.6	83.2	76.9	85.1	
Non Better Start Ward	85.3	88.3	74.1	89.6	
Blackpool	80.7	86.3	75.2	87.9	

Figure E1: ASQ Problem Solving



## ASQ Personal Social Score

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached expected level of development at age 12 months

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	71.2	94.0	93.3	89.8	91.1	91.2	
Non Better Start Ward	70.4	93.0	94.4	94.8	89.7	90.9	
Blackpool	70.7	94.0	94.0	92.9	90.2	91.0	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 2 / 2 ½ years

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	84.4	93.0	91.4	91.0	82.6	83.6	
Non Better Start Ward	82.6	96.0	94.0	91.0	82.9	88.8	
Blackpool	83.3	95.0	93.0	90.2	82.8	86.8	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 3 / 3 ½ years

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	80.6	85.1	79.0	87.5	
Non Better Start Ward	87.2	90.2	75.0	89.4	
Blackpool	84.8	88.2	76.5	88.6	

Figure E2: ASQ Personal Social Skills

## BESSI Measure

Percentage of children who when screened with the Brief Early Skills and Support Index (BESSI) in the domains of Daily Living Skills and Family Support scored less than 3, indicating higher levels of school readiness

	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	93.0	97.3	5.9	
Non Better Start Ward	98.9	98.4	11.1	
Blackpool	96.8	98.0	9.1	

Figure E3: BESSI School Readiness measure

## Child in Need Plans

**NB:** The way the data is reported to CECD changed in December 2020.

Percentage of the under 5s population who are subject to a Child in Need Plan.

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	2.5	2.3	1.7	1.5	4.8	4.7	
Non Better Start Ward	1.2	1.4	0.9	0.9	2.1	2.0	
Blackpool	1.7	1.8	1.2	1.5	3.1	3.0	

Percentage of the under 5s who are subject to a Child in Need Plan under the Category of Abuse or Neglect

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	1.4	0.9	1.6	1.6	2.9	1.4	
Non Better Start Ward	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.2	0.7	
Blackpool	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.1	1.8	1.0	

Figure E4: Child in Need Plans

## Child Protection Plans

**NB:** The way the data is reported to CECD changed in December 2020.

Percentage of the under 5s population who are subject to a Child Protection Plan

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	1.8	1.5	2.2	2.3	2.9	2.1	
Non Better Start Ward	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.1	
Blackpool	1.3	1.3	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.4	

Percentage of the under 5s who are subject to a Child Protection Plan under the Categories of Abuse or Neglect.

**NB:** A Child Protection Plan can come under more than one category and there are 4 categories for abuse and neglect (i.e. Emotional Abuse, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect)

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	3.4	2.3	2.6	2.5	2.9	2.6	
Non Better Start Ward	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.2	
Blackpool	2.3	1.7	1.2	2.0	1.8	1.6	

Figure E5: Child Protection Plans

## Looked After Children

Percentage of the under 5s population who are registered as a Looked After Child

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	1.9	2.2	2.4	3.1	2.7	3.5	
Non Better Start Ward	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	
Blackpool	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.9	1.7	2.0	

Figure E6: Looked After Children

# F: Speech Language and Communication Outcomes

Due to the ongoing impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic the EYFSP measures are not available. The Wellcomm Assessment is not taken at population level, 61% of children had the measure undertaken, where Health Visitors identify potential additional needs. Although the ASQ and Wellcomm show similar trends in the 12 month and 3-3.5 year development check, at 2-2.5 years a larger number of children are identified through the Wellcomm as requiring additional support. These children are referred to the triage panel for support and this is likely to be supporting the higher levels of children meeting the expected level of development at the 3-3.5 year development check.

## ASQ Communication Score

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached expected level of development at age 12 months

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	71.2	94.0	93.7	92.4	94.4	92.4	
Non Better Start Ward	70.4	93.0	94.3	95.7	89.7	92.3	
Blackpool	70.7	94.0	94.0	94.5	91.5	92.3	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 2 / 2 ½ years

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	84.4	93.0	83.6	79.7	77.0	75.0	
Non Better Start Ward	82.6	96.0	87.0	86.1	77.9	82.5	
Blackpool	83.3	95.0	85.7	83.6	77.6	79.6	

Percentage of children undertaking the ASQ Measure who reached the expected level of development at age 3 / 3 ½ years

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	74.2	81.8	78.43	84.0	
Non Better Start Ward	86.2	87.0	74.09	89.6	
Blackpool	81.9	84.9	75.78	87.4	

Figure F1: ASQ Communication Skills

## Wellcomm Assessment

Percentage of children undertaking the Wellcomm Assessment who reached the expected level of speech, language and communication at age 1 year

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	92.0	90.9	86.2	93.2	
Non Better Start Ward	89.8	91.1	87.2	91.4	
Blackpool	90.7	91.0	86.9	92.0	

Percentage of children undertaking the Wellcomm Assessment who reached the expected level of speech, language and communication at age 2 / 2 1/2 years

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	63.7	62.8	70.8	61.1	
Non Better Start Ward	69.7	63.4	74.6	68.7	
Blackpool	67.4	63.2	73.3	66.1	

Percentage of children undertaking the Wellcomm Assessment who reached the expected level of speech, language and communication at age 3 / 3 1/2 years

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	79.5	81.7	92.5	87.8	
Non Better Start Ward	96.1	89.4	90.0	93.8	
Blackpool	90.5	86.4	91.1	91.8	

Figure F2: Wellcomm Assessment

# G: Drivers

Small increases are seen in the number of children whose carers confirm at development checks that they are brushing their teeth, there is still a low percentage of children who are registered with dentists and focused work is being undertaken to increase awareness of practices offering NHS dental registration.

Mothers smoking at time of delivery has reduced in line with the national figures (0.05-0.08%), the percentage of women smoking remains more than double the national average, however it is positive that there is a continued reduction. Mothers disclosing alcohol consumption during pregnancy has increased this year, in Year 4 a spike was also seen although at a much higher rate, which coincided with the first launch of the Alcohol Exposed Pregnancies campaign, the campaign in Year 7 may again have raised awareness and made women more open to disclosing alcohol use to their midwife.

The percentage of mothers initiating breastfeeding at birth in the Better Start Wards has increased and the level is slightly higher than the pre-pandemic rate, the investment in the HENRY infant feeding support service is likely to have contributed to this. Mothers maintaining breastfeeding is showing some improvements at 3-4 months and 12months but there is still a steep decline at 6-8 weeks. An encouraging drop has however been seen in reports of early weaning before 3-4 months, it is hoped that this trend will continue and a reduction in the number of children being weaned before 6 months will be observed.

## Oral Health Indicators (Brushing)

Percentage of children who have teeth at the 12 month check whose teeth are brushed per guidelines

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	85.6	80.3	90.0	90.8	
Non Better Start Ward	89.8	89.2	92.0	94.2	
Blackpool	88.2	85.8	91.2	92.9	

Percentage of children whose teeth are brushed per guidelines as at the 2 / 2 ½ year check (as a percentage of records where a response is recorded)

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	88.7	92.5	92.5	91.8	
Non Better Start Ward	95.0	91.1	93.7	93.9	
Blackpool	92.7	91.6	93.2	93.1	

Percentage of children whose teeth are brushed per guidelines as at the 3 / 3 ½ year check (as a percentage of records where a response is recorded)

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	86.1	86.8	92.5	93.5	
Non Better Start Ward	83.6	87.3	95.6	94.9	
Blackpool	84.5	86.1	94.4	94.4	

Figure G1.1: Oral Health Indicators (Brushing)

## Oral Health Indicators (Dental Registration)

Percentage of children who have teeth at the 12 month check who are registered with a dentist

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	46.6	51.7	37.3	28.3	
Non Better Start Ward	62.9	60.4	42.0	39.0	
Blackpool	56.6	57.2	40.2	34.8	

Percentage of children who are recorded as being registered with a dentist as at the 2 / 2 ½ year check (as a percentage of visits that took place)

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	54.3	64.4	62.8	51.5	
Non Better Start Ward	74.8	74.9	69.4	63.5	
Blackpool	67.2	70.9	67.0	58.9	

Percentage of children who are recorded as being registered with a dentist as at the 3 / 3 ½ year check (as a percentage of visits that took place)

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	61.1	64.4	67.8	22.8	
Non Better Start Ward	71.6	73.8	73.5	35.9	
Blackpool	68.0	70.1	71.3	30.8	

Figure G1.2: Oral Health Indicators (Dental Registration)

## Smoking

Percentage of pregnant women reporting smoking prior to booking

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	58.0	55.3	54.1	50.6	50.3	46.7	
Non Better Start Ward	40.4	40.6	37.2	33.9	36.1	34.8	
Blackpool	47.3	45.9	43.1	40.4	41.6	39.5	

Percentage of pregnant women reporting still smoking at time of booking

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	40.4	37.4	39.4	37.5	37.9	30.5	
Non Better Start Ward	-	23.3	21.4	19.7	20.6	17.4	
Blackpool	-	28.4	27.7	26.6	27.4	22.6	

Percentage of pregnant women reporting smoking at time of delivery

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	38.4	35.7	34.2	30.8	31.3	30.5	
Non Better Start Ward	14.5	19.0	19.8	17.0	16.0	15.4	
Blackpool	20.7	25.3	25.2	21.6	21.8	21.1	

Figure G2: Smoking Indicators

## Low Birth Weight (<2,500 grams)

Percentage of babies born with a birth weight lower than 2,500 grams

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	6.6	10.2	10.2	11.0	13.1	10.3	
Non Better Start Ward	1.4	9.6	8.3	8.2	7.9	8.1	
Blackpool	2.7	9.8	9.0	9.2	9.9	8.9	

Figure G3: Low Birth Weight

## Pre-term birth (<37 weeks)

Percentage of babies born who were born before 37 weeks gestation

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	11.0	9.4	11.2	11.2	11.6	11.8	
Non Better Start Ward	5.3	8.3	9.9	8.9	8.7	8.4	
Blackpool	6.8	8.7	10.4	9.8	9.8	9.7	

Figure G4: Pre-term Birth

## Alcohol Consumption

Percentage of pregnant women booking in who reported that they consumed alcohol pre-pregnancy

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	69.8	68.0	68.4	67.4	59.8	54.8	
Non Better Start Ward	76.8	79.3	80.7	75.8	69.3	69.9	
Blackpool	74.0	75.2	76.4	65.6	65.6	64.0	

Percentage of pregnant women booking in who reported that they continue to consume alcohol at any level

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	1.3	0.2	12.5	1.0	0.1	0.6	
Non Better Start Ward	1.7	3.5	15.8	0.6	0.1	0.5	
Blackpool	1.5	2.4	14.6	0.8	0.1	0.5	

Figure G5: Alcohol Consumption Indicators

## Depression and Anxiety Screening (Whooley and GAD2)

Percentage of pregnant women, at booking, who when undertaking the Whooley and GAD2 screening tools were then asked to complete the GAD7 or PHQ9 due to concerns

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	6.2	6.6	3.1	2.7	3.5	3.9	
Non Better Start Ward	4.2	3.9	3.3	3.5	2.5	2.8	
Blackpool	5.0	4.9	3.2	3.2	2.9	3.2	

Figure G6: Depression and Anxiety Screening Indicators

## Anxiety

(Ctrl) Percentage of pregnant women who completed GAD7 whose score at booking indicates they suffer from moderate to severe anxiety

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	75.6	78.7	66.7	68.4	53.8	55.6	
Non Better Start Ward	68.1	64.6	66.0	72.5	72.4	62.5	
Blackpool	71.6	71.6	66.3	71.2	63.6	58.8	

Percentage of women who completed GAD7 whose postnatal score indicates they suffer from moderate to severe anxiety

	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	32.0	40.0	50.0	56.5	53.6	
Non Better Start Ward	38.0	69.2	26.3	49.6	58.1	
Blackpool	35.3	56.5	24.0	52.6	55.9	

Figure G7: Anxiety Indicators

## Depression

Percentage of pregnant women who completed PHQ9 whose score at booking indicates they suffer from moderate to severe depression

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	78.1	85.1	87.0	73.7	57.7	55.6	
Non Better Start Ward	75.0	66.7	72.3	80.0	65.5	25.0	
Blackpool	76.4	75.8	77.1	78.0	61.8	41.2	

Percentage of women who completed PHQ9 whose score indicates they suffer from moderate to severe depression

	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	34.5	50.0	42.9	64.2	46.4	
Non Better Start Ward	40.2	100.0	31.6	46.2	61.3	
Blackpool	36.5	77.8	34.6	54.4	54.2	

Figure G8: Depression Indicators

## Breastfeeding

Percentage of pregnant women who initiated breastfeeding within 48 hours of delivery

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	55.0	54.3	53.4	51.0	51.1	53.6	
Non Better Start Ward	44.0	64.3	64.5	65.0	61.6	59.5	
Blackpool	43.9	60.5	60.3	58.9	57.6	57.3	

Percentage of babies being breastfed (partially or exclusively) at 6-8 weeks visit

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	21.0	22.9	21.9	20.6	26.5	24.8	
Non Better Start Ward	25.1	24.7	24.1	28.5	30.9	31.7	
Blackpool	23.5	24.0	23.3	25.5	29.3	28.8	

Percentage of babies being breastfed (partially or exclusively) at 3-4 months visit

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	14.8	14.4	20.3	19.4	
Non Better Start Ward	18.0	20.5	22.7	24.9	
Blackpool	16.8	18.2	21.7	22.5	

Percentage of babies being breastfed (partially or exclusively) at 12 months visit

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	8.3	9.1	13.4	13.1	
Non Better Start Ward	8.9	11.7	14.3	17.9	
Blackpool	8.7	10.7	14.0	16.0	

Figure G9: Breastfeeding Indicators

## Maternal BMI

Percentage of mother's whose BMI was greater or equal to 35 at booking

	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	10.4	14.9	15.0	13.9	14.5	15.0	
Non Better Start Ward	10.6	10.0	11.3	11.3	13.4	12.8	
Blackpool	10.5	11.8	12.6	12.3	13.8	13.7	

Figure G10: Maternal BMI



### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)

Percentage of mothers receiving their antenatal visit who have an ACE score of 1 or higher (as a percentage of mothers who have a score recorded on their profile at the antenatal visit)

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	49.0	66.9	60.2	55.8	
Non Better Start Ward	26.8	52.5	37.9	48.9	
Blackpool	38.9	59.0	46.1	51.7	

Figure G11: Maternal Adverse Childhood Experiences

### Mothers who report early weaning

(Ctrl) Percentage of mothers who reported that they had introduced complementary food before 3 to 4 months visit (as a percentage of those where response recorded)

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	28.2	38.2	31.3	23.8	
Non Better Start Ward	21.4	29.0	20.4	18.6	
Blackpool	23.9	32.5	24.6	20.6	

Percentage of mothers who, at the time of the 12 months visit, reported that they had introduced complementary food before the child was 6 months old

	Yr 4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Trend
Better Start Ward	54.5	59.6	54.7	56.2	
Non Better Start Ward	49.1	54.1	50.0	48.7	
Blackpool	51.1	56.1	51.7	51.6	

Figure G12: Mothers who report early weaning

# YEAR 7

2021/22 PART ONE

- New Services x 5
- Events & Training x 9
- Launches x 8
- Campaigns x 8
- Recruitment x 7

## New Services

In April 2021 a new speech and language group called **Little Explorers** was launched to deliver weekly activities to families from community venues.

**Library Early Years Engagement Workers** began visiting early settings in August 2021 to deliver speech and language activities.

Trauma Informed Maternity and Perinatal Mental Health Services Training (TIMPS) was launched with Lancashire Midwifery in October 2021 with **Organisational Readiness Workshops**.

**Free grotto visits** for families in Blackpool were launched to families in December 2021 at three community venues across the town. Families were invited to meet Father Christmas and receive a book gift, while also enjoying festive crafts and activities.

## Supervised Toothbrushing

In January 2022 the scheme was relaunched with early years settings in Blackpool.



## Events and Training

In April 2021 **NHS England Trauma Informed Maternity and Perinatal Improvement Guidelines** were presented to professionals.

June 2021 was a busy month for **virtual conferences** including World Association for Infant Mental Health (WAIMH) and Trauma Summit. CECD also presented the Health Visitor ACEs routine enquiry work as part of the trauma and Health Visiting work.

Representatives from CECD presented at the **British Psychological Society Conference** in September 2021.

In October 2021, the CECD held their **annual conference** 'Rebuilding the Future: Putting Children and Babies First' for 500 virtual delegates.

**iHV Fathers and Perinatal** training took place in November 2021.

## Early Years Mental Health Summit

CECD presented at the Summit in February 2022 about Blackpool Better Start Community Approaches to Pregnancy and Early Years.



In December 2021, the CECD attended Manchester University to present a seminar on '**Place Based Approaches**'.

March 2022 saw the national NCB 'A Better Start – Reducing Inequalities' conference take place, with **presentations from the CECD** on co-production, data and workforce development.

## Commissioner Visit

The CECD was visited by the new Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, in July 2021. The visit included meeting families in Revoe and a roundtable discussion with senior leaders.



# YEAR 7

2021/22 PART TWO

New Services x 5

Events & Training x 9

Launches x 8

Campaigns x 8

Recruitment x 7

## Activity Programme

A town-wide early years timetable was launched in March 2022 to inform local families of all activities taking place at Family Hubs, and in community venues throughout the town.



## Launches

Blackpool Council launches an **Early Years Communications Offer** as part of the SEND offer in May 2021.



### Blackpool Sling Library

Following a year of virtual appointments, Blackpool Sling Library reverts to delivering face-to-face appointments in June 2021.

In October 2021 the **Early Years Strategy Partnership** was formed to review and renew local early years strategy.

The scale-up of **Video Interactive Guidance (VIG)** service with Blackpool Council launched in October 2021.

A new **Money Saving Connector** role was launched in December 2021 to support parents through the food/fuel poverty and cost of living crisis.

January 2022 saw the launch of the **Blackpool Together Integrated Care** pilot.

In March 2022 a new working group **The Pregnancy and Early Years Partnership** was launched to merge the Healthy Child Working Group with the Early Years Strategic Group.

## Campaigns

As part of the 'Get Blackpool Reading' campaign, **book drops** took place in local parks and community venues in April and June 2021.

To encourage take-up of the Covid19 vaccination, the Community Connector team supported the **Covid19 Vaccine Bus** in Blackpool locations in September 2021.

### Superbabies

In June 2021 the new 'Superbabies' campaign was launched on buses and on social media. The campaign highlighted the benefits of not drinking alcohol during pregnancy on the unborn baby.



A targeted offer from the **Book Trust** was launched to young parents in September 2021.

In November 2021 **literacy activities and sessions** around the theme 'Out and About in Autumn' were delivered to families.

# YEAR 7

2021/22 PART THREE

- New Services x 5
- Events & Training x 9
- Launches x 8
- Campaigns x 8
- Recruitment x 7

## Campaigns

As part of the **Christmas campaign**, a free, personalised letter from Father Christmas was distributed to families in November 2021.

In December 2021 a **campaign** highlighting services available for families to help with food and fuel poverty was launched.

### Healthy Start Campaign

To encourage take-up of the Healthy Start scheme, a campaign was created to inform parents of the benefit in February 2022.



## Recruitment

In April 2021 new **Library Early Years Engagement Officers** were recruited.

A new **Evaluation Officer** joined the CECD team in May 2021.

The new **CECD Director**, Clare Law, was in position by July 2021.

November 2021 saw an increase of staff within the **Speech and Language Home Visitor team**.

A new **Development Support Officer** in the area of Diet and Nutrition was appointed in January 2022.

### Connector Roles

Additional Community Connector positions of Health Connector and Dad's Connector were filled in June 2021.



## OUR VISION

Our vision is for Blackpool families to raise happy, healthy children who grow up in communities that they feel proud of .

Every new baby in Blackpool will have access to the care and nurture they need for healthy development and will be ready to start school.

## OUR MISSION

We support and empower families in Blackpool to have the best outcomes for their babies and children, from pregnancy to starting school.

We work with families to find the right support for them, at a personal and community level.

We are compassionate, approachable, dedicated and respectful.

Our investment, our research and our expertise will provide a legacy to the future families of Blackpool.

We will give the community the tools and advice to improve the outcomes of Blackpool children for years to come.

## OUR PLEDGE

1. Our families, communities and workforce will have opportunities to understand how babies' brains are built and will champion the importance of early child development.
2. Our families, communities and workforce will be supported to achieve their potential, and to have positive mental health and wellbeing.
3. All babies and children in Blackpool will be offered high-quality early years education and experiences and will have access to safe parks and areas for play.
4. Our families will have the right support at the right time and will feel seen, heard and cared for.
5. Together, the Partnership will lay the foundations to enable the Better Start approach to continue, influencing policy and practice through evidence and changing the way we work long-term.

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**Sharon Wadsworth**

**Subject:**

FW: Better Connected - Blackpool Better Start Newsletter



**Blackpool  
Better Start**

**Better Connected**  
November 2022



## Welcome

Welcome to the Blackpool Better Start quarterly newsletter! We're here to bring you all the latest information about events and activities we have planned for Blackpool families to enjoy.

You can also find out about the events and training we offer to local early years professionals too.

If you have any feedback, or if you'd like us to include one of your events, please contact us [here](#)

## Festive Fun for Families!

This year Blackpool Better Start is giving every child aged 0-4 in Blackpool a free personalised letter from Father Christmas, posted to your door! To get this special letter for the little people in your life, families can register [here](#).





Families can also enter a ballot to visit Father Christmas in his grotto by visiting our booking link to [enter the draw](#).  
 The grottos will run from 5th - 9th December from Westminster, Mereside Freedom Centre and @The Grange, giving local 0-4s magical

## Cost-of-Living Support

This month we have launched our first ever Cost-of-Living roadshow, to help families cut through the confusion and get free, friendly and confidential advice from our Community Connectors and trusted partners.

Over 40 families attended the event, and as a result we will be holding weekly drop-ins and future roadshows to help support families through these difficult times. For more information, please check the Family Hub timetables on the [Better Start website](#).

To keep up to date with all our news, please visit the [Better Start Facebook page](#).

**Confused about cost of living support and advice on offer?**

Apply for your place at our 'Cost of Living' event for Blackpool families including free play session for little ones

**Blackpool Better Start**

**COST OF LIVING ROADSHOW**

Thursday 10th Nov, 1-3pm  
 at St Johns Church  
 (Opposite Winter Gardens)  
 FY1 1BP

**Offers include:**

- Low cost 0-4 clothing
- Free keeping warm kits
- Free hot brews & food box
- Better Start packs & vitamins
- Play session for 0-4s

**Find out about:**

- Help with forms
- Energy advice
- Grants and funds
- Local offers

Scan QR code to apply for your place or visit <https://bit.ly/3p210wz7H>

## Early Years Workforce Learning Events





# Blackpool Better Start

## Learning Events 2022-23



**Book on via the included links below which will direct you to the relevant learning event.**

Any Blackpool Council staff member should book using the internal Employee Self Service booking system linked below. Please ensure you are signed in to ESS here [[ESS - Login \(webitrent.com\)](#)] to access the training links. If you are not an employee of

Blackpool Council, book via the linked external training application form hosted on the Blackpool Council website.

<b>Resilience Film: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope</b> <i>(90 mins, online)</i>  This documentary film reveals how toxic stress can trigger hormones that wreak havoc on the brains and bodies of children which can lead to lifelong adversity. Aimed at those working with young school age children and teens.	8 <sup>th</sup> Nov 4:00pm—5:30pm
	24 <sup>th</sup> Nov 10:30am—12:00pm
	13 <sup>th</sup> Dec 1:00pm—2:30pm
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar 1:00pm—2:30pm
	<a href="#">Council employee booking</a> <a href="#">External applicant booking</a>
<b>Introducing the Blackpool Parent Infant Relationship Service</b> <i>(1 hour, online, delivered via Microsoft Teams)</i>  Join us in introducing our new Parent Infant Mental Health Team in Blackpool, exploring what our service offers to parents, infants, and the workforce, and providing greater insight into the importance of infant mental health.	23 <sup>rd</sup> Nov 12:30pm—1:30pm  <a href="#">Council employee booking</a>  <a href="#">External applicant booking</a>
<b>Fathers and Perinatal Mental Health</b> <i>(Full day, The Solaris Centre)</i>  Presented by Community Engagement Officer Colin Smy and Specialist Health Visitor Tracy Greenwood  This one-day training delivered by local Champions trained through the Institute of Health Visiting will increase knowledge of the neglected and inadequately understood mental health needs of fathers, better preparing them for parenthood.	30 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 25 <sup>th</sup> Jan 9:30am—4:30pm  <a href="#">Council employee booking</a>  <a href="#">External applicant booking</a>
<i>Future learning events to be announced</i>	
<i>Future learning events to be announced</i>	

Further learning events are planned for the following dates with information to follow:

7<sup>th</sup> Dec, 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan

If you have any questions or for further event details please email:

[owd@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:owd@blackpool.gov.uk)

The work Better Start is doing is for professionals who have contact with expectant parents and children aged 0-4yrs.



@CECDBlackpool

[www.blackpoolbetterstart.org.uk](http://www.blackpoolbetterstart.org.uk)



Blackpool Better Start



COMMUNITY FUND

**For more information about booking onto workforce training events, please visit [Training and events page](#)**



[Unsubscribe](#)

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 December 2022

## YOUNG INSPECTORS

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive a presentation on Young Inspectors.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To identify any further issues for scrutiny.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure Members of the Committee are aware of the arrangements regarding Young Inspectors.

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

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

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

### 5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

### 6.0 Background information

6.1 The Committee will receive a presentation, attached at Appendix 6(a) on the topic of Young Inspectors.

6.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

- 7.1 Appendix 6(a): Young Inspectors Presentation
- Appendix 6(b): Young Inspectors - The Charter Mark For Semi Independent Homes
- Appendix 6(c): Young Inspectors Work Plan

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

- 8.1 None.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

- 9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

- 10.1 None.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

- 11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

- 12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

- 13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

- 14.1 None.

# Blackpool Young Inspectors



# Highlights Jun 21 – Nov 22

- Training programme fully developed and delivered to 10 young people
- Recruitment ongoing
- Charter Mark for post 16 accommodation coproduced and piloted in Bispham House
- Supporting the set up of a local new children's residential home
- Charter Mark awarded to Bispham House

# Activity

- Team of 8 fully trained Young Inspectors
- Training session delivered
- Recruitment ongoing
- 12 Quality assurance visits
- 2 Charter Mark co-production sessions with Providers
- 10 sessions to co-produce the Charter Mark with support from staff in Headstart
- Piloted implementation of Charter Mark and awarded to Bispham House ( BCH )
- 1 session with Creative Living to consult on development of residential home
- Presented at the National Children's Commissioning Conference

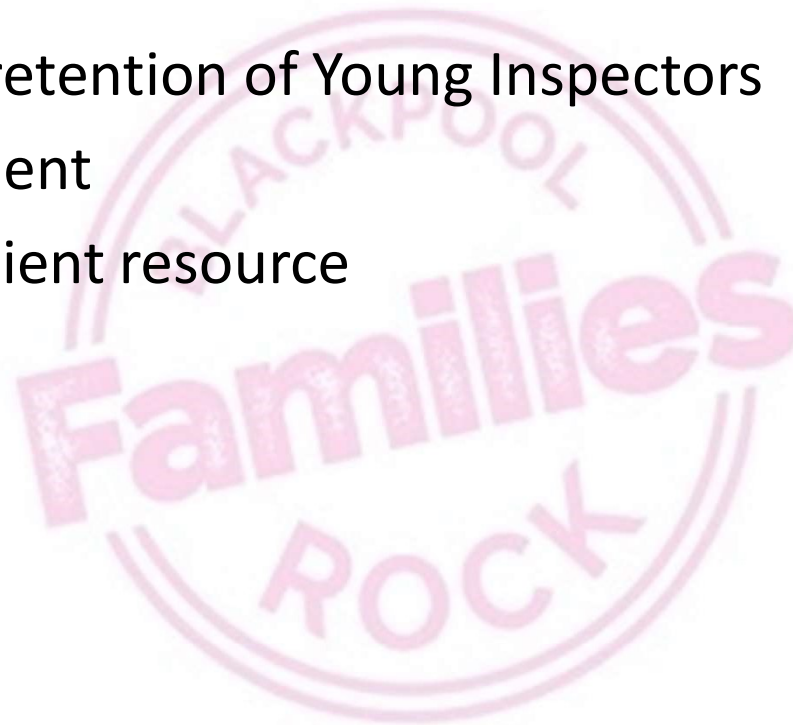
# Future Plans

- To award Charter Mark status to all providers
- Develop and train a consistent team of 10 Young Inspectors
- Evidence improvement of outcomes for the young people
- Support providers to become OFSTED registered ( national requirement Apr/May 2023)
- To be an intrinsic part of Blackpool's Journey to Good



# Challenges

- Recruitment and retention of Young Inspectors
- Provider engagement
- Capacity – insufficient resource



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# THE CHARTER MARK FOR SEMI INDEPENDENT HOMES

## THE PLACE

<b>Standard Required</b>
The home is decorated and maintained to a high standard, it feels warm and welcoming. (decoration/furnishings) any damages are repaired quickly
I can walk to the local shops and local services
I have good links to public transport
I have a say in how my bedroom is decorated and I can contribute to the general appearance of the home.
I was given a Welcome Pack which includes new bedding, towels, and basic toiletries.
I feel safe in the home
There is access to a communal space where I can spend time together with other people and staff in the home.
I have access to a house computer/laptop for my studying
I have access to free wifi
I have access to Netflix, TV package
My friends and family can visit in the communal space. There are Clear Rules on visitors and overnight stays.
I have access to an outdoor space and I am encouraged and supported to spend time outdoors
I can have time out in my room and my privacy is respected.
The use of CCTV has been discussed with me and is only used to monitor entrance/ exits to the home. (or in exceptional circumstances to safeguard an individual) YP to be discussed and agreed with YP and SW)
I have a key to the front door and my room
I have access to a fully equipped kitchen at all times and lockable storage.
There is a place to wash and dry my clothes. I have access to an iron, ironing board and outdoor drying space
I am supported to eat a healthy diet, I am given choices on the food I eat, I have access to basic food essentials in the kitchen at all times.
I understand the rules of the home, they are clear and fair. They are regularly reviewed so everyone knows what the expectations are. They are clear and realistic. They also are flexible and can be changed to meet the needs of the current group.

**THE PEOPLE**

I feel like the staff care about me.

I get to spend time with staff and they are there when I need them

I know when staff will be out of the home and I can get hold of staff when if I need them.

I have built trusting relationships with staff and know I can go to them if I need any support.

The staff have a variety of skills and abilities so they are able to support me

The staff are empathetic and have a good understanding of my past experiences

The staff are responsive to me if I am having a difficult time, they can see when I am upset/overwhelmed and will actively offer support.

Staff are proactive and can manage situations and make decisions with me without always relying on the support of SW/PA

Staff work well together with other people who support me, they will advocate for me if I need them to

Staff are enthusiastic and motivated, the staff stick around so I don't keep having to get used to new workers all the time

Staff are positive and creative, they can think outside the box and will go the extra mile to support me

I believe the staff are positive role models and act like a good parent to me

The staff appear resilient and confident, I can trust them to support me

I am involved in the recruitment of new staff with other young people in the home.  
I can help to interview new staff, together we are able to have the deciding vote and feel fully involved in the whole process

**ME**

Staff understand that I am learning to become independent and that I still have things to learn. I am working towards being Independent by the time I leave.

I am supported to learn about my own emotional wellbeing and ways to become more resilient

I am supported to learn about healthy friendships/relationships.

I am supported and encouraged to see my family and friends, staff understand that I may need help in maintaining and understanding these relationships

I am supported to create good support networks around me

I know and understand my individual support plan. I have been fully involved in the writing of it and it is the right plan for me

I am supported to learn independence and skills for life which are individual to me and the areas I need support in

I am supported to be healthy and make good choices

I am encouraged to be ambitious

I am supported to make plans for my future

I am encouraged and supported to try new things and get involved in my local community.

The level of support is individual to what I need, it is recognised that I may need more support when I first move in.

My successes and special occasions are celebrated

There are fun activities to do and I am given choices about what we do.

I am supported to access any support services that may help me.

I am supported to move on and helped to settle in my new home. Staff will keep in touch and check in on me to see how I am doing

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Paul Turner – Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years.
<b>Meeting</b>	8 December 2022

## LITERACY STRATEGY UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive a report on progress made since the launch of the literacy strategy.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To support the continued focus upon literacy in Blackpool schools and the wider Blackpool community.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 Literacy is key to educational outcomes and employment / life opportunities for the residents of Blackpool.

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

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

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

### 5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

### 6.0 Background information

6.1 The general aim of the strategy is for every person in Blackpool to have the speaking, reading and writing skills to enable wider learning and employment opportunities as well as access to social and cultural activities.

The recent Government white paper sets targets for 90% of pupils at the end of KS2 to reach the expected standard for reading and writing (and Maths) and 70% of secondary pupils achieving English GCSE grade 5 or higher.

To do this we must improve literacy provision across all educational settings from Early Years through to Adult learning and ensure promotion of digital skills and literacy. This will be through -

- Teaching and Learning
- Curriculum development
- Libraries
- Early Years
- Adult Education

The strategy has twenty-four overarching Recommendations.

We have established a strategic group containing expertise from all stakeholders across Blackpool and two eminent university professors. By March 22 we had established the vision, goal and aim for the strategy. Since the launch -

- Groups (including several KS3 project leads) worked on developing activity plans and establishing baseline data sources for all 6 priority areas in the strategy.
- Members completed a data survey, establishing the literacy data we already collate/have access to across Blackpool.
- We discussed the challenges and barriers to this project.
- We identified next steps and actions ahead of September 2022.
- National charity Right to Succeed have collated the information gathered and added this into a single, comprehensive implementation plan, which has been agreed by members.
- We have started to compile baselines for all priorities/objectives.
- Audit tools were sent out to Early Years, Primary and Secondary settings.
- We have continue compiling baselines for all priorities/objectives.
- Priorities will now to be allocated to group members and establish some working groups (First one, SLCN in Early Years).

6.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

## 7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 7(a) – Literacy for Life - Literacy Strategy



**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 Internal and external consultation was held whilst writing the literacy strategy and this has been ongoing as described above.

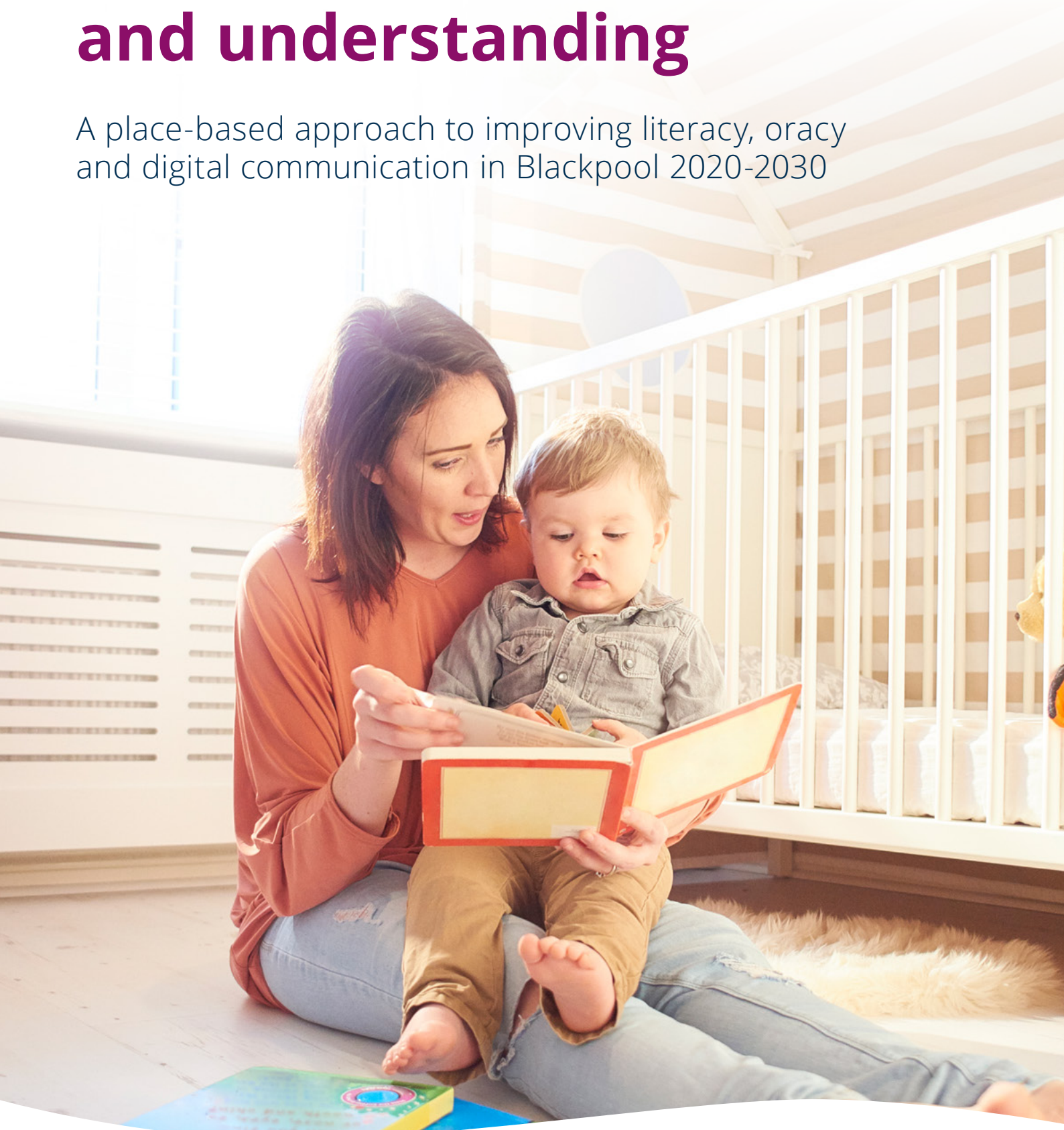
**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 Literacy Strategy

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# Literacy for life - A journey of joy, discovery and understanding

A place-based approach to improving literacy, oracy  
and digital communication in Blackpool 2020-2030



# A challenge that can only be completed in partnership

Everybody has a part to play in raising levels of literacy. There must be a clear partnership between schools and families, health, businesses, charities and all elements of a community to really make a difference. Working in isolation dilutes the impact and slows down the processes.

Our collective aim is that everyone who lives in Blackpool is confident at speaking, listens well, enjoys reading and writes with clarity and in detail. These are big ambitions and a big task. We know that many adults wish they could read, write and talk in public more confidently. They understand that these skills help us to enjoy life more and enable us to understand new ideas, helping us to put forward our own thoughts and dreams. They also understand that being confident in oracy and literacy can help us to secure a good job and even help us to start up our own business.

Being good at speaking and listening and reading and writing are important in many ways and their impact is felt throughout everyone's lives.

Becoming literate starts very early on. Children experience a wide range of words and conversations, are encouraged to join in with nursery rhymes and are shown how to handle books. The role of adults in the family is crucial because they are the child's first and most important teacher. If adults are not confident in reading, writing, speaking and listening it will impact on the child. This is why we have called our approach 'Literacy for Life'. To improve oracy and literacy across the town we will need to mobilise everyone from the youngest to the oldest. As they say, it is never too late to start!



# Executive summary

The Blackpool literacy strategy is one of three pillars that underpin the town's ambitious 2020-30 education strategy. At the heart of the strategy is an ambition for every resident, regardless of their age, to enjoy learning and to see this as a key element of a satisfying and rewarding life. A crucial element of improved learning, and the enjoyment it brings, is having strong literacy and oracy skills. These are some of the important skills we all require to better understand our world and our place within it.

Research has shown us that greater levels of literacy improve life-expectancy, reduce poverty, increase employment levels and enhance an individual's wellbeing, as well as many other significant gains. They are also the skills employers seek and are therefore important in enabling local people to find rewarding and fulfilling employment. More recently, the importance of digital technology, has come to the fore and is increasingly affecting our lives. So, we have included digital skills as an element of the literacy strategy.

The journey towards strong literacy, oracy and digital skills starts with the family and with pre-school settings. It continues through school, then college and into the world of training and work. If we all play our part in supporting this journey then children and families will flourish, along with our town. It is our collaborative endeavour that will make the difference.

The literacy strategy is unashamedly ambitious. It wants children to have good language and communication skills from an early age, so they thrive and are ready for school. We also want them to develop their literacy, oracy and digital skills through their school years so that they can access the curriculum and become proficient readers, writers, and speakers. They will use these skills to love reading, pass examinations, enter the world of work and training, and achieve great things.

For older residents we need to enable them to further improve their skills acquisition including those who, for whatever reason, didn't gain the necessary skills when they were at school. This is why we have engaged a range of services across the town in our efforts. These include the library service, employers and charities, in addition to schools and colleges reaching out further to support the parents and carers of their pupils and students.

We want to see more residents reading, whether that is their local newspaper or an online review of a film they are considering watching. We want to encourage more of it, so we have introduced a 30 minute reading challenge. The 'Blackpool 30 Challenge' is for everyone regardless of age, so get involved and use the improvement of literacy, oracy and digital skills as a passport to a more enjoyable and fulfilling life.

**Neil Jack**  
Chief Executive



**Cllr Lynn Williams**  
Leader of Blackpool Council



# We have momentum but need to improve further

Blackpool has long been regarded as a town with a lot of social and economic challenges. But things are changing. The Council's 2030 Agenda for Action provides an ambitious vision for the future with more jobs, better homes, more employment for 16-24 year olds and an improved perception of Blackpool as a 'can do' place. The Council has agreed with its partners to focus on three Priority Areas, one of which is Literacy.

Our Early Years settings, primary schools, secondary schools, Post 16 provision, special schools and alternative provision are improving strongly, with nearly all judged as good or better by Ofsted. Additionally, Blackpool Adult Learning provision is also judged as good. This sadly doesn't mean that all children are good at literacy and oracy. We know that some settings need to focus even more on these skills so that all children and young people benefit from the joy, discovery and understanding that come from being confident at speaking and listening and reading and writing. We want to encourage more cooperation between Early Years settings and their feeder primary schools and encourage even higher expectations in the training of staff for Early Years settings.

Much good work is underway, including a successful Literacy Project for younger students in secondary schools, Better Start's literacy family learning project and the considerable efforts of an English Hub. Blackpool Libraries have always been at the heart of local communities across the town, but recently they have developed a 4 year Ambition Plan, which redoubles their efforts to become 'the living room of the community.'

The town has many amazing businesses including some with a national and international reputation for excellence. These businesses contribute much to the fabric of our town, providing employment and driving innovation. They require confident and ambitious employees with strong literacy and oracy skills.

It is apparent that we have much good work going on, but every Early Years setting, school, college, father, mother, carer, child, student and resident knows they can improve their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

To date there has been no overarching strategy for developing literacy and oracy across the town. This plan brings together all of the amazing work that is taking place so that they are better known and better connected.

We are ambitious because we love Blackpool and we want all of its residents, regardless of age, to benefit from the joy, discovery and understanding that comes from strong oracy and literacy skills. Our town's future depends on this plan succeeding. So, get involved!



# The vision

This literacy strategy will improve outcomes for everybody in Blackpool by championing literacy at every stage of a person's life. We believe that greater levels of literacy will improve life-expectancy, reduce poverty, increase employment levels and reduce offending rates, as well as many other significant gains.

An often quoted statistic is that just thirty minutes of reading a day can significantly increase levels of literacy.

Our Blackpool "30" challenge will ensure that all children and adults see the real value of reading for pleasure for 30 minutes a day.

# The Blackpool 30 Challenge



We hope to inspire all organisations to encourage their employees, members, children and contacts to read for thirty minutes a day. This could be anything from a magazine, newspaper, article or book. The main message is that reading is fun and good for your wellbeing. You don't have to read to achieve a goal or read in a particular place, at a particular time or for a particular reason. Just form a "reading habit" and be part of the Blackpool challenge and your own, personal reading journey.

We want every child and adult to be reading every day. Make it your mission to share the message that reading is fun and that reading with a child is a massively important part of parenting!

**A library opens up a world of possibilities and every child and adult should be able to access a local library.**



# What do Blackpool children enjoy reading

**Children have turned to adventure, comedy, fantasy and real life stories during lockdown and have found joy in discovering books they'd never read before**



- Children are reading more fiction (genres: adventure, funny books, realistic stories and magical/fantasy), song lyrics, news, non-fiction, etc. with a real uplift in reading on screen, compared with before lockdown
- Almost 1 in 2 (46.3%) children said that they had read new books during lockdown and 1 in 7 (14.1%) had re-read books they have at home

**Reading has also provided refuge in this difficult time, supporting children's mental wellbeing and enabling them to dream about the future**



- 3 in 5 (59.3%) children and young people told us during lockdown that reading makes them feel better
- 3 in 10 (31.6%) said that reading helps them when they feel sad because they cannot see their family and friends
- Reading is encouraging half of children (50.2%) to dream about the future

**While the gender gap in children's reading has widened during lockdown, audiobooks may provide a route into reading for boys**



- Lockdown has increased the literacy engagement gap between boys and girls, with the gap in reading enjoyment widening from 2.3 percentage points at the beginning of 2020 to 11.5 percentage points during lockdown. The gender gap in daily reading also widened during lockdown, increasing from a 4.3 percentage point difference at the beginning of 2020 to a 7.4 percentage point difference during lockdown
- Audiobooks might be a way to re-engage boys with stories, as this is the only format where more boys than girls said that they enjoy it more and are doing it more often.
- Overall, slightly more boys than girls (25.0% vs. 22.4%) said they had listened to audiobooks more during lockdown than before
- Audiobooks also appear to offer a way into literacy for boys, with 1 in 2 (51.1%) boys saying that listening to audiobooks has increased their interest in reading, and 2 in 5 (43.2%) saying that it has made them more interested in writing

Source of data, [www.literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2020-before-and-during-the-covid-19-lockdown](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2020-before-and-during-the-covid-19-lockdown)





# The benefits of reading for pleasure

“

*When teachers know more about children’s literature and children’s reading practices beyond school, they widen what counts as ‘reading’ in their classrooms, and authentically recognise diversity in texts and readers. Our research has shown that this, responsively combined with the Reading for Pleasure pedagogy, makes a positive impact on children’s reading for pleasure.*

**Professor Teresa Cremin, The Open University**

”

“

*Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imaginations so they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read can be crucial.*

*A survey of school children for World Book Day in 2002 found that 15 to 16 year old boys spent 2.3 hours a week reading for pleasure, compared to 9 hours a week playing computer games or 11 hours watching television. Girls spent considerably more time reading, namely 4.5 hours a week. However, when boys were reading they did so because they enjoyed it. Specifically, 81% of 11 to 12 year olds and 76% of 15 to 16 year olds reported reading for pleasure.*

**Christina Clark and Kate Rumbold –  
National Literacy Trust – November 2006**

”

“

*Evidence suggests that reading for pleasure leads to increased attainment. Clark and DeZoya (2011) found a significant positive relationship between enjoyment and attainment indicating that pupils who read more are also better readers. Although they made no inference about causality, therefore higher attainment may lead to more enjoyment of reading or greater enjoyment may lead to higher attainment. Similarly Clark (2011) in a large scale survey of over 18,000 young people found that those who reported enjoying reading very much were six times more likely than those who did not enjoy reading very much to read above the expected level for their age. Young people who reported not enjoying reading at all were 11 times more likely than those who enjoyed reading very much to read below the expected level for their age. Evidence from the OECD (2002) found that reading enjoyment is more important for children’s educational success than their family’s socio-economic status. Clark and Rumbold (2006) argue that reading for pleasure could be one important way to help combat social exclusion and raise educational standards.*

**Research evidence on reading for pleasure –  
Education standards research team – May 2012**

”

“

Research shows that children who enjoy reading achieve more highly right across the curriculum. Developing a love of reading is one of the most effective ways a school can improve national test results in all areas but, more importantly, it also sets children up as readers for life, with all the accompanying benefits that follow.

Reading is a passport to the world. The benefits of reading go beyond the opportunities offered by being well-read with a good command of English. Reading great literature opens children up to ideas, experiences, places and times they might otherwise experience in real life. Reading for pleasure gives opportunities to learn about a multitude of things that cannot be covered by a school curriculum.

**Building an outstanding reading school – Six strategies for making reading for pleasure work in your school – Oxford School Improvement.**

”

“

Billington (2015) undertook a UK-wide study exploring the benefits reported by adults regularly reading for pleasure. The study surveyed 4,000 individuals from diverse demographics through an online poll consisting of fourteen questions designed to elicit participants' perception of their general mood, well-being and levels of social interaction in relation to reading. The findings indicated that reading for pleasure is positively associated with a greater sense of community, a stronger feeling of social inclusion, a stronger ability to enjoy social occasions, and enhanced openness and talkativeness.

**The Reading Agency Literature Review: The impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment June 2015**

”



**LITERACY IS  
EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY!**

# A lifetime of communication, literacy and reading and literacy development

Learning how to read and continually improving the skill through reading for pleasure, is an important part of this strategy. It needs to be embraced and everybody needs to put time aside to read, every day. We can all help to ensure that there is a reading culture in Blackpool.



# The vision



# The Blackpool context

## A localised approach is needed to improve literacy and life expectancy in England

- Improving local literacy levels could raise life expectancy in the most deprived wards in England by reducing inequalities in health and socioeconomic circumstances:
  - Compared to people with poor literacy skills, those with good literacy skills are less likely to exhibit poor health behaviours, have lower incomes or live in more deprived communities – all of which are risk factors to longevity.
- Inequalities in literacy and life expectancy are related to geographic community and solutions therefore need to be tailored to meet local need and built on local assets.

### Literacy and Life Expectancy - National Literacy Trust 2018



Attainment in Blackpool shows a picture of some challenges in the Early Years with good performance by the end of primary school and a significant drop-off by the end of secondary school, although this is showing early indicators of improvement.

- At the Early Years Foundation Stage 67.9% of children achieved a ‘good level of development’.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, 67% of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By Key Stage 4 however just 47.8% of pupils achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths (national 59.8%) and 9-5 pass rate was 26.3% (national 40.1%).

While this shows some challenges within the education system, it also points clearly to work that is needed in the home learning environment.

If we take account of wider factors impacting Blackpool, entitlement to free school meals in primary school is close to double the national average (30.8% - 17.7%) and for secondary age pupils this is even higher (33.3% - 15.9%). Referrals of children to Children’s Social Services is similarly dramatic at over 1,000 per 10,000 (national is 544.5 per 100,000). From Jan-Dec 2019, 19.9% of Blackpool households were classified as workless.

Taking these factors together, the challenges which communities face are compounded by deprivation which robs people of self-confidence and self-esteem. This can make parents less active in their children’s education especially when their own skills may be low and their experience of education is poor.

A major challenge emerges among teenagers (and young adults) when their comprehension exceeds their ability to decode with fluency. Young people have a far greater understanding of the world, spoken vocabulary and range of interests than they find in texts that they can read independently. Use of graphic novels, comics and other formats which carry complex meaning with a blended offer (text and images) can be useful in strengthening motivation among people to continue reading.

The Millennium cohort study, conducted by UCL, looked at the link between reading for pleasure and vocabulary among 14-year olds. The link was conclusive:

- Teenagers who read for pleasure every day understood 26% more words than those who never read at all in their spare time.
- Teenagers from book-loving homes knew 42% more words than their peers who had grown up with few books.
- Better readers can articulate more clearly.
- Better articulation leads to a better expression of feelings, moods and knowledge.
- Better articulation leads to less frustration in articulation which often leads to poor behaviour and anti social behaviour.

*“Even taking into account other factors, like parents’ qualifications and their professions, teenagers who read for pleasure still got 12% more words right, while those from book-rich homes scored 9% more.”*

The ability to read and decode and then express yourself is critical to any aspect of learning and later success in life. A good vocabulary is fundamental to a teenager being able to engage across the secondary curriculum. Subject specific vocabularies in history, the sciences and maths mean young people without that knowledge will do less well, are less likely to select subjects which are optional and are then blocked from further education or the job market when those qualifications and knowledge are required.

Once children have developed decoding skills it is often felt that they have learned to read. Parents often feel that it is acceptable to then allow pupils to read unaided. The reality is that children now need to learn for meaning and for pleasure and will need their parent's guidance to do so.

At the same time parental engagement, in role modelling behaviours and supporting aspiration remains important and may be even more important for low-income families. Research has found that parental engagement can help to counteract the socio-economic gap in attainment. For example, the performance advantage among students whose parents read to them in their early school years is evident regardless of the family's socio-economic background (OECD, 2010).

Therefore, what is needed is an approach which starts from an assets-based approach, works to celebrate what is good about Blackpool and fundamentally looks to people in communities to be supported to help one another. Sustained long-term change, through a place-based approach, has an evidence base going back to the first iteration of the Harlem Children's Zone in the 1970s. It requires the empowerment of the community, facilitating greater engagement by them with existing partners and provision and shaping a response which aligns with their life experience and needs.\*

Our own place-based reading hubs for families at locations such as Grange Park will support families who have no reading resources in their homes.

Working with families from the start of their lives, in conjunction with Blackpool Better Start, will see levels of early literacy and intergenerational literacy increase in Blackpool.



\*With thanks to the National Literacy Trust for providing this contextual section.

### Key Blackpool reading indicators

Figure 1a shows is that although many children are able to read at a level above their chronological age, many do not reach that standard by the time they are 8 or 9 years old.

**Figure 1a. Reading Age (in years) source - GL Assessments Reading Test 2019 (pupils Y4 are 8 or 9 years old and in Y5 are 9 or 10 years old).**

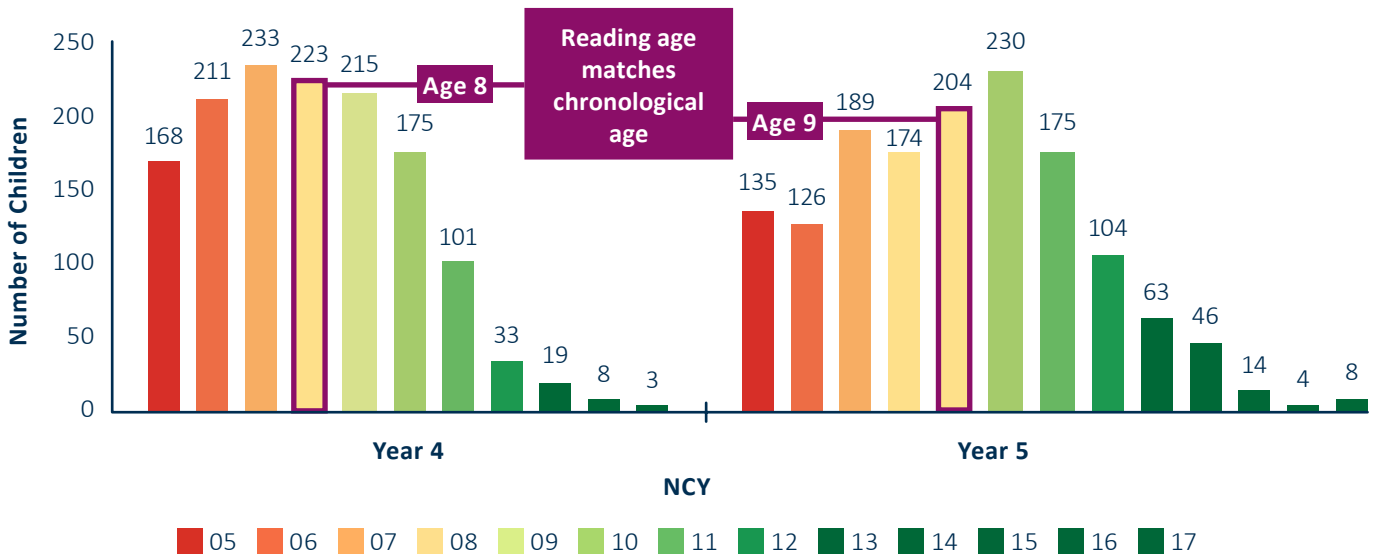
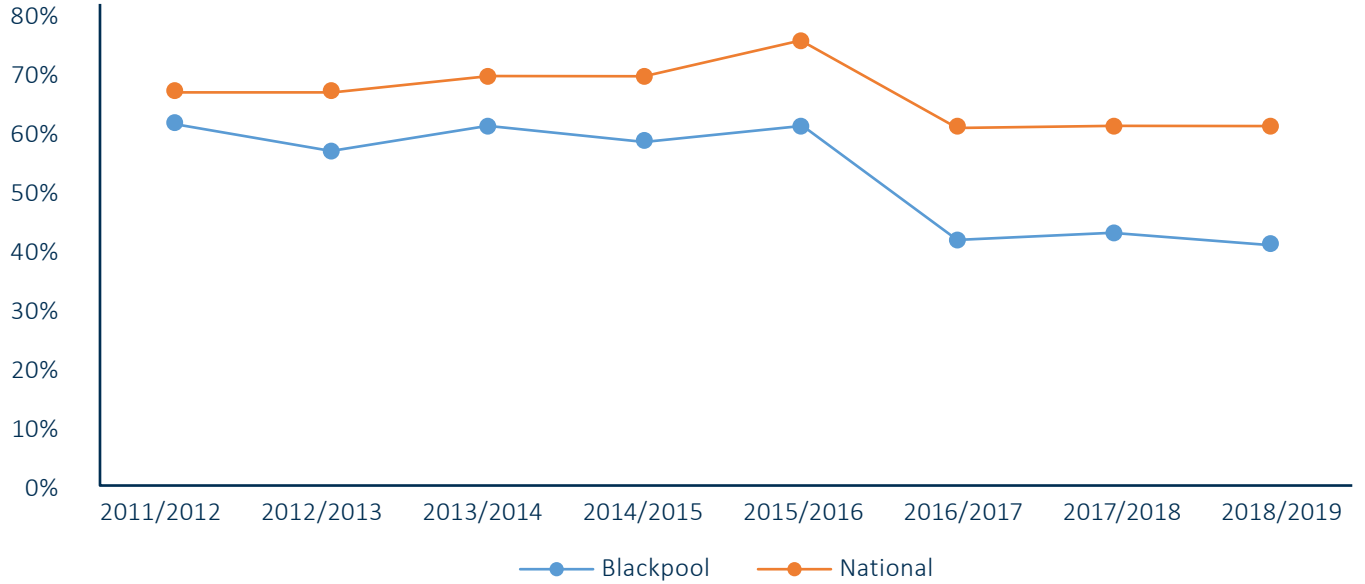


Figure 1b shows that the percentage of children achieving a C grade or Grade 5 at GCSE level in English is stubbornly low in Blackpool and has shown little sign of improving over the last few years.

**Figure 1b. KS4 English - Percentage at C+ / 5+**



# The impact of transience and transition on the Blackpool literacy journey

## A strategy that places transience at its heart

As a seaside town, with a significant seasonal element to its economy, Blackpool sees large amounts of movement into and out of the town. Some schools see over 25% of their cohort change on a yearly basis. Where pupils move into Blackpool part-way through their school journey, they may often have lower than average levels of literacy, as may their parents.

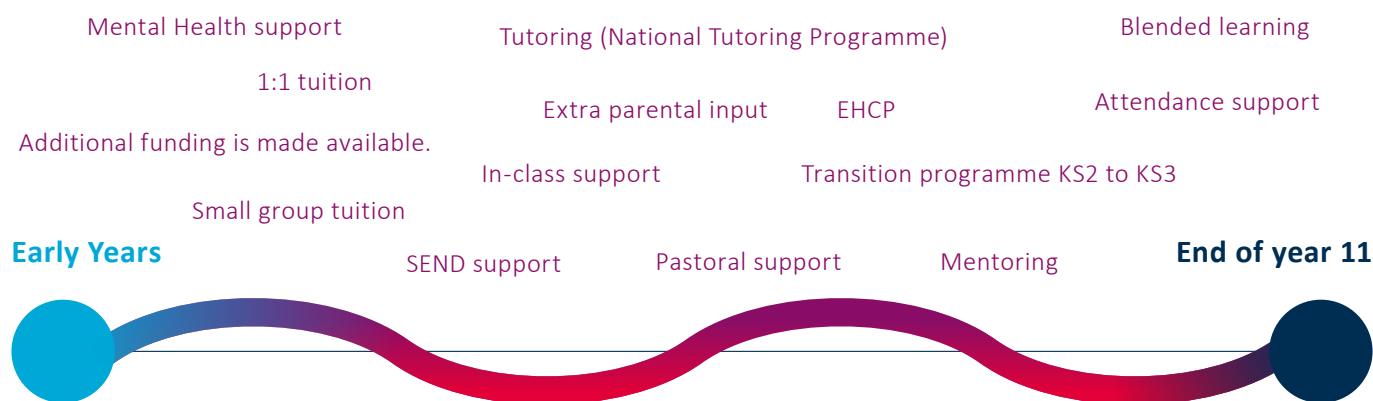
If we do not plan for a high level of pupil movement within our strategy we will not make the progress that we require. Unlike some areas that are able to teach a large percentage of pupils all the way through their education, at each major key stage Blackpool has to pick up, or put down provision for many pupils during their childhood.

This break in the continuity of provision and the reduction in progress, attainment and school readiness that this brings, means that we need to have programmes in places for pupils who are consistently educated in Blackpool schools and for pupils who join our system at different points in their lives.

Transition between schools, key stages and life stages is also, therefore, a highly significant element of an individual's literacy journey.

This also applies to adults within our community and how we work with those adults who have low levels of literacy.

## The catch-up journey interventions



## Barriers to literacy

- Long-term illness
- Leaves Blackpool
- Arrives in Blackpool
- Bereavement
- Permanently excluded
- Short-term illness
- Becoming looked-after
- Child protection processes
- Choose Elective Home Education
- School closure
- School to college transition
- KS2 to KS3 transition
- Transition into the workplace
- Parental disengagement in education
- parenting skills

**A literacy journey is never a linear journey.**



# Our minimum expectations for Blackpool

## Breaking the cycle

Blackpool has been the focus of many initiatives over many years, yet Blackpool's outcomes in the key indicators at GCSE level remain stubbornly low.

Interestingly, the quality of education in Blackpool has increased across all phases, with most schools rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted in the Primary phase, Special School sector and Alternative provision sector. Half of the secondary schools are good, with all Post 16 provision good or better.

If the general quality of education is higher, yet the outcomes lag behind, the question is for how long this will persist? When will the improvements in educational quality have a real, tangible impact upon outcomes?

As a town we need to build further upon the improved quality of education by setting ourselves some challenging targets.

### Our town-wide literacy targets

- Children receive speech and language support at the right time, without unnecessary delay.
- At least 80% of all pupils must meet the end of Key Stage 1 expected levels of performance relating to literacy.
- At least 70% of disadvantaged pupils must meet the end of Key Stage 1 expected levels of performance relating to literacy.
- At least 80% of pupils must meet the end of Key Stage 2 expected levels of performance relating to literacy.
- At least 70% of disadvantaged pupils must meet the end of Key Stage 2 expected levels of performance relating to literacy
- At GCSE level at least 70% of all pupils must achieve a Grade 4 or above in English.

**A significant element of this strategy is the notion that "you are never too old to learn" and therefore there are also significant key performance indicators related to adult literacy levels.**

**We must, therefore, strive to raise the level of adult literacy in Blackpool so that it is at least in-line with national averages.**

The table below (figure 2) shows that Blackpool has a greater proportion of adults that do not have an Entry Level 1 qualification in English than Lancashire and the North West and people in Blackpool are statistically less likely to have a qualification in English at L2 or above compared to Lancashire and the North West.

2011 Council Ward Name	EL1 and below	EL2	EL3	L1	L2 and above
Blackpool	5.4%	2.5%	9.3%	31.4%	51.4%
Lancashire-14	5.0%	2.3%	8.6%	30.3%	53.8%
England	5.0%	2.1%	7.9%	28.5%	56.5%

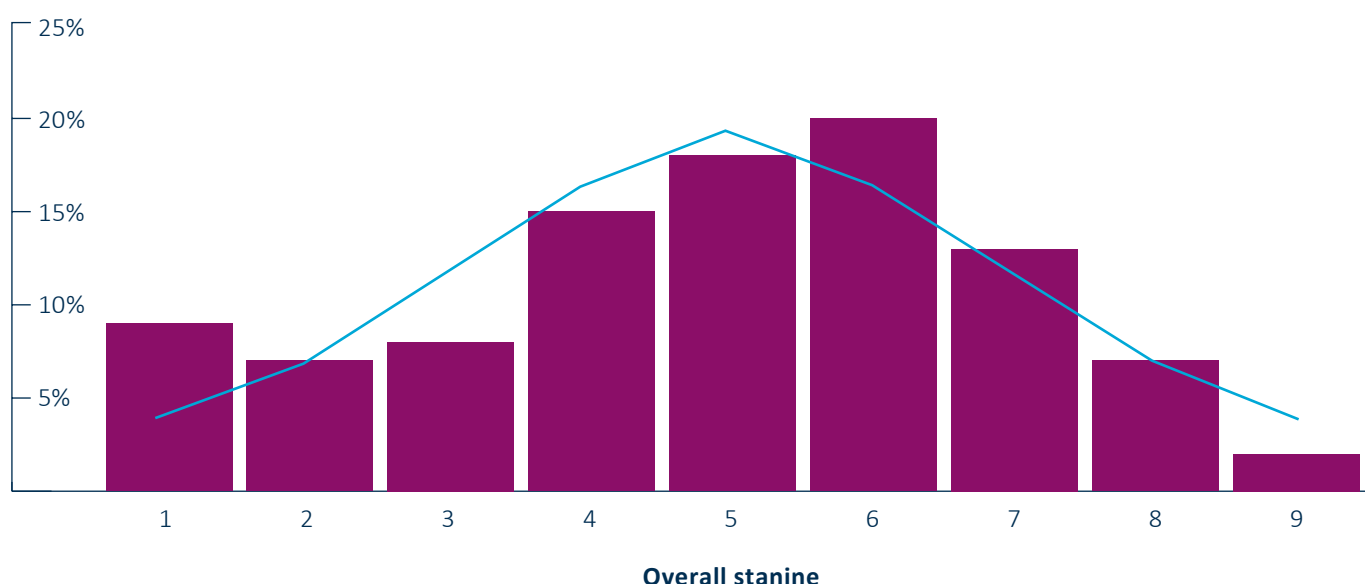
# Our focus upon assessment and action at every stage of the literacy life cycle

At every stage of the literacy journey, high quality assessment of the relative position of each child is essential to the delivery of this strategy.

Only by harnessing the power of high-quality assessment data can we intervene effectively and assess the impact that our projects are having on outcomes in Blackpool.

Throughout the lifetime of this strategy we will use data from GL assessments, data from statutory end of phase assessments, validated GCSE (and equivalent data), Fischer Family Trust data and national adult-literacy data to assess our progress and to evaluate the effectiveness of our strategy.

## GL assessment overall reading stanines for Blackpool secondary schools (Year 7 pupils) 2020



GL assessment data is able to show us how cohorts of children in Blackpool perform in relation to national cohorts. For example, this chart shows us that Blackpool pupils in Y7 have are overly represented in the 1st stanine (lowest performing) and under-represented in the 9th stanine (highest performing) relative to national.

# How we are tackling the issue

We have identified six areas to focus on that will ensure oracy and literacy improves across the town.



# Blackpool Families Rock - role in the Literacy Strategy



## Heart: Feelings

- We are all human
- We can all make mistakes
- Trusting relationships are important
- Respect each other
- Be kind
- Let's be brave together
- Never give up on me
- See me (I am unique)
- See the good things
- Share the power

## Hand: The doing of what we think and feel

- See our strengths
- Find out what works for us
- Show you've listened by your actions
- Be clear about expectations
- Get to know me
- Know who is important to me
- Support us to develop our own plans and solutions
- Have meaningful meetings
- Celebrate positive changes
- Make time for me
- Be honest

## Head: Knowledge, culture and thinking

- Don't be nosy (ask yourself if you really need to know this)
- Use plain language
- Share knowledge
- Take care in how you talk and write about us
- Share what you know about us
- Be non-judgemental
- Walk in my shoes

We should all support families to help themselves to move forwards, becoming self-sustaining.

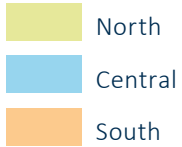
Reading must be a large part of the interactions in the family hubs.

Understanding the impact of poor levels of literacy on families must be a key part of service delivery in Children's Social Care.

We would like all foster carers to sign-up to the Blackpool literacy pledge and we will ensure that all foster carers have the resources and training to improve children's reading and literacy.

# Cross phase areas

## Blackpool Education Improvement Board Cross Phase Areas

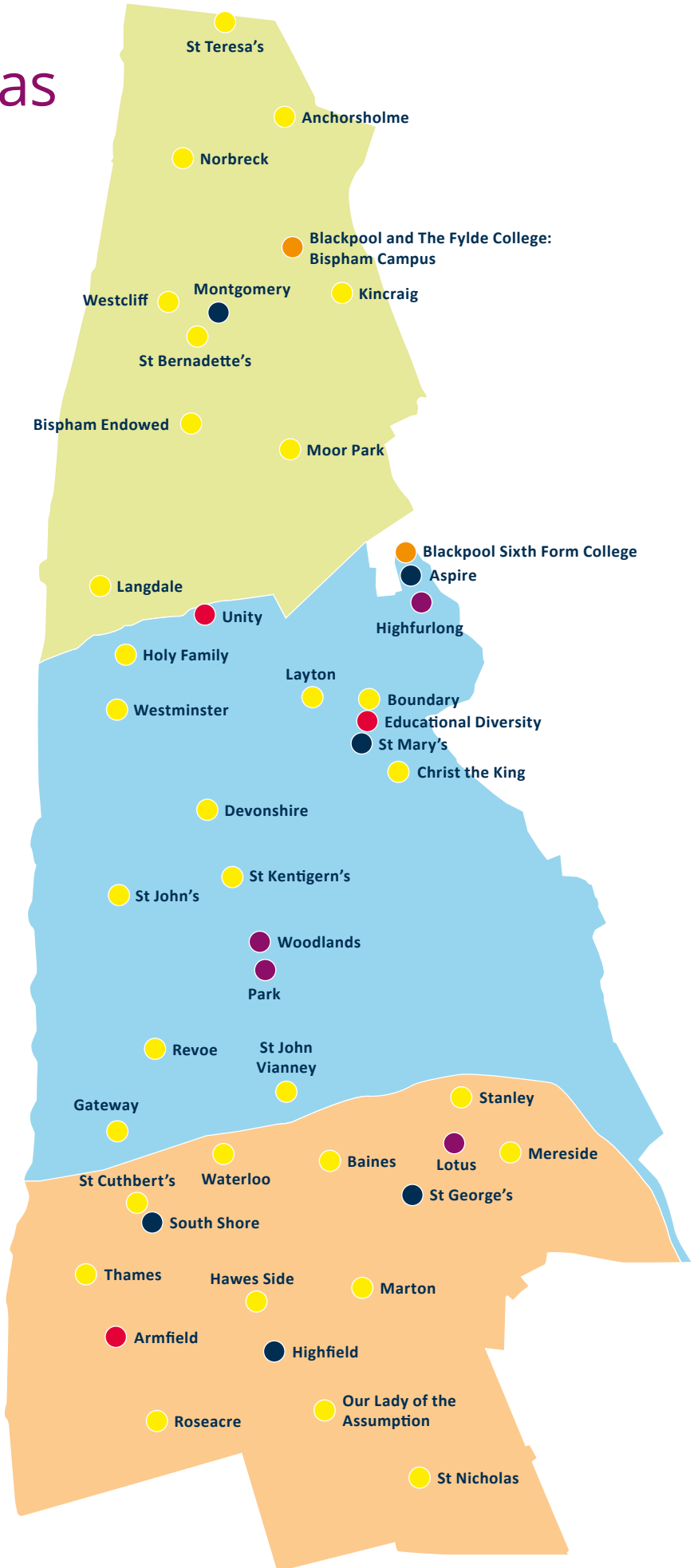


## Blackpool Schools

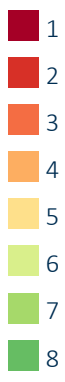
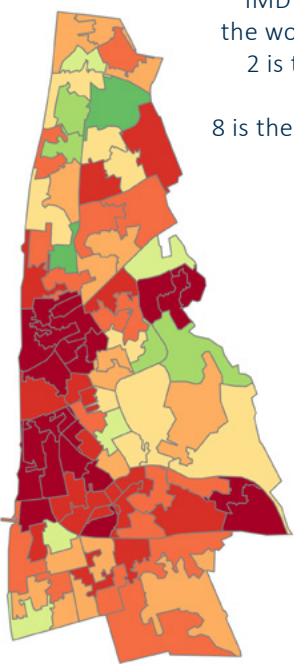


The Literacy Strategy will be developed to incorporate elements of the strategy that are bespoke to the three different cross phase areas shown in this diagram.

We accept, however, that these artificial boundaries do not really take into account how people actually live their lives and that people will move in-between and across these areas to access support for literacy.



IMD Decile where 1 is the worst 10% in England, 2 is the worst 11-20% in England... 8 is the top 20% in England.



# Developing our Blackpool literacy projects



# The KS3 Literacy Strategy

## Summary:

The Key Stage 3 (KS3) Literacy Project is a collective impact project focusing on improving the literacy capability of all 11-14 year olds across the town. Blackpool Opportunity Area, 8 secondary schools, working in partnership with Right to Succeed, are committed to taking a collective, research informed, asset-based approach to tackling the issue of literacy capabilities in KS3.

## Project Overview:

The Key Stage 3 (KS3) Literacy project is working to improve the literacy capability of all 11-14 year olds across the town, which has been a major factor in academic underperformance (children were on average one year behind in reading age, with 30% 2+ years behind). The project has continued to go from strength to strength and has gained recognition as a result.

The aims of the project are as followed.

1. To improve the decoding skills of students at Key Stage 3
2. Enhance the vocabulary acquisition of students in order to improve pupils' reading stanine, in sentence or paragraph comprehension, by one or more stanines
3. To increase the amount of time students read leading to increase fluency and comprehension
4. To develop, implement, test and embed a process for the reading of text within identified secondary school subjects leading to increase in the English mean standard age score of each cohort
5. To develop, implement, test and embed a systematic improvement in Key Stage 3 Literacy and the use of evidence informed practice across Blackpool Secondary schools
6. To develop schools' ability to undertake a Response to Intervention approach to meeting pupil needs, matching intervention to identified need
7. To improve students' social and emotional development, particularly confidence and self-efficacy

## Key Messages/Quotes:

The powerful impact of the project continues to be seen across a number of areas. For example, the project was highlighted in South Shore academy's recent OFSTED report, which sees them move from Inadequate to Requires Improvement. The report says:

*"Leaders know that pupils' literacy skills often get in the way of learning. Teachers across the school promote literacy well. They focus on key vocabulary and make sure that pupils understand any new terms that they meet. We saw pupils learning new words as their teacher read a novel during form time. The school provides extra teaching for pupils who find it hard to read. Pupils' reading ability is improving quickly. **Pupils' behaviour is improving swiftly because they can understand what the teacher wants them to learn. The pupils we saw had a positive approach to their learning.** This meant that their teachers did not have to waste time waiting for everyone to concentrate."*

The project was also recognised positively when South Shore Academy narrowly missed out on a Bett Award for their collaborative work with GL Assessments in the project. Alex Quigley Educational Endowment Foundation National Content Manager and author of 'The Confident Teacher' 'Closing the Vocabulary Gap' and 'Closing the Reading Gap' says:

*"Working on the KS3 Literacy has been a real privilege. There are few evidence-based, sustained projects that train teachers and school leaders in challenging circumstances. Working so closely with Blackpool schools, with the support offered by the project, has meant I could engage in a sustained way to support the schools to improve. The professional knowledge of the project leads has developed quickly and their implementation plans are strongly evidence-informed and of a very high quality."*

# The KS3 Literacy Strategy

## Reflections, Learning and Evaluation

The following is a selection of the reflections and learning of the project so far.

Literacy and Reading now being identified as key priority/focus for all schools

Literacy and the Special Educational Needs provision being more strategically joined up via the SENCO

Schools implementing a far more robust, holistic offer for their pupils and staff around reading – both in relation to how new and pre-existing interventions are utilised

The well-established network of project leads being an excellent support and practice/information sharing network within and across the schools

School leaders, supported by Heads are prioritising more time in CPD calendars for literacy specific professional development

Both the project heads and schools are seeing the interventions as a catalyst for whole school change, not the silver bullet solution to improving literacy/reading and social emotional development

A greater prioritisation on middle leader development, collaborative planning and taking an evidenced approach to professional development across the schools.

## Insight from the EEF secondary literacy guidance and the results of town wide literacy audit, the focus of the project has now progressed from the monitoring of fidelity of the transactional interventions to:

The more effective targeting of those interventions

The transference of impactful approaches and techniques into mainstream classrooms

Building the capacity of middle leaders to lead on disciplinary literacy within their specific subject areas and departments

Reviewing their existing approaches to supporting pupils in stanine 1 and 2

Improving literacy capabilities requires a multi-agency approach, bringing together the energy, enthusiasm and resources of those agencies with responsibility for promoting social justice for young people in Blackpool. The aim of the KS3 Literacy Project is to develop a sustainable change that identifies and responds flexibly to the needs of young people, supporting them to achieve through a place-based, multi-agency lens. A universal understanding of how we develop these 3 overarching essential protective factors, through an integrated early intervention approach, is key moving forward:

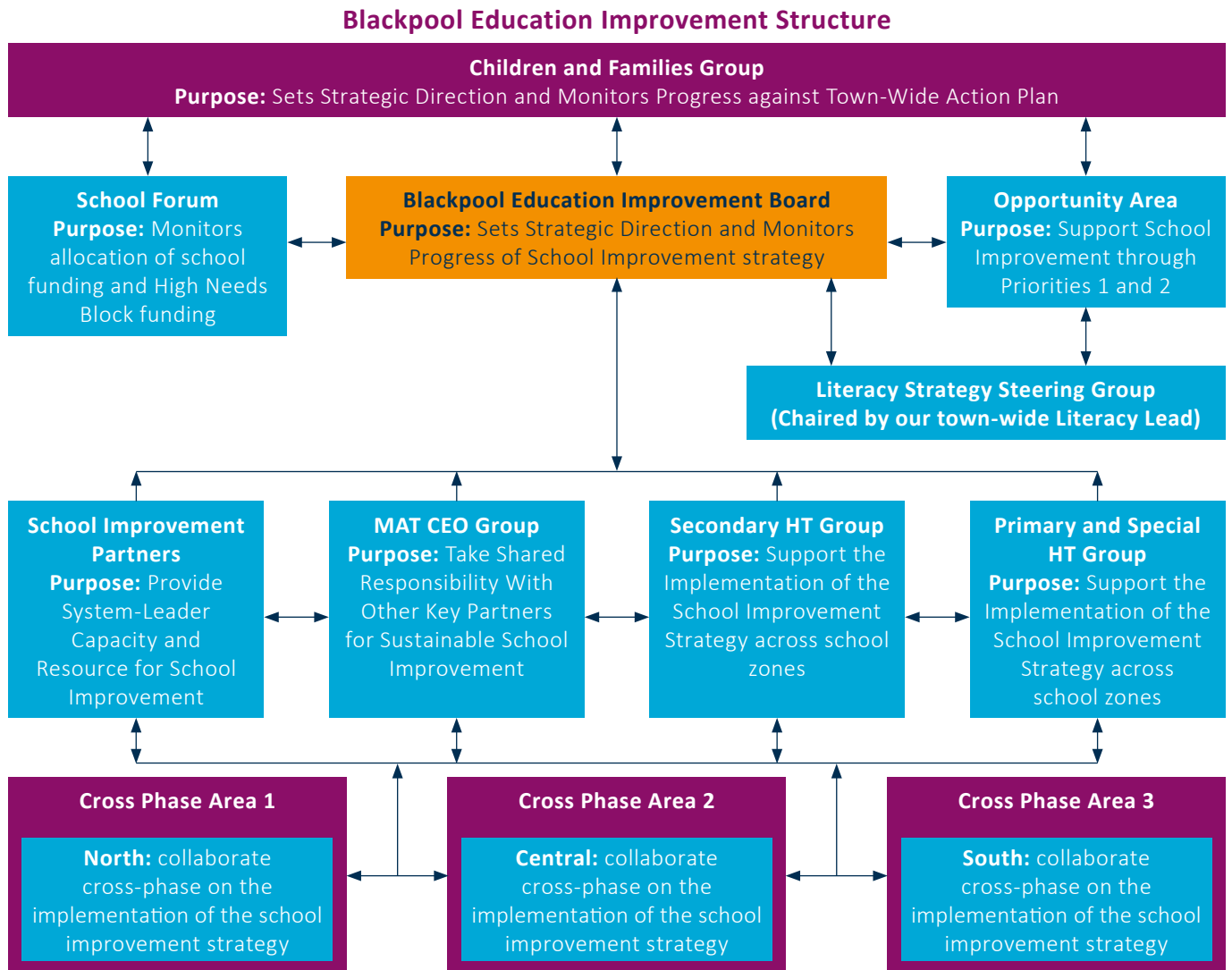
Enhancing the overall capability and well-being of young people

Effective implementation of research-informed interventions

Greater connectivity around issues affecting young people



# Literacy Strategy Governance



# Monitoring and evaluation

The strategy recognises that literacy support can come from many places, community partners, volunteers etc and the strategy commits its members to support/train/provide information for others who believe they can play a part.

We require access to in-depth analysis of our town's data and to be able to see how it is changing in "real-time".

For this we will use the expertise of nationally recognised data analysts and providers of national comparative data to highlight the progress that we have made and the potential next-steps.

We will capture a wide range of qualitative data from all parts of our community to measure the need and to help us to monitor the impact for all, or for different groups within our community.

We will establish a literacy steering group that reports into the Blackpool Education Improvement Board, the Children and Families Strategic Partnership Board and the Opportunity Area Board.

There will be a standing agenda item on the Blackpool Education Improvement Board that measures the impact of our literacy strategy.

We will employ a literacy leader who monitors and evaluates the impact of the initiatives and projects that we deliver.

Evaluation of the different elements of this strategy will be provided by a commissioned higher-education provider who can evaluate over the lifetime of the strategy.



# Speech and language therapy

## Understanding the scale of the problem

**Every child, regardless of circumstance should be able to develop and thrive. There is increasing concern about the numbers of children starting school with poor speech, language and communication skills, with unacceptable differences in outcomes in different areas of the country. Inequalities in early language development are recognisable in the second year of life and have an impact by the time children enter school.**

(Best start in speech, language and communication, PHE, October 2020)

Early language development and communication skills are recognised as primary indicators of child wellbeing due to the link between language and other social, emotional and learning outcomes. Language contributes to a child's ability to manage emotions and communicate feelings; to establish and maintain relationships; to think symbolically and to learn to read and write (Law J, Charlton, J, Asmussen, K. Language as a child wellbeing indicator. London: The Early Intervention Foundation; 2017). Without support, children and young people with SLCN are at risk of poor outcomes across the life course:

### Educational attainment

- 1 in 4 children who struggled with language at the age of 5 did not reach the expected standard in English at the end of primary school, compared with 1 in 25 children (at the age of 5) who had good language skills (Hollo A, Wehby, J, Oliver, R. Unidentified language deficits in children with emotional and behavioural disorders: A meta-analysis. Council for Exceptional Children. 2014;80(2))
- 15% of pupils with identified SLCN achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of their primary school years compared with 61% of all pupils (Department for Education. GCSE results 2017)
- Only 20.3% of pupils with SLCN gained grade 4/C or above in English and Maths at GCSE, compared with 63.9% of all pupils

### Social, emotional and mental health:

- 81% of children with emotional and behavioural disorders have unidentified SLCN (Hollo A, Wehby, J, Oliver, R. Unidentified language deficits in children with emotional and behavioural disorders: A meta-analysis. Council for Exceptional Children. 2014;80(2))
- Children with vocabulary difficulties at age 5 are 3 times more likely to have mental health problems in adulthood and twice as likely to be unemployed when they reach adulthood (Law J, Rush, R, Parsons, S, Schoon, I. Modelling developmental language difficulties from school entry into adulthood: Literacy, mental health and employment outcomes. Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research. 2009;52:1401-16)

### Lifelong impact:

- 60% of young offenders have low language skills (Bryan K, Freer, J, Furlong, C. Language and communication difficulties in juvenile offenders. International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders. 2007;42:505-20)
- The long-term negative impacts of language difficulties suggest that their associated costs to individuals, their families, and society across the life course are likely to be high (Law J, Charlton, J, Asmussen, K. Language as a child wellbeing indicator. London: The Early Intervention Foundation,; 2017)

### Understanding local prevalence and demand on services

Data regarding the prevalence of Speech Language and Communication Needs SLCN in the early years is collected but, unfortunately, is unavailable for inclusion in this paper. In response to need, A BetterStart has invested in extending service provision – there is evidence that this has resulted in increased referrals to NHS SLT services.

The prevalence of Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) amongst school aged children and young people in Blackpool is higher than the average for similar authorities (this measures all those with identified SEND, so SEN support and those with EHCPs). It has been deduced that the level of identified need is greater than for similar authorities because the proportion of the child population with both an Education, Health and care Plan (EHCP) and identified for SEN support, but without an EHCP is higher than for similar authorities. The proportion of those with those who have SLCN as their identified need is also higher in both primary and secondary schools, but particularly primary schools.

# Improving the teaching of literacy in all settings, schools and colleges

## What we already have in place.

- A Betterstart has supported early family literacy and family learning, alongside family literacy programmes run by Adult Learning.
- A major Key Stage 3 literacy initiative has been implemented that has improved the achievement of secondary students.
- A nationally regarded English Hub has been established in Blackpool to support local schools.
- The English Hub is supporting schools in the teaching and learning of phonics particularly for 5-7 year olds.
- Work is ongoing with Pre-School and Early Years settings to ensure they promote quality talk and improve vocabulary.
- More parents, carers and extended family are engaged to take part in school related and community based activities.
- Professional development opportunities have been established for school staff to accelerate progress in Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

## 1. Improving the teaching of literacy in all settings, schools and colleges

### What are we aiming to achieve and how will we do it?

- Improve the quality of literacy and oracy provision in pre-school and early years settings with high-quality adult-child interactions.
- Improve the overall standard of reading for all children in the town.
- Increase the level of enjoyment that children and young people get from reading.
- Improve motivation and engagement to develop persistence and enjoyment in reading
- Extend the role of parents and improve the level of engagement from parents/carers/extended family in supporting their children to enjoy and achieve in reading and speaking.
- Support parent to understand how to help their children learn and improve their communication, language and literacy
- Enable more pupils to achieve above average standards in reading and writing by the time they leave primary school.
- Ensure students capitalise on the good standards achieved in reading and writing by the end of Year 6 when continuing this through into their secondary education.
- Ensure all school staff prioritise literacy and oracy skill development as an important aspect of their classroom work. (Disciplinary literacy)
- Improve literacy across the curriculum emphasising the importance of subject specific support in secondary schools
- Ensure senior leaders and governors/trustees are held to account for standards in literacy and oracy.
- Establish an expectation that all schools in the town engage in peer review audits of practice for literacy and oracy and develop timely actions to address areas for improvement.

### Projects that we will deliver to improve literacy

The Opportunity Area programme has funded a range of activities through the National Literacy Trust.

Extend the Key Stage 3 Literacy project that has been funded through the Opportunity Area, which works with our weakest leaders and develops effective whole-school literacy practices.

Continue to allow access for all schools to the range of GL testing / assessments that provide a base-line and show progress.

Ensure that every school in Blackpool has a functioning, accessible library that contains at least 20 books per child at their appropriate reading age.

Increased the number of class visits to local public libraries.

Ensure that every school has sufficient resources to be able to teach a reading recovery programme in every year group.

Establish a reading school "kite-mark" specific to Blackpool that is peer reviewed and bench-marked against national best practice.

Establish a network of literacy champions at each stage of a child's education.

Provide bespoke staff CPD that improves the quality of teaching.

Assess all pupils in Blackpool twice a year to determine their relative level of "attainment", devise structured interventions and to measure impact / progress.

# Improving the teaching of literacy in all settings, schools and colleges

**Through our existing School Improvement Partners network that is an integral part of the Blackpool Education Improvement Board's Governance Structure, we will provide training and professional development opportunities that allow our teachers to -**

- Break down complex writing tasks
- Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject
- Provide opportunities for structured talk
- Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students
- Develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and wider understanding of language
- Use a balanced and engaging approach to developing reading, integrating both decoding and comprehension skills
- Effectively implement a systematic phonics programme
- Teach pupils to use strategies for developing and monitoring their reading comprehension
- Teach pupils to use strategies for planning and monitoring their writing
- Promote fluent written transcription skills by encouraging extensive and purposeful practice and explicitly teaching
- Use high-quality information about pupils' current capabilities to select the best next steps for teaching
- Use high-quality structured interventions to help pupils who are struggling with their literacy
- Develop pupils' language capability to support their reading and writing
- Support pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities
- Teach reading comprehension strategies through modelling and supported practice
- Teach writing composition strategies through modelling and supported practice
- Develop pupils' transcription and sentence construction skills through extensive practice
- Target teaching and support by accurately assessing pupil needs
- Use high-quality structured interventions to help pupils who are struggling with their literacy
- We will ensure that staff at every stage of their career have access to high-quality, continuing professional development related to literacy.
- We would like all schools to adopt, as part of their annual cycle of lesson evaluation and staff appraisal, a focus upon high-quality teaching of literacy.



# Improving the literacy curriculum in all settings, schools and colleges.

## What we already have in place.

- An improved focus upon literacy in all our schools.
- An alignment of GCSE English curriculums in our Secondary Academies.
- A GL assessment cycle that looks specifically at reading and barriers to reading.
- Literary Canons in place in a number of our Secondary Academies.
- Improved library provision across our schools.

## 2. Improving the literacy curriculum in all settings, schools and Colleges

### What are we aiming to achieve and how will we do it?

- Develop an audit tool for schools to use to identify aspects of literacy and oracy that may require further development.
- Introduce a parental engagement strategy to support early years literacy.
- Provide wider opportunities for debate and public speaking for pupils and students.
- Ensure maximum use of language rich books to develop vocabulary in classrooms.
- Ensure all teachers are supported to understand how to teach children/students to read, write and communicate effectively.
- Align town-wide literacy events such as those made by visiting authors with school and community activity.
- Support Early Years settings to develop their curriculum
- All schools, no matter what their educational phase, have a curriculum that teaches children to read and then how to "read to learn".
- Every school's curriculum will maximise the use of quality, inspiring texts, that captivate young readers.
- We will use the framework provided by the national curriculum and a shared list of high-quality texts that are enjoyed by Blackpool readers, to provide a strong, broad curriculum in every school.

### Projects that we will deliver to improve literacy

Introduce a Reading School Kitemark Framework.

Draw on resources and training provided by the Library Service, Adult Learning, Oxford University Press, National Literacy Trust, English Hub, Research School and Teaching Schools.

Businesses agree to being proactive participants in encouraging staff to commit to Literacy and Oracy Pledge.

Laureate Schools Library Project

# Improving access to libraries and ensuring libraries reach out to their communities.

## What we already have in place.

We have a network of 8 libraries across the town, providing free access to a wide range of books for all ages; computers, free WiFi and printing facilities; 24/7 online services (including e-Books, e-Audiobooks and e-Magazines and newspapers); learning opportunities and resources; and a range of engagement activities throughout the week.

- We know that libraries are at the heart of many Blackpool communities and have a pivotal role in promoting literacy and a love of reading, in delivering digital access and support and in providing a safe and welcoming place where people can find information, participate in learning and cultural activity. They are also great places to meet and feel part of the community.

- We know that some residents do not have strong literacy and oracy skills so we want to enable them to improve. We also know that many do have secure skills and want to improve these further so we need to make the library suitable and accessible for all.

## We removed all library fines from April 2019 and found out that:

- 40,000 people used library services in past three years.
- Over ½ million visits to our libraries occurred in 2019 with over 2k events leading to more usage and over 120k sessions on library computers.
- 90% of Blackpool residents think local libraries are important.
- 80% of those visiting libraries borrow books.

## 3. Improving access to libraries and ensuring libraries reach out to their communities

### What are we aiming to achieve and how will we do it?

- Establish a reading culture across Blackpool that pledges that all employers and forward facing companies and enterprises will champion early reading with children, whether through parents, siblings or their wider family.
- Greater involvement of residents around choosing stock

### Our plan focuses on the following core themes:

#### Future Readers, Future Choices

*Reading and free access is fundamental to people's life opportunities so libraries will provide books, information, ICT and activities. We will champion the 'literacy of opportunity'.*

#### Get Connected

*Libraries will be 'the living room of the community' so that people have safe and trusted places to go to. We will deliver high quality top services for technology, digital enablement and support to get online and be places where the community we will support people to participate. Libraries will be places where people feel better and less lonely.*

#### Your Library

*Stay at the centre of their communities. Do more to get out into and work with those communities. Develop targeted services to appeal to existing and new users.*

### Projects that we will deliver to improve literacy

Expand "Rhyme-time" sessions across all libraries.

Develop and deliver regular digital story-times for all ages.

Bookstart packs for every Early Years' child in the town.

A vibrant engagement programme and visits to local schools and nurseries.

More support for children in care and care leavers.

Work with Booktrust and steering group partners to develop Early Years literacy offer and widen participation.

# High quality learning programmes to enable adults to improve their literacy and oracy skills.

## What we already have in place.

Combined face to face literacy classes for adults (when safe to do so) with online courses.

A number of individualised learning opportunities, using online platforms where possible. This includes a new 'Functional Skills English' Facebook page where videos, live streams and posts are shared.

Online classes using Google Classroom; We offer 1:1 meetings to learners to familiarise themselves with 'the classroom'; and we are encouraging all learners to use this.

- An online offer of digital skills courses is now in place through a secure Google Education Suite.
- Digital courses are now being offered through Google Classroom with face to face video weekly sessions to create a blended approach.
- Google has enabled learners to access their courses and tutors on a friendly and easy to use platform.
- Courses are underway ranging from eSafety to spreadsheets, to enable employment.
- We are now able to allow learners to take their ECDL exams remotely through video conferencing invigilation, meaning that they can learn and achieve their full ECDL Level 2 in the safety of their own homes.

## 4. High quality learning programmes to enable adults to improve their literacy and oracy skills

### What are we aiming to achieve and how will we do it?

- Learners who can access remotely will be encouraged to do so (with some preferring to have the face to face option) for all informal and accredited ICT courses.
- The new Digital Skills for Life and Work will be rolled out. Through the British Computer Society we can deliver this accreditation remotely, also with the same exam options. This will mean that with a device and connectivity, learners can obtain Digital Skills qualification from Entry level to Level 2.
- Successful literacy intervention / recovery is more successful when it is embedded into other aspects of work-related learning. So we will work with employers to embed adult literacy programs in their apprenticeships and their training provision.

### Projects that we will deliver to improve literacy

Deliver adult reading classes in our community (ideally schools or community locations) that deliver courses such as "Read Easy" <https://readeasy.org.uk> so that adults can easily and confidentially improve their reading on a 1:1 basis.

Employers will be encouraged to boost the use of literacy in their workplaces.

From September 2020, planning a much more blended learning approach of small classes to learners who are currently unable to access activity online. During these sessions, in addition to the literacy focus we aim to help learners use online platforms, in preparation for the future, in particular, if they have the equipment to do so at home.



# Promoting and building digital literacy across the town.

## What we already have in place.

Blackpool Adult Learning's offer includes combined face to face literacy (when safe to do so) and online courses.

- An online offer of digital skills courses are now in place through a secure Google Education Suite.
- Digital courses are being offered through Google Classroom with face to face video weekly sessions to create a blended approach.
- Google has enabled learners to access their courses and tutors on a friendly and easy to use platform. Courses are underway ranging from eSafety to spreadsheets, through to those that enable employment.
- Learners are now able to take their ECDL exams remotely through video conferencing invigilation, meaning that they can learn and achieve their full ECDL Level 2 in the safety of their own homes.
- A digital programme of IT courses have been offered that range from the absolute basics of how to switch a device on to ECDL level certification. Adults include complete beginners who need to gain confidence, unemployed adults who need to develop their skills to apply for jobs and employees who need to improve their digital skills in the workplace. These classes have been taught face to face in a classroom environment in a variety of community buildings, mainly libraries.
- Courses have been made bespoke for different groups' needs. The service work with a wide variety of organisations across Blackpool to meet their digital needs. Groups can be as small as 6 learners so they all receive a high level of support to assist their learning.

## 5. Promoting and building digital literacy across the town

### What are we aiming to achieve and how will we do it?

From September 2020 we are planning to have a further blended approach with a mixture of online and face to face (small group) learning.

Free access to computers (>100 across the network), with staff/volunteer support available and free WiFi provision in all libraries; plus the general council WiFi provision.

### Projects that we will deliver to improve literacy

The new Digital Skills for Life and Work will be rolled out. Through the British Computer Society we can deliver this accreditation remotely too with the same exam options, this will mean that with a device and connectivity, learners can obtain Digital Skills qualification with ACFL from Entry level to Level 2.

Introductory programmes will be commissioned and delivered in Blackpool that inspire young and old to be digitally literate and to seek employment in the digital sectors.

# Improving Early Years outcomes in literacy and oracy and in particular the transition to schools

## What we already have in place.

- We have encouraged all Early Years providers and schools to formally meet to discuss how they teach literacy and oracy and how these approaches can be better forged to ensure the most progress is made.
- We have discussed these arrangements with Ofsted and have shared our findings with Early Years providers and schools to ensure that we all have a clear understanding of expectations.
- We are considering how best to support staff in a sustainable way when a Better Start concludes.
- We have raised concerns about the financial viability of some Early Years providers with government and making clear to our school leaders the negative impact this could have on their children in the future.
- We have encouraged schools to extend their professional development programmes to local Early Years settings.
- We have worked with Further Education providers to ensure qualifications in child care contain a level of expectation for learner progress that is appropriate to meet national expectations on entry to primary school.
- We are seeking local solutions so that we can support parents across transition from Early Years to school, especially those who have been unable to access much in the way of Early Years provision for their child.
- Over time the relationship between the various phases of education has improved. The link between primary and secondary sectors has gained real traction in recent years.
- Ofsted inspections have shown improving Early Years provision in all types of provision.

## 6. Improving Early Years outcomes in literacy and oracy and in particular the transition to schools

### What are we aiming to achieve and how will we do it?

- Improve Early Years outcomes in literacy and oracy and in transition to schools.
- Improve teaching of literacy in all settings, schools and colleges
- Improve literacy curriculum in all settings, schools and colleges
- Improve access to libraries and ensure libraries reach out to their communities.
- High Quality learning programmes to enable adults to improve their literacy and oracy skills.
- Promote and build digital literacy across the town

### Projects that we will deliver to improve literacy

- Use of CLL framework to develop practice.
- Delivery of Hanen Learning Language and Loving it / Teacher Talk to settings.
- Use of CLL framework to support practice.
- Focus on key texts for EY settings to share with children / training on approaches to using rhyme and story effectively to promote language development and love of sharing books / reading
- Training and support around a progressive approach to key texts and language / pre-reading skills
- Support to develop Communication Friendly Status
- Further developing the transition document completed by EY settings and shared with schools, to reflect the changes to the EYFS / non-statutory guidance and ensure the information provided to schools is as useful as possible in giving children the right start in Reception.

# The value of reading for pleasure

## **Our Blackpool challenge to all residents, businesses, employers and employees!**

Reading for pleasure is a key part of developing individual literacy skills. It opens up a world of literature that is not always available in schools. Without access to a wider range of texts, an individual's reading journey will be much slower and have less impact.

Children who read regularly, at home, are better readers than those who read solely at school. (Insert stats).

# The Blackpool 30 Challenge



# Our Literacy Pledge

The literacy (including oracy) strategy is ambitious and we know that it requires total commitment from the entire town, including those involved in the community of each school, College and setting to succeed. Its importance is crucial to the future success of Blackpool so we are proposing to ask an independent reviewer to be appointed to determine the speed of progress against our plan. This will ensure that we maintain our commitment to the work over the next 10 years.

## Blackpool Literacy Pledge

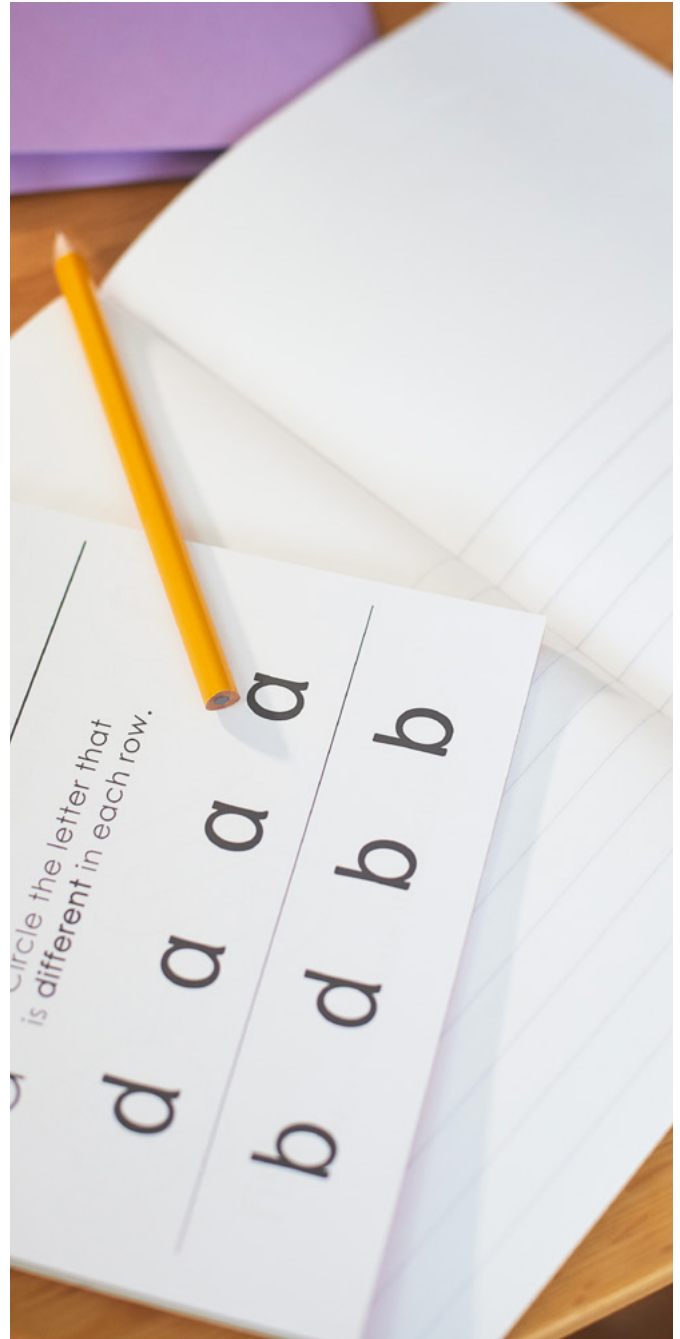
**As part of the vision for the future of the town we invite you to commit to you and or your organisation to the following:**

### You

- I will promote literacy and oracy with all those I meet and live with
- I will lead by example so I will set myself a reading challenge per week and will let others know about it and when I achieve it
- I will encourage all young people and children I have regular contact with to read often and I will, if appropriate, accompany them to the library
- I will consider undertaking training on how better to support children and young people in literacy and oracy

### Your organisation

- I will promote literacy and oracy with all those I work with to ensure Blackpool becomes a better place to live, work and play.
- I will encourage the company and/or people I work with to create a plan for encouraging the employees and their families to read more for pleasure
- I will encourage my employer to emphasise the enjoyment of reading in a public space
- I will use Blackpool's Literacy Logo on all communications from the business



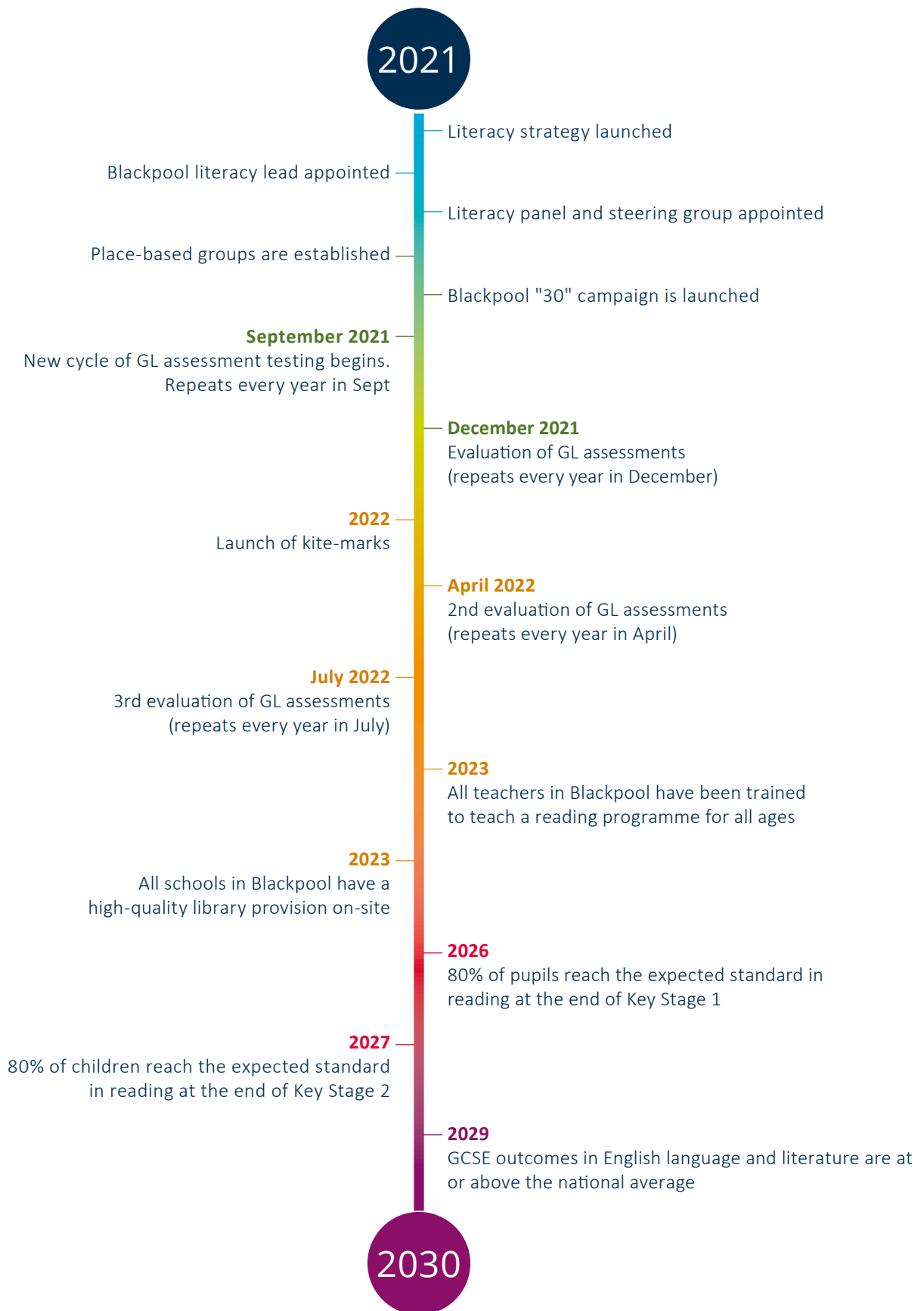
# Engaging with the community and ensuring impact is felt by the "end-user"

We will champion our three literacy kite-marks.



These kite-marks will be developed by an expert panel and assessed at three-levels (Bronze, silver and Gold).

# Literacy timeline



# Appendix 1 - The literacy issue - Level of adult literacy

2011 Council Ward Name	EL1 and below	EL2	EL3	L1	L2 and above
<b>Anchorsholme</b>	4.8%	2.2%	8.4%	30.2%	54.4%
<b>Bispham</b>	4.4%	2.1%	8.1%	30.0%	55.5%
<b>Bloomfield</b>	6.0%	2.8%	10.4%	33.5%	47.3%
<b>Brunswick</b>	5.9%	2.7%	9.7%	31.7%	50.0%
<b>Claremont</b>	6.7%	3.0%	10.8%	33.1%	46.4%
<b>Clifton</b>	6.3%	2.9%	10.3%	32.5%	48.0%
<b>Greenlands</b>	4.9%	2.3%	8.5%	30.1%	54.2%
<b>Hawes Side</b>	5.4%	2.5%	9.4%	32.1%	50.5%
<b>Highfield</b>	4.6%	2.2%	8.2%	30.1%	55.0%
<b>Ingthorpe</b>	5.5%	2.5%	9.0%	30.3%	52.7%
<b>Layton</b>	5.2%	2.4%	8.8%	30.2%	53.3%
<b>Marton</b>	4.7%	2.2%	8.4%	30.3%	54.3%
<b>Norbreck</b>	4.7%	2.2%	8.4%	30.1%	54.5%
<b>Park</b>	7.9%	3.4%	11.6%	32.9%	44.2%
<b>Squires Gate</b>	4.7%	2.2%	8.4%	30.6%	54.0%
<b>Stanley</b>	4.7%	2.2%	8.4%	30.5%	54.2%
<b>Talbot</b>	6.0%	2.8%	10.2%	32.9%	48.1%
<b>Tyldesley</b>	5.0%	2.4%	8.9%	31.1%	52.6%
<b>Victoria</b>	5.2%	2.5%	9.4%	32.5%	50.4%
<b>Warbreck</b>	5.0%	2.4%	8.9%	31.2%	52.5%
<b>Waterloo</b>	5.1%	2.4%	9.1%	31.7%	51.8%
<b>Blackpool</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>31.4%</b>	<b>51.4%</b>
<b>Lancashire-14</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>53.8%</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>28.5%</b>	<b>56.5%</b>

# Appendix 2 - The literacy issue

## Adults whose first language is English

2011 Council Ward Name	ESOL (English for speakers of other languages)					
	Mean Estimates		Lower 95% CI Estimates		Upper 95% CI Estimates	
	ESOL	NotESOL	ESOL	NotESOL	ESOL	NotESOL
Bloomfield	3.0%	97.0%	2.3%	96.5%	3.5%	97.7%
Brunswick	3.2%	96.8%	2.6%	96.4%	3.6%	97.4%
Claremont	3.0%	97.0%	2.3%	96.5%	3.5%	97.7%
Clifton	2.1%	97.9%	1.6%	97.5%	2.5%	98.4%
Greenlands	2.1%	97.9%	1.8%	97.6%	2.4%	98.2%
Hawes Side	2.1%	97.9%	1.7%	97.4%	2.6%	98.3%
Highfield	1.8%	98.2%	1.6%	97.8%	2.2%	98.4%
Ingthorpe	2.1%	97.9%	1.8%	97.5%	2.5%	98.2%
Layton	2.4%	97.6%	2.1%	97.3%	2.7%	97.9%
Marton	1.8%	98.2%	1.5%	97.8%	2.2%	98.5%
Norbreck	1.6%	98.4%	1.4%	98.0%	2.0%	98.6%
Park	2.3%	97.7%	1.8%	97.3%	2.7%	98.2%
Squires Gate	2.0%	98.0%	1.7%	97.6%	2.4%	98.3%
Stanley	1.9%	98.1%	1.6%	97.7%	2.3%	98.4%
Talbot	3.1%	96.9%	2.4%	96.4%	3.6%	97.6%
Tyldesley	2.2%	97.8%	1.8%	97.5%	2.5%	98.2%
Victoria	1.9%	98.1%	1.5%	97.6%	2.4%	98.5%
Warbreck	2.1%	97.9%	1.7%	97.5%	2.5%	98.3%
Waterloo	2.3%	97.7%	1.9%	97.3%	2.7%	98.1%
<b>Blackpool</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>97.8%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>97.4%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>98.2%</b>
<b>Lancashire-14</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>96.5%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>96.1%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>97.0%</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>89.2%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>85.5%</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>91.6%</b>



**Figure 2. In 2018/19 (Y1 Phonics)**

Ward	Percentage working at expected standard
Claremont	70.7%
Bloomfield	74.3%
Clifton	76.3%
Greenlands	79.0%
Brunswick	78.1%
Hawes Side	78.2%
Layton	74.3%
Waterloo	82.6%
Bispham	81.6%
Park	83.3%
Highfield	85.3%
Victoria	81.6%
Tyldesley	88.2%
Norbreck	90.0%
Stanley	88.0%
Warbreck	87.5%
Ingthorpe	87.2%
Talbot	90.0%
Squires Gate	90.0%
Marton	89.8%
Anchorsholme	88.9%

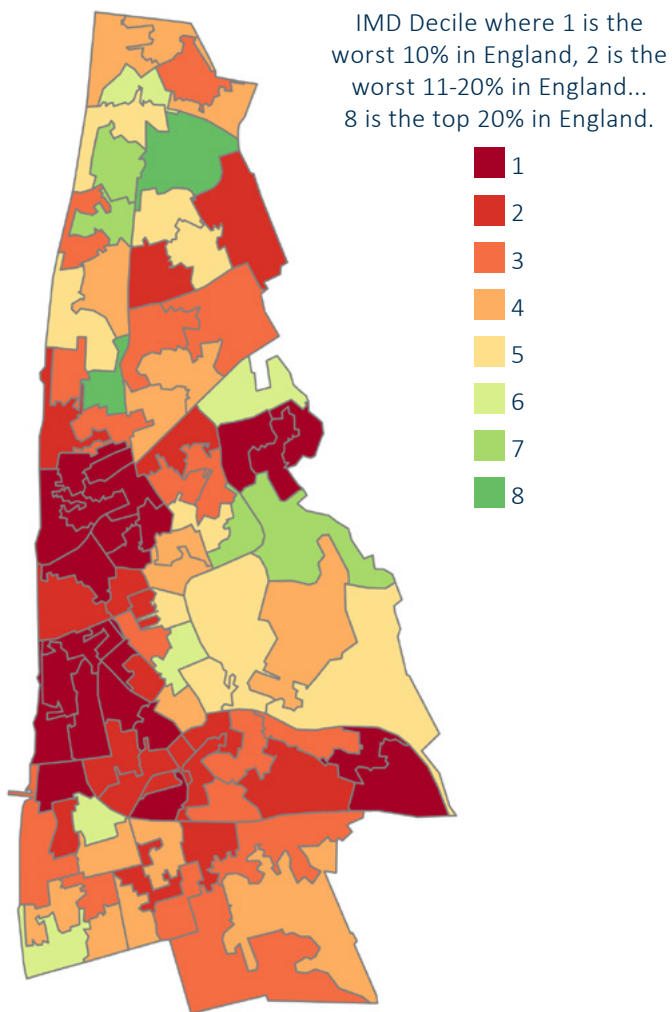
**Figure 3. The percentage of children that reached the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1 (2018-19 school year)**

Ward	Reading	Writing
Park	60.32	55.56
Bloomfield	60.92	54.02
Tyldesley	62.96	60.49
Brunswick	64.47	59.21
Claremont	66.04	59.43
Talbot	67.31	63.46
Highfield	69.7	69.7
Victoria	70	64.44
Stanley	70.21	63.83
Clifton	70.89	62.03
Waterloo	72.55	64.71
Hawes Side	73.33	65.56
Bispham	74.6	73.02
Squires Gate	75	64.29
Greenlands	75.68	72.97
Warbreck	76.12	74.63
Ingthorpe	76.71	73.97
Marton	78.13	68.75
Norbreck	80	76.36
Layton	81.82	72.73
Anchorsholme	85.37	73.17

**Figure 4. In 2018/19 the percentage of children at or above the expected standard for reading and writing at Key Stage 2**

Ward	Reading	Writing
Bloomfield	58.43	68.54
Brunswick	62.35	74.12
Claremont	64.62	67.69
Victoria	64.77	69.32
Tyldesley	69.23	72.53
Greenlands	69.35	69.35
Talbot	70.59	67.65
Layton	74.19	80.65
Hawes Side	76.25	81.25
Park	76.54	74.07
Marton	77.78	94.44
Clifton	78.95	75
Norbreck	79.07	81.4
Waterloo	79.59	79.59
Bispham	80	70
Warbreck	80	84.62
Stanley	80	77.5
Highfield	80.65	87.1
Ingthorpe	82.54	79.37
Squires Gate	85.19	66.67
Anchorsholme	86.54	86.54

**Figure 4.**



## Blackpool's position in summary

	2017		2018		2019		2017-2019	
	LA	National	LA	National	LA	National	LA	National
Pupils	1,689	651,237	1,668	662,047	1,723	663,363	5,080	1,976,647
Below KS1 threshold	387	147,351	407	148,914	471	153,643	1,265	449,908
Above KS1 threshold	1,302	503,886	1,261	513,133	1,252	509,720	3,815	1,526,739
Below KS1 threshold, %	22.9%	22.6%	24.4%	22.5%	27.3%	23.2%	24.9%	22.8%
Above KS1 threshold, %	77.1%	77.4%	75.6%	77.5%	72.7%	76.8%	75.1%	77.2%

### If Blackpool were in line with the national average:

	2017	2018	2019	2017-2019
Below KS1 threshold	382	375	400	1,158
Difference versus actual**	5	32	71	107

\*\*This displays the difference between the actual number of pupils below the KS1 threshold in Blackpool and the number there would be were Blackpool in line with the national average. A positive number means there are more pupils below the KS1 threshold in Blackpool; a negative number means there are fewer pupils below the KS1 threshold.

	2017	2018	2019	2017-2019
Below KS1 threshold	456	457	484	1,397
Difference versus actual***	-69	-50	-13	-132

\*\*\*This displays the difference between the actual number of pupils below the KS1 threshold in Blackpool and the number there would be were Blackpool in line with a group of matched pupils in similar schools nationally. A positive number means there are more pupils below the KS1 threshold in Blackpool; a negative number means there are fewer pupils below the KS1 threshold.

Source of data FFT Data Lab.

# Glossary of terms

**Academy** – An independent state school.

**Alternative Provision** – Provision outside of what can be provided in a mainstream school.

**ASD** – Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

**Betterstart** – A national lottery funded programme.

**CEO** – Chief Executive Officer.

**Co-production** – Collaborative, planning and action that involves a range of stakeholders eg: adults and children.

**Cognition** – Related to thinking.

**Cross-phase** – working across the different phases of education.

**Dedicated Schools Grant** – Specific funding ring-fenced for schools.

**Early Help** – Action to prevent escalation.

**Early intervention** – Early action to improve access to education.

**Early Years Foundation Stage** – The first stage of a child's education.

**Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** – A legal document that outlines a plan to support a child to ensure that they receive the appropriate level of education.

**Educational Diversity** – Blackpool's Pupil Referral Unit.

**Fixed Term Exclusion (FTE)** – Where a pupil is excluded from a school for a set-period of time, between 1 day and 45 days per school year.

**GL assessments** – A private provider of testing for school-aged children.

**Good level of development** – The expected level for a child at the end of the Foundation stage.

**Graduated response** – A provision that meets the needs of pupils by working up through a series of types of provision and specialist offers.

**High Needs Block** – A ring-fenced part of the Dedicated Schools Grant for pupils with additional needs.

**Hospital school** – A statutory offer from the Local Authority for pupils who are too unwell to attend school.

**Inclusion** – Involving and / or providing for all pupils in a school.

**KS1 – Key Stage 1** – A phase of education at a Primary School.

**KS2 – Key Stage 2** – A phase of education at a Primary School.

**Literacy** – To do with writing and reading.

**Local Leader of Education** – A local expert in education leadership.

**Maintained School** – The Local Authority is the employer.

**MLD** – Moderate Learning Difficulty.

**Multi-agency** – Involving a number of different agencies in a locality.

**NEET** – Not in education, employment or training.

**NVQ Level 1** – A qualification type that is vocational.

**NVQ Level 2** – A qualification type that is vocational.

**Ofsted** – School regulator.

**Opportunity Area** – A government initiative that aims to boost social mobility in a select number of areas.

**Permanent Exclusion (PEX)** – Where a pupil is excluded from a school and may not return unless a successful appeal is lodged.

**Primary School** – A school that provides education for pupils aged 11 or below.

**Pupil Premium** – Additional funding paid to schools.

**Pupil Referral Unit** – A provision who pupils who have been excluded and / or need alternative means of education.

**Regional Schools Commissioner** – Department for Education Senior Civil Servant.

**Resilience** – Ability to cope in difficult circumstances.

**Secondary School** – A school that provides education for pupils aged between 11 and 16, or with a Sixth Form, age 18.

**SEMh** – Social, Emotional, Mental Health.

**SEND** – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

**SLD** – Specific Learning Difficulty.

**Special Educational Needs Resource Facility** – A specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs.

**Specialist Leader of Education** – An expert in specific aspects of school provision.

**Teaching School Hub** – A DFE initiative that brings together schools under an umbrella to provide school to school support and training.

**Transition** – Moving between schools or phases.

**Vocational** – Linked to work.

**Voluntary Aided School** – The relevant Church Diocese is the employer.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Paul Turner – Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years.
<b>Meeting</b>	8 December 2022

## SCHOOL RESPONSE TO PANDEMIC UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update the committee on progress against recommendations of the Schools' Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Scrutiny Review Panel.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 That the implementations of the review's recommendations be noted and that any areas for further scrutiny be identified.

2.2 The Committee is asked to determine whether any/all of the recommendations can be signed off as complete.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The report focused upon the pandemic period which has now ended as schools are open fully.

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

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

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 To continue to monitor.

### 5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

## **6.0 Background information**

6.1 The recommendations from the review are -

- That further consideration be given by Council officers to the implementation of measures to monitor and address the potential impact on mental health to both pupils and school staff as a result of the pandemic.
- That the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee should continue to monitor academic performance and the impact of the pandemic on affected cohorts.
- Council officers should continue to review practices in preparation for a second wave.
- A best practice summary guide should be produced and distributed to schools by the Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion which outlines the key success criteria as identified during the initial closure and reopening.
- A letter of thanks should be extended from the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee to Headteachers and schools for their commitment and efforts in the continued safeguarding of pupils’ learning and wellbeing in exceptional circumstances.

6.2 These actions have all been completed and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

6.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

## **7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 None

## **8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 None.

## **9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 None.

## **10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 Schools Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Scrutiny Review Final Report

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Paul Turner – Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years.
<b>Meeting</b>	8 December 2022

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the extent of the Personal, Social And Health Education (PSHE) programme that is delivered in Blackpool schools.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 That the report be noted and any areas for further scrutiny be identified.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To enable ongoing scrutiny of the PSHE offer in Blackpool's schools.

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

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

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

### 5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

### 6.0 Background information

6.1 There is a considerable amount of education being delivered to children in Blackpool to raise awareness of bad or coercive relationships. This work begins in earnest in our fantastic primary schools where positive relationships are taught in much broader terms. We see lots of evidence of this when we audit their safeguarding provisions. The context is much broader and age appropriate to our younger children as we would expect.

Once children join their high school, the education continues in a structured and considered way. Each school has a PSHE coordinator who works alongside their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure that children are taught how to stay safe and report abuse. There is a culture of vigilance amongst schools and colleges in Blackpool.

Here below are some examples of the content delivered from the Council and schools to our children across Blackpool:

### **Blackpool Council**

- Deliver training to teachers
- Website that offer advice guidance and support
- Series of Webinars cascaded to DSL
- Seven Minute Briefing for December is planned for teenage relationships

### **Secondary Schools**

- Evidence of age appropriate materials being taught through PSHE lessons
- Evidence of significant 'relationship' content including:
  - Puberty and sexual health
  - Consent – different levels of understanding depending on age group
  - Dealing with Bullying and conflict in relationships
  - Grooming – what it is and how to avoid or deal with it.
  - Positive and respectful relationship making
  - Think before you share (digital imagery)
  - Knowing my rights
  - Values, beliefs and attitudes
  - Abuse
  - Readiness for intimacy
  - Sexual harassment
  - Coercive relationships
  - Same-sex relationships

## Colleges

- Evidence of similar content to the Secondary schools
- Evidence of more on coercive relationships including rape culture understanding, criminal and sexual exploitation
- Guest Speaker in 2022 from Empowerment for all Lower Sixth (1200) students
- Signposting for students on Google Classroom (learning platform) for a variety of resources:
  - Speak to a member of the College Safeguarding team
  - Lancashire Police - <https://www.lancashire.police.uk/help-advice/personal-safety/domestic-abuse/healthy-relationships/>
  - No Excuse for Abuse - <https://www.noexcuseforabuse.co.uk/>
  - Child Line - <https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/>
  - Lancashire Victim Services - 0300 323 0085 / [www.lancashirevictimservices.org](http://www.lancashirevictimservices.org)
  - Fylde Coast Women's Aid - [www.fcwa.co.uk](http://www.fcwa.co.uk)
  - NSPCC - Call on 0800 800 5000 / <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/report/>

6.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

### 7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 9(a) - PSHE National Guidance

### 8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

### 9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

### 10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

### 11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

**12.1** None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

**13.1** None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

**14.1** None.



Department  
for Education

# **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education**

**Statutory guidance for governing bodies,  
proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior  
leadership teams, teachers**

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## Secretary of State Foreword

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. The key decisions on these subjects have been informed by a thorough engagement process, including a public call for evidence that received over 23,000 responses from parents, young people, schools and experts and a public consultation where over 40,000 people contacted the Department for Education.

The depth and breadth of views is clear, and there are understandable and legitimate areas of contention. Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and have told us that they see building on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. We agree with this principle and congratulate the many schools delivering outstanding provision to support the personal development and pastoral needs of their pupils. We are determined that the subjects must be deliverable and give schools flexibility to shape their curriculum according to the needs of their pupils and communities.

In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.



All of this content should support the wider work of schools in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils' ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives.

This should be complemented by development of personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty. We have endeavoured to ensure the content is proportionate and deliverable. Whilst we are not mandating content on financial education or careers, we want to support the high quality teaching of these areas in all schools as part of a comprehensive programme, which complements the national curriculum where appropriate and meets the ambitions of the Careers Strategy. We know that many schools will choose to teach the compulsory content within a wider programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education or similar. Schools are encouraged to continue to do so, if this is right for them, and build on established, high quality programmes.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.

# Summary

## What is the status of this guidance?

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996 – further details are in Annex A.

Schools<sup>1</sup> must have regard to the guidance, and where they depart from those parts of the guidance which state that they should (or should not) do something they will need to have good reasons for doing so.

## About this guidance

This document contains information on what schools **should** do and sets out the legal duties with which schools **must** comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

Unless otherwise specified, 'school' means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent schools, including academies and free schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units.

## Who this guidance is for

This statutory guidance applies to all schools<sup>2</sup>, and is therefore aimed at:

- governing bodies of maintained schools (including schools with a sixth form) and non-maintained special schools;
- trustees or directors of academies and free schools;
- proprietors of independent schools (including academies and free schools);
- management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs);
- teachers, other school staff and school nurses;
- head teachers, principals and senior leadership teams;
- Diocese and other faith representatives; and
- for reference for relevant local authority staff.

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<sup>1, 2</sup> Guidance on Health Education does not apply to independent schools, which must meet the Independent School Standards as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. However, they may find the sections on Health Education helpful. It does, however, apply to academies and free schools.

## What this guidance updates

This guidance replaces the Sex and Relationship Education guidance (2000). This guidance will be reviewed three years from first required teaching (September 2020) and every three years after that point.

The guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (statutory guidance)
- [Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool](#) (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- [Behaviour and Discipline in Schools](#) (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
- [Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) (statutory guidance)
- [Alternative Provision](#) (statutory guidance)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) (advice for schools)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#) (advice for schools, including advice on [cyberbullying](#))
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools](#) (advice for schools)
- [The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance](#) (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- [Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools](#) (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC))
- [SMSC requirements for independent schools](#) (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).
- [National Citizen Service](#) guidance for schools

## Introduction

1. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

2. High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society. The duties on schools in this area are set out in legislation.<sup>3</sup>

3. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.<sup>4</sup> They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

4. This guidance also sets out both the rights of parents/carers<sup>5</sup> to withdraw pupils from sex education (but not Relationships or Health Education) and the process that head teachers should follow in considering a request from a parent. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

5. Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in this guidance, in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme or lessons. Teaching will include sufficient well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real life situations.

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<sup>3</sup> Maintained schools and academies are required to provide a curriculum, which is broad and balanced in accordance with Section 78 of the Education Act 2002. Part I of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 requires independent schools other than academies to make provision for PSHE (paragraph 2(2)(d)), and to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraph 2(2)(i)). Part 2 of the Schedule requires independent schools (including academies) to meet the standard relating to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils.

<sup>4</sup> For ease of reference, this guidance refers to primary schools and secondary schools, but the statutory requirements refer to pupils receiving primary/secondary education.

<sup>5</sup> Parents used henceforth to mean both parents and carers.

6. Many schools are choosing to deliver relationships or sex education as part of a timetabled PSHE programme, with good outcomes. Where that provision meets the requirements of this high level framework of core content they are free to continue with this model. Other schools may choose different curricular models for delivery.

7. The lead teacher will need to work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education programmes complement, and do not duplicate, content covered in national curriculum<sup>6</sup> subjects such as citizenship, science, computing and PE. It is important to check prior knowledge and build this into the planning process to ensure a smooth transition between primary and secondary. Further information on links to national curriculum subjects can be found on page 39.

8. Schools should be aware that for many young people the distinction between the online world and other aspects of life is less marked than for some adults. Young people often operate very freely in the online world and by secondary school age some are likely to be spending a substantial amount of time online. Where topics and issues outlined in this guidance are likely to be encountered by pupils online, schools should take this into account when planning how to support them in distinguishing between different types of online content and making well-founded decisions.

9. More broadly, the internet and social media have other important characteristics which young people should be aware of in order to help them use them discriminatingly. For example, social media users are sometimes prepared to say things in more extreme, unkind or exaggerated ways than they might in face to face situations, and some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online. Some platforms attract large numbers of users with similar, sometimes extreme, views, who do not welcome dissent or debate. Young people should be aware that certain websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (i.e. to enable targeted advertising). In addition, criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. Schools should take these factors into account when planning teaching of these subjects and consider the overlap with their wider curriculum to ensure pupils know how to keep themselves and their personal information safe.

10. In this guidance where topics occur equally on and offline they are accommodated in the core content under the most applicable theme with the assumption that teachers will deliver them in a way that reflects that pupils will be negotiating issues and opportunities in these areas in all contexts, including online. Where there are topics with exclusively online content or implications this is drawn out explicitly.

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<sup>6</sup> The national curriculum does not apply to academies or independent schools.

## Summary of requirements

11. The subjects are part of the basic school curriculum (as previously for sex education in maintained secondary schools), which allows schools flexibility in developing their planned programme, integrated within a broad and balanced curriculum.

12. The guidance applies to:

<b>Relationships Education</b>	<b>Relationships and Sex Education</b>	<b>Health Education</b>
All schools providing primary education, including all-through schools and middle schools (includes schools as set out in the Summary section).	All schools providing secondary education, including all-through schools and middle schools (includes schools as set out in the Summary section).	All maintained schools including schools with a sixth form, academies, free schools, non-maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units.
		The statutory requirement to provide Health Education does not apply to independent schools – PSHE is already compulsory as independent schools must meet the Independent School Standards as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Independent schools, however, may find the principles in the guidance on Health Education helpful in planning an age-appropriate curriculum.
The statutory requirements do not apply to sixth form colleges, 16-19 academies or Further Education (FE) colleges <sup>7</sup> , although we would encourage them to support students by offering these subjects. These settings may find the principles helpful, especially in supporting pupils in the transition to FE.		

<sup>7</sup> Sixth form colleges and other 16-19 institutions that provide education for 14-16-year olds under an agreement with the Department for Education or its agencies are required by that agreement to follow guidance which covers a number of areas including the curriculum. The current guidance sets out the need to include the teaching of sex and relationship education in accordance with sections 403 and 405 of the Education Act. From September 2020, these institutions will need to teach the new subjects of Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education and to follow this guidance.

## Developing a policy

13. All schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships Education and RSE. Schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy. Schools should ensure that the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community they serve.

14. There are many excellent examples in which schools have established clear sex education policies in consultation with parents, governors and the wider community, and where they are already delivering effective programmes. Schools should build on that good work in adapting to these new requirements.

## What is required?

15. All schools must have an up-to-date policy, which is made available to parents and others. Schools must provide a copy of the policy free of charge to anyone who asks for one and should publish the policy on the school website<sup>8</sup>.

16. The policy should:

<b><i>Policies for mandatory subjects</i></b>		<b><i>Policy for non-mandatory subjects</i></b>
<b>For primary education<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>For secondary education</b>	<b>For primary schools that may choose to teach sex education</b>
Define Relationships Education	Define Relationships and Sex Education	Define any sex education they choose to teach other than that covered in the science curriculum.
Set out the subject content, how it is taught and who is responsible for teaching it.		
Describe how the subject is monitored and evaluated.		
Include information to clarify why parents <i>do not</i> have a right to withdraw their child.	Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused from sex education within RSE only.	Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused.

<sup>8</sup> If a school does not have a website, they should ensure that the policy is available by other means.

<sup>9</sup> The regulations apply to the teaching of all primary and secondary pupils respectively. This includes all types of schools to which the regulations apply.

Confirm the date by which the policy will be reviewed.

**Typical policies are likely to include sections covering:**

- details of content/scheme of work and when each topic is taught, taking account of the age of pupils
- who delivers either Relationships Education or RSE
- how the policy has been produced, and how it will be kept under review, in both cases working with parents
- how delivery of the content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- explanation of the right to withdraw
- requirements on schools in law e.g. the Equality Act (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice)
- how often the policy is updated
- who approves the policy

17. In secondary schools, RSE will often address aspects of relationships and sex education in an integrated way within a single topic. Schools should develop programmes of teaching which prioritise effective delivery of the content, and do not need artificially to separate sex education and Relationships Education.

18. The policy should also reflect the views of teachers and pupils. Listening and responding to the views of young people will strengthen the policy, ensuring that it meets the needs of all pupils.

## **Religion and belief, including teaching in schools with a religious character**

19. A good understanding of pupils' faith backgrounds and positive relationships between the school and local faith communities help to create a constructive context for the teaching of these subjects.

20. In all schools, when teaching these subjects, the religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that the topics that are included in the core content in this guidance are appropriately handled. Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.

21. All schools may teach about faith perspectives. In particular, schools with a religious character may teach the distinctive faith perspective on relationships, and balanced debate may take place about issues that are seen as contentious. For example,



the school may wish to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex.

22. In all schools, teaching should reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

## Use of materials

23. There are a lot of excellent resources available, free-of-charge, which schools can draw on when delivering these subjects. Schools should assess each resource that they propose to use to ensure that it is appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, and sensitive to their needs.

24. Schools should also ensure that, when they consult with parents, they provide examples of the resources that they plan to use as this can be reassuring for parents and enables them to continue the conversations started in class at home.

25. In addition, there are varieties of resources targeted at young people that can be helpful to use to complement teaching in the classroom. Public Health England, for example, have produced a website for young people which covers a broad range of health issues in a format which is accessible for young people, targeted at secondary-age pupils. This includes [Rise Above resources](#) for lessons linked from the [PSHE Association website](#).

26. A list of some of the resources, which are available free-of-charge, can be found in Annex B.

## Equality

27. Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Further guidance is available for schools in [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#) advice. Schools<sup>10</sup> should pay particular attention to the [Public sector equality duty \(PSED\)](#) (s.149 of the Equality Act).

28. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership<sup>11</sup>, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make

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<sup>10</sup> Equality Act provisions in relation to schools are in Part 6, Chapter 1. Independent schools are not subject to the PSED.

<sup>11</sup> In the rest of this guidance, references to marriage should be read as marriage and civil partnership.

reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects.

29. Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic. This should be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects. A school, could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

30. Schools should consider the makeup of their own student body, including the gender and age range of their pupils, and consider whether it is appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with particular protected characteristics (which mean that they are potentially at greater risk). Schools should consider what they can do to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment, which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole-school approach.

31. Schools should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours. School pastoral and behaviour policies should support all pupils.

32. Schools should refer to the Department's advice, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#). The advice sets out what sexual violence and sexual harassment are, the current evidence on their preponderance in schools and colleges, how to minimise the risk of them occurring and what to do when they do occur or are alleged to have occurred. Schools should be aware of the importance of making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up. Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously; staff should be aware that statistically it is more likely that females will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment than males, and that it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by males. However, males can also be the victims of sexual violence and it can also happen in same-sex relationships. It is, however, essential that assumptions are not made about the behaviour of boys and young men and that they are not made to feel that this behaviour is an inevitable part of being male; most young men are respectful of young women and each other. An understanding for all pupils of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour and the right of everyone to equal treatment will help ensure that pupils treat each other well and go on to be respectful and kind adults.

## **Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)**

33. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who represent a large minority of pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Schools should also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes,<sup>12</sup> as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

34. Schools should be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors should be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects.

35. In special schools and for some SEND pupils in mainstream schools there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. As with all teaching for these subjects, schools should ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

## **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)**

36. In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

37. Schools should ensure that all of their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum.

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<sup>12</sup> "Preparing for adulthood" outcomes are set out at section 7.38 of the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

## Governors

38. As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing boards or management committee should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

39. Foundation governors and trustees of faith academy trusts will also have wider responsibilities in relation to maintaining and developing the religious ethos of the schools.

## **Working with parents/carers and the wider community**

40. The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

41. All schools should work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when, and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

42. Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSE. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach help increase confidence in the curriculum.

43. Many schools build a good relationship with parents on these subjects over time – for example by inviting parents into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues. This can be an important opportunity to talk about how these subjects contribute to wider support in terms of pupil wellbeing and keeping children safe. It is important through such processes to reach out to *all* parents, recognising that a range of approaches may be needed for doing so.

44. Many schools will have existing mechanisms in place to engage parents and should continue to draw on these as they respond to the new legal framework.

### **Right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)**

45. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request it would be good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Schools will want to document this process to ensure a record is kept.

46. Good practice is also likely to include the head teacher discussing with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the

detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead).

47. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

48. This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision. The approach outlined above should be reflected in the school's policy on RSE.

49. Head teachers will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum.

50. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

## **Working with external agencies**

51. Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people.

52. As with any visitor, schools are responsible for ensuring that they check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials. Schools should also ensure that the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with their planned programme and their published policy. It is important that schools discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils. Schools should ask to see the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan in advance, so that they can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs). It is important to agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy. Further information for teachers in handling potential safeguarding or child protection reports is on page 35.

53. Use of visitors should be to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of the teaching staff, rather than as a replacement for teaching by those staff.

## Relationships Education (Primary)

54. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

55. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils should be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.

56. Respect for others should be taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

57. From the beginning, teachers should talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts should enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

58. The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers should address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers should include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

59. Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.

60. A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as ‘virtues’) in the individual. In a school wide context which encourages the development and practice of resilience and other attributes, this includes character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils should develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

61. Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.

62. Through Relationships Education (and RSE), schools should teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In primary schools, this can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

## By the end of primary school:

<p><b>Families and people who care for me</b></p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.</li> <li>• the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other’s lives.</li> <li>• that others’ families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children’s families are also characterised by love and care.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.</li> <li>• that marriage<sup>13</sup> represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.</li> <li>• how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Caring friendships</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.</li> <li>• the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.</li> <li>• that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.</li> <li>• that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.</li> <li>• how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Respectful relationships</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.</li> <li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li> <li>• the conventions of courtesy and manners.</li> <li>• the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.</li> <li>• that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.</li> </ul>

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<sup>13</sup> Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.</li> <li>• what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.</li> <li>• the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.</li> </ul>
<b>Online relationships</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.</li> <li>• that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.</li> <li>• the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.</li> <li>• how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.</li> <li>• how information and data is shared and used online.</li> </ul>
<b>Being safe</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).</li> <li>• about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.</li> <li>• that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.</li> <li>• how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.</li> <li>• how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.</li> <li>• how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.</li> <li>• how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.</li> <li>• where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.</li> </ul>

## Managing difficult questions

63. Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education. The school's policy should cover how the school handles such questions. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.

64. Meeting these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of Relationships Education. Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods should take account of these differences (including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Schools should consider what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting, as teachers may require support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class.

## Sex Education (Primary)

65. The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools and the content set out in this guidance therefore focuses on Relationships Education.

66. The content set out in this guidance covers everything that primary schools should teach about relationships and health, including puberty. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement.

67. It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born. As well as consulting parents more generally about the school's overall policy, primary schools should consult parents before the final year of primary school about the detailed content of what will be taught. This process should include offering parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school. Meeting

these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of sex education. Teaching needs to take account of the developmental differences of children.

68. Where a maintained primary school chooses to teach aspects of sex education (which go beyond the national curriculum for science), the school must set this out in their policy and all schools should consult with parents on what is to be covered. Primary schools that choose to teach sex education must allow parents a right to withdraw their children. Unlike sex education in RSE at secondary, in primary schools, head teachers must comply with a parent's wish to withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science. Schools will want to draw on the good practice for conversations with parents around the right to withdraw as set out in paragraphs 45 and 46. Schools must also ensure that their teaching and materials are appropriate having regard to the age and religious backgrounds of their pupils. Schools will also want to recognise the significance of other factors, such as any special educational needs or disabilities of their pupils.

## Relationships and Sex Education (RSE): Secondary

69. The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

70. Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

71. Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This should be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Many teachers use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

72. RSE should provide clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education. Teachers should build on the foundation of Relationships Education and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, pupils should also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. This teaching should enable pupils to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful.

73. Pupils should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. They should be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing.

74. As in primary, secondary Relationships Education can be underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual. These should include character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility,

kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth. There are many ways in which secondary schools should support the development of these attributes, for example by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

75. Pupils should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. When teaching about these topics, it must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. There should be an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships. This should be integrated appropriately into the RSE programme, rather than addressed separately or in only one lesson.

76. It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

77. Schools may choose to explore faith, or other perspectives, on some of these issues in other subjects such as Religious Education.

78. Pupils should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs. Key aspects of the law relating to sex which should be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.

79. Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, should also be addressed sensitively and clearly. Schools should address the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM). They should also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM. As well as addressing this in the context of the law, pupils may also need support to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for oneself or others at risk. Schools should also be mindful that for pupils who are or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, the school may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where they can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support.

80. Internet safety should also be addressed. Pupils should be taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This will include how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Pupils should have a strong understanding of how data is generated, collected, shared and used online, for example, how personal data is captured on social media or understanding the way that businesses may exploit the data available to them.

81. Some pupils are also exposed to harmful behaviours online, and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader Relationships Education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.

## By the end of secondary school:

**Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:**

<p><b>Families</b></p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.</li> <li>• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.</li> <li>• what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.</li> <li>• why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.</li> <li>• the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.</li> <li>• the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.</li> <li>• how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Respectful relationships, including friendships</b></p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li> <li>• how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).</li> <li>• that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.</li> <li>• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.</li> <li>• that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.</li> <li>• what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.</li> <li>• the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.</li> </ul>
<b>Online and media</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.</li> <li>• about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.</li> <li>• not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.</li> <li>• what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.</li> <li>• the impact of viewing harmful content.</li> <li>• that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.</li> <li>• that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.</li> <li>• how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.</li> </ul>
<b>Being safe</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.</li> <li>• how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</b></p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.</li> <li>• that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.</li> <li>• that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.</li> <li>• that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.</li> <li>• the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.</li> <li>• the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.</li> <li>• that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).</li> <li>• how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.</li> <li>• about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.</li> <li>• how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.</li> <li>• how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.</li> </ul>

## The Law

82. It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions. Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

## Physical health and mental wellbeing

83. The aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. It should enable them to recognise what is normal and what is an issue in themselves and others and, when issues arise, know how to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources.

84. Physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa.

85. It is important for schools to promote pupils' self-control and ability to self-regulate, and strategies for doing so. This will enable them to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges. This integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing has a potential positive impact on behaviour and attainment.

86. Effective teaching should aim to reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular those to do with mental wellbeing. Schools should engender an atmosphere that encourages openness. This will mean that pupils feel they can check their understanding and seek any necessary help and advice as they gain knowledge about how to promote good health and wellbeing.

87. Schools have flexibility to design and plan age-appropriate subject content, but this guidance sets out core areas for health and wellbeing that are appropriate for primary and secondary aged pupils.

88. Puberty including menstruation should be covered in Health Education and should, as far as possible, be addressed before onset. This should ensure male and female pupils are prepared for changes they and their peers will experience.

## Menstruation

89. The onset of menstruation can be confusing or even alarming for girls if they are not prepared. Pupils should be taught key facts about the menstrual cycle including what is an average period, range of menstrual products and the implications for emotional and physical health. In addition to curriculum content, schools should also make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation including with requests for menstrual products. Schools will need to consider the needs of their cohort of pupils in designing this content.

## Physical health and mental wellbeing: Primary

90. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Teachers should be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.

91. This starts with pupils being taught about the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and giving pupils the language and knowledge to understand the normal range of emotions that everyone experiences. This should enable pupils to articulate how they are feeling, develop the language to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate for the situations that they experience.

92. Teachers should go on to talk about the steps pupils can take to protect and support their own and others' health and wellbeing, including simple self-care techniques, personal hygiene, prevention of health and wellbeing problems and basic first aid.

93. Emphasis should be given to the positive two-way relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing, and the benefits to mental wellbeing of physical exercise and time spent outdoors.

94. Pupils should also be taught the benefits of hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities. This teaching should make clear that people are social beings and that spending time with others, taking opportunities to consider the needs of others and practising service to others, including in organised and structured activities and groups (for example the scouts or girl guide movements), are beneficial for health and wellbeing.

95. Pupils should be taught about the benefits of rationing time spent online and the risks of excessive use of electronic devices. In later primary school, pupils should be taught why social media, computer games and online gaming have age restrictions and should be equipped to manage common difficulties encountered online.

96. A firm foundation in the benefits and characteristics of good health and wellbeing will enable teachers to talk about isolation, loneliness, unhappiness, bullying and the negative impact of poor health and wellbeing.

### By the end of primary school:

<b>Mental wellbeing</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.</li><li>• that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.</li> <li>• how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.</li> <li>• the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.</li> <li>• simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.</li> <li>• isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.</li> <li>• that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.</li> <li>• where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).</li> <li>• it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Internet safety and harms</b></p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.</li> <li>• about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.</li> <li>• how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.</li> <li>• why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.</li> <li>• that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.</li> <li>• how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.</li> <li>• where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.</li> </ul>

<b>Physical health and fitness</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.</li> <li>• the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.</li> <li>• the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).</li> <li>• how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.</li> </ul>
<b>Healthy eating</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).</li> <li>• the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.</li> <li>• the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).</li> </ul>
<b>Drugs, alcohol and tobacco</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.</li> </ul>
<b>Health and prevention</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.</li> <li>• about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.</li> <li>• the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.</li> <li>• about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.</li> <li>• about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.</li> <li>• the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.</li> </ul>
<b>Basic first aid</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.</li> <li>• concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.</li> </ul>

<b>Changing adolescent body</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.</li> <li>• about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.</li> </ul>
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## Physical health and mental wellbeing: Secondary

97. It is important that the starting point for health and wellbeing education should be a focus on enabling pupils to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves. In secondary school, teaching should build on primary content and should introduce new content to older pupils at appropriate points. This should enable pupils to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and to understand why terms associated with mental and physical health difficulties should not be used pejoratively. This knowledge should enable pupils to understand where normal variations in emotions and physical complaints end and health and wellbeing issues begin.

98. Teaching about the impact of puberty, which will have started in primary school, should continue in secondary school, so that pupils are able to understand the physical and emotional changes, which take place at this time and their impact on their wider health and wellbeing.

99. Emphasis should continue to be given to steps pupils can take to protect and support their own health and wellbeing. They should know that there is a relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing and that this can also influence their ability to learn. Teachers should cover self-care, the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors. This should be linked to information on the benefits of sufficient sleep, good nutrition and strategies for building resilience.

100. Pupils should know the contribution that hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities can make to overall wellbeing. They should understand that humans are social beings and that outward-facing activity, especially that with a service focus (for example, work, volunteering and participation in organisations such as the scouts or the girl guiding movements, the National Citizen Service or the Duke of Edinburgh Award) are beneficial for wellbeing. This can also contribute to the development of the attributes for a happy and successful adult life. Pupils should be supported to recognise what makes them feel lonely. Self-focused or isolating lifestyle choices can lead to unhappiness and being disconnected from society for those who have greater need for companionship and relationships.

101. Pupils should also be taught about problems and challenges. This should include factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions, drugs, alcohol and information about effective interventions. Schools may also choose to teach about issues such as eating disorders<sup>14</sup>.

102. Teachers should be aware of common ‘adverse childhood experiences’ (such as family breakdown, bereavement and exposure to domestic violence) and when and how these may be affecting any of their pupils and so may be influencing how they experience these subjects. The impact of time spent online, the positive aspects of online support and negotiating social media, including online forums and gaming, should also be included. Teachers should understand that pupils who have experienced problems at home may depend more on schools for support.

103. Pupils should be taught how to judge when they, or someone they know, needs support and where they can seek help if they have concerns. This should include details on which adults in school (e.g. school nurses), and externally can help.

**Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:**

<b>Mental wellbeing</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.</li> <li>• that happiness is linked to being connected to others.</li> <li>• how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.</li> <li>• common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).</li> <li>• how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others’ mental health.</li> <li>• the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.</li> </ul>
<b>Internet safety and harms</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and</li> </ul>

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<sup>14</sup> Eating disorders and extreme weight loss are a specialised area and schools should use qualified support or advice as needed. Schools may consider accessing support from the NHS or local specialist services who may be able to provide advice and CPD for teachers.



	<p>information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.</li> </ul>
<b>Physical health and fitness</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.</li> <li>• the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health.</li> <li>• about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.</li> </ul>
<b>Healthy eating</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.</li> </ul>
<b>Drugs, alcohol and tobacco</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.</li> <li>• the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.</li> <li>• the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.</li> <li>• the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.</li> <li>• awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.</li> <li>• the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.</li> </ul>
<b>Health and prevention</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.</li> <li>• about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.</li> <li>• (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.</li> <li>• the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.</li> </ul>
<b>Basic first aid</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic treatment for common injuries.</li> <li>• life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.<sup>15</sup></li> <li>• the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Changing adolescent body</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.</li> <li>• the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.</li> </ul>

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<sup>15</sup> Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation is usually best taught after 12 years old.

## Delivery and teaching strategies

### National curriculum subjects: citizenship, science, computing and PE

104. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education complement several national curriculum subjects. Where schools are teaching the national curriculum, they should look for opportunities to draw links between the subjects and integrate teaching where appropriate. There continues to be no right of withdrawal from any part of the national curriculum.

105. The national curriculum for citizenship at key stages 3 and 4 aims to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. In particular, citizenship education should foster pupils' awareness and understanding of democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. Teaching should equip pupils with the knowledge to explore political and social issues, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments. It should also prepare pupils to take their place in society as responsible citizens, manage their money well and make sound financial decisions.

106. At key stages 1 and 2, the national curriculum for science includes teaching about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty. At key stage 3 and 4, it includes teaching about reproduction in humans; for example, the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS.

107. The national curriculum for computing aims to ensure that all pupils can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including logic, algorithms and data representation. It also covers e-safety, with progression in the content to reflect the different and escalating risks that young people face as they get older. This includes how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private, and where to go for help and support.

108. The national curriculum for PE aims to ensure that pupils develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and activities and lead healthy, active lives.

109. Schools need to consider how they can ensure that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education complement existing national curriculum subjects and whole school approaches to wellbeing and health. For example, health education can complement what is taught through PE by developing core knowledge and broader understanding that enables people to lead healthy, active lives and citizenship can

complement all of the new subjects in the coverage of law. Schools should tailor their curriculum to meet the needs of their pupils.

## **Pupil Referral Units/Alternative Provision**

110. Pupil referral units (PRUs), alternative provision (AP) academies and free schools and independent schools that provide AP are required to make provision for Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education in the same way as mainstream schools; and they must have regard to this guidance in delivering their programme. In teaching these subjects in PRUs, AP academies and free schools, and independent<sup>16</sup> AP schools, specific thought should be given to the particular needs and vulnerabilities of the pupils.

## **Senior leadership and whole school approach**

111. Schools which demonstrate effective practice often ensure clear responsibility for these subjects by a senior teacher in leadership position with dedicated time to lead specialist provision, e.g. a subject lead or co-ordinator.

112. All of these subjects should be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. For example, the curriculum on relationships and on sex should complement, and be supported by, the school's wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, bullying and safeguarding (including handling of any reports pupils may make as a result of the subject content). The subjects will sit within the context of a school's broader ethos and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally; and its pastoral care system. This is also the case for teaching about mental health within health education. The curriculum on health education should similarly complement, and be supported by, the school's wider education on healthy lifestyles through physical education, food technology, science, sport, extra-curricular activity and school food.

113. Schools should consider how their teaching can help support the development of important attributes in pupils, such as honesty, kindness, tolerance, courtesy, resilience and self-efficacy, as well as how those attributes are also developed by other aspects of the school's provision. The curriculum should proactively address issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on children's physical, emotional and sexual development. This should be in line with pupil need, informed by pupil voice and participation in curriculum development and in response to issues as they arise in the school and wider community.

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<sup>16</sup> Independent schools do not have to have regard to the guidance on Health Education, although they may find it helpful in planning.

## Flexibility

114. Schools will retain freedom to determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people, is developed in consultation with parents and the local community. Schools must also comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act as noted earlier. Where appropriate this may also require a differentiated curriculum. Schools have specific duties to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.

115. Flexibility is important as it allows schools to respond to local public health and community issues, meet the needs of their community and adapt materials and programmes to meet the needs of pupils (for example in teaching about gangs or high local prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections).

## Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

116. At the heart of these subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

117. Good practice allows children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children should be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This should include processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer.

118. KCSIE is clear that all staff should know what to do if a pupil tells them that they are being abused or neglected or are witnessing abuse. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

119. Good practice would be to involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) in anything that is safeguarding-related in the context of these subjects. They will potentially have knowledge of trusted, high quality local resources that could be engaged, links to the police and other agencies and the knowledge of any particular local issues which it may be appropriate to address in lessons.

120. Where a school invites external agencies in to support delivery of these subjects, they must agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding report should be dealt with by the external visitor. It is important that children understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what might happen if they choose to make a report.

121. There are some important points for teachers in terms of how they approach this content and how they consider their planning. When teaching the new subjects, schools should be aware that children may raise topics including self-harm and suicide. In talking about this content in the classroom, teachers must be aware of the risks of encouraging or making suicide seem a more viable option for pupils and avoid material being instructive rather than preventative. To avoid this, they should take care to avoid giving instructions or methods of self-harm or suicide and avoid using emotive language, videos or images. *Teacher Guidance: preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing*<sup>17</sup> provides useful support for teachers in handling this material.

122. If teachers have concerns about a specific pupil in relation to self-harm or suicidal ideation or attempts, they must follow safeguarding procedures.

---

<sup>17</sup> [Teacher Guidance: preparing to teach about mental health and wellbeing](#), PSHE association

## Assessment

123. Schools should have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in these subjects as for other curriculum areas. A strong curriculum will build on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress.

124. Lessons should be planned to ensure that pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged. Teaching should be assessed and assessments used to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention.

125. Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for these subjects, there are some areas to consider in strengthening quality of provision, and which demonstrate how teachers can assess outcomes. For example, tests, written assignments or self-evaluations, to capture progress.

## Accountability

126. Key aspects of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education are in scope for Ofsted inspection; for example, through inspectors' consideration of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare; and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.



## **Annex A Regulations**

### **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education**

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and provide that pupils receiving primary education must be taught Relationships Education, pupils receiving secondary education must be taught RSE and that all primary and secondary pupils must be taught Health Education. The new subjects of Relationships Education and RSE must be taught in all maintained schools, academies and independent schools. This includes pupil referral units, maintained special schools, special academies, and non-maintained special schools. All schools, except independent schools, must make provision for Health Education.

To give effect to the duty in section 34 of the 2017 Act and the power in section 35 of that Act, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 amend existing provisions in the Education Act 1996 and the Education Act 2002 and insert new provisions into the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015. The new provisions include a requirement for the Secretary of State to publish guidance on Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education; require schools to have regard to that guidance; require schools to make a statement of policy on their provision of Relationships Education and RSE; and set out the circumstances in which a pupil is to be excused from RSE.

The regulations and guidance in relation to Health Education do not apply to independent schools – they will continue to make provision for the health education element of PSHE under the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

# Annex B Suggested resources

## Teaching resources

There are many excellent resources available, free of charge, which schools can draw on when delivering these subjects. Schools should assess each resource that they propose to use carefully to ensure it is appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils and sensitive to their needs, where relevant, schools should use resources that are medically accurate. Schools should also consider drawing on the expertise of the main subject associations who often quality assure third party resources. We also recognise that schools use resources from representative bodies (e.g. many Catholic and other schools draw on the model curricula provided by the Catholic Education Service.)

Schools should also ensure that, when they consult parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use, as this can be reassuring for parents, and enables them to continue the conversations started in class at home.

This is for illustrative purposes and is not an exhaustive list.

## Relationships Education

[Safeguarding: NSPCC PANTS rule with film.](#)

[Example of model primary curricula from Catholic Education.](#)

## Relationships and Sex Education

Sexual health and relationships: up to date information on all aspects of sexual and reproductive health available on [Sexwise's website](#) which teachers may find helpful for their knowledge.

[Abuse in relationships: Disrespect NoBody from the Home Office and Government Equalities Office.](#)

[Consent: PSHE Association lesson plans](#) from the PSHE association.

[LGBT inclusivity: Stonewall lesson plans and materials for primary and secondary.](#)

Resources covering all contexts, including online, and specifically relationships and bullying, alcohol, smoking, stress, body image from [Public Health England website with videos made by young people and resources tested with teachers.](#)

[Example model secondary curricula from Catholic education.](#)

## **Mental health**

[Mental health and emotional wellbeing lesson plans from PSHE Association.](#)

[MindEd educational resources](#) on children and young people's mental health.

## **Online safety**

[Education for a Connected World](#) is the UK Council for Internet safety (UKCCIS) framework of digital knowledge and skills for different ages and stages.

[Sexting advice from UKCCIS for schools](#) on preventative education and managing reports of sexting.

[Thinkuknow is the education programme from National Crime Agency \(NCA\) and Child Exploitation Online Programme \(CEOP\)](#), which protects children both online and offline. The site offers materials for parents, teachers and pupils on a wide range of online safety issues and facts about areas such as digital footprints, recognising fake websites and checking URLs.

## **PSHE**

[PSHE Association Programme of study for KS1-5](#)

## **Drugs and alcohol**

[Teacher training on drugs, alcohol and tobacco](#) - a training module for primary and secondary schools to use to train staff to teach about drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

## **Extremism and radicalisation**

[Practical advice and information from Educate Against Hate](#) for teachers, teachers in leadership positions and parents on protecting children from extremism and radicalization.

## **Curriculum**

[Non-statutory framework for Citizenship KS 1 and 2](#) (Non-statutory programme of study). Schools may wish to draw on the Citizenship programme of study in their planning.

## Data to understand the health and wellbeing needs of the local school-age population

[Public Health England's Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network](#) brings together a range of publicly available data, information, [reports](#), tools and resources on child and maternal health into one easily accessible hub.

It includes [school-age health profiles](#) and [young people's health profiles](#).

The indicators allow areas to see how they perform against the national average and against other local areas. These tools, accompanied by local health intelligence, will be useful in supporting schools to identify and respond to the particular health and wellbeing needs of their local school-age population.

There are also [early years health profiles](#).

## Annex C Cross-government strategies

These subjects support many cross-government strategies of which schools will want to be aware. Whilst we have not referenced all strategies or supporting documents, we have included some of the key areas below.

- [Transforming children and young people's mental health provision](#) green paper. The green paper announced new support in and near schools and colleges to support children and young people with their mental health.
- The [drug strategy](#) 2017 sets out how the government and its partners, at local, national and international levels, will take new action to tackle drug misuse and the harms it causes.
- [Internet Safety Strategy](#) green paper sets out steps towards developing a coordinated strategic approach to online safety.
- The Children's Commissioner [Digital 5 A Day](#) provides a simple framework that reflects the concerns of parents as well as children's behaviours and needs.
- Government aims to significantly reduce England's rate of childhood obesity within the next ten years. The [childhood obesity plan](#) sets out the approach to reduce childhood obesity.
- [Guidance](#) from the Chief Medical Office (CMO) on how much physical activity people should be doing, along with supporting documents.
- Over the last 18 years, the teenage pregnancy rate has reduced by 60%. However, a continued focus is needed to maintain the downward trend and narrow inequalities in rates between and within local authorities. The [Teenage Pregnancy prevention framework](#) provides evidence based guidance for local authorities, including the important role of RSE and links to local sexual health services.
- Sustaining the downward trend and making further progress is one of the key objectives of the Department of Health and Social Care's [Framework for Sexual Health Improvement in England](#). These subjects provide a key opportunity to strengthen support for young people to develop healthy relationships and prevent early unplanned pregnancy.
- [Reproductive health - a public health issue](#). A consensus statement, data and women's experiences, covering reproductive health through the life course, from menstruation to menopause. (PHE. 2018)
- The cross-government [loneliness strategy](#), which sets out the Government's vision for supporting individuals, businesses and communities to build and maintain strong relationships.



Department  
for Education

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 December 2022

## RESILIENCE REVOLUTION FINAL REPORT

1.0 **Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To present the evaluation of HeadStart Resilience Revolution programme 2016-2022.

2.0 **Recommendation(s):**

To review the report findings and recommendations.

3.0 **Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 To understand the impact and legacy of the Resilience Revolution.

3.2 Use and disseminate its findings to support the continuation of building resilience in Blackpool.

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

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

4.0 **Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 None.

5.0 **Council priority:**

5.1 Priority Two - Communities: creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

## 6.0 Background information

The Resilience Revolution is an innovative whole town approach to building resilience, made possible by funding from The National Lottery Fund's HeadStart programme. Funding was available between 2016 and 2022, across 6 areas nationally in the UK with the purpose of testing and learning new ways to support young people's mental health (ages 10-16).

In Blackpool, the programme took the bold step of developing a vision for the whole town; giving everyone who lived, worked or volunteered in the town the opportunity to get involved. The Resilience Revolution embraced co-production as a way to design and test innovative projects. Co-production meant a range of people, with different expertise, working together, as equals towards shared goals including:

- Building lifelong trusted relationships between; young people, families, schools, workers and organisations.
- Working alongside schools to promote more inclusive learning environments.
- Working alongside young people and families on new ways to deliver support.
- Working alongside young people and families to make processes and policies that impact them, fairer.
- Raising awareness of what is unfair and how it needs to change through campaigns.

Over time, the Resilience Revolution worked to move systems more strongly towards the prevention of mental health problems. It helped people to "beat the odds", whilst also "changing the odds" (Hart et al., 2016); promoting well-being and created opportunities and new spaces for resilience to grow (RSA, 2018).

### 6.1 The Resilience Revolution supported

- 19184 young people in schools
- 2552 young people in target groups
- 841 parents and carers
- 152 volunteers
- 44 schools
- 3276 professionals
- 147 organisations

### 6.2 Impact Schools

With help from The Resilience Revolution, schools became fairer, safer and better places where the voices of pupils were listened to and acted upon.

Young people reduced their levels of negative thinking and saw statistically significant improvements in: feeling confident, feeling able to make changes in school, being hopeful about their futures, coping, problem-solving, understanding resilience and in being able to make friends.

Whole school approaches have played an important role in building a positive school climate that nourishes and supports pupils to maintain wellbeing and reach their developmental potential. Where schools had joined the anti-bullying Charter mark project, there was also improved wellbeing scores for the young people at those schools compared with school that had not joined the Blackpool Beating Bullying campaign.



School communities, including parents and carers, young people and staff, came together and customised the Academic Resilience Approach in regard to the strengths and needs of their schools.

Through staff training on resilience, Resilience Committees and innovation fund projects, transformations took place at both individual and system levels. For instance, at individual level, increased attendance, self-confidence, and pride in the school, as well as reduced behavioural episodes and exclusions were reported.

### **Parents**

With strong relationship building through a blend of online and face to face opportunities for parents and carers in Blackpool, evidence of improved parent and carer self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy was observed. Groups of parents and carers took part in and led a range of training and learning events; and conducted interviews for social care workers and co-produced toolkits and guidance documents. The outcomes from this range of opportunities led to improved resilience and wellbeing, with particular focus on peer-support as a mechanism for improvement.

### **Our Children**

The Resilience Revolution used brave innovative approaches that support 'Our Children' (Children Looked After) building longstanding and trusted relationships in school and in the community. Our Children reported improvements in their emotions, behaviours, aspirations, self-esteem, confidence, school attendance and civic engagement.

Our Children led projects such as training adult volunteers and picked a trusted and trained adult to be their Friend for Life. Over a 5-year period, Our Children, who were young friends in these projects, attended school approximately 2% more than Our Children without a Friend for Life. None of these young friends in the community projects have been permanently excluded from school.

### **Young people's Health**

Through the Walk and Talk and Self harm support projects, young people took part in activities because they wanted targeted support with managing their emotions and behaviours. At the end of these projects young people had improvements in their life aspirations. Young people were more motivated and able to manage their emotions better. Some young people also improved relationships with peers. And specifically in self-harm project, 77% of young people did not go back to Accident and Emergency related to self-harm. The projects were very impactful for those who joined the activities with higher levels of negative emotions at the beginning.

### **Employment and Skills**

Young people involved in co-production opportunities reported transformational impacts in confidence, sense of belonging and new life skills. A range of new employment roles specifically for parent, carers and young people with relevant lived experiences were created, this led to improved self-esteem, sense of belonging and leadership skills. Apprentices rated their experiences at 8.8 out of 10. Co-production groups also helped connect a range of local and national organisations, including Ofqual (Office for Qualifications, Examinations and Regulations) as well as ensuring recruitment processes became increasingly more accessible and relevant for the Blackpool community. Young people's involvement has indicated a long-term impact on aspirations and confidence about their future opportunities. Outcomes suggest a strong sense of empowerment and self-advocacy for young people

### 6.3 **Evaluation**

The strengths of the evaluation include the use of both quantitative and qualitative data mostly from multiple people which helped explore the impact on 10–16-year-olds not only from the young person’s perspective, but from multiple perspectives of people who work with, care for and see young people every day. This offers the evaluation a depth and breadth in its findings. Young people contributed to the design of the project and by incorporating their lived expertise and unique perspective to the design of research an additional layer of relevance is added. However, the results should be evaluated in the light of the strong and weak methodological features of the research and evaluation design. One limitation of the evaluation is the lack of control groups for comparison. This is the case across all the evaluation studies. Although this limitation affects every evaluation, the ethical consideration that the Resilience Revolution was not a clinical trial but a community-based resilience-building programme with the aim to offer support to as many young people as possible meant control groups were not feasible.

However, the absence of control groups prevented the researchers from eliminating alternative explanations of the findings. Therefore, normative trends in the literature for early and middle adolescence were used as a reference point to interpret the findings, where possible. Small sample sizes in some of the projects restricted the statistical power of research analysis. Therefore, even though positive trends were observed in the data, the statistical analysis either could not be computed or could not reach significance in these cases.

### 6.4 **Conclusion**

The report synthesises the overall impact of the Resilience Revolution programme and includes recommendations for policy makers. It also includes evaluation reports from each Resilience Revolution project. The final report (to be circulated separately) and executive summary (attached at Appendix 10(a)) can be disseminated independently to relevant stakeholders.

The Resilience Revolution implemented a town wide strategy that embedded ground-breaking, place-based, co-produced activity not previously tested on this scale. The programme was led by a Local Authority with statutory and complex democratic, organisational and administrative processes. However, the Resilience Revolution was committed to the ‘test and learn’ approach and developed/refined many elements of the programme based on learning over the course of the programme.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

### 7.0 **List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 10(a) – Resilience Revolution Executive Summary

### 8.0 **Financial considerations:**

8.1 None

### 9.0 **Legal considerations:**

9.1 None

10.0 **Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None

11.0 **Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None

12.0 **Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

13.0 **Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

14.0 **Background papers:**

14.1 None

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**The Resilience Revolution Final Research Report 2016-2022**

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## **Executive Summary: The Resilience Revolution Blackpool 2016-2022**

This report presents the research and evaluation of the Resilience Revolution programme (2016-2022).

The Resilience Revolution is an innovative whole town approach to building resilience, made possible by funding from The National Lottery Fund's HeadStart programme. Funding was available between 2016 and 2022, across 6 areas nationally in the UK with the purpose of testing and learning new ways to support young people's mental health (ages 10-16).

In Blackpool, the programme took the bold step of developing a vision for the whole town; giving everyone who lived, worked or volunteered in the town the opportunity to get involved. The Resilience Revolution embraced co-production as a way to design and test innovative projects. Co-production meant a range of people, with different expertise, working together, as equals towards shared goals including:

- Building lifelong trusted relationships between; young people, families, schools, workers and organisations.
- Working alongside schools to promote more inclusive learning environments.
- Working alongside young people and families on new ways to deliver support.
- Working alongside young people and families to make processes and policies that impact them, fairer.
- Raising awareness of what is unfair and how it needs to change through campaigns.

Over time, the Resilience Revolution worked to move systems more strongly towards the prevention of mental health problems. It helped people to "beat the odds", whilst also "changing the odds" (Hart et al., 2016); promoting well-being and created opportunities and new spaces for resilience to grow (RSA, 2018).

### **The Implementation of the Resilience Revolution**

The Resilience Revolution engaged young people, parents and carers and professionals to co-produce both practice and research.

Three tiers of support were initially co-produced and delivered.

#### **Universal:**

Delivered in all schools in Blackpool.

- Supporting all 44 Blackpool Schools to have a Resilient Therapy and co-production informed approach to systems change.
- Delivering an introduction to resilience course to every Year 5 primary school pupil.

#### **Universal +:**

Offered to anyone living, working, or volunteering in Blackpool.

- Free Resilient Therapy, co-production and activism events and activities for young people aged 10-16.

- Free resilience training and learning events for the children’s and families’ workforce, regular supervision and communities of practice.
- Free resilience training and peer support groups for families, parents and carers.

**Targeted:**

Targeted support was tailored towards priority groups:

- ‘Our Children’, (the term looked after children and young people in Blackpool prefer), were supported through Friend for Life and Back on Track projects.
- Young people who self-harm had access to therapy through Walk and Talk or support from a Resilience Coach.
- Young people moving from primary into secondary school identified as having lower levels of resilience were supported by a Resilience Coach on an individual or group basis.
- Young people with emotional and communication needs enrolled at Blackpool's Pupil Referral Unit and at a primary school were supported by a combination of Resilient Therapy (Hart et al, 2007) informed equine care and art therapy.

In addition to these initial universal and target areas, the Resilience Revolution sparked innovative activities often initiated by young people, parents and carers and schools.

**Table 1.** An overall summary of numbers of people engaged in the Resilience Revolution.

<b>Young people (universal &amp; universal +)</b>	<b>Young people (targeted)</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>Professionals</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>
<b>19184</b>	<b>2552</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>3276</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Primary Schools</b>	<b>Secondary Schools</b>	<b>Other school settings</b>	<b>Community based organisations</b>	
<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>147</b>	



## Research Questions and Methodology

Five research questions shaped the research and evaluation:

1. What were the projects within the Resilience Revolution and who was part of them?
2. What were different people's experiences of the Resilience Revolution?
3. What was the impact of the Resilience Revolution for 10- to 16 -year -olds?
4. How much has the Resilience Revolution created spaces for systems changes?
5. What is the potential for sustaining the Resilience Revolution?

This research was informed by the Value Creation Framework (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2020) and drew from quantitative and qualitative data from multiple sources. We adopted a 'test and learn' approach. Co-production was central, and methods were selected to maximise accessibility and participation.

**Table 2.** Research and Evaluation Data Sources

Data Source	Source Number
Project Specific Surveys	16,200
Interviews	60
Focus Groups	5
Feedback Forms	3,800

Regular learning events and conferences helped to develop co-research skills, presentation skills, and amplify lived experience voices at an international level in South Africa, Portugal, Ireland, United States of America, Greece and at the Blackpool based International Resilience Conference in March 2022.

## Findings

*Research question 1: What were the projects of the Resilience Revolution and who was part of them?*

The Resilience Revolution involved many community organisations, individuals, and schools across Blackpool. Table 3 below presents details of participation in the Resilience Revolution projects.

**Table 3.** Total numbers participating in each project of the Resilience Revolution (n/a indicates not applicable).

	Young People	Parent and carers	Schools	Professionals	Organisations
Academic Resilience Approach	19,184	108	44	945	n/a
Video Interactive Guidance	21	42	n/a	3	n/a
Parents of the Revolution	n/a	135	n/a	n/a	n/a
Youth Engagement	669	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Back on Track	39	39	22	n/a	n/a
Self-Harm Support	154	77	15	n/a	n/a
Moving on Up Group Work	520	n/a	19	n/a	n/a
Moving on Up One to One	520	520	44	n/a	n/a
Friend for Life	28	28	n/a	56	n/a
Saddle Up	63	n/a	3	6	1
Friend for School	9	n/a	1	3	1
Digital Friends	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Peer Mentoring	26	n/a	1	n/a	n/a
Resilience Clubs	93	n/a	3	n/a	n/a
Creative Experiences	300	n/a	n/a	n/a	3
Bounce Forward	3134	n/a	20	45	n/a
Junior Park Rangers	262	n/a	n/a	4	n/a
Workforce Development	n/a	n/a	44	2331	147
Walk and Talk	475	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Apprenticeships / Sessional	24	n/a	n/a	28	5
Blackpool Beating Bullying	n/a	n/a	44	n/a	n/a

As shown in Tables 1 and 3, the provision of diverse activities enabled a broad range of individuals to take part in the Resilience Revolution. Active participation in the delivery of the Resilience Revolution included 669 Young People, 841 parents and carers, 44 schools, 3276 professionals like NHS workers, council employees and practitioners, and 147 community partners like schools, colleges, universities, and Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) and 152 volunteers.

Participation levels for all groups increased steadily prior to initial COVID-19 restrictions. Engagement with young people dipped when restrictions were in-place yet returned once restrictions were lifted. Conversely, engagement with parents, carers and partnership organisations increased as the programme trialled new ways of online and hybrid working.

The overall number of individuals and groups participating in Resilience Revolution projects is higher than our figures show. This is because of the extensive partnership working with schools, colleges, universities, and VCFSE sectors. As the Resilience Revolution grew, some of these groups did not directly report into the programme's reporting structure but had significant involvement.

#### *Research question 2: How was the overall implementation process experienced?*

The experiences of stakeholders suggested six key factors that need to be considered when designing and implementing similar complex initiatives. These are:

##### **1. Motivations for joining**

Young people and parents took part to shape local services and systems to ensure they are relevant, accessible, and effective. The key motivation of practitioners and community organisations for joining the Resilience Revolution was often to transform and improve these services and systems by working directly with people who use them.

##### **2. Relationships**

Adults and young people emphasised the importance of respectful relationships as important foundations of future work. A key goal for many young people in the targeted support projects was to make new friends and improve their sense of belonging. Parents and carers emphasised the importance of informal spaces where they could share their lived experiences, exchange peer support and feel less isolated.

##### **3. Group and team facilitation**

Relaxed but focused, knowledgeable, and respectful facilitation of groups and teams helped co-produced activities achieve their aims. Young people, parents and carers felt their diverse voices were heard and acted upon in the Resilience Revolution.

##### **4. Adapting approaches**

The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns necessitated changes in the way the Resilience Revolution operated with a shift to more online activities. This worked better for adults than some young people. A willingness to adapt the way things were done was found to be important throughout.

### **5. Ensuring voices are heard and amplified**

The Resilience Revolution generated many opportunities to ensure that young people's and parents'/carers' voices were heard. This happened locally within the Resilience Revolution's leadership through the Young People' Executive group, in schools and nationally in important policy making processes such as the Westminster mental health consultation event in 2018.

### **6. Meaningful co-production**

The Resilience Revolution's activities were in general experienced as involving meaningful and genuine co-production. This was helped when professionals and those in positions of power were open to be challenged. The Workforce Development project aimed to improve this. Making use of both informal and formal spaces helped genuine co-production. The informal spaces provided a safe space for all to speak and resulted in specific recommendations for change and improvement to feed into formal spaces. People also valued accountability with feedback about the progress of agreed actions.

#### Research question 3: What was the impact of the Resilience Revolution for 10- to 16 -year -olds?

Through their involvement in the Resilience Revolution, schools became fairer, safer and better places where the voices of pupils were listened to and acted upon. Young people reduced their levels of negative thinking and saw statistically significant improvements in: feeling confident, feeling able to make changes in school, being hopeful about their futures, coping, problem-solving, understanding resilience, wellbeing and in being able to make friends. Through staff training on resilience, Resilience Committees and innovation fund projects, transformations took place at both individual and system levels. For instance, at individual level, increased attendance, self-confidence and pride in the school, as well as reduced behavioural episodes and exclusions were reported for pupils who were part of Resilience Committees.

#### **1. Primary school**

Surveys were completed by young people in primary schools before and after taking part in the Resilience Revolution projects. The results of these show significant improvements in young people's wellbeing, emotional control and behaviour. Following Resilience Revolution projects, young people had increased levels of resilience, self-esteem, and aspirations for future achievements. Their confidence to take part in new activities and making decisions in school and at home was also improved.

#### **2. Secondary school**

Surveys from young people in secondary school saw statistically significant improvements in their mental health scores after taking part in Resilience Revolution projects as well as feeling more prepared for the challenges of secondary school, more confidence, more able to make new friends. There were

greater aspirations for future achievements as well as better school attendance. Schools that joined the anti-bullying Charter mark project saw improved wellbeing scores for young people compared with schools that had not joined the Blackpool Beating Bullying campaign.

### **3. Parents**

Evidence of improved parent and carer self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy was observed. Groups of parents and carers took part in and led a range of training events; and conducted interviews for social care workers and co-produced toolkits and guidance documents. These opportunities led to improved resilience and wellbeing, with a particular focus on peer-support as a mechanism for improvement.

### **4. Our Children**

The Resilience Revolution used brave innovative approaches that support 'Our Children' (Children Looked After) building longstanding and trusted relationships in school and in the community. Our Children reported improvements in their emotions, behaviours, aspirations, self-esteem, confidence, school attendance and civic engagement.

### **5. Young People's Mental Health**

Through the Walk and Talk and Self harm support projects, young people took part in activities because they wanted targeted support with managing their emotions and behaviours. At the end of these projects young people had improvements in their life aspirations. Young people were more motivated and able to manage their emotions better. Some young people also improved relationships with peers. And specifically in the self-harm project, 77% of young people did not go back to Accident and Emergency related to self-harming.

### **6. Employment and Skills**

Young people involved in co-production opportunities reported transformational impacts in confidence, sense of belonging and new life skills. A range of new employment roles specifically for parents, carers and young people with relevant lived experiences were created, this led to improved self-esteem, sense of belonging and leadership skills. Apprentices rated their experiences at 8.8 out of 10. Young people and parents and carers in co-production groups helped connect a range of local and national organisations, including Ofqual (Office for Qualifications, Examinations and Regulations) as well as ensuring recruitment processes became increasingly more accessible and relevant for the Blackpool community. Young people's involvement has indicated a long-term impact on aspirations and confidence about their future opportunities. Outcomes suggest a strong sense of empowerment and self-advocacy for young people.

The Resilience Revolution has improved mental health and well-being in Blackpool's young people and increased protective factors that might enable them to overcome adversities that they face in the present or in the future. Longitudinal and in-depth assessment of experiences and impact is likely to produce

stronger and more conclusive results. Young people's involvement in the Resilience Revolution's implementation and co-production opportunities has resulted in an array of positive outcomes.

*Research Question 4: To what extent did the Resilience Revolution build capacity within the system?*

Capacity building was linked to four interconnected processes: 1) effective and distributed leadership, 2) co-production, 3) training and employment and 4) activism. In the Resilience Revolution, capacity building was successful because of the understanding that lived experience experts, and - particularly in Blackpool - youth expertise, significantly added to the likelihood of improving schools, health services, and community organisations. This improvement was seen in accessibility, inclusivity, and relevance but also in terms of governance and accountability.

**1. Capacity building through effective and distributed leadership**

Distributed (a type of shared) leadership includes individuals, teams, organisations and whole systems into a unified movement. Parents and carers highlighted that having a team leader helped to match lived experience and activities effectively leading to inclusion and meaningful engagement. Young people highlighted that, adult facilitators of youth groups supported continuous engagement, helped activities to remain focused, provided clarity and cohesion ensuring tasks were completed.

**2. Capacity building through co-production**

Co-production was a route to navigating services and systems and involved enhancing social networks, enabling peer support, and growing individual capacity by developing skills acquisition and improving practices. Much of the Resilience Revolution's contribution to capacity building are the ideas, toolkits, and products co-produced by young people, parents, carers, practitioners, and academics. For example, the Blackpool Families Rock Model of Practice helped shape a new way of working with families. Beyond Blackpool, a toolkit was co-produced for young people and parents working with Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

**3. Capacity building through training & employment**

Lived-experience co-trainers built capacity across Blackpool and beyond by sharing their expertise and experience. For example, young people and parents and carers co-delivered training offered by Boingboing, at Big Resilience Get Togethers and at the International Resilience Revolution Conference. This increased personal capacity, whilst improving understanding of resilience and best practices where young people increasingly became "the centre of all decision making" (Charity 3). Over time, youth and parent and carer employment structures were expanded inside the Resilience Revolution's organisational culture and partnering organisations. The employment of apprentices and sessional workers improved communication, organisation, and the quality of work, contributed to a more diverse workforce, increased creativity and risk mitigation.

**4. Capacity building through activism**

The ability of projects to influence systems linked to 1) youth voice, 2) cross-organisational partnerships and 3) intergenerational partnerships. Here, young people, parents and carers, and those that support them worked collectively to drive systems change at local and national levels. This way of working was evidenced across all universal and targeted projects: youth projects, in schools, training and communities of practice, within the Friendship Model of Volunteering and in Parents and Carers groups. It was also nationally recognised. For example, Blackpool's young people were specifically commended (Tilly, Morris & Yusuf, 2021) for contributions to the Youth Affairs All Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs (APPG) on The Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Young People - Submission of evidence - Boingboing. This was one of 7 co-produced policy submissions where the Resilience Revolution helped to change national policy and practice.

Two other policy submissions have influenced a change in the national parliamentary consultation processes. Are you influential? Get your voice heard in UK Parliament - Parliament UK Education offers training to young people in how to submit evidence and take part in consultations. Also, Campaign for change - Parliament UK Education is a bespoke school-based programme to support youth campaigning skills.

Cross-systems activism increased following the first national COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020 with the 'Inclusion Not Exclusion Group' which was a collaboration between schools' staff, young people, NHS workers as well as other Blackpool professionals. Young people were further enabled to build their capacity around contributing to wider systems change via projects such as Activists in Residence, Blackpool Youth Climate Group, and the Resilience Revolution Education Voices group.

*Research question 5: What is the potential for the sustainability of the Resilience Revolution?*

All 11 Resilience Revolution universal and targeted approaches have been sustained in-full or in-part. Seven of these projects have been actively sustained by continuation of funding (Back on Track, Friendship Model of Volunteering, Self-Harm Support, Walk and Talk, Apprenticeships, Youth Engagement co-production and Moving on Up 1:1). Some projects expanded, such as the Friendship Model of Volunteering and work with Apprenticeships.

The remaining four projects were more passively sustained via the continued use of co-produced guidance (i.e , Academic Resilience Approach, Bounce Forward, Moving on Up group work, and Saddle Up). For example, although the equine aspect of Saddle Up was not continued after the project ended, Educational Diversity teachers reported the continued use of art and emotional regulation classroom-based activities and practices that they had learned from the project.

Thus, successful sustainability came from the creative and innovative adaptation of the original projects and through applying resilience concepts to improve projects' fit with local needs. For example, work with Parents and Carers and Voluntary/Community/Faith/Social Enterprise (VCFSE) groups took place across projects and expanded over time. The transformational impact of the Resilience Revolution is evident across all four areas that Windell (2014)

outlines as imperative for reducing health inequalities. These included: early intervention, inclusive education, improved employment, and a healthy environment.

#### **1. Early intervention:**

- Blackpool Council Volunteers Service will continue the Friendship Model of Volunteering with support from the business community, particularly Merlin Entertainments.
- Funding has been secured for a five-year research collaboration with the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), Empowerment, Lancaster University to look at health inequalities in different areas of Blackpool.

#### **2. Inclusive education:**

- Continued support to Our Children and young people at risk of self-harm and exclusion will be provided by Resilience Coaches embedded in local schools.
- Blackpool Football Club Community Trust's Premier League Kicks programme embeds Resilient Therapy and co-production in the school curriculum.
- The Grand Theatre has Resilient Therapy embedded explicitly in their future projects.

#### **3. Improved employment:**

- A total of 45 young people and 20 parents and carers have accessed supportive employment opportunities within the Resilience Revolution and partnering organisations since inception.
- Blackpool Council has established a Co-production Team and a team of youth advisors to promote the use of co-production projects across every directorate in the Council. The teams will continue to deliver co-production training and Communities of Practice sessions.
- Blackpool Council and partner organisations, such as the Blackpool Teaching Hospital, have altered recruitment processes to increase the likelihood of successful youth employment in their organisations.

#### **4. Healthy environment:**

- Blackpool Council Parks Service is committed to an apprenticeship within their team and to continue to fund and expand Junior Park Rangers.
- The Resilience Revolution's [Resilience Pathway](#) demonstrates that the resilience approaches and values are a long-term commitment in Blackpool.

#### **Supporting Sustainability**

Three themes emerged from interviews that highlight factors that supported sustainability of the Resilience Revolution's work. These include:

- Redistribution of power (e.g., inclusive language, recognising the value of lived-experience, enhanced understanding of co-production, supportive funding structures)
- Pride in the collective (e.g., individual and organisational reputational benefits of co-production and cross-partnership working)



- Intergenerational planning (e.g., co-production across generations, an ambition for improving mental health in Blackpool for future generations)

Sharing findings as they arose increased the potential for sustainability as it inspired collective pride whilst improving organisations and systems. Intergenerational planning saw young people and their supporters enthused and motivated with the innovative way of the Resilience Resolution approaches. This led them to commit to personally sustaining practices and projects for those that come after them.

### **Recommendations**

The Resilience Revolution’s findings show statistically significant improvements in wellbeing, resilience and an increase in civic and social behaviours. Therefore, this evaluation found that in the Resilience Revolution programme social action was a mechanism that helped to reduce health inequalities and challenge multiple disadvantages young people face.

Furthermore, the Resilience Revolution showed evidence for rapid practice development in the local workforce. Stepping up voluntary co-production opportunities into new paid employment opportunities helped to sustain values and ideas as well as drive improvements in services. Based on the learning from the process, outcomes, and impact of the Resilience Revolution the following recommendations are suggested.

#### **Overall**

- Start with social justice focused conversations to grow meaningful grass-roots campaigns.
- Engage with young people and a wide range of parents and carers groups to improve local services.
- Create a wide-ranging choice of co-production opportunities across the whole town.
- Co-produce local policies and strategies particularly in education, health and social care because it can lead to fairer outcomes for young people and families.
- Make wellbeing a priority because without this, it will be impossible to make transformative changes to systems.

#### **For Practitioners and their Managers**

- Create lived experience co-trainer jobs because these will help drive workforce practice developments.
- Explore the barriers to engagement and co-produce solutions about how to overcome them.
- Invest in youth employment opportunities; youth advisors and apprenticeships to share decision making with those new to the workforce.
- Training packages need to be co-produced after relationships are built. It is important to know the community and its needs and training needs to include relevant local examples.
- A tiered training programme with a range of short and longer training courses helps ensure learning has accessible routes for a wide range of workers and volunteers.
- A high frequency of training and learning events helps workers to connect, test and learn from new approaches.
- Intergenerational co-produced training resources help unite the whole community to have a shared understanding and common language.

- A repository of local examples of successful resilience building work is useful for practitioners to use to improve decision making in work with young people and families.

#### **For Policymakers**

- Incorporate resilience and co-production within national measurements of school performance.
- Update the statutory requirement for independent visitors to require lifelong commitment of a trusted adult to every young person in care
- Young people choosing their lifelong friend and co-producing the matching, training and supervision processes will help drive best practice in intergenerational friendships for Our Children.
- Create national co-production groups that focus on people from coastal communities to address inequalities.
- Reconsider universal approaches. Co-produced and specific resilience building activities can have systems level impacts.

#### **For Funders**

- Ensure funding requirements have suitable flexibility and resilience.
- Remove limitations on percentages that can be spent on implementation, research and treatments. Co-production is all of these rolled into one.
- When commissioning services, consider local providers first. Lived experience local experts lead to more sustainable outcomes.

#### **For Researchers**

- Ensure the research and evaluation works within co-production spaces. The benefit of co-research allows projects to quickly adapt to new opportunities and strengths as well as create teams to work as co-researchers, improve data capturing and analysis.
- Report regularly as a continuous process – enabling adjustments and improvements that impact on people’s lives to be made as soon as possible. Future research needs to evaluate and correlate longer-term systems changes after the implementation of the Resilience Revolution in Blackpool.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 December 2022

## INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive a report on the outcomes of the Department for Education's (DfE) independent review of Children's Social Care.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 That the details of the Independent Review be noted.

2.2 That any areas for additional scrutiny be identified.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure scrutiny oversight of the recommendations of the review and the impact on Council services.

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

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

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

### 5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

**6.0 Background information**

6.1 At its 28 September 2022 meeting Members of the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee requested that a report be brought to the next meeting outlining the outcome of the DfE’s Independent Review of Children’s Social Care

6.2 Appendix 11(a) presents an abridged outline of the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care and Blackpool’s Children Principal Social Worker, Ms Kara Haskayne, initial reflections regarding Blackpool’s current position to deliver against the recommendations of the review and the potential impact of these on our practice, Blackpool Families Rock culture, the workforce and the wider partnership.

6.3 Appendix 11(b) presents a summary of the market facing recommendations of the Competition and Market Authority (CMA) and Josh MacAlister (JM) Children’s Review.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? Yes/No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 11(a) - Independent Review of Children’s Social Care Review - Final Report  
Recommendations

Appendix 11(b) - Summary of the market facing recommendations of the Competition and Market Authority (CMA) and Josh MacAlister (JM) Children’s Review

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

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## Independent Review of Children's Social Care Review - Final Report Recommendations

### 1. Introduction

This paper presents an abridged outline of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care<sup>1</sup> and Blackpool's Children Principal Social Worker initial reflections regarding Blackpool's current position to deliver these and the potential impact of these on our practice, Blackpool Families Rock culture, our workforce and the wider partnership.

### 2. Independent Review Recommendations

#### 2.1 'Family Help' Offer

Replace 'Targeted Early Help' and Child in Need' to reduce families experience of 'step up and down' handovers, changing relationships and 'gatekeeping', with a developed S17 single category of '**Family Help Hubs**' offer, multi-disciplinary **Family Help Teams**, including Domestic Abuse and Mental Health practitioners, Health Visiting, School Nurses and Community Organisations and include **Social Workers within the Early Career Development (first 2 years)**. This should be delivered via **Hubs located within local communities**. A **re-designed Single Access Front Door** would determine appropriate access to 3 level Family Help Pathway; Universal and Community Family Support, Family Help, Child Protection. '**Mechanical referral led processes and assessments**' at the front door replaced with '**tailored quality conversations**' between **Family Help, Universal Services and families**, reference is made to Leeds' 'Family Valued Model'. **Timescales for Assessment should be removed** from Working Together and Data Collection, timescales for S47 should remain and the data system be preoccupied with improving family outcomes.

The Government would need to implement £2 billion over the next 5 years to support this development via a ring fenced grant. This recommendation is clearly linked to the current national development of Locality Hubs and Early Help Self-Assessment. Blackpool Early Help Service has led the partnership self-assessment event (16<sup>th</sup> June) and is well placed to implement this recommendation with our Early Help Strategy Action Plan.

We would need to consider which social workers are within their first 2 years of the 5 year Early Career Framework (see recommendations 7 for detail), as if this recommendation is implemented, this cohort of our workforce would be co-located within the Locality Hub Family Help offer. We would need to review our current Child In Need offer, agree a further developed Request for Support process, update our Working Well with Families document and undertake training across Children Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP), to reflect the changes in national legislation re: S17 of Children Act 1989. This would have an impact on our current Social Care staffing structure if all Child In Need and Child Protection caseloads were removed to be provided via a Family Help Offer, with our 5 yr. Expert Practitioners offering their experience and guidance to the Family Help Teams.

#### 2.2 A Just and Decisive Child Protection System

Over the next 5 years '**Expert Child Protection Practitioner**' roles should be developed, in future **new social workers need to have passed a 5 year Early Career Framework**. They should **work alongside the Family Help Team**, 'cutting our unnecessary referrals', provide reflective supervision, to support better risk management, undertake joint visits, chair Child Protection planning, lead multi-agency professionals input into decisions and have

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<sup>1</sup> [Home - The Independent Review of Children's Social Care \(childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk\)](http://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk)

responsibility to make key decisions about children and undertake the role of the current Child Protection Chair, Working Together would need to be revised need to reflect these changes. The report makes reference to **'...by widening the workforce who can undertake CiN (Child In Need) work in Family Help, making reforms to non-case holding roles, such as Child Protection Chair and Independent Review Officer (IRO) experienced social worker will be freed up can undertake the Expert Practitioner role'**.

**Family Help Teams would continue to work with families throughout Child Protection processes.** Decisions should include Specialist Police Officers and Specialist Paediatricians. **The Social Workers would make best use of their skills via working directly with families, working directly with them, or being managers of Family Help Teams.** Clear reference is made throughout the report to the **Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding Model** and **'...by removing the arbitrary distinction between Early Help and Social Care, we will improve the ability of the system to respond to changing risk, without the inherent weaknesses in hand off points'**.

**Parents should have robust independent representation and support to navigate the child protection response,** an advocate support offer. The Child Protection System approach referenced within the report is aligned to our Blackpool Families Rock current culture, values and practice principals approach and we currently have invested £70K in advocacy for parents involved within our Blackpool Child Protection Conference system. There should also be more transparency about decisions made and family court outcomes.

The report makes detailed reference to re-purposing Children's Social care via a central aim to ensure help is available, responsive and free from stigma, support should strengthen lifelong relationships and support wider family networks to care for children instead of bringing them into care. **The care experience support offered should help heal trauma, realise identity and achieve potential and birth families must be supported with this loss** via services being available to them, so as to break the cycle.

This recommendation would remove the current role and function of Blackpool's Child Protection Chair Team. These experienced roles, 4.8 Full time equivalent H4 and one H5 manager would require an updated job description and process developed to offer their experience and guidance to the Family Help Offer.

With regard to children experiencing **Contextual Safeguarding Harm**, a **bespoke Child Community Safety Plan Pathway should be developed**, so Police, Social Care and others can provide robust Child Protection response. This would replace the current practice of supporting children being exploitation outside of their family via Child In Need or Child Protection Plan. We would need to update CSAP Policies, Procedures and Pathways and train our workforce to implement and practice within as new Child Community Safety Plan Pathway.

### 2.3 Unlocking the potential of family networks

**Before a child is brought into care there should be involvement of wider family and friends into the decision making and develop 'Family Network Plan', via legal right to an FGC offer before reaching PLO,** the Local Authority should support wider family members to care for their children and provide the necessary resources to support the plan, **diverting money otherwise spent on looking after a child in care.** We are well placed to further implement this recommendation with our Family Together Service, Connected Carer Team and SGO Support Offer, no changes would be required within our service to evidence we have implemented this recommendation. However, the report recommends that **families** are currently forced to become foster carers **should receive financial allowance support to care for their kin at the same rate as fostering allowance and wider set of kinship careers should receive a comprehensive package of support.** The report makes recommendations for all,



**SGO and carers with a CAO should also all receive a national statutory allowance, legal aid and statutory kinship leave** with requires the Government's national implementation, a **legal definition of Kinship Care should be introduced. Legal Aid should be provided to family members seeking SGO or CAO as alternative to bringing a child into care and Local Authorities should develop peer support and training for all kinship carers.**

**Modernise adoption** and bring this into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, **contact should be supported by modernised approaches such as 'Letterswap', supported by Adoption Support Fund and plans should be put into place so contact arrangements are reviewed by adopters at regular intervals** and certainly at transition points including when the child becomes a teenager and just before the turn 18. **Support for parents should not end at the point that their child becomes adopted.**

## **2.4 Fix the broken market and give children a voice**

Providing care for children should not be based on profit. **Local Authorities should establish new Regional Care Co-Operatives (RCCs), who take on the responsibility for creating and running a new public sector fostering, residential and secure care via a regional approach** reference is made the RCCs *'Planning, commissioning and running homes'* and **providing Fostering Services, overseeing the recruitment and training of foster carers,** akin to the our Regional Adoption Agency. Local Authorities will have direct involvement in running the RCCs, these **must be mandated by Government** and not a voluntary regional arrangement. It is anticipated that up to 20 RCCs would need to be established across England, in some places could be linked to Mayoral Combined Authorities and **should be driven by the best performing Local Authorities, with Government selecting one or two lead Authorities in each region to oversee the set up of their Cooperatives.**

With regard to **'Unregulated' provision Government should proceed with the speedy introduction of regulation for independent and semi-independent accommodation as a short term step,** before holding these homes to account via a **new set of Care Standards via legislation.**

**A Windfall Tax on profits made by the largest Private Children's Home providers and IFAs should be levied and contribute to the costs of transforming the care system.**

**New and ambitious care standards should be applicable to all homes where children live,** rather than prescriptive minimum standards they should focus on defining smaller number of quality standards expected from all homes, and articulate the values to deliver them.

A **'New Deal' with foster carers** must ensure they have the social networks and training. The Government must immediately should launch a **new national Foster Carer Recruitment Programme to approve 9,000 foster carers over the next 3 years,** reference is made to the Ukraine Homes for Families approach.

With regard to children having a voice, the **system of multiple people being involved in their lives must be simplified via a truly independent advocacy offer, via an 'opt out', not an 'opt in' approach. Remove the role of IRO and Regulation 44 visits.** Reference is made to options for the delivery of truly independent advocacy, **via 3 potential approaches; 1) a newly established National Advocacy Service, commissioned by the Local Authority** with a capacity to meet the need of the individual Local Authority's Children in Care cohort, **2) re-purpose CAFACSS to become Children and Family Court Advisory, Advocacy and Support Service, 3) Expand the role of the Children's Commissioner.**

**Care Planning Meetings** should be chaired by the Manager of the Social Worker allocated to the child, **significant decisions cannot be made without an Advocates view being provided.**

These recommendations would require the removal of our current Independent Reviewing Officer Service role and function. Potential tupe arrangements may be available for our current staff to a new model, or, realign this experienced team of H4 and H5 staff to 'Expert Practitioner' roles as proposed by the report. This recommendation requires statutory legislation change, with regard to the Children Act and Care Planning Regulations. If the advocacy responsibility sat outside of Blackpool Childrens Social Care in any of the 3 proposed models, this function would have a different culture and approach to our Blackpool Families Rock Restorative Practice based Issue Resolution Procedure and would lack the opportunity to provide mentoring and buddy support to our ASYEs (newly qualified Social Workers) and IROs current involvement as experienced Practice Educator Offer for our Social Work Students which would have an impact upon our ability to deliver upon our Childrens Social; Care Workforce Strategy Recruitment and Retention priorities.

## **2.5 Five 'missions' for care experienced people**

**Corporate Parents should have 5 ambitious missions; loving relationships, quality education, a decent home, fulfilling work and good health** should be set out as the foundations for a good life. Central Government, employers the NHS, Education providers should secure these foundations for all care experienced people.

In Blackpool we are well placed to reflect the implementation of this recommendation in terms of the work our Adolescent Service is undertaking to develop and implement our Care Leaver Offer, our Care Leaver Covenant and our Corporate Parent Strategy and our recently revised 5 Promises we have made to Our Children.

## **2.6 Realizing the potential of workforce**

The report proposes a radically new offer for social workers, **develop a 5 year Early Career Framework linked to national pay scales** to support the workforce to remain in practice, specialise and be rewarded via higher pay that reflects their expertise. Reference is made to the Teaching Early Career Framework endorsed by the Education Endowment Foundation, the proposals made are clearly modelled on this pathway. **Remove current 12 month ASYE Programme and replace with a 2 year element of the Early Career 'Expert Practitioner' 5 year Pathway, include a Common National Assessment at the end of year 2. During years 3-5 practitioners should have a choice from a set of modules that count towards the full 5 year Early Career Pathway.**

**Identify and remove barriers that divert social worker spending time with families via reducing administrative tasks and embedding multidisciplinary teams** (akin to Family Safeguarding Model) at the heart of the local communities who deliver, not commissioned, the help needed.

**Reduce number of agency social workers** to ensure families supported via stable professional relationships via smaller caseloads, more knowledge and skills and more time and resources available **via developing new rules and regional staff banks.**

The Department should work with an **independent review body of experts, to set and introduce national pay scales, brining greater coherence to workforce plans across Local Authorities.**

**The DfE and Social Work England should work together to ensure initial education lays foundation for practice** and that the Early Career Pathway does not become a ‘catch up’ programme for social workers not offered the right learning opportunities as students.

**Family Support Workers and Children’s Home staff should not be forgotten**, first step is to **develop Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) for Family Support Workers**, a **Leadership Programme and Professional Registration for Children Home Managers** and a **Leadership Development Programme for Children’s Social Care leaders**, aligned to the **Review Reforms and increase diversity in leadership**.

## 2.7 System relentlessly focused on children and families

The report makes reference to a lack of direction about purpose of social care and national government involvement is uneven. A **National Social Care Framework** is needed, supported via meaningful indicators which bring transparency and learning. A **National Practice Group should be appointed to build practice guides which set out known ways to achieve the National Framework objectives**.

Local safeguarding partnerships (CSAPs) should have **Education a statutory safeguarding partner**.

**Government should update funding formula for Children’s Social Care to better direct resources where they are needed. Inspections should be more rounded to focus on being ‘child focused’**. Government should intervene more decisively via **permanent Regional Improvement Commissioners** to oversee progress across regions. **National Data and Technology Taskforce** should oversee 3 priorities; drastically reducing social worker time spent on recording cases, enabling frictionless sharing of information and improving data collection and its use in informing decisions.

## 3. National Review Recommendations implementation

**The Independent Review proposed that a 5 year Reform Programme should be led by a Reform Board** which includes people with lived experiences. Government senior official should receive quarterly progress reports. Secretary of State should hold other Government Departments to account and report progress directly to Parliament. The system change would require £2.6 billion over 4 years; £46 million 1<sup>st</sup> year, £987 million year 2, £1.257 billion year 3 and £233 million year 4.

During June 2022 the Government announced a **Childrens Social Care National Implementation Board**<sup>2</sup> had been established, in response to:

- the [Independent Review of Children’s Social Care](#)
- the Independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel’s [review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson](#)
- the Competition and Markets Authority’s [report into the children’s social care market](#)

The National Implementation Board’s role is to advise Ministers on the implementation of reform across Children’s Social Care. The Board is chaired by a DfE Minister, Board Members will include those with experience of leading transformational change in the Children’s Social Care sector as well as those with lived experience of the care system. The current members are:

- Chief Executive of Together for Children and Director for Children’s Services in Sunderland

<sup>2</sup> [Children’s Social Care National Implementation Board - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- Care Leaver, working within participation at Action for Children
- President of the Association for Directors of Children's Services
- England's Children's Commissioner
- President of City, University of London. Computer Scientist
- A birth parent/parent, Chair of Trustees of Family Rights Group
- An adopter and kinship carer
- His Majesty's Chief Inspector at Ofsted
- Chief Social Worker for Children and Families for England
- Chief Executive of Leeds City Council

The Implementation Board's Terms of Reference are currently being developed.

## Summary of Market Facing Recommendations from Competition and Market Authority (CMA) and Josh MacAlister (JM) Children’s Review –2022

### Report for Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee

November 2022

#### Local Impact

The Competition and Market Authority (CMA) and Josh MacAlister (JM) Children’s Reviews have each made recommendations to Government about the way the market is managed in England and how it might be better shaped to deliver better outcomes for Children and Young People.

The recommendations can be broadly summarised under the following broad headings -

#### Market Sustainability and Shaping

**Not enough transparency about sufficiency across England and the regions, aggregate commissioning activity up to a regional approach to get better outcomes.**

- **CMA**

Essentially – the CMA feel that the very different and narrative approaches taken by different Local Authorities to describe sufficiency of support for looked after children is so diverse that it makes it difficult to assess on a wider geographical level whether the system is working well. They suggest a template approach that would support the national aggregation of data and a requirement for LA’s to provide this data for national and regional analysis and publication.

The CMA recommendations support regional market shaping and sufficiency activity – which ties in with the JM report.

- **JM**

The JM report makes some very specific recommendations about the development of Regional Commissioning Cooperatives. These would be large geographical footprints that would manage the commissioning and direct delivery of care homes and fostering – taking this function from individual local authorities. The report says *“The scale and specialist capabilities of Regional Care Cooperatives will address the current weaknesses in the system and establish organisations able to transform the care system in the future. Local authorities will no longer perform the above functions but they will have direct involvement in the running of RCCs and children will continue to be in the care of the local authority.”*

The report goes on to say *“Cooperatives should be owned by and fully accountable to local authorities in the regional cluster. We anticipate there being up to 20<sup>1</sup> RCCs across England and their success will in part be determined by the engagement from local authorities in everything from matching children with homes through to projecting future needs. Government should consider the best organisational form for RCCs so that they give local authority members meaningful influence, and in some places they could be linked to Mayoral Combined Authorities. For the success of these new bodies it is essential that the leadership, culture and values of the new Cooperatives are driven*

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<sup>1</sup> For comparison, there are 42 Integrated Care Boards in England. 152 LA’s currently run Children’s Services

*by the best performing local authorities, and government should therefore select one or two lead Authorities within each region to oversee the setup of their Cooperatives.”*

There has been some healthy debate among Local Authorities about whether RCC's are the solution to the problem. We do not always see local outcomes improve when responsibilities are aggregated up in systems.

### **Fostering**

**Not enough foster carers – immediate pressure everywhere meaning too many children in residential care – needs a national response.**

- **CMA**

The CMA recommends more national support for “innovative” projects to recruit more foster carers to work directly with local authorities and reduce the reliance on Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA's). They believe that the recruitment and retention of foster carers should be subject to a national strategy that ties in with the “State of the Sector” review.

- **JM**

Better recruitment and retention is recommended, the report draws attention to the larger number of applications for fostering which seems to have a high “drop out” level. The report says *“there needs to be a national fostering recruitment programme. The recruitment programme should recruit 3,000 additional foster carers each year between 2023 and 2026 (9,000 in total). The programme should focus on recruiting new carers in areas of the country where they are most needed. It should also target carers with the skills to offer care to older teenagers, babies and their parents, unaccompanied children, siblings and children on remand, as well as recruiting carers from ethnic minorities. To deliver a campaign at the pace and scale required, the Department for Education should not only improve the conversion rate of people already interested in fostering but should also appeal to individuals and families who would not ordinarily consider fostering.”*

### **Regulation**

***Too much regulation, not evidently helping the market to deliver the flexibility of support that children need.***

- **CMA**

The CMA recommends a review of the regulation of provision – “considering whether specific regulations are unnecessarily restricting the effective provision of placements.” It also recommends that planning regulations are reviewed – as there is a suggestion that they are impacting on the development of children's homes.

- **JM**

A similar view from this report, that “the ability to provide tailored home environments for children is being constrained, rather than supported by, a highly complex web of standards and legislation”. The JM report supports the CMA recommendation exemption of small homes from planning.

New care standards that apply across provisions are recommended that span different provisions – and the current legislative framework is considered to be stifling innovation and a relentless focus on providing the best support for the child(ren).

In fostering, the report recommends that a foster carer can act “as a parent” in most instances – for example not needing to seek the LA’s permission to allow a child to stay with a friend from school.

### “State of the Sector” reviews

**There should be greater clarity about the skills and availability of staff working in the delivery of support to children in care settings – where there are shortages to help shape a response.**

- **CMA**

The CMA recommends that there should be an annual assessment of the state of the workforce to provide a clear overview of staffing pressures and concerns, and to recommend measures to address bottlenecks. This would be similar in scope to the CQC’s annual State of Care review in England.

- **JM**

The JM report covers across its recommendations a need for new approaches and a “new deal” to support more loving homes for children and young people. There is some “push/ pull” across the reports with the professionalization of support for children, while maintaining as “normal” a life for children as possible.

Is parenthood a profession? Locally, we definitely want to welcome experienced and skilled carers in to our fostering cohort – but how this experience and skill is both gained and recognised is something that the market has not yet fully explored.

### Resilience of the market

**Profiteering should stop – but not by capping costs or other similar proposals that have been made to the report authors.**

- **CMA**

The CMA recommends that the Government creates an appropriate statutory oversight regime that is capable of assessing the financial health of the most difficult to replace providers of children’s homes and warning placing authorities if a failure is likely. *“The Government via its appointed oversight body should require the most difficult to replace children’s home providers to maintain a “contingency plan” setting out how they are organising their affairs to mitigate the risk of provision having to close in a sudden and disorderly way in the event that they get into financial difficulties or insolvency.”*

- **JM**

The report says that profiteering from children is unacceptable. The solution offered is twofold – better market management through RCC’s and a windfall tax for the largest providers.

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager.
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 December 2022

## SCRUTINY WORKPLAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the contents of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee's Workplan for 2022/2023.

### 2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To approve the Committee Workplan, taking into account any suggestions for amendment or addition.

2.2 To monitor the implementation of the Committee's recommendations/actions.

2.3 To note the outcome of the Young People Classed As Not In Employment, Education Or Training (NEET) Scrutiny Review Panel.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To ensure the Workplan is up to date and is an accurate representation of the Committee's work.

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

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

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

### 5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

## **6.0 Background Information**

### **6.1 Scrutiny Workplan**

A Scrutiny Workplanning Workshop was held on Tuesday 7 June 2022 to consider items for inclusion on the Committee's workplan for the 2022/2023 municipal year. The workplan is a flexible document that sets out the work that will be undertaken by the Committee over the course of the year, both through scrutiny review and Committee meetings.

Attached at Appendix 12 (a) is a draft of the proposed Workplan for 2022/2023, which will be used a starting point for further consideration at the Workplanning Workshop.

Committee Members are invited to suggest topics at any time that might be suitable for scrutiny review through completion of the Scrutiny Review Checklist. The checklist forms part of the mandatory scrutiny procedure for establishing review panels and must therefore be completed and submitted for consideration by the Committee, prior to a topic being approved for scrutiny.

### **6.3 Implementation of Recommendations/Actions**

The table attached at Appendix 12(b) has been developed to assist the Committee in effectively ensuring that the recommendations made by the Committee are acted upon. The table will be regularly updated and submitted to each Committee meeting.

Members are requested to consider the updates provided in the table and ask follow-up questions as appropriate to ensure that all recommendations are implemented.

### **6.4 Scrutiny Review Checklist**

The Scrutiny Review Checklist is attached at Appendix 12(c). The checklist forms part of the mandatory scrutiny procedure for establishing review panels and must therefore be completed and submitted for consideration by the Committee, prior to a topic being approved for scrutiny.

The Committee is recommended to place an emphasis on the priorities and performance of the Council when considering requests for scrutiny reviews.

### **6.5 Young People Classed As Not In Employment, Education Or Training (NEET) Scrutiny Review Panel Report**

On 26 September 2022 the Young People Classed As Not In Employment, Education

Or Training (NEET) Scrutiny Review Panel met to considered the training opportunities available to young people and how services are promoted to them.

The NEET Scrutiny Review report has been attached at Appendix 12(d).

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 12(a) - Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee 2022/2023 Workplan.  
Appendix 12(b) - Implementation of Recommendations/Actions.  
Appendix 12(c)- Scrutiny Selection Checklist  
Appendix 12(d) - Young People Classed As Not In Employment, Education Or Training Scrutiny Review Report

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

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<b>Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee - Work Plan 2022/2023</b>	
2 February 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Children’s Social Care Update</b> – To receive the findings of the Department for Education Care Review launched in January 2021.</li> <li>2. <b>Youth Justice Update</b> – To receive an update on the work of the Youth Justice Team.</li> <li>3. <b>Children’s Social Care Medium Term Financial Strategy</b> – To review the proposed MTFS.</li> <li>4. <b>Thrive Model Update</b> – To receive an update on the work of the Thrive model introduced into schools in September 2022.</li> <li>5. <b>Youth Provision Review Update</b> – To receive an update on the implementation plan from the review of Youth Provision in Blackpool.</li> <li>6. <b>Corporate Parenting Strategy</b></li> </ol>
June 2023 TBC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Literacy Strategy Update</b> – To receive an update on the implementation of the Literacy Strategy.</li> <li>2. <b>Early Help Work with Families</b> – To receive a report outlining the work being undertaken by Early Help to support families in Blackpool.</li> </ol>

<b>Scrutiny Review Work</b>	
Started July 2022	<b>Mental Health Support for Young Men (aged 16-25) and Suicide Prevention Services</b> A joint scrutiny review with the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee. To include further information on the Elliot's House project and the links between self-harm and suicide rates.
3 October 2022	<b>Catch-Up/Recovery Premium Spend Review</b> To review how Blackpool schools have spent their Catch-up/Recovery premium funding from the government to consider if the funding has been utilised to ensure that children are able to catch-up any lost learning caused by the pandemic.
26 September 2022	<b>Young People classed as Not In Employment, Education or Training (NEET)</b> To consider this cross-cutting issue which disproportionately affects vulnerable young people. To include the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on training/employment opportunities for young people, as well as considering the breadth of the offer in Blackpool and whether young people are adequately directed to available opportunities.
Post-September 2022	<b>Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools</b> To review the provisions within schools to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. Potential link to SEND target of: <i>'Children and young people with SEND to enjoy good physical and mental health and wellbeing emotional health.'</i>
TBC	<b>SEND Review Recommendations</b> To consider the response to the recommendations from the SEND Review undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. It was noted that the Council had received one recommendation and the NHS four.
TBC	<b>Looked After Children in Blackpool – Children's Homes</b> Consideration of the viability of Council-run children's homes.

## MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
1	09.01.20	To receive the findings of the National Association of Children's Services examining the costs of residential placements for children and the impact on Local Authorities.	June 2022	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services	This work was never completed by DfE due to Covid-19 and will now be built into a care review launched by DfE in January 2021, with an expected 12 month timescale. Outcomes of care review anticipated by June 2022.  Provided to 8 December 2022 meeting.	Complete
2	09.01.20	To receive the findings of the Department for Education impact study on out of area placements.	June 2022	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services	This work was never completed by DfE due to Covid-19 and will now be built into a care review launched by DfE in January 2021, with an expected 12 month timescale. Outcomes of care review anticipated by June 2022.  Provided to 8 December 2022 meeting.	Complete
3	28.01.21	That the data relating to the proportion of Our Children who were looked after be reported to a future meeting of the Committee following the outcomes of the working party examining the issue.	September 2022	Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Service	Ms McCartan to include within her next report to the Committee in September 2022.	Completed
4	22.04.21	To receive further data on Blackpool's mental health hospital admission rates once available.	June 2022	Stephen Ashley, CSAP Independent Scrutineer	To be included in Annual report to September 2022 meeting.	Completed
5	24.06.21	To receive regular updates on the work of the Young Inspectors with an update to be considered by the Committee at its meeting in	June 2022	Kirsty Fisher, Engagement Officer	To be provided at the Committee meeting in November 2022.	Ongoing

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
		June 2022.				
6	07.10.21	That further information regarding available funding for Early Years be provided to the Committee.	September 2022	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)	Provided to 22 September 2022 meeting	Completed
7	07.10.21	To consider the youth provision draft report once completed.	March 2022	Lisa Arnold, Head of Parks, Leisure and Catering Services	Informal information session was held on 24 May 2022.	Complete
8	09.12.21	That Better Start's draft Communications Strategy be shared with the Committee once completed.	November 2022	Clare Law, Director of Centre for Early Child Development	Provided to 8 December 2022 meeting	Complete
9	09.12.21	That a further update on the work of Better Start be provided in twelve months' time.	November 2022	Clare Law, Director of Centre for Early Child Development	Provided to 8 December 2022 meeting	Complete
10	09.12.21	That further details of the Personal, Social and Health Education programme offered in schools be provided at a future meeting, with particular emphasis on raising awareness of coercive relationships.	November 2022	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)	Provided to 8 December 2022 meeting	Complete
11	09.12.21	That further consideration be given by the Committee to the findings of the 'Child of the North' report and the potential impact on Blackpool.	TBC			TBC



	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
12	24.03.22	That Committee members be invited to attend a working group to further consider the draft SEND Strategy, with Ms Venessa Becket to contact Committee Members to arrange a suitable date.	May 2022	Ms Venessa Becket, Delivery Development Officer	SEND Strategy considered at June 2022 Committee	Completed
13	24.03.22	That the Committee would review the final version of the SEND Strategy at its meeting in June 2022.	June 2022	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)		Completed
14	24.03.22	That a site visit be undertaken to the Oracle building ahead of its opening in September 2022.	July 2022	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)	Undertaken July 2022	Completed
15	24.03.22	That an update on the work of the Thrive model, introduced into schools from September 2022, be provided.	January 2023	Ms Elaine Walker Integrated Emotional Health and Wellbeing Manager, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust		Not yet due.
16	30.06.22	That details of the number of excluded children who had been re-referred to CSC be provided in writing following the meeting to the	22 September 2022	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services		Completed

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
		Committee.				
17	30.06.2022	That any comments on the Draft Blackpool SEND Strategy 2022-2025 be provided to Children's Services.	August 2022	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)	Member Comments provided July/August 2022	Completed
18	22.09.2022	That the availability data on the number of Semi-Independent Homes in Blackpool be provided following the meeting.	17 November 2022	Kara Haskayne, Head of Children's Social Care	A report has been scheduled for the 17 November 2022 Committee meeting	

**SCRUTINY SELECTION CHECKLIST****Title of proposed Scrutiny:**

The list is intended to assist the relevant scrutiny committee in deciding whether or not to approve a topic that has been suggested for scrutiny.

Whilst no minimum or maximum number of 'yes' answers are formally required, the relevant scrutiny committee is recommended to place higher priority on topics related to the performance and priorities of the Council.

	Yes/No
<b>The review will add value to the Council and/or its partners overall performance:</b>	
<b>The review is in relation to one or more of the Council's priorities:</b>	
<b>The Council or its partners are not performing well in this area:</b>	
<b>It is an area where a number of complaints (or bad press) have been received:</b>	
<b>The issue is strategic and significant:</b>	
<b>There is evidence of public interest in the topic:</b>	
<b>The issue has potential impact for one or more sections of the community:</b>	
<b>Service or policy changes are planned and scrutiny could have a positive input:</b>	
<b>Adequate resources (both members and officers) are available to carry out the scrutiny:</b>	

Please give any further details on the proposed review:

Completed by:

Date:

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 December 2022

## **YOUNG PEOPLE CLASSED AS NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING (NEET) SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To note the outcome of the Young People classed as Not In Employment, Education or Training (NEET) Scrutiny Review Panel meeting held on 26 September 2022.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 That the outcome of the scrutiny review panel meeting be noted; and

2.2 That details of the impact of work taking place be reported back to the Committee in September 2023.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 To allow an overview of the review work being undertaken by the Committee and ensure outcomes are recorded.

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

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council’s approved budget? Yes/No

### **4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 None.

### **5.0 Council priority:**

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

### **6.0 Background information**

- 6.1 At its 7 June 2022 work-planning meeting members of the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of the issues effecting Young People Classed As Not In Employment, Education Or Training (NEET).
- 6.2 The meeting was held on 26 September 2022 and was attended by  
Councillor Rick Scott;  
Ms Jo Snape, Co-opted Member; and  
Ms Gemma Clayton, Co-opted Member
- 6.3 The meeting was also attended by the following Council officers;  
Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children’s Services  
Ms Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Services  
Mr Peter Legg, Head of Economic and Cultural Services
- 6.4 Members considered the training opportunities available to young people and how services are promoted to them. Issues facing work with young people were outlined at the meeting and included:
- 6.5 Low educational attainment – This was reported as the largest factor in young people becoming NEET. Attendance rates at secondary schools in Blackpool are below the national average and many young leave education with low or no qualifications.
- 6.6 Transience – Some young people arrive late in their education journey, having experienced a stalled education up to that point and no obligation to continue in traditional education once they had reached 18 years of age.
- 6.7 Reduction in Work Experience Opportunities – This factor had made it more difficult for those young people not suited to traditional education streams to find and gain experience in other areas.
- 6.8 Unstable domestic situation – Many young people in Blackpool live in families where they have to act as a carer to a parent or sibling, where they prioritise this role ahead of their own education. It was also highlighted that the care leavers were disproportionately regarded as NEET.
- 6.9 Employer willingness to employ NEET young people – A lack of understanding among employers regarding young people classed as NEET and especially those who are also care leavers means that many are not willing to offer opportunities to those in need.
- 6.10 Children’s Services was seeking to address these issues through the wrapping around of support for young people in schools, looking to promote better attendance and improve the educational offer. The offer of greater vocational opportunities was also being promoted

such as in the hospitality sector and construction. Adolescent services had also sought to target support to the most vulnerable groups of young people. The available data

- 6.11 The Council had sought this approach to operate vocational training commissioned jointly with partners in addition to the offer in schools. This had been the adopted approach to prevent adding pressure to schools' limited resources and ability to deliver the existing curriculum.
- 6.12 The rate of young people who were NEET was in part tracked by monitoring those between 18 and 24 who had claimed unemployment benefits. Although this number had fallen since the end of the Covid pandemic, Blackpool's average remained approximately double the national average. The Council had therefore sought to work with employers to generate work placements working with the Job Centre. This had generated 184 paid job placements, of which 80 were within Blackpool.
- 6.13 A youth hub, The Platform, had also been established through funding from the Community Renewal Fund. The Platform, located in Bickerstaffe House, receives referral of young people from the Job Centre as well as walk-ins from young people looking for training and employment opportunities. Originally it had been hoped that up to 300 young people could be engaged by the Platform, however over 370 had been signed up, with 84 subsequently finding employment and 85 entering training. Although this had been regarded as a success work was still need to evaluate what had been done and identify areas for further learning going forward.
- 6.14 It had been recognised in the long term that for the Platform to be a success, engagement needed to be maintained with young people and ensure that they could be helped into employment.
- 6.15 The Review Panel welcomed the information that it had received and asked that an update on the impact of all the work that had been outlined at the meeting be brought to a meeting in twelve months' time.
- 6.16 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.