

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years.
Date of Meeting:	24 March 2022

PUPIL LITERACY AND READING PERFORMANCE DATA

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the latest GL Assessment pupil performance data.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to have oversight of pupil attainment.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure Scrutiny oversight and to provide the opportunity for further questions and continued Member involvement.

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

- Blackpool is a Department for Education Opportunity Area. This has been the case since 2017.

- 6.2
- Blackpool has a town-wide Literacy Strategy aiming to improve levels of literacy across the town.
 - Blackpool has been hit by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, especially since the end of the second lockdown.
 - There is a concern that levels of pupil attainment, progress and reading ability will have been affected by the pandemic.
 - Town-wide baseline tests provided by the organisation “GL Assessment” have been funded in Blackpool for three years. As part of this package there is a test that measures pupil reading levels/ability. There is also a test that measures pupils’ attitudes to schools and self (PASS).
- 6.3
- The data from the GL assessments shows that Blackpool children have a mean Standard Age Score (SAS) that is at the national average or very slightly (1 point) below.
 - This shows that the cohort is performing at national average and this is sustained from Year 6 into Year 7. There does not appear to be a drop-off from the end of Primary to the beginning of Secondary education.
 - This round of testing has shown, however, that the reading level in Year 5 is lower than in Year 6. This may be due to different cohorts, with one being at a lower average level than the other, or there may be other factors influencing the scores. It is not possible to tell this from the data. Further exploration of the data will be required to establish what factors are relevant.
 - Similar patterns are seen in the passage comprehension analysis and the sentence completion analysis. This may show that reading for meaning is slightly less developed within the cohort than their ability to read complete sentences.
 - At Year 7 level, the mean SAS is 99, with the south of the town showing a slightly lower mean SAS at 97. Once again, this may be attributed to many different factors, although the correlation may be relatively weak.
 - Pupils in Year 7 have a good attitude to school and self, as indicated by the PASS surveys. It is indicative of a high satisfaction level with school and self, which is good news for Blackpool schools.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 6(a) - GL Assessment Overview.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 Pupil testing costs approximately £120,000 per annum and consideration may be given to whether funding of such testing should be continued.

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 Blackpool Literacy Strategy.