

# Public Document Pack

## Blackpool Council

14 June 2023

To: Councillors Bamborough, S Brookes, Cooper, Critchley, Ellison, Fenlon, Flanagan, Jones and C Mitchell

The above members are requested to attend the:

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

Thursday, 22 June 2023 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 2 FEBRUARY 2023** (Pages 1 - 8)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 2 February 2023 as a true and correct record.

#### **3 APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS** (Pages 9 - 12)

To consider the appointment of Ms Gemma Clayton and as a parent governor co-opted member and Ms Jo Snape as a Diocesan co-opted member to the Committee for the

Municipal Year 2023/2024.

**4 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

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

**5 FORWARD PLAN**

(Pages 13 - 18)

The Committee to consider the content of the Council's Forward Plan July 2023 to October 2023, relating to the portfolios of the relevant Cabinet Members.

**6 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE UPDATE**

(Pages 19 - 40)

To receive an overview of the journey of Children's Social Care, current key issues and areas of focus.

**7 LITERACY STRATEGY UPDATE**

(Pages 41 - 88)

To update the committee on progress made since the launch of the Literacy Strategy.

**8 SEND OFSTED INSPECTION AND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION UPDATE (Pages 89 - 114)**

The purpose of this report is to advise of the progress made since the recent Ofsted and CQC SEND inspection.

**9 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

(Pages 115 - 122)

To advise of the workplanning process for 2023/2024 for the Committee.

**10 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

To note the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday 21 September 2023, commencing at 6pm.

**Venue information:**

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

**Other information:**

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager, Tel: 01253 477213, e-mail [sharon.davis@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.davis@blackpool.gov.uk)

Copies of agendas and minutes of Council and committee meetings are available on the Council's website at [www.blackpool.gov.uk](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk).

## MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING - THURSDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2023

### **Present:**

Councillor Stansfield (in the Chair)

Councillors

Burdess

Cross

M Mitchell

Wright

Critchley

B Mitchell

R Scott

Gemma Clayton, Parent Governor and Co-opted Member

Jo Snape, Diocesan Co-opted Member

### **In Attendance:**

Councillor Maxine Callow JP, Scrutiny Independent Member

Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools

Councillor Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth and Transience

Lisa Arnold, Head of Community and Wellbeing Services

Chris Coyle, Assistant Director of Operations - Children's Social Care and TIS

Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services

Ms Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Services

Ms Nicola Turner, Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Programme Manager, Integrated Care Board

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Andrew Stansfield declared a personal interest in respect of item 9 - Fylde Coast Mental Health Support Team, as they worked in Blackpool school supported by the team.

### **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2022**

**The Committee agreed:** That the minutes of the last meeting held on 8 December 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.

### **4 EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

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

**MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING -  
THURSDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2023**

**5 OFSTED INSPECTION UPDATE**

Ms Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services, provided a verbal update on the Ofsted Inspection report that had been received on 1 February 2023.

Ofsted had undertaken an inspection of Children's Services 5-16 December 2023, with the report being published on 1 February 2023. The outcome of the inspection was that the Council had been moved out from an "Inadequate" rating and to "Requires Improvement". This was a positive outcome for services and noted that while work was still required widespread improvement had been achieved. Within Children's Services it was also highlighted that the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers had been rated "Good". Areas for improvement had included strengthening partnership working in early help and multi-agency work with children in cases of domestic abuse and neglect.

The Inspection Report had made a further four recommendations, work on which had begun. Ms Gent expressed the view that the outcome had shown that Ofsted had confidence in the improvement journey being undertaken at the Council and reiterated that the service aspired to be "Outstanding".

The Committee discussed the issues surrounding partnership working in early help, with Ms Gent explaining that although the Council's work had been good more was needed to co-ordinate with partners. To ensure that this happened a Partnership Development Day had been organised for March 2023, where all partners would be brought together to agree a partnership strategy and headline priorities for all involved. The strategy would lay out what was expected from each member of the partnership to address the priorities and establish a governance structure to ensure that assurance could be provided. Once this had been achieved it was proposed that monitoring of partnership work would be undertaken through the multi-agency Children and Family Group.

Members noted that the report had identified one child who had been placed in an unregistered children's home and queried why this was the case. Mr Chris Coyle, Assistant Director Children's Services, responded that unregistered children's homes were establishments that were not regulated by Ofsted and that if used the Council had to notify the regulator of the number being placed in them, with it being recognised that the use of such establishments was undesirable. He added that in respect of the case highlighted in the report, that the child placed in the home had complex needs and had posed a significant challenge to services in identifying a suitable placement for them. However the service would be reviewing how the case was handled to determine if any learning could be gained.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. That the update be noted; and
2. That the Service be congratulated on the positive outcome of the review inspection.



**MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING -  
THURSDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2023**

**6 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Ms Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services, presented the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for Children's Services. The report outlined that the MTFS was the result of a refresh of the document undertaken in 2022 and was underpinned by actions across the service that are designed to ensure that more children and families receive coordinated and effective early help. Ms Gent added that if achieved the actions outlined would bring Blackpool in to line with levels of demand experienced by comparable local authorities.

Targeted early intervention by services had been recognised as the most effective approach in delivering positive outcomes for children. It was also emphasised that untargeted excessive interventions could be expensive and cause harm to children, young people and families. The MTFS therefore sought to reduce cost pressures through a strategic approach of targeted intervention, at the right time and right level by the most appropriate service, which would deliver positive outcomes for children, young people and families.

Members of the Committee discussed what 'normal' would look like for Blackpool, querying what levels of demand were experienced in comparable authorities. Mr Chris Coyle, Assistant Director of Children's Services, explained that areas in the North East of England, such as Middlesbrough, with similar levels of deprivation to Blackpool offered the best comparators. In these cases 'normal' was represented by 175 looked after children per 10k people, or approximately 500 children in care. Blackpool had 205 per 10k at the time of the meeting, although it was noted that this was 15% lower than during June 2022.

The Committee asked if data on looked after children numbers from 2019 to the present day could be provided for information, which would demonstrate the impact of improvement work.

Mr Coyle emphasised that although it was desirable to reduce the number of children in care, the service would seek to do this in a sustained and safe manner, with priority focussed on the outcomes for children, not statistics. The Committee also asked if Middlesbrough or other comparable authorities could provide any learning that could be applied in Blackpool to safely reduce numbers. Mr Coyle explained in response that although the Council was open to examining models of best practice in other areas, it had to be careful that if implemented in Blackpool that they suited the unique challenges faced and would deliver the outcomes for children that was desired.

The MTFS showed that the proposed development of an Assessment Centre had been dropped from future plans. Mr Coyle explained in reply to a query from members regarding the reason for this, that it had been determined that the impact of such a centre would not deliver the outcomes hoped for and that other schemes and improvements to existing practices were in place to achieve better results.

Proposals in the MTFS to reduce the number of Section 47 enquires, placing children in residential care, being undertaken by 30% through a greater focus on interventions in a family setting were discussed. Members expressed concern that in some cases domestic

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abuse could prevent successful intervention in a family setting and asked how a reduction could be safely achieved. Mr Coyle responded that although domestic abuse was an issue, and Section 47's would continue to be used where necessary, neglect posed the biggest challenge to services in Blackpool.

Placing children in residential care through Section 47's was not considered an effective approach to addressing neglect and would not achieve positive outcomes for the child and their family. The most effective approach therefore was through targeted interventions within a family setting in cases of neglect. Ms Gent added that the "Blackpool Families Rock" practice model had proven that this was the approach which delivered the best outcomes for children.

It was also stated that work to develop Family Safeguarding, whereby partners would wrap services around a family was under consideration. Ms Gent confirmed that if a proposal was developed from this work that a report could be provided to a future meeting of the Committee.

Mr Coyle also provided details of issues relating to the stability of foster placements to the Committee. He explained that for a placement to be considered stable, a child would have to remain in one for two or more years. The national average of stable placements was 70%, whereas in Blackpool the level was 50%. It was stated that instability was often caused by the complex needs of a child being placed. Although the current level was an improvement on previous years, work was still needed to improve and it was expected that Blackpool could meet the national average, if improvement continued, in approximately two years.

The Committee raised the possibility of exploring different deliver model for Children's care homes in Blackpool to allow greater Council control over children's care rather than reliance on private sector providers. Ms Gent responded although they were aware of proposals to do this, that due to ongoing high demand and the improvement work taking place that it was not feasible to make such a substantial change to the operation of Children's Homes currently. Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools, added that once the Council was further progressed along the improvement journey then the proposal could be given further consideration, noting that issue was included on the Committee Work Plan.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy for Children's Services be noted;
2. That data on the levels of look after children from 2019 to 2023 be provided for information; and
3. If developed that proposals for a Family Safeguarding approach be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

**7 YOUTH JUSTICE TEAM UPDATE**

Ms Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Services, presented an update on the work being undertaken by the Youth Justice Service (YJS). She explained that the YJS operated a "Child First" approach, which placed children at the heart of work being undertaken,

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treating children as children, seeing the whole child, including any structural barriers they face and focusing on better outcomes for children.

Challenges faced by the services were outlined to the Committee. Ms McCartan reported that the YJS had seen an increase in the number of children remanded and sentenced to custody in the last quarter and explained that the number of first time entrants into Blackpool's YJS remained higher than local and national averages. Work was needed to understand the causes of these issues and how services could be supported to address them.

As previously reported children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), Speech, Language or Communication needs, made up approximately three-quarters of all those involved with the YJS. Challenges in addressing this issue included a lack of targeted intervention provision for the YJS. The service had therefore entered a service level agreement with Children's Targeted Intervention Service and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals to provide specialist intervention services to the YJS.

Ms McCartan also reported that the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) had informed the YJS that a revised set of Key Performance Indicators will be introduced in April 2023 including areas such as:

- Accommodation
- Employment
- Training and Education
- Learning Needs
- Mental Health
- Substance Misuse
- Youth Justice Board Attendance
- Out Of Court Disposal Orders
- Youth Violence

The data to support these KPIs had been already been collected by the YJS but work would be undertaken to adapt the information to fit the MoJ's requested format.

The Committee discussed Out Of Court Disposal Orders with Ms McCartan explaining that these covered a number of outcomes for children, including "Words of Advice" from a Police Officer, but that the YJS main areas of work involved those children subject to a Community Resolution with an element of diversion. The precise details of diversions implemented were dependent on the individual child and were designed to ensure their engagement by linking them to educational and training opportunities and other relevant services.

Members also queried if the rise in the number of children sentenced and remanded in custody was linked to the reported increase in instances of youth Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). Ms McCartan explained that there was no evidence for a correlation between these two but a link between ASB and the rate of children being arrested in Blackpool was likely. The YJS and partners would however be undertaking work to ensure it understood why there had been an increase in children in custody.

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**The Committee agreed:** That the update be noted.

**8 FYLDE COAST MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM**

Nicola Turner, Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Programme Manager, provided an update on work of the Fylde Coast Mental Health Support Team in schools in Blackpool. The core aims of the team's work were detailed as:

- Delivering evidence-based interventions for children and young people with mild-to moderate mental health problems
- Supporting the senior mental health lead in each education setting to introduce or develop their whole school/college approach
- Giving timely advice to school and college staff, and liaising with external specialist services, to help children and young people to get the right support and stay in education

The team worked with Educational Diversity and various schools across Blackpool to deliver these functions to children and young people. In addition to this the team supported children in Wyre and had been looking to undertake work in Fylde.

Recruitment to the team had been a challenge, but Ms Turner reported that a new approach had therefore been adopted which had seen this issue resolved.

The Committee noted that of 441 appointments offered only 43 had not been attended. Ms Turner explained that each child referred to the team would be offered six appointments, which could be increased in required. In some cases where it was regarded that more in-depth support was required a referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services could be made. Members asked if educational services not supported by the team could also refer child to it, in response to which Ms Turner explained she would provide details in which circumstances that this would be appropriate.

Training opportunities for teaching staff were also discussed with Ms Turner noting that these had been recognised and would be explored in the future. It was added that teaching staff were offered Mental Health First Aid currently.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That details of the possibility of referrals into the Fylde Coast Mental Health Support Team from educational services not supported by the team be provided to members.

**9 YOUTH PROVISION REVIEW UPDATE**

Ms Lisa Arnold, Head of Community and Wellbeing Services, provided an update following the review of Youth Provision completed in 2023 and the commitment from the Council to establish a small Youth Service, to provide coordination and support to third sector youth providers.

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The review had made a number of recommendations, based on the outcome of a survey of young people in Blackpool. Ms Arnold explained that achieving these recommendations, including ensuring all young people had access to youth provision within a 15-minute walk of their homes, would be challenging and that these would be likely only possible in the long term. However the Council had made a commitment to improve youth provision and recognised the health, mental and social benefit of implementing the recommendations.

Work to establish a Youth Services to support the implementation of the recommendation had been undertaken, with the appointment of a Youth Services Manager having been made, with them starting work in March 2023. Following this four further members of the team would be appointed. This team would then seek to support collaboration between youth service providers and assist in securing grant funding. This work would be supported by a Youth Services Plan which had been developed with Ms Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Services.

The Committee discussed if existing provision had been mapped and were informed that although the Council had already been aware of significant gaps, with some wards having no youth provision, a mapping exercise would be undertaken once the Youth Services team was in place.

**The Committee agreed:** That the update be noted.

## **10 CORPORATE PARENT STRATEGY**

Mr Chris Coyle, Assistant Director of Children's Services, provided an update regarding Blackpool's Corporate Parent Strategy. The Strategy was designed to support the Council in being a good corporate parent and fulfilling its duties corporately, in partnership with other statutory agencies.

To ensure that the new strategy focussed on issues children and young people had identified as mattering to them, five promises had been developed:

1. Care and Respect
2. Your Relationships
3. Your Health
4. Your Education
5. Your Future

These had been launched in October 2022, were now the strategic priorities outlined in the strategy and it was hoped that this would further demonstrate the Council's commitment to ensuring that the voice of children and young people continued to drive the Blackpool Corporate Parent agenda and its priorities.

The Committee discussed the Passport to Leisure card available to all Looked After Children. Ms Lisa Arnold, Head of Community Health and Wellbeing Services explained that the passport gave young people access to the Council's Leisure Centres and allowed them to undertake activities at half price. It was added that the Council also funded

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leisure activities for those children placed outside of Blackpool.

**The Committee agreed:** That the update be noted.

**11 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

The Committee considered its Workplan for 2022/2023 and noted the items within.

Members considered Committee's Action Tracker, noting the outstanding items contained. Ms Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services, informed the Committee that in respect of Action One, "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.", that this information had been received and provided to members.

In respect of Action Two "To receive the findings of the Department for Education impact study on out of area placements." Ms Gent reported that despite the findings being expected in 2022, the Council had not yet been received them. Officers would continue to monitor this situation and would provide the Committee with further updates when possible.

Mr Chris Coyle, Assistant Director of Children's Services, confirmed that in respect of Action Nine that he would provide members with the data on the number of Semi-independent Children's Care Homes in Blackpool.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. The report be noted; and
2. That the Action Tracker be updated to reflect the updates provided at the meeting.

**12 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted the provisional date and time of the next meeting as 6.00pm on Thursday, 22 June 2023, subject to confirmation at Annual Council.

**Chairman**

(The meeting ended at 8.01 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)

<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>	22 June 2023

## APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the appointment of Ms Gemma Clayton and as a parent governor co-opted member and Ms Jo Snape as a Diocesan co-opted member to the Committee for the Municipal Year 2023/2024.

### 2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To approve the appointment of Ms Gemma Clayton and as a parent governor co-opted member and Ms Jo Snape as a Diocesan co-opted member to the Committee for the Municipal Year 2023/2024.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure the scrutiny process continues to be fully accountable and an important part of the democratic process.

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:

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 School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires the Council to have Parent Governor Representatives on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny body dealing wholly or partly with education functions. The representatives are entitled to participate in discussions on any issue but are only able to vote on any question which relates to the education functions of the Council.

6.2 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and the Education Act 1996 require the Council to have Church representatives on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee which considers education matters. Like the Parent Governor representatives, they are entitled to participate in discussions on any issue, but only able to vote on any question which relates to the education functions of the Council.

6.3 The Council's Constitution allows for membership of the following representatives in order to comply with the statutory requirements:

- One Church of England diocese representative
- One Roman Catholic diocese representative
- Two Parent Governor representatives; and
- Such other representatives of other faiths or denominations as may be agreed

6.4 At the meeting of full Council on 24 May 2023 it was agreed that the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee should appoint two diocesan co-opted representatives and two governor co-opted representatives.

6.5 There remain two vacancies, one parent governor vacancy and one of the Roman Catholic diocese. Work will be undertaken in order to recruit to these two vacancies.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

## **7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 None.

## **8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 The posts are not salaried but the positions currently attract an allowance of £523 each per year.

## **9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the Education Act 1996 require the Council to have Church representatives on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny



Committee which considers education matters.

**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>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>	21 June 2023

## FORWARD PLAN REPORT

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the content of the Council's Forward Plan July 2023 to October 2023, relating to the portfolios of the relevant Cabinet Members.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 Members will have the opportunity to question the relevant Cabinet Members in relation to items contained within the Forward Plan within the portfolios of the Leader of the Council relating to Children's Services only and the Cabinet Member for Young People and Aspiration.

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 priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool

- 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 5(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 Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Tourism, Arts and Culture (in relation to her role as Statutory Lead Member for Children’s Services)
- Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Young People and Aspiration

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 5(a) - Summary of items contained within Forward Plan July 2023 to October 2023.

## **6.0 Financial considerations:**

6.1 None.

## **7.0 Legal considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Human Resources considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Risk management considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Equalities considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental 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**

**JULY 2023 TO OCTOBER 2023)**

**\* Denotes New Item**

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<b>Anticipated Date of Decision</b>	<b>Matter for Decision</b>	<b>Decision Reference</b>	<b>Decision Taker</b>	<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>
July 2023	Update of the Children's Services Medium Term Financial Strategy	12/2002	Executive	Cllr Williams

**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:**

<b>Matter for decision</b>  Ref N° 12/2022	Update of the Children's Services Medium Term Financial Strategy
<b>Decision making individual or body</b>	Executive
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council and Statutory Member for Children's Services
<b>Date on which or period within which decision is to be made</b>	July 2023
<b>Who is to be engaged and how</b>	Subject to consultation with a range of stakeholders...
<b>How representations are to be made and by what date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration</b>	Report Updated Strategy
<b>Name and address of responsible officer</b>	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources, Resources Directorate, Blackpool Council, Number 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road, Blackpool, FY1 3AH  e-mail:steve.thompson@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 478505



<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>	22 June 2023

## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive an overview of the journey of Children's Social Care, current key issues and areas of focus.

### 2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To consider the presentation provided at the meeting, identifying areas for question and challenge on the journey and work of Children's Social Care.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To ensure the Committee has an overview of Children's Social Care and can provide a challenge to service provision.

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

Children's Social Care was reinspected between the 5 and 16 December 2022 following an Inadequate rating in November 2018. Following re-inspection Services

were re-graded as an overall Requires Improvement, with Good For Children in Care, Requires Improvement for Children in need of help and protection and Management and Leadership.

This presentation sets out key activity since January including-

- The revised Improvement Plan
- Focus of work with the DfE Improvement Advisor
- The three key strategic workstreams currently in progress
- The overall vision moving forward and culture change required

#### **6.1 Children’s Social Care Update**

Vicky Gent, Director of Children’s Services will provide a presentation (appendix 6(c)) to the Committee at the meeting along with Chris Coyle, Assistant Director, Children’s Social Care.

Attached is the Blackpool Children Social Improvement Care Plan April 2023 to Oct 2024 for Members’ consideration and a short audit and performance briefing from June 2023.

6.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

#### **7.0 List of Appendices:**

- 7.1 Appendix 6(a): Blackpool Children Social Improvement Care Plan April 2023 to Oct 2024
- Appendix 6(b): Audit and Performance 7 Minute Briefing, June 2023
- Appendix 6(c): Presentation

#### **8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 To be advised during the presentation.

#### **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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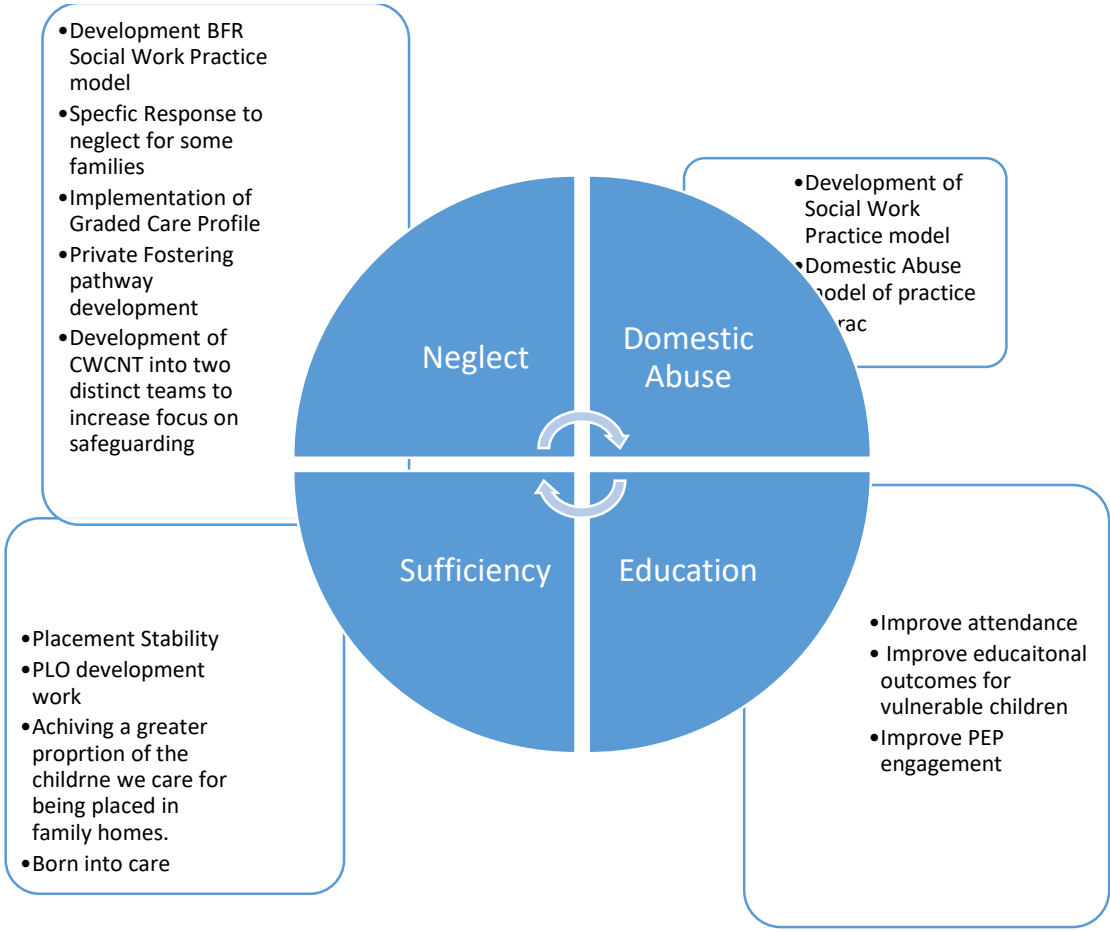
# Blackpool Children Social Improvement Care Plan

April 2023 to Oct 2024

## Cross cutting themes



**Key Priorities**



Ref.	Our obsessions	Baseline April 2023	% identified as good in Audit in Oct 2023		% identified as good in Audit in March 2024		% identified as good in Audit in Oct 2024	
		Outcome	Target	Outcome	Target	Outcome	Target	Outcome
	Timely Analytical and Comprehensive Assessments	48%	60%		70%		70%	
	Timely and Effective Plans	39%	50%		65%		70%	
	Effective Co-ordination between agencies	55%	60%		75%		80%	
	Regular and Timely Reviews	39%	50%		65%		70%	
	Child Centred Work	39%	50%		65%		70%	
	Improving outcomes for children	34%	50%		60%		70%	
	Effective Management oversight	30%	50%		65%		80%	
	Overall Grade	29%	50%		60%		70%	







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# Audit & Performance 7 minute briefing June 2023

This is the first briefing following our updated audit cycle and new Quality Assurance (QA) guidance. Hopefully you're aware of these updates, the four **core principles in our updated QA guidance** are based on us all embracing *quality assurance as everyone's business*:

- We all help create and nurture a learning environment
- We all understand our Blackpool Families Rock restorative practice and relationship-based approach
- Use all information available and integrate it into a holistic view of practice
- Audit learning links to actions and plans to help our service continually improve



The **headline audit figures** from the most recent audits completed at the end of April were: 29% 'good', 69% 'requires improvement' and 2% 'inadequate'.

This is a slight dip from the previous audits completed in January: 2% outstanding, 34% 'good', 59% 'requires improvement' and 5% 'inadequate'.

More of you know your audit findings and performance data and are using these to understand the quality of practice and improve services to families.

There are some brilliant **areas of good practice**:

- Across the whole service there is lots of child-centred work, good direct work and we capture children and young people's lived experience really well
- There is lots of great evidence of good relationships with our children and young people
- There is some great analysis in places
- Youth Justice are using restorative language throughout their records
- Leaving Care are coproducing Pathway Plans, capturing young people's voices throughout records
- Child Protection Chair's oversight is up to 87% in the last 3 months
- 73.5% of our children over 4 have attended and participated in their reviews in the last 6 months (up from 53% in November)

Some of the key **areas of practice we can improve** are:

- Consistently good analysis – particularly capturing the impact, what the information we know actually means for children and young people
- Attendance of agencies and partners at Child in Need Reviews
- Quality of plans is still a work in progress, particularly capturing measurable and specific outcome for individual children and contingency planning
- Management oversight and supervision can be good, but not consistently across the service, it can be more analytical (and had the lowest performance of the 10 different audit domains)
- Our audits should capture quality of practice better and focus more on process and compliance
- We need to complete genograms and complete these to a better standard

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# Blackpool Childrens Services Improvement Journey

Victoria Gent DCS

22 June 2023

Childrens Scrutiny

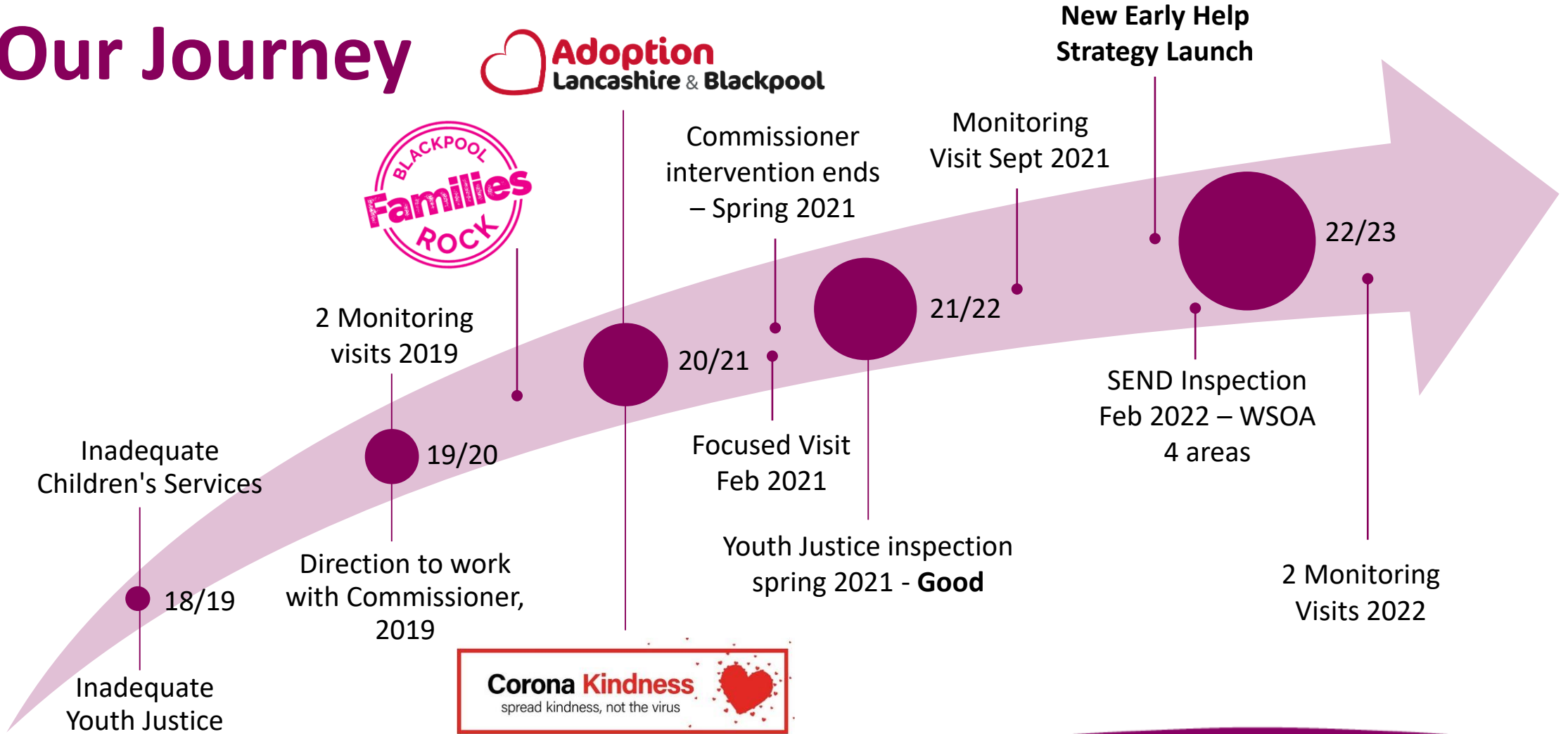
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# Our Journey



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## Key headlines from ILACS report

### What needs to improve?

- The multi-agency response to children suffering domestic abuse or long-term neglect, and to those children with complex needs.
- Work with partners to strengthen their contribution to early help and neglect.
- Sufficient placements to meet children's assessed needs.
- The timeliness of meeting children's dental and emotional needs.

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The practice model additionally requires strengthening to be able to respond effectively to issues such as domestic abuse and neglect.

We have a revised improvement plan that addresses all the issues and recommendations within the ILACS report.

## Our Challenges Along the Way!

- Deprivation
- Health of the adult population
- The long-standing nature of inadequacy
- Instability in management and leadership
- Workforce-high agency cohort
- Volume of work
- History of statutory escalation
- "Blackpool Exceptionalism"-Culture Shift



## **Our Strengths**

**Our size-Small but Mighty!**

**Strong corporate and political support**

**Sense of Optimism and momentum-positive talk encourages positive talk**

**Capitalizing on our USP**

**Aspiration, achievement and opportunities –**

**“Jobs in the Family Firm”**

**Small, dynamic, receptive to change and learning  
from others**

**Betterstart, Headstart, Opportunity Area,  
Levelling Up**

# Plans for the future-Getting to Good

## Extending and further integrating the local multi-agency Early help offer through the Family Hubs model

- Multi-agency partners co-located to deliver services

## Enhance and develop our Blackpool Families Rock

- Implementing Multi-agency teams on the lines of the Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding model to more effectively intervene with children and families.

## Tailored services co-produced with local families targeting critical local issues, such as “Born into Care

## Revised governance and accountability framework for the local partnership

- Need to respond to increasingly constrained resourcing, while retaining a focus on the non negotiables and working to reduce avoidable expenditure

## **Children and Families Partnership Plan**

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**New Childrens and Families Partnership Plan currently being prepared**

**Task and Finish Group lead by Head of Safeguarding and Strategic partnerships**

**Consultation with families over summer**

**Development Day 15 March 2023-over 85 attendees**

**Draft plan-to Board in July**

**Final Plan-September**

# Place Based Childrens safeguarding Arrangements

Current safeguarding arrangements- Pan- Lancs

Decision to move to Place Based Board in February 2023

Transitional period through until 4 September

Initial workshop in February 2023

Scoping out a new Business Unit-Joint with Adults and Community Safety-Join the Dots approach

Dynamic and Ambitious Business Unit to deliver improvements and drive change in key areas such as domestic abuse

Final touches 19 June to arrangements-to be agreed with partners

## Transformation within Childrens Social care

Blackpool Families Rock-move from practice principals to definitive delivery model

Multi disciplinary teams-Domestic abuse/mental health/substance misuse

Head of Transformation appointed to lead work

Over summer-Project team in Place

Key Objectives-

To bring Blackpool in line with comparator authorities

To deliver an improved offer to families

Workshop 11 July to scope out

Build on co production-Operational workforce Group/Lived Experience

# Questions and Thankyou!

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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>	22 June 2023

## LITERACY STRATEGY UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update the committee 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 and ensure that the Strategy is implemented as agreed.

2.2 To establish the current work undertaken by the Libraries Service to support the Literacy Strategy.

### 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 N/A

### 5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- 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.

1. Increase level of cross-phase collaboration with the Research school (based at St Mary's Catholic Academy).
2. Promote and support the implementation of the new National Professional Qualification for Leading Literacy - middle leaders and experienced teachers.
3. Increase levels of engagement in the national tutoring programme for those pupils falling behind in English.
4. Work towards increasing the national GCSE average grade in English language from 4.5 in 2019 to 5 by 2030.
5. Have writing as a bespoke and specific project.
6. Establish a baseline in each Cross Phase Area: Map literacy teaching skills across each cross-phase areas and identify gaps/strengths.
7. Map education setting and community resources in each Cross Phase Area.
8. 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 (one focus per year).
9. Ensure that every school has sufficient resources to be able to teach a reading



recovery programme in every year group.

10. Disseminate learning and good practice within and across phases and enable opportunities for shared CPD across key stages.
11. Provide bespoke staff CPD that improves the quality of teaching.
12. Establish a reading school "kitemark" specific to Blackpool that is peer reviewed and bench-marked against national best practice.
13. Establish a network of literacy champions at each stage of a child's education.
14. Expand the work of the Literacy Hub (at St John Vianney School) to empower KS3 teachers.
15. Develop a set of effective cross-phase teaching and learning strategies for EAL pupils.
16. Develop a town wide audit tool for education settings - needs to be built upon (from existing tools) and should be bespoke to EYFS, primary, secondary and post-16 settings. It should also be used to give us a better idea of what library provision is available in schools. The audit should be linked to the kitemark so it's a full circle approach.
17. Produce a comms plan and overview of literacy approaches, tools and resources across the town.
18. Draw on existing resources and training provided by the Library Service, Better Start, Adult Learning, Oxford University Press, National Literacy Trust, English Hub, Research School and Teaching Schools.
19. Get businesses to agree to being proactive participants in encouraging staff to commit to the literacy and oracy pledge.
20. Encourage all visitor attractions to advertise and develop a parent and child literacy offer that is embedded in their offer and attraction, through their signs, information boards or activity trails.
21. Introduce a parental engagement strategy to support early years literacy and consider how this can be expanded to older children e.g. parents doing functional skills alongside children, utilising baseline data from early years literacy work.
22. Develop a curriculum map across all settings which maximises reading opportunities.
23. Develop a system to share information on interventions across settings during

transition (share what interventions worked and what didn't).

24. Develop an understanding of what happens at each stage of literacy education (Early Years, KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4, adult literacy).

A strategic group has been established containing expertise from all stakeholders across Blackpool and two eminent university professors, to drive these priorities.

Since the last report, the Early Years task and finish group is now progressing the elements of the plan that relate to Early Years education.

Blackpool library service has agreed to send the literacy survey out to partners, and support the initiatives in any way that is needed.

National Literacy Trust is working with the library service and promoting and developing literacy with young adults and through youth clubs, out of school settings and the Grand Theatre, through Arts Council funding, the Connecting Stories project and the Penguin Random House project that has worked with 18 schools so far.

From the work that has been done so far, it is clear that reading and literacy are high priorities for school leaders and other stakeholders within Blackpool.

The Blackpool 30 reading challenge still continues and reading standards at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) were high throughout the pandemic period, in Blackpool. Writing was not as strong, so this has been the focus for this year.

6.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 7(a): Literacy strategy

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 N/A

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

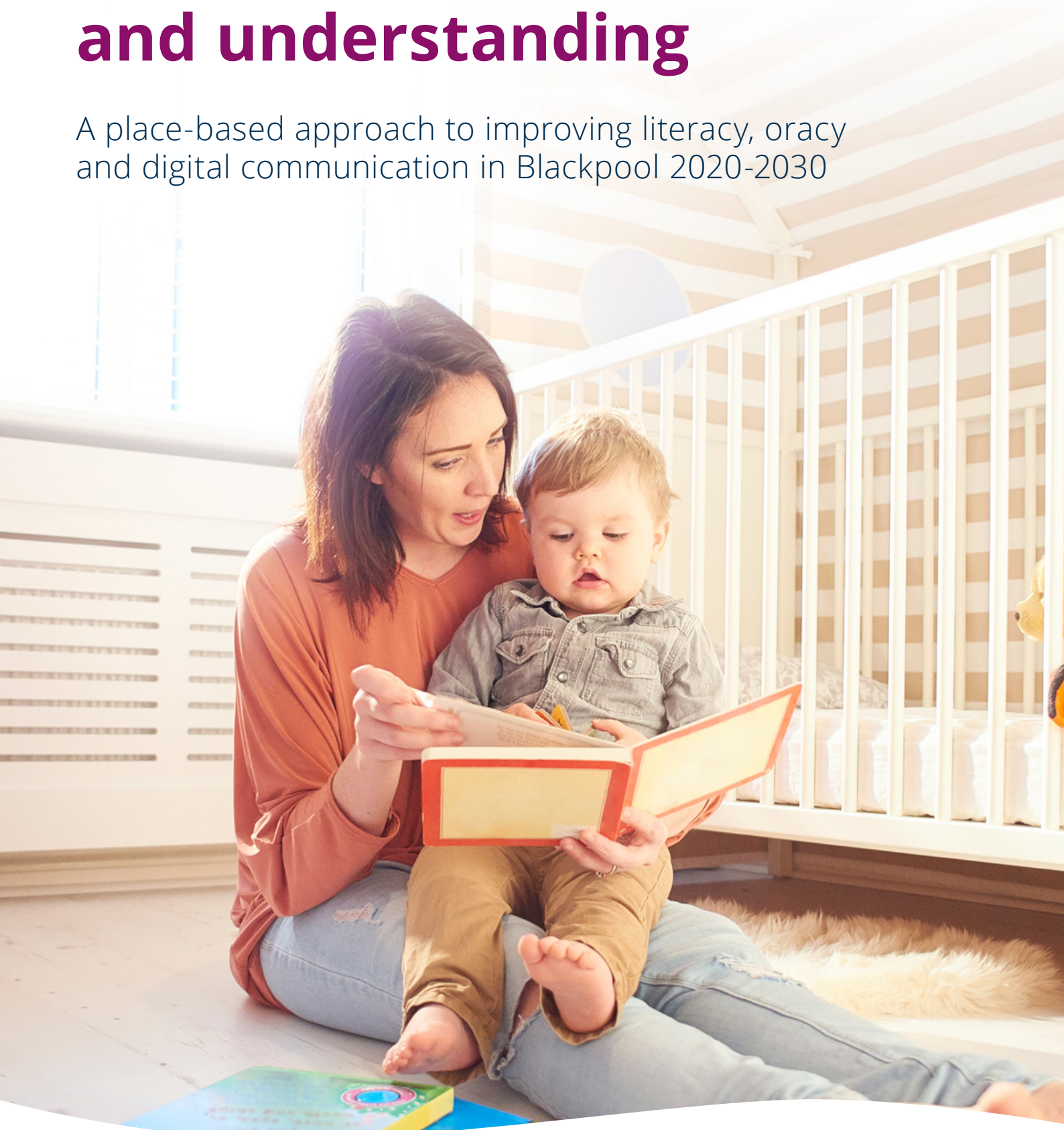
**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

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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).**

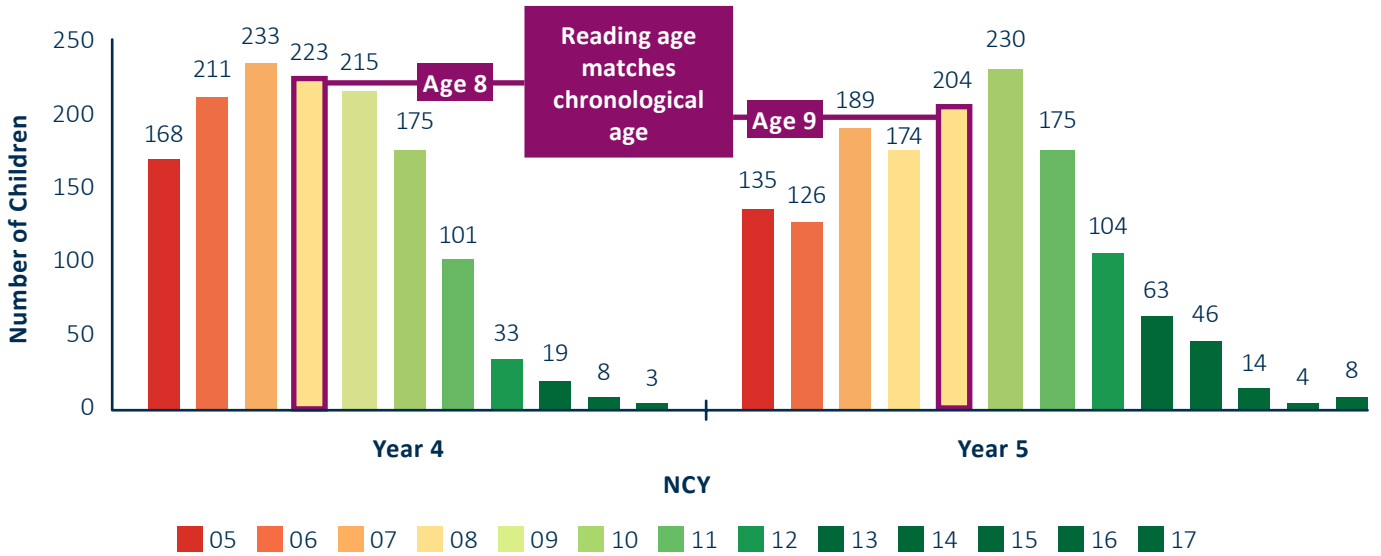
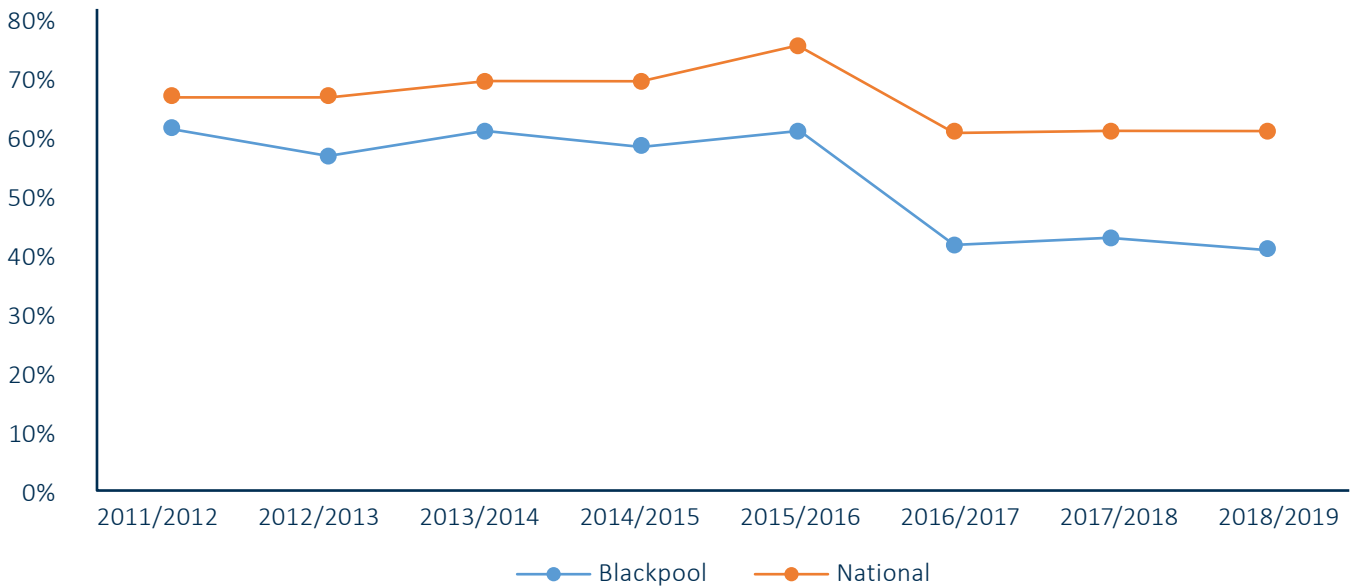


Figure 1b shows that the percentage of children achieving a C grade or Grade 5 at GCSE level in English is stubbornly low in Blackpool and has shown little sign of improving over the last few years.

**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.

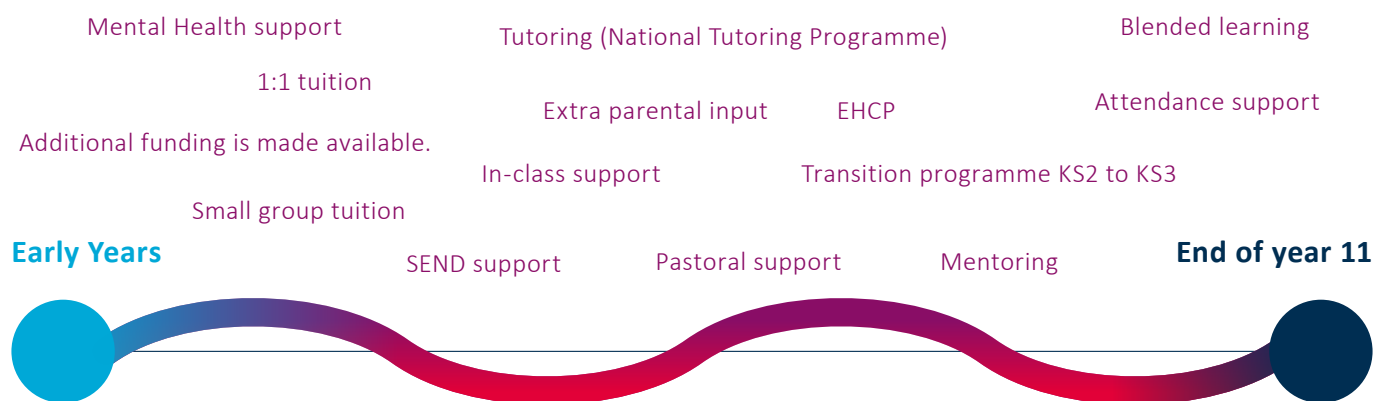
If we do not plan for a high level of pupil movement within our strategy we will not make the progress that we require. Unlike some areas that are able to teach a large percentage of pupils all the way through their education, at each major key stage Blackpool has to pick up, or put down provision for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



**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%

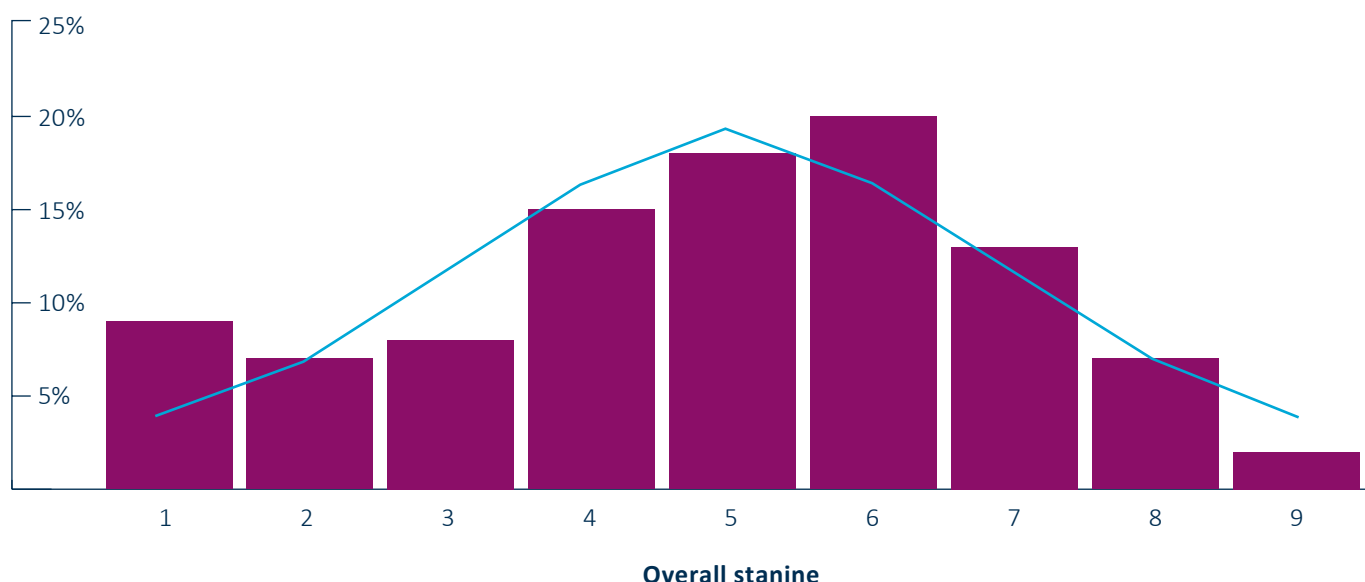
# Our focus upon assessment and action at every stage of the literacy life cycle

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 show 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.

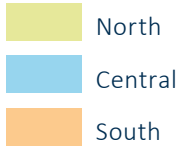
Reading must be a large part of the interactions in the family hubs.

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

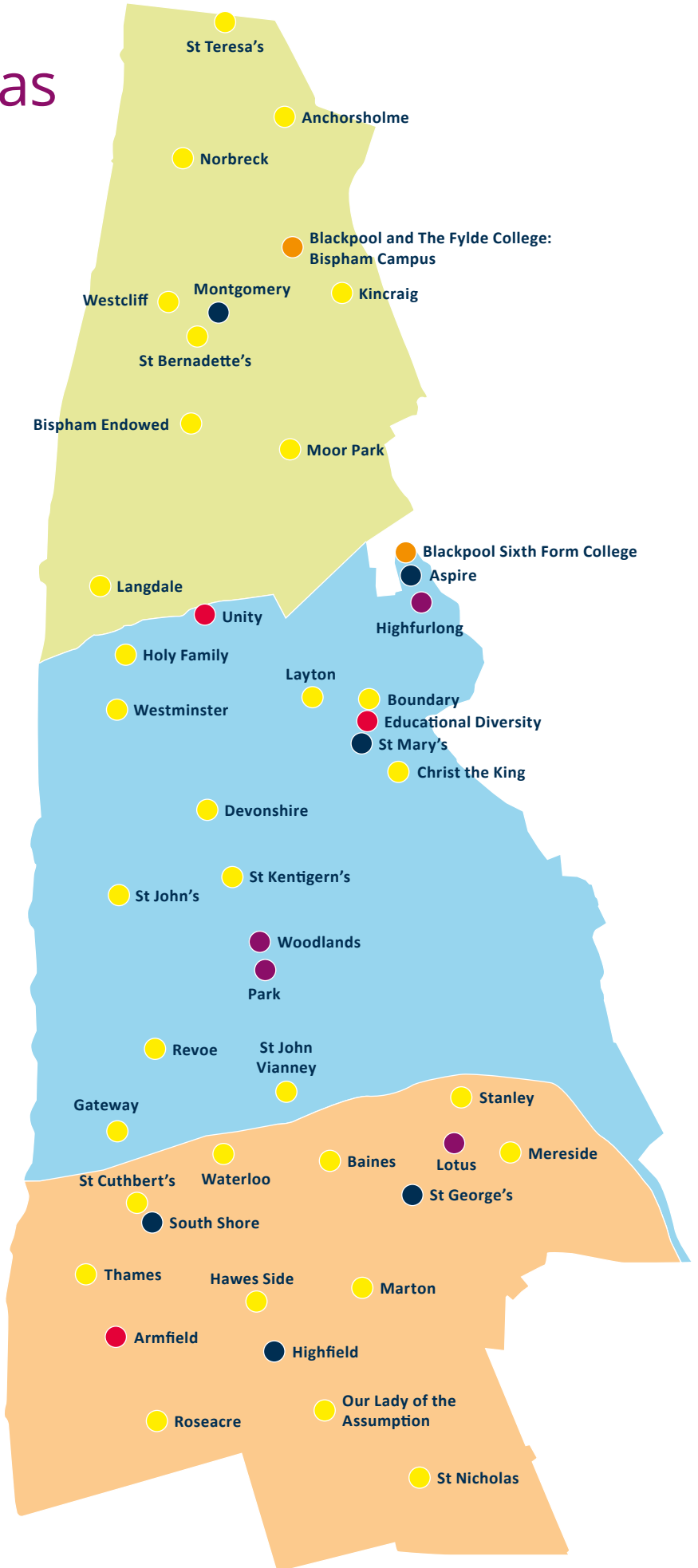


## Blackpool Schools

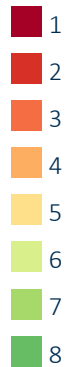
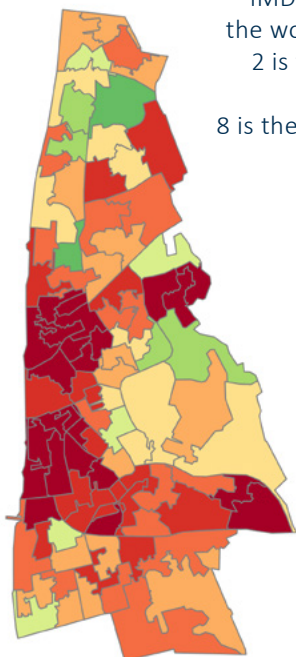


The Literacy Strategy will be developed to incorporate elements of the strategy that are bespoke to the three different cross phase areas shown in this diagram.

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

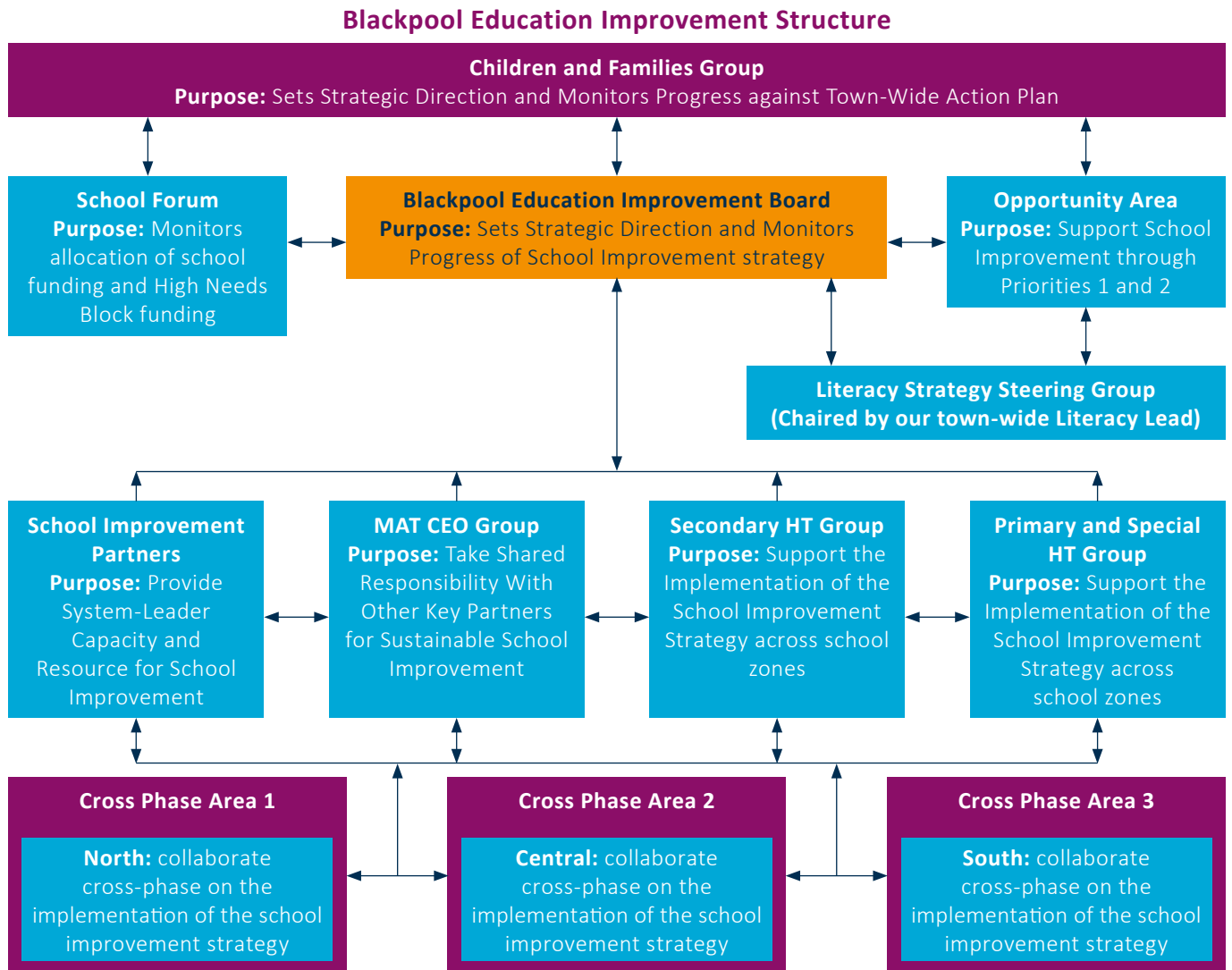
Improving literacy capabilities requires a multi-agency approach, bringing together the energy, enthusiasm and resources of those agencies with responsibility for promoting social justice for young people in Blackpool. The aim of the KS3 Literacy Project is to develop a sustainable change that identifies 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

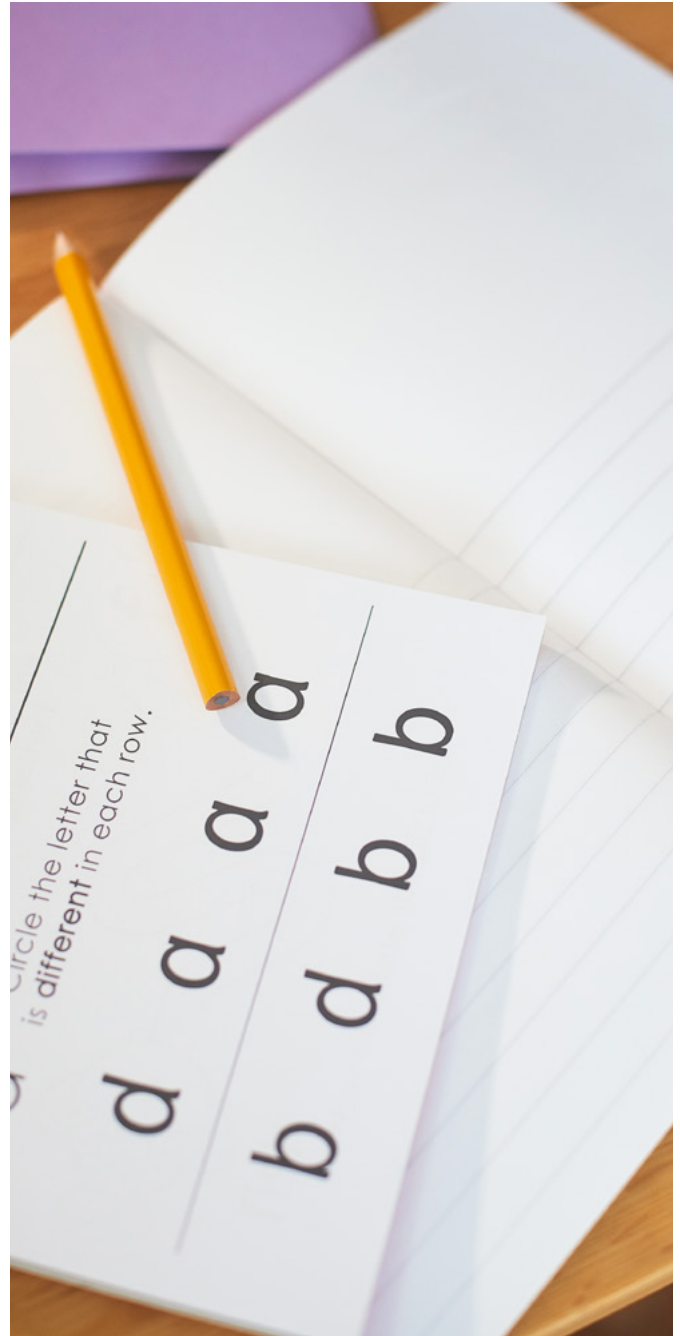
**As part of the vision for the future of the town we invite you to commit to you and or your organisation to the following:**

### 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



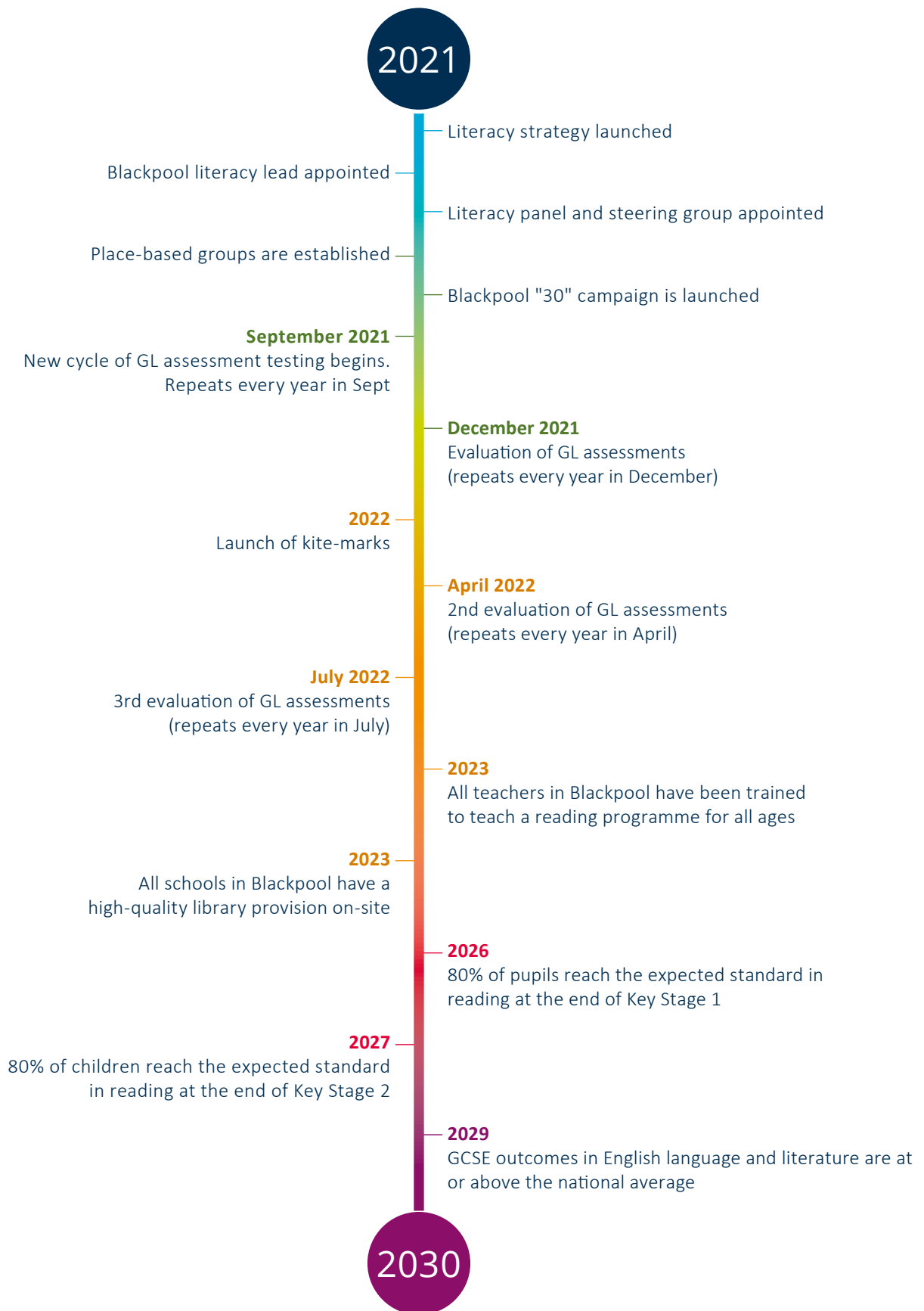
# Engaging with the community and ensuring impact is felt by the "end-user"

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%

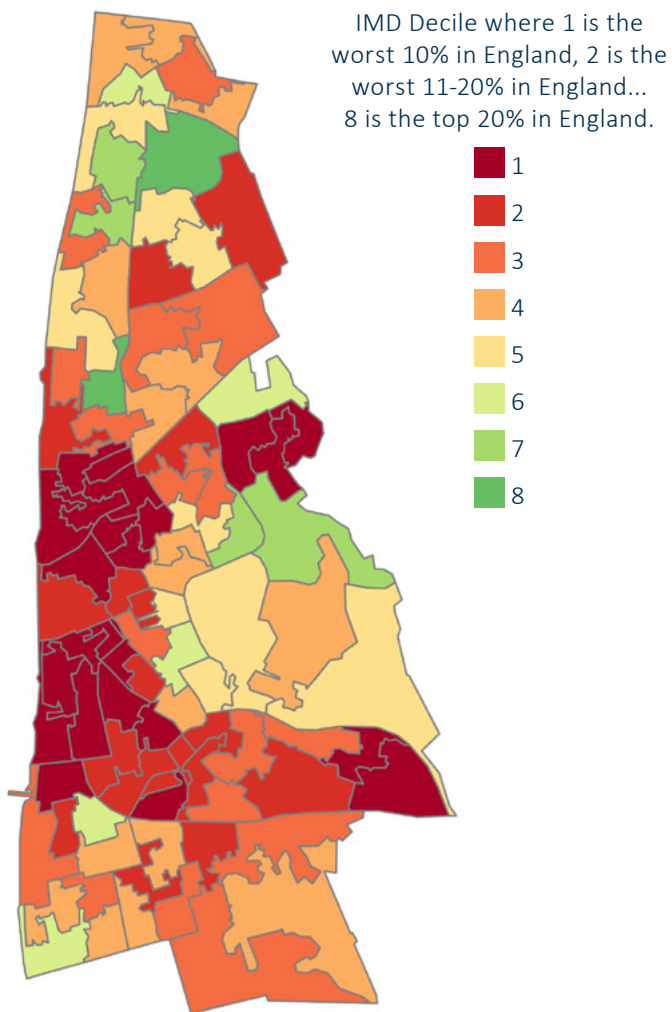
**Figure 3. The percentage of children that reached the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1 (2018-19 school year)**

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>	22 June 2023

## SEND OFSTED INSPECTION AND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

#### 1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Inform Scrutiny of the progress made since the recent Ofsted and CQC SEND inspection.
- Raise awareness of the cross-cutting nature of the SEND policy agenda and its links to other key improvement programs within the Council.
- Seek assurance from Scrutiny that there is shared ownership and commitment to delivering aspects of the improvement plan to improve the health, care, education, leisure and employment outcomes for children and young people (0-25) with SEND.
- Inform Scrutiny of developments in relation to the SEND Strategy.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 • To secure commitment from members to ensure that children and young people with SEND are given the same opportunities to access meaningful employment including apprenticeships, suitable housing, and accessible leisure facilities.
- 2.2 • To note the SEND Strategy 2022-25 (appendix 8(a)).

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 As a result of the findings of the inspection, the outcome in 2022 was that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was required because of significant areas of weakness in the area's practice. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) has also determined that the local authority and the area's clinical commissioning group (CCG – now ICB (Integrated Care Board)) were jointly responsible for submitting the written statement to Ofsted.

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 There is no alternative. The SEND Partnership must carry out the improvements to local area SEND provision as a requirement of the Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice.

#### **5.0 Council priority:**

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

#### **6.0 Background information**

6.1 Between 28 February 2022 and 4 March 2022, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Blackpool to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

6.2 This inspection provides an independent, external evaluation of how well a local area carries out its statutory duties for children and young people with SEND between the ages of 0-25 years. The local area includes the local authority, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), public health, NHS England (for specialist services), early year's settings, schools and further education providers.

6.3 The official findings letter was published and made publically available on 26 May 2022. A link to the report can be viewed [here](#). (Search Ofsted inspection reports, Blackpool Council)

#### **6.4 Findings and outcome of the report**

The outcome of the inspection, though hugely disappointing, was anticipated by senior officers. The inspection feedback recognised that Blackpool's leaders have an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the area and that these are accurately reflected in the self-evaluation provided to Ofsted prior to inspection.

The inspectorates' findings are detailed as strengths and areas for development against each of the key lines of enquiry. The report identifies 15 areas of strength and 18 areas for development.

#### **6.5 Areas of strength**

The inspectors did note the following areas of strength:

- Some parents and carers spoke highly of leaders' efforts to maintain services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools remained open to vulnerable children and young people throughout local and national restrictions. Health services adapted their ways of working so they could continue to identify and meet children and young people's needs. Parents and carers appreciated the emotional and practical support that they received from front-line professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Parents and carers are quick to sing the praises of many front-line staff who make a



positive difference. There are staff who go the extra mile every day to give children, young people and their families the help and support that they need. These individual professionals are a 'lifeline' for the families that they work with.

- The area's well regarded special schools provide an effective service for children, young people and their families. Many mainstream settings also meet the needs of children and young people well.

## 6.6 Significant areas of weakness

The inspectors identified four areas of weakness that the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) must address.

- The lack of specificity, ownership and accountability in the areas' improvement strategy for SEND.
- The duties around preparing children and young people for adulthood, not being fulfilled.
- The poor communication with parents and carers across the area – model of co-production
- The long waiting time for some therapies.

Addressing these four areas of weakness has required significant cross-organisation working between Blackpool Council and Blackpool CCG together with a wide range of stakeholders including:

- Children, young people and their families.
- Parent carer forum, other parental children and young people groups
- Information and Advice Services for education, social care and health.
- Education providers – Early Years, schools and colleges.
- Employers, housing and leisure providers.

The SEND Code of Practice 2015, sets out that children, young people together with their parents and carers must be involved in planning, commissioning and reviewing services; and in decision making about individual support and local provision/services.

The expectation is that this involvement is undertaken through a model of co-production. Co-production is a way of working where providers and users of a service work together to reach a collective outcome. This is now underway.

The aim is to give everyone equal life chances as they move into adulthood. Preparation for adulthood should begin from the earliest years to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive the right support and services to:

- Secure paid employment.
- Live independently.

- Develop friendships and relationships.
- Enjoy good health.
- Access leisure and community activities where they can feel safe and confident.

#### 6.7 **Monitoring and re-inspection**

The local area will be re-inspected by Ofsted and the CQC to decide whether sufficient progress has been made in addressing each of the areas of significant weakness identified. The timescale for re-inspection is eighteen months after publication of the initial inspection. This will be conducted under the new framework, introduced in 2023.

#### 6.8 **Key progress**

Highlights since the last report are -

1. Agreed £3.8 million of funding to eradicate the school funding deficit and High Needs Block deficit (from the Department of Education safety-valve programme).
2. Agreed £6.2 million of funding to build new school sites in Blackpool at Highfurlong Special School, Educational Diversity and Park school.
3. A new post-19 offer at The Oracle, through Valley College.
4. Enhanced Assessment provision at Revoe Primary Academy.
5. A new SEMH Free School for 56 pupils has been approved by the Department for Education.
6. An Alternative Provision Academy bid has been submitted to the Department for Education for children with medical needs that prevent them from attending school.

6.9 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

#### 7.0 **List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 8(a): SEND Strategy 2022-25

#### 8.0 **Financial considerations:**

8.1 Some additional resource to support the improvement program has been provided by the CCG, and additional capacity will be created within existing budgets and funding streams.

#### 9.0 **Legal considerations:**

9.1 This is an evaluation of the Council's ability to meet the legislative requirements set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, s20 of the Children's Act 2004, and Equalities Act 2010

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 These are published documents so there is risk to the Council's reputation if we do not fulfil our statutory duties.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 The purpose of the improvement plans is to ensure that Blackpool has fully inclusive services for all children and young people 0-25.

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

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 Consultation on the SEND Strategy 2022-25 was undertaken in the form of an online survey and a number of focus groups with young people and parents.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

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# Blackpool SEND Strategy

## 2022–2025



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# Foreword

Welcome to the Blackpool Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy which sets out our key priorities and actions to help children and young people with SEND between the ages of 0-25 years and their families, live happy, healthy lives in Blackpool.

This strategy is the result of our SEND Partnership Board working together and listening to the views and experiences of parents/carers, children and young people, and professionals across education, health and social care.

We consulted on the strategy from 4 April 2022 until 22 May 2022 and undertook a number of focus groups with parents/carers and children/young people. As a result of this activity the strategy has been updated to include:

- Support in early years
- Transitions between services
- Greater clarity on what we will do
- Our commitment to ensuring that co-production, communication and engagement with parents/carers, children and young people is central to all changes/improvements in SEND services.

The consultation provided recommendations from parents/carers, children and young people on changes/improvements to services and support currently available in Blackpool. Professionals working directly to deliver SEND services also suggested actions that need to be taken to enable the delivery of this strategy. We would like to express our thanks for this feedback and will ensure that it is considered in the development of the SEND partnership's improvement plan that will drive the achievement of this strategy.



# Blackpool in Context

## Demographics

Blackpool is a small, densely populated seaside town located in the north west of England. It has a total population of approximately 141,100 people with 30,600 children and young people aged 0-19 years. 21.7% of the population are under 20 years compared to 23.1% nationally.

Blackpool has an extraordinary concentration of social and economic issues in the central third of the town. According to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) the centre of Blackpool has 10 of the most deprived small areas in England – no other town has anything like this level of social challenge within such a small geographical area.

## Local Area Inspection

Between 28 February and 4 March 2022, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected services provided by practitioners and professionals who support children and young people aged 0-25 years with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). During the inspection they assessed how well the local area has worked together to implement the SEND reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The local area includes Blackpool Council (education, children's and adult's social care and public health), NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board, Blackpool Teaching Hospital and other associated partners, parents and carers; and children and young people with SEND.

Some of the strengths identified during the inspection include:

- The most vulnerable children and young people with SEND benefit from the wealth of specialist services available.
- Across the area children in primary schools who require support for SEND attend and achieve well.
- There is a wide range of provision across the area to improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.
- The intended outcomes in recent EHC plans better reflect the aspirations of children, young people and their families.

The inspectors also identified four areas for improvement and His Majesty's Chief Inspector has determined that a Written Statement of Action is required to address these. The four areas are:

1. The lack of specificity, ownership and accountability in the area's improvement strategy for SEND.
2. The duties around preparing children and young people for adulthood not being fulfilled.
3. The poor communication with parents and carers across the areas.
4. The long waiting times for some therapies.

The SEND Partnership, as leaders of the local area, agree with the findings of the inspection and is committed to ensuring that swift action is taken to deliver these improvements. The inspection outcome has provided confirmation of the areas for improvement that we had recognized, as well as providing a renewed mandate to drive forward our plans and deliver progress as a partnership.





# Strategic Leadership for SEND

The SEND Partnership Board has overall responsibility for ensuring this strategy is achieved. Members are experienced leaders of special educational needs and disabilities services and hold partners, across education, health and social care, to account for the co-ordination, commissioning and delivery of services and support for children and young people with SEND and their families.

**Membership of the SEND Partnership Board is detailed in the following table.**

Role	Organisation
Chair	Independent
Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth Schools and Transience	Blackpool Council
Director of Children’s Services	Blackpool Council
Assistant Director for Education, SEND and Early Years	Blackpool Council
Assistant Director Children’s Social Care	Blackpool Council
Head of SEND	Blackpool Council
Adult Services representative	Blackpool Council
Associate Director SEND	NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Head of Commissioning	NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Executive Director of Integrated Care	Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Divisional Director of Operations	Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Chair, Blackpool Parent Carer Forum	Parent representatives
SEND Parent’s Advisory Group	Parent representatives
Service Manager	SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
Head Teacher, Highfurlong Special School	School representative
Executive Principal South Shore and Marton Academies, Bright Futures Education Trust	School representative
Public Health Specialist	Blackpool Council
Head of Commissioning and Corporate Delivery	Blackpool Council

# Monitoring progress

To enable the SEND Partnership Board to measure progress on the priorities and actions set out in this strategy, a SEND Improvement Plan has been developed by stakeholders that sets out what needs to be done and when it will be achieved. The improvement plan is also aligned to the Written Statement of Action that will address the four key areas for improvement identified from the SEND inspection.

Regular reports will be presented to the SEND Partnership Board who will provide assurance to a range of key strategic partnerships across Blackpool that the SEND partnership is delivering on its priorities.

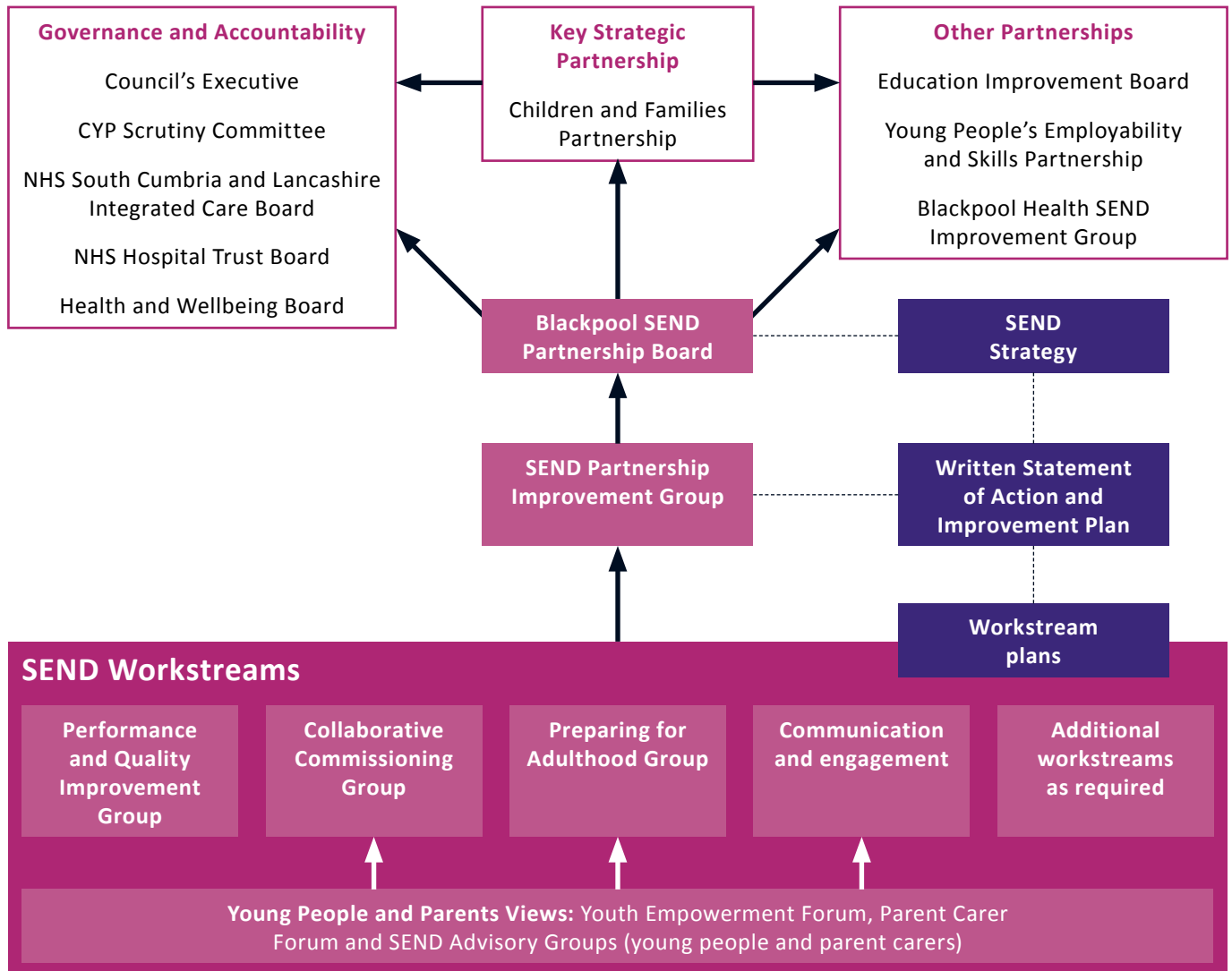
To support the SEND Partnership Board's progress monitoring, a set of key performance measures have been agreed and these are included in a SEND performance data dashboard that is also reported to the SEND Partnership Board.

The strategy will be reviewed and impact evaluated on an annual basis to demonstrate improvement, identify further areas for development and to take account of any local or national policy changes.

The governance structure diagram detailed on the following page sets out the range of partnerships that contribute to delivery of the strategy and the boards that hold the SEND Partnership to account for ensuring that the strategy is achieved. The SEND workstreams are task and finish groups made up of a range of professionals, parents and young people from across the area.



# SEND Partnership Governance Structure



# Our Partnership Vision

***All children and young people with SEND live happy, healthy lives, in a community that is inclusive and supports them to achieve their ambitions.***

This vision will determine how, as a partnership, we will most effectively use our resources and expertise to plan and delivery local services and support in the best interests of children and young people with SEND, and their families within Blackpool.

The achievement of this vision will require a commitment from all our partners to make SEND everybody's business. This means all individuals working in education, health and social care services with children and young people in Blackpool Council will consider the needs of the individual and their families in everything that they do. This will enable positive interactions and experiences of all that Blackpool has to offer to our residents.





# Working Together

***The SEND partnership is committed to working together through a model of co-production. This means parents and carers, children and young people will be involved as equal partners in the design and shaping of services/support alongside those responsible for funding and delivery.***

We will all work together and share our experiences to co-design both new resources, services and systems and to improve existing ones that parents and carers, children and young people; and professionals tell us need to be improved.

We know that we have work to do to improve communication with parents and carers across Blackpool so that they can have trust and confidence in what they are told about SEND and SEND services.

We are establishing a Parents' SEND Advisory Group and a Young People's SEND Advisory Group to facilitate co-production with families across Blackpool. These groups will enable parents and carers, children and young people to confidently express their views, wishes and feelings to help them live happy and healthy lives.

Together we will produce a SEND communications charter that describes how our families want us to work together based on our collective core beliefs, values and our practice.

Our goal is to build a SEND community that is based on mutual trust and respect and places parents/carers, children and young people's experiences and expertise at the heart of our decision making.



# What children and young people told us is important to them



# What parents and carers told us is important to them



# The landscape for SEND in Blackpool



## Early Years

- 34 group childcare providers (day nurseries and preschools)
- 20 schools with nursery classes
- 44 childminders.



## Infrastructure for health

- 1 NHS hospital providing both acute and community services including public health 0 – 19 services
- 1 child development centre
- 1 CAMHS provider



## Schools

- 33 primary schools
- 6 secondary schools
- 2 all through schools
- 4 special schools
- 1 pupil referral unit.



## Profile of children with SEND

- 1,311 children and young people with an EHC plan (October 2022)
- 3,297 children receiving SEN support (October 2022)
- 160 children with EHCPs aged 16 and 17 years old



## Post 16 provision

- 1 FE College
- 1 Sixth Form College
- 1 Specialist College 19-25,
- 3 16-19 special schools
- 1 supported internship provider
- 3 private training providers





# Our Partnership Priorities

Working in partnership we have identified four key priorities that help us to achieve our vision.

## These priorities have been informed and guided by:-

- Our SEND self-evaluation
  - The outcome of our SEND inspection
  - Listening to the views of parents, carers, children and young people; and professionals through consultation and focus groups.
- 1. Timely identification and access to education, health and care services, well planned transitions and the best opportunities that help children and young people live healthy lives.**
  - 2. Expand our range of education provision to enable children and young people's needs to be met in local settings that provide an inclusive education and support them to achieve their very best.**
  - 3. A range of leisure and social activities that develop children and young people's interests and broaden opportunities to socialise and develop friendships, incorporating respite placements.**
  - 4. Clear routes into further/higher education and training that will provide young people with the skills to secure employment, live independent, healthy lives and reach their potential.**



# Priority 1

*Timely identification and access to education, health and care services, well planned transitions and the best opportunities that help children and young people live healthy lives.*

## The importance to our partnership

Timely identification and support enables children to make the best possible progress in their education and in everyday life. Listening to the experiences and concerns of children, young people and their families enables support to be tailored to individual need, and builds a climate of confidence and trust between families and professionals.

Well planned transitions ensures that this support continues whenever there is a change to the child or young person's circumstances or the services/support being provided.

We expect all professionals and services working with children, young people and their families to plan, discuss and agree any changes that may take place to ensure continuity of support and that children, young people and their families have confidence in what is being provided and where they can go for help.



## What we need to do

- Adopt a 'right door and tell us once' approach with families so that professionals can support them to access the right services and support at the right time.
- Further develop processes for sharing information between professionals supporting children in their pre-school years so that support is planned for and provided when it is needed.
- Use the model of family hubs to establish co-located, wrap-around services in places close to where people live.
- Improve the local offer website so that families know where they can obtain help and advice when they have concerns about their children's development.
- Review the use of funding to enable more flexibility when meeting needs.
- Co-design and deliver training and support for the whole workforce and families to utilise a graduated approach for SEND.
- Co-produce strengthened graduated approach pathways into health services that provide support at the time when a need is identified.
- Provide timely access to all health services for children and young people with SEND, and resolve the access challenges in Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy.
- Work with families to ensure that EHC plans accurately reflect their child or young person's needs, expected outcomes and are updated in a timely manner.
- Jointly commission/improve services and support across education, social care and health that are based on robust data analysis and what families tell us is needed.
- Co-review the current arrangements for transitions between children's and adults' education, health and social care services based on the experiences of children, young people and their families, and the workforce.
- Ensure that information, advice and guidance is available to professionals, children, young people and their families to enable timely planning and clarity for continuity of support.

# Priority 2

***Expand our range of education provision to enable children and young people's needs to be met in local settings that provide an inclusive education and support them to achieve their very best.***

## **The importance to our partnership**

We are committed to ensuring the inclusive education of children and young people and the removal of barriers to learning.

There is an expectation that all educational settings will work to enable all children and young people to develop, learn, participate and achieve their best possible educational potential and achieve their aspirations.

We want every child's needs to be met, as far as possible, in their local community, by local early years' providers and mainstream schools.



## **What we need to do**

- Widen and strengthen SEND provision by increasing the numbers of places in Blackpool for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Create an intensive support centre to meet the needs of our most complex children and young people.
- Provide specialist, evidence based training and support to our early years and mainstream educational settings in relation to SEND to underpin our principles of local schools for local children and 'no Blackpool child left behind'.
- Promote quality first teaching in all our educational settings that focuses on high expectations for all our children through the effective deployment of the education service.
- Support the development of SEND provision in all educational settings through a whole school approach to SEND based on NASEN standards.
- Undertake a needs based assessment to identify and strengthen the range of educational provision commissioned to ensure the needs of our most complex children and young people in Blackpool are met.
- Ensure that children, young people and their parents are involved in the planning and delivery of the support their children require.
- Increase the numbers of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan who are educated in a mainstream school to ensure that they have access to a full curriculum that enables them to progress to further education/employment.

# Priority 3

*A range of leisure and social activities that develop children and young people's interests and broaden opportunities to socialise and develop friendships, incorporating respite placements.*

## The importance to our partnership

We believe that all children and young people that live in Blackpool should have access to the same range of opportunities and experiences as any other child or young person living in Blackpool.

Evidence tells us that children and young people that are connected to their communities have a sense of belonging, experience better mental health and wellbeing, grow in confidence, build resilience and independence; and develop positive relationships and friendships with others.

### What we need to do

- Explore opportunities to expand the range of school holiday care across Blackpool for working parents.
- Co-design and realign existing funding to provide a range of opportunities that enable children and young people to develop life skills, friendships and build confidence.
- Encourage partners to create activities in accessible locations to avoid unnecessary travel.
- Expand provision in before and after school clubs to enable access for children from special schools.
- Support existing leisure and social activities to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Consult and co-produce with families commissioning priorities to ensure a wide variety of options for respite, short breaks and leisure opportunities to meet a wide range of needs.
- Provide training and support to voluntary organisations to enable children and young people with SEND to access their activities.
- Explore the use of community assets to provide safe, accessible venues and facilities for children and young people with SEND.





# Priority 4

***Clear routes into further/higher education and training that will provide young people with the skills to secure employment, live independent lives and reach their potential.***

## **The importance to our partnership**

We are ambitious on behalf of our young adults with SEND. We want them to have access to opportunities that enable them to achieve their career and life goals.

We recognise that young people and their families need support for this to happen and we are committed to working with young people and their families to understand what their goals are and the support they need to achieve them.

Our intention is to develop a Preparation for Adulthood strategy with young people, their families and a range of stakeholders across Blackpool that provides clarity on the routes, opportunities and support available so that young people and their families can plan and be confident in the decisions they make about their futures.

## **What we need to do**

- Gather the views and aspirations of young people, and their parents to shape the provision provided within Blackpool.
- Work with our further education partners to provide courses for young people that include a quality work experience placement and enable them to gain the skills and qualifications to progress to higher education, access apprenticeships/employment within the Blackpool area.
- Engage with local employers to increase the numbers of opportunities for supported internships and apprenticeships.
- Provide high quality information, advice and guidance to young people and their parents in a timely manner that enables them to make early informed choices about their future career/life pathway.
- Co-develop with young people and our partners a range of provision that will prepare young people for everyday life that develops their independence skills (e.g. managing on a budget, cooking, booking health appointments).
- Create opportunities with local providers for young people to participate in activities such as Duke of Edinburgh awards and volunteering.



# Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	An apprenticeship is a paid job for anyone over the age of 16. Alongside on-the-job training, apprentices spend at least 20% of their working hours completing classroom-based learning with a college, university or training provider which leads to a nationally recognised qualification
<b>Children and Families Act 2014</b>	The Children and Families Act 2014 brought together a number of changes to legislation around services for vulnerable children and young people and families. The changes cover the family justice system, virtual schools for looked after children, adoption, childcare, shared parental leave and flexible working, and services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). The provisions in the Act which relate to SEND came into force in September 2014.
<b>CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services</b>	Blackpool CAMHS service is made up of professionals from a range of disciplines including consultant child and adolescent psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, psychologists, counsellors, support staff and an admin team.  The service offers a range of assessments and therapeutic interventions including 1:1 work, family therapy and group work.
<b>Communications charter</b>	An agreement that sets out how professionals will communicate with parents, carers, children and young people based on a co-produced set of principles.
<b>Co-production</b>	An approach that places parents, carers, children and young people at the heart of decision making by involving them in the design, development and delivery of services that impact on their lives.
<b>CQC – Care Quality Commission</b>	The independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. They make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high quality care and encourage care services to improve. They undertook the SEND inspection in Blackpool jointly with Ofsted.
<b>Data dashboard</b>	An information management tool that helps to track our progress against our key performance indicators.
<b>Early Years</b>	From pre-birth to starting school.
<b>EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan</b>	A legal document that details the education, health and social care support that is provided to a child or young person who has a special educational need and/or a disability. It is drawn up by the local authority after an education, health and care (EHC) needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies.
<b>Family hubs</b>	Family Hubs are centres which, as part of integrated family services ensure families with children and young people aged 0-19 receive early help to overcome a range of difficulties and build stronger relationships.
<b>Focus Group</b>	A group of people brought together to have a discussion/provide feedback on a specific service or topic.

# Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
<b>Graduated approach</b>	An outline of the provision and support that Blackpool Council expects to be in place in all educational settings which support Blackpool children and young people with SEND and, therefore, forms an important part of the Blackpool local offer for SEND.
<b>IMD – Index of Multiple Deprivation</b>	The Index of Multiple Deprivation is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas <sup>1</sup> (or neighbourhoods) in England. The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area).
<b>Improvement Plan</b>	A plan that sets out measurable actions that will be taken with clear accountabilities, measures and deadlines to make improvements identified from the SEND strategy and the SEND inspection.
<b>IAG – Information, advice and guidance support</b>	Services that provide advice and information to children with SEND, their parents and young people with SEND. These services provide advice and support to help families make informed decisions about education, further learning and employment, health and care transitions and support.
<b>Local Offer</b>	The Local Offer is the support and services available in Blackpool for children and young people with SEND aged 0–25 and those who support them.
<b>Mainstream</b>	Any school or setting that is not a special school or non-specialist pre-school provision.
<b>NASEN</b>	The National Association for Special Educational Needs – a charitable membership organisation that exists to support and champion those working with, and for, children and young people with SEND and learning differences.
<b>ND pathway</b>	
<b>(Neurodevelopmental) pathway</b>	The Fylde Coast School Age Neurodevelopmental Pathway is an integrated multi-agency pathway for children and young people aged 5-16 years who are causing parental and professional concern and who require multi-agency specialist consideration of their needs.
<b>NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)</b>	A statutory NHS organisation which is responsible for developing a plan for meeting the health needs of the population, managing the NHS budget and arranging for the provision of health services in a geographical area. ICBs have their own leadership teams, which include a Chair and Chief Executive, and also include members from NHS trusts/foundation trusts, local authorities, general practice, and an individual with expertise and knowledge of mental illness.
<b>Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills</b>	Ofsted is a non-ministerial department that inspects services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. They also inspect and regulate services that care for children and young people and undertook the SEND inspection in Blackpool jointly with the Care Quality Commission.
<b>Short breaks/respite provision</b>	Short breaks provide opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to spend time away from their primary carers, and provide opportunities for their parents and carers to have a break from caring responsibilities

# Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
<b>Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities</b>	A child or young person between the ages of 0-25 years has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of education facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or colleges.
<b>Quality First Teaching</b>	A style of teaching that emphasises high quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils in a class.
<b>Supported Internships</b>	Supported internships are a structured, work-based study programme for 16 to 24-year-olds with SEND who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The core aim of a supported internship study programme is a substantial work placement, facilitated by the support of an expert job coach for those young people wanting to secure employment.
<b>Transitions</b>	The moves children and young people make from home to early years education through to further and higher education/employment and the transfers from children's services to adult services for health and social care provision.
<b>WSOA – Written Statement of Action</b>	A document which sets out the actions that are needed to address the significant areas of weakness in a local area identified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission following a SEND inspection.



<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>	22 June 2023

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To advise of the workplanning process for 2023/2024 for the Committee.

### 2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To note that the Committee's workplanning workshop will take place on 18 July 2023, commencing at 6pm via MS Teams.

2.2 To monitor the implementation of the Committee's recommendations/actions.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To ensure the Workplan is robust and fit for purpose.

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 will be held on 18 July 2023 to consider items for inclusion on the Committee's workplan for the 2023/2024 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.

Committee Members are also invited to suggest topics at any time that might be suitable for scrutiny review through completion of the Scrutiny Review Checklist (attached at Appendix 9(b)). 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 outside of the workplanning workshop.

## 6.2 **Implementation of Recommendations/Actions**

The table attached at Appendix 9(a) 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. The table includes the work and recommendations of the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

6.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

## 7.0 **List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 9(a) - Implementation of Recommendations/Actions.  
Appendix 9(b)- Scrutiny Selection Checklist

## 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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**MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
1	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
2	08.12.2022	To include an item on the work programme to look at the resource capacity of the Young Inspectors Team.	TBC		To be added to workplan during consideration of Municipal Year 2023/24.	
3	08.12.2022	To invite the Head of Library Service to a future meeting to provide a report on the services provided within the community in respect of the Literacy Strategy.	TBC	Vicky Clarke	On the agenda for June 2023 meeting.	Completed.

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**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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