



Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Time and Date

10.00 am on Thursday, 13th February, 2025

Place

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House, Coventry

Public Business

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**

2. **Declarations of Interests**

3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)

a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th of January 2025

b) Matters Arising

4. **Coventry Education Performance** (Pages 9 - 32)

Briefing Note of the Director of Children and Education.

5. **Children's Services Resources and Efficiency Peer Challenge** (Pages 33 - 36)

Briefing Note of the Director of Children's Services and Education

6. **Work Programme** (Pages 37 - 40)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator

7. **Any Other Business**

Any other items of business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

Private Business

Nil

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry

Wednesday, 5 February 2025

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Tom Robinson Email: tom.robinson@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors J Birdi, B Christopher, J Gardiner, S Hanson (Co-opted Member), D Jackson (Co-opted Member), R Lancaster, S Nazir, E M Reeves, R Thay, CE Thomas (Chair), A Tucker and G Vohra (Co-opted Member)

By Invitation: Councillors K Sandhu (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills) and P Seaman (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

Public Access

Any member of the public who would like to attend the meeting in person is encouraged to contact the officer below in advance of the meeting regarding arrangements for public attendance. A guide to attending public meeting can be found here: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/publicAttendanceMeetings>

Tom Robinson

Email: tom.robinson@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 16 January 2025

Present:

Members: Councillor CE Thomas (Chair)
Councillor J Birdi
Councillor B Christopher
Councillor J Gardiner
Councillor S Nazir
Councillor E M Reeves
Councillor R Thay
Councillor A Tucker

Co-Opted Members: Mrs S Hanson, David Jackson and Ghulam Vohra

Other Members: Councillor K Sandhu (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)
Councillor P Seaman (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

Employees (by Service Area):

Children's and Education R Eaves, J Monk, R Sugars

Governance Services G Holmes, C Taylor, A Veness

Others Present: D Benson, Independent Chair of Coventry Safeguarding Adults Board

Apologies: Councillor R Lancaster

Public Business

58. Declarations of Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

59. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28th of November, 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

60. Coventry Safeguarding Children's Partnership Yearly Report

The Board considered a Briefing Note and a presentation of the Director of Children and Education regarding the annual report in relation to activity of the CSCP April 2023- March 2024.

Working Together 2023 states that, 'Safeguarding Partners must jointly report on the activity they have undertaken in a 12-month period. That reporting should be transparent and easily accessible to the families and professionals. The focus of these reports should be on multi agency priorities, learning, impact, evidence and improvement.

The note also emphasised that Safeguarding Partners should make sure the report is widely available. A copy should also be sent to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

The CSPC had 3 priorities for 2023-2024:

- Child Sexual abuse
- Exploitation
- Making the system work

The Board questioned officers, received responses and discussed the following issues:

- That recruitment to the Horizon team was no longer an issue and there were no vacancies currently.
- The recent comments at parliament concerning grooming gangs in Coventry and the steps the local authority had taken in preventing and combating child exploitation.
- The national level of sexual abuse experienced by children, how this is calculated and what age is classified as a "child".
- How E-Learning is adapted to suit 6 key faiths and work in places of worship.
- How data surrounding low income was calculated and defined, as well as if data was available more recently than 2021-2022.
- Whether a glossary could be included to explain some of the jargonistic terms and acronyms in the report.
- The promotion and use of Education, Health and Care Plans and whether it affected access to children's services.
- Why, despite high numbers of referrals to MASH there was a relatively low conversion rate and whether the thresholds for intervention were at the appropriate level.
- That the Cabinet Member and officers were confident that a new approach to address harmful sexual behaviour would be in place following the withdrawal of the previous provider,

The Board requested:

- The presentation be circulated to all board members
- Date regarding ages of children likely to suffer child sex abuse to be circulated to the board.
- E-learning package to be shared with board members.
- Background to the house project and information on supported lodgings to be brought back to the board.

RESOLVED that the Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Board (2):

- 1. Agreed to note the information in the report about the Coventry Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Annual Report.**
- 2. That the Coventry Safeguarding Children’s Partnership provides a glossary of key terms to be included in future yearly reports and circulated to Members of the Board.**

61. School Attendance Duties

The Scrutiny Board considered a Briefing Note from the Director of Children and Education which provided information on the Local Authorities duties for School Attendance.

The Briefing Note stated that new guidance from the DfE set out statutory responsibilities and expectations for all key stakeholders: schools, multi-academy trusts (MATs), Local Authorities (LA), parents / carers. The initial intention was that the guidance would be statutory from September 2023, and this was presented to Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Board alongside the changes to the service in Autumn 2023. The guidance became statutory in August 2024 following further updates.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Skills, Cllr K Sandhu welcomed the reforms on School Attendance Duties following the implementation of new guidance. She emphasised the importance of school attendance, adding that attendance rates were a national problem but that through a partnership approach, these statutory duties were being managed well. She added that these statutory duties were additional however, they had not incurred additional resource, and the council had managed to meet the statutory duty. Cllr Sandhu advised the focus of the bill was the well-being of the child.

LA’s made changes to the operation of the Attendance Service to implement updated guidance from the DfE. LA’s locally, regionally, and nationally have continued to make representation to the DfE pointing out that the attendance reforms create additional burdens for LA’s and schools for which there has been no additional resource provided.

The LA have recruited additional staff to ensure delivery of the new reforms. This equates to two additional Local Authority Attendance Officers (LAAO), an extension of hours for two existing LAAO’s and an increase in administrative support time. In addition, the time available for traded service has reduced. The majority of this has been funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant, achieved through re-prioritisation of existing funding

The LA have made further amendments to the service and processes to deliver the updated statutory guidance from September 2024.

The revised guidance sets the same expectations for LAs as previous, to:

- Rigorously track local attendance data;
- Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker through the Virtual School;
- Resource a School Attendance team providing core functions free of charge to all schools (e.g. communication & advice; targeting support meetings with every school; support access to multi-disciplinary family support; legal interventions)

Questions from Members were answered by officers as follows:

- Root causes of school non-attendance included special educational needs (SEN), parental struggle to get children to school, schools' ability to meet the needs of children, anxiety, attachment, low mood, low self-esteem (impact of covid) and parental value on going to school.
- SEN children attendance rates at Special Schools were static pre and post covid. However, the SEN cohort in mainstream schools experienced absence due to a number of reasons including awaiting a, EHCP plan, and the child's refusal to go to school. Officers were targeting these groups to ensure schools were putting the right support in place. New reforms gave a better oversight across the city.
- The key theme running through the reforms was 'support first'. Support first was identifying what the barriers were, what support could be put in place and which other agencies needed to be involved. A flow chart was available which was shared with schools.
- Only high-level attendance codes were available to the local authority however, work was ongoing with schools to ascertain why some children were persistently absent. Under the new reforms, schools undertook horizon scanning which looked for patterns in cohorts or communities, facilitating a conversation with Attendance Officers. This information could be gathered directly from schools.
- Officers had close links with the Early Help team who linked with Attendance Officers in a partnership approach to ensure children were receiving early help if needed. Early Help assessments were undertaken by schools.
- The Council's ability to monitor children who are home educated.
- If a child is on a Child Protection plan, then Elective Home Education will be determined as unsuitable by Coventry on the grounds of safeguarding.
- Understanding additional capacity needs and ensuring schools were fully briefed on the reforms would be key going forward.
- Plans to introduce a unique identifier for children would need to be compatible to the systems in place.
- Leave of absence during term time was recognised as a national issue however, prosecutions did take place and under the reforms there was a national framework of fixed penalty notices to deter parents to request leave during term time.
- Schools were able to request evidence of medical conditions if they felt this was necessary.
- DFE guidance stated schools should not grant leave of absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances, however there was no definition of "exceptional" so was at the discretion of individual schools.

Councillor K Sandhu thanked the Board for their contributions and the officers for their continued successful work in the field.

RESOLVED that the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) agreed to note the information in the briefing note

62. **Work Programme**

The Board noted the work Programme.

The board agreed they would discuss the Early Help programme at the meeting on 17th April.

The Board agreed to add the work of the Horizon team to the work programme.

63. **Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 11.45 am)

This page is intentionally left blank



Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board

Date: 13th February 2025

Subject: Coventry Education Performance

1 Purpose of the Note

1.1 To update members on Coventry's 2024 performance on the following:

- Trends in pupil numbers
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Phonics
- Key Stage (KS) 2
- Key Stage (KS) 4 (provisional)
- 16-19 attainment (provisional)
- Attendance and exclusions
- Difference in performance between males and females
- Performance of vulnerable groups

1.2 Refer to [Section 4](#) for the executive summary, and [Appendix 1](#) which holds all the supporting data and further commentary.

1.3 Please also refer to the glossary at [Appendix 4](#) for an explanation of key terminology.

1.4 This report includes published data available through government sources. For operational and planning purposes the Local Authority (LA) use a wider range of tools such as NCER Nexus and FFT Aspire, used as management information by most LAs. This can provide more timely data and supports LA officers in their roles but is not included in this report as not published data.

2 Recommendations

2.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:

- 1) Consider the information provided to comment and/or raise questions
- 2) Identify any recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member
- 3) Identify any areas for further scrutiny to be added to the work programme

3 Background/context

- 3.1 KS4 data is currently provisional and does not take account of amendments to data made by schools. Notwithstanding, significant changes in the data are not expected at this stage. We are expecting further data updates in February 2025.
- 3.2 National and statistical neighbour averages are included where available. Statistical neighbour comparator information includes local authority areas that are more like Coventry in terms of statistics such as levels of deprivation, ethnicity, size, etc. These are all factors that can have an impact on educational performance. A list of Coventry's statistical neighbours is included in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The Department for Education (DfE) has been clear that all users of educational school performance data need to consider the data alongside a range of other information about the school and its individual circumstances, for example by speaking to the school directly, and that conclusions should not be drawn based on a single piece of data alone.
- 3.4 Within the report the KS4 and 16-18 attainment 2023/24 data has been compared to 2022/23. (KS4 data and 16-18 performance measures based on qualification outcomes cannot be compared to 2021/22. This is because for most qualifications that count in performance measures a different grading approach was used in 2021/22 (to take account of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic). Although this data is included it should not be used for comparison purposes.
- 3.5 Within the report the KS2 and EYFS 2023/24 data has been compared to 2022/23 to provide consistency with the presentation of other data in the report (KS4 and KS5). However, for EYFS and KS2, 2021/2022 data was assessed in the same way so can be taken as a reliable comparison point.
- 3.6 KS1 data has not been provided because this is no longer a statutory assessment point.
- 3.7 Following the Covid-19 pandemic performance data was not used by Ofsted to inform inspections in the same way. For 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 performance data is now once again used to inform Ofsted inspections, in triangulation with evidence gathered from other inspection activity.

4 Executive summary

- 4.1 The vision of the Coventry Education Partnership encompasses high expectations for the achievement of children and young people to achieve their full potential whatever background. As part of our working partnership with all schools and settings, the LA acts as champion of educational excellence for children and young people forging strong networks. The LA recognises that schools retain statutory responsibilities for their own school performance and seeks to support this through enabling school leaders to engage in professional collaboration with colleagues across the system. This includes facilitation of primary networks, secondary collaboratives, the special school network and partnership meetings which bring all schools together.
- 4.2 The collaborative approach of the Coventry Education partnership is designed to support all schools in maintaining and improving on their effectiveness. The Coventry Education Improvement priorities for the 2024/25 academic year are included at Appendix 3. For maintained schools the LA recognises its statutory responsibilities

regarding schools which become eligible for intervention from the Department for Education. Furthermore, the LA seeks to support maintained schools as early as possible, where there is evidence or concern that school effectiveness is declining. School Improvement Board and Progress Check-in structures monitor progress and enable specific intervention and support.

- 4.3 From September 2024 overall 'one word' Ofsted judgements for schools have been removed. The change is part of the government's plans to reform Ofsted inspections. For inspections this academic year, parents will see four grades across the existing sub-categories: quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership & management. This means that the previous performance measure regarding the number of children attending good or outstanding schools is no longer available. Ofsted are currently consulting on a new framework and approach from September 2025 using report cards¹.
- 4.4 It's important to note the trends in pupil numbers and the increase in certain groups, which form part of the contextual information for Coventry. All the supporting data and commentary for the following summary is included in Appendix 1.
- There has been an increase in **pupil population** over the last 5 years from 57,570 in 2020 to 61,566 in 2024 – 6.9% increase since 2020
 - The number of children eligible for **free school meals** has increased from 20.1% in 2020 to 28.2% in 2023 – an 8.1% increase over 5 years.
 - There has been an increase of 5.9% in **non-white British** children between 2020 and 2024.
 - The proportion of the pupil population receiving **SEN support** has also increased by 2,157 (2.6%) since 2020, and 726 (increase of 1%) more children on an EHCP.
- 4.5 Early years continues to be a citywide priority through the Early Years Strategy and the Best Start for Life programme. Notwithstanding significant work in this area Coventry's citywide good level of development (GLD) measure remains below national and statistical neighbour average in 2024. Outcomes for 2024 were below 2023.
- 4.6 There has been an improvement in performance in the Year 1 phonics screening check in Coventry in 2024 and at a faster rate than national. Outcomes remain below national, but we have maintained our statistical neighbour position.
- 4.7 In KS2 attainment, for reading, writing and maths combined, there has been an improvement in performance in Coventry in 2024 but at a slower rate than national. Outcomes remain below national, but we have maintained performance when compared with statistical neighbours. Individually our position improved for reading with no change in writing and maths.
- 4.8 In KS4 the Attainment 8 measure for 2024 showed an improvement whilst national declined. In English and Maths combined, for both the standard pass (GCSE grade 4) and strong pass (GCSE grade 5), there has been an improvement in performance in Coventry in 2024 and at a faster rate than national. Coventry has narrowed the gap significantly with national and we have improved or maintained our performance

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/improving-the-way-ofsted-inspects-education>

when compared with statistical neighbours. The Progress 8 measure for 2024 showed an improvement from 2023 and for the first time is positive and above national.

- 4.9 In KS5 attainment, the average A level grade has improved since 2023 and at a faster rate than national. This means the gap to national has narrowed.
- 4.10 KS5 English and Maths progress measures (for students who have not achieved GCSE 9-4 by the end of KS4) could not be produced as it would rely on using KS4 prior attainment data from summers 2020 and 2021. There has been a national commitment not to use this data due to differing assessment methodology as a result of the Covid pandemic. The KS5 English and maths progress measure will be published for the cohort of students completing 16 to 18 study in the 24/25 academic year at the earliest.
- 4.11 Post-16 participation data (2024) will be published in March and annual NEET and not known data in July. This means there is no updated data to be provided in this report.
- 4.12 The full year attendance data for the 2023/24 academic year is not yet published. Compared to the 2022/23 academic year there has been an improvement in attendance during the first two terms of the 2023/24 academic year in all phases.
- 4.13 The last published suspension data is for the 2022/23 academic year. Compared to the 2021/22 academic year the suspension rate in primary, secondary and special has increased. The rate for secondary is below national and statistical neighbour averages. The rate for primary and special is above national and statistical neighbour averages.
- 4.14 The last published exclusion data is for the 2022/23 academic year. Compared to the 2021/22 academic year the permanent exclusion rate in primary has decreased and is below national and in line with statistical neighbours. In secondary and special the permanent exclusion rate has increased and is above national and statistical neighbours. The LA is working in partnership with schools to develop additional pathways that aim to reduce the number suspensions and permanent exclusions over time. The Coventry Alternative Provision (CAP) Graduated Model of Support is currently being piloted with secondary schools in the 2024/25 academic year.
- 4.15 In Coventry the 'gender' gap stayed the same at Key Stage 2 and widened at Key Stage 4 with male attainment staying static as female attainment increased.
- 4.16 The performance of vulnerable groups is summarised below across EYFS, KS2 and KS4. It is important to note that due to small cohort size this data can fluctuate significantly, and fluctuations should always be viewed in this context, with consideration given to longer term trends.

Disadvantaged children in Coventry saw an improvement in achievement data in most measures, and although achievement remained below national average in most measures, the gap narrowed.

Children with an EHCP in Coventry saw an improvement in achievement data in some measures but a decrease in others. The cohort size is growing but remains small. Achievement remains below national averages with the gap widening for half of the measures and narrowing for the other half.

SEND Support children in Coventry saw an improvement in achievement data for most measures – achievement is below national averages for most measures, and the gap widened for the majority of these.

Children Looked After (CLA) in Coventry saw a decrease in achievement in most measures. It should be noted that the small cohort size is particularly relevant for this group.

- 4.17 Overall, Coventry’s performance compares favourably with statistical neighbours for the majority of measures. Statistical neighbours are directly comparable to Coventry because of similarities in size and other important characteristics. For many (but not all) of the key performance measures Coventry is below national average, and this reflects the characteristics of the city in comparison to all local authorities nationally. However, national averages remain the target, and all Coventry schools continue to strive to meet or exceed national benchmarks.
- 4.18 The performance in Coventry shows an improvement across the key stages when compared with statistical neighbour and national averages. This demonstrates that as children and young people progress in education within Coventry their performance improves and by the time they reach the end of their school years a higher proportion secure positive KS4 results and positive destinations (i.e. education, employment, or training). This is testament to the whole system, the strong partnership between Coventry education providers and a relentless focus on next steps.

5 Appendices:

Appendix 1

1. Trends in Pupil Numbers
2. Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
3. Phonics (final)
4. Key Stage 2 (final)
5. Key Stage 4 (provisional)
6. 16-18 Attainment (provisional)
7. Overall Attendance Rates by Phase 2022 – 2024
8. Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions by phase 2021 – 2023
9. Performance KS2 and KS4: difference between males and females in 2023 and 2024
10. Performance of vulnerable groups
11. References and sources

Appendix 2

Information regarding comparative groups and A Level performance points

Appendix 3

Coventry Education Partnership – Priorities 2024/25

Appendix 4

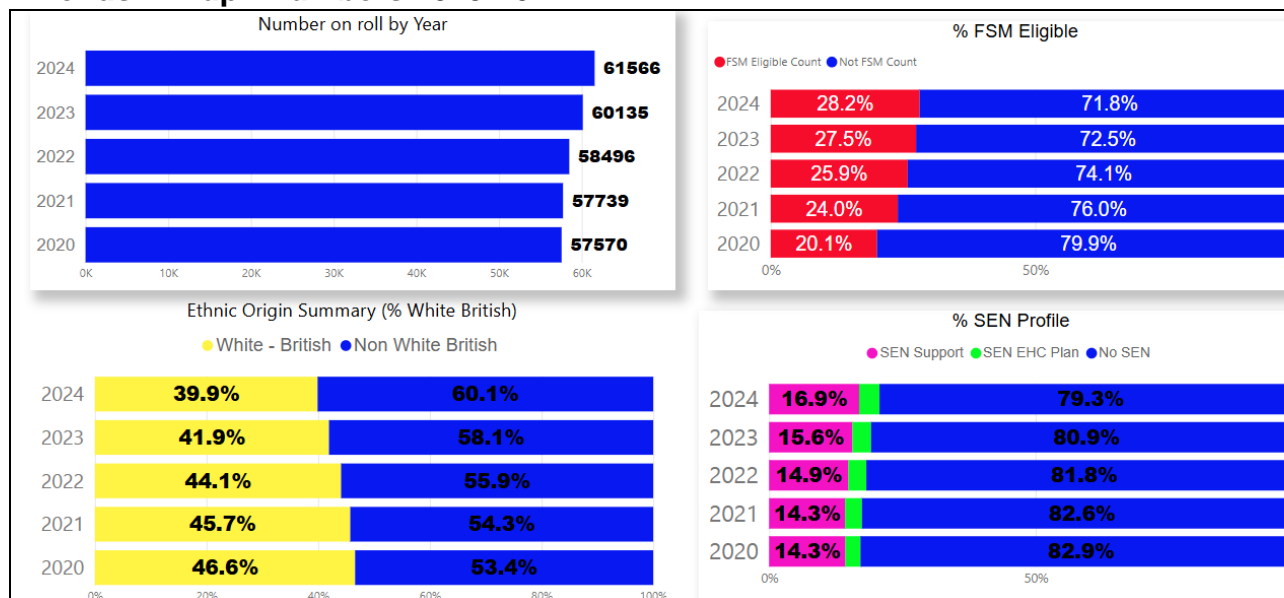
Glossary of key terminology

Report Author

Rachael Sugars, Head of Service Education

Appendix 1

1. Trends in Pupil Numbers 2019-2024



2. Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (final)

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE PROFILE				
Good Level of Development	2022	2023	2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	61.1%	63.9%	63.3%	downward
National	65.2%	67.2%	67.7%	upward
LA ranking	132	124	136	downward
Stat neighbour (SN) average and ranking	62.0% 7th	64.3% Joint 5th	64.8% 9th	below SN average and down 4 places
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry has had a small decrease (0.6%) in 2024 as both national and our statistical neighbours increased by 0.5%. Despite the dip in 2024 the city's three-year trend still shows over 2% increase 2022-24. The statutory EYFS framework sets the standards and requirements that all early years providers must follow to ensure all children have the best start in life and are prepared for school. It requires that children be assessed against the EYFS profile in the summer term of the academic year in which they turn 5. Definition of a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). The EYFS profile (the approach to assessing children for GLD) is intended to provide an accurate representation of each child's development at the end of the EYFS to support their transition into year 1. Children are defined as having a good level of development if they are at the expected level for the 12 early learning goals within the 5 areas of learning relating to: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; physical development; literacy; and mathematics. 				

Appendix 1

3. Phonics (final)

Year 1 Phonics	2022	2023	2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	72.3%	76.3%	78.3%	Upward
National	75.5%	78.9%	80.2%	Upward
LA ranking	127	123	117	Upward
Stat neighbour (SN) average and ranking	72.5% 4th	76.4% 4th	77.9% Joint 4th	above SN average, maintained position

Commentary

- Coventry has improved in 2024 and at a faster rate than national (2.0% compared to 1.3%).
- The phonics screening check assesses children on how well they can decode certain words. Decoding means sounding out an unfamiliar written word. To do this, children will need to be able to recognise letters and the sounds that they represent. This is an important part of achieving reading fluency.
- The Year 1 phonics screening check is a statutory assessment for all children in Year 1 (typically aged 6). Pupils are judged to have met the expected phonics standard if they exceed the nationally published performance level.

4. Key Stage 2 (final)

Key Stage 2 ATTAINMENT Expected standard (subject level)	2022			2023			2024			Trend since 2023
	Reading	Writing	Maths	Reading	Writing	Maths	Reading	Writing	Maths	
Coventry	71	65	68	68	69	71	70	69	71	upward in reading; no change in writing and maths
National	75	70	72	73	72	73	75	72	74	upward in reading and maths; no change in writing
LA ranking	132	136	121	145	122	109	144	130	109	rankings have increased/decreased in line with city trends
Stat neighbour (SN) average and ranking	72 Joint 6th	66 Joint 6th	69 Joint 6th	69 Joint 8th	68 Joint 6th	70 Joint 5th	71 Joint 7th	69 7 th	71 Joint 5 th	rankings have increased/decreased in line with city trends

Commentary

- Both Reading (+2%) and Writing (no change) matched the national trends but no change in Maths was set context of a national increase (+1%).
- Pupils' achievements in Reading and Mathematics at the end of KS2 are from statutory tests. KS2 Writing is based on teacher assessment.

Appendix 1

Key Stage 2 ATTAINMENT Expected standard Reading, writing and mathematics (combined)	2022	2023	2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	53.6%	55.6%	56.7%	upward
National	58.7%	59.6%	61.3%	upward
LA ranking	134	124	123	upward
Stat neighbour (SN) average and ranking	56% 8th	56.4% Joint 6th	58.0% Joint 6th	below SN average and maintained position
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry has improved in 2024 by 1.1% compared to a 1.7% improvement in the national rate and a 1.6% improvement in the statistical neighbour average. Pupils' achievements in reading and mathematics at the end of KS2 are from statutory tests. KS2 writing is based on teacher assessment. 				

5. Key Stage 4 (provisional)

Key Stage 4 ATTAINMENT Attainment 8 point score	2022	2023	2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	46.2	43.7	44.3	upward
National	48.9	46.4	46.1	downward
LA ranking	118	120	97	upward
Stat neighbour (SN) average	46.0 Joint 5th	43.5 6th	43.2 4th	above SN average and moved up 2 places
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry saw a 0.6% increase compared to a national decrease of 0.3% and has extended its position above statistical neighbour average to 1.1%. Attainment 8 measures pupils' average attainment across 8 qualifications. 				

Appendix 1

Key Stage 4 PROGRESS Progress 8	2022	2023	2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	-0.04	-0.05	+0.01	upward
National	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03	no change
LA ranking	72	76	58	upward
Stat neighbour (SN) average	-0.12 3rd	-0.14 3rd	-0.15 3rd	above SN average and maintained position

Commentary

- Coventry increased by 0.06 and is now positive and above the national average for the first time.
- Progress 8 was introduced in 2016 as the headline indicator of school performance. It aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It shows how pupils have improved during secondary school, compared to other pupils who were at the same level when they finished primary school.
- Progress 8 focuses on the same 8 qualifications as Attainment 8.

Key Stage 4 ATTAINMENT Grade 5 or above in English and maths ('strong' pass')	2022	2023	2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	46.6	40.8	43.4	upward
National	49.8	45.5	46.2	upward
LA ranking	95	109	93	upward
Stat neighbour (SN) average	45.0 5th	39.9 5 th	41.1 5th	above SN average and maintained position

Commentary

- Coventry has improved in 2024 and at a faster rate than national (2.6% compared to 0.7%).
- The way GCSEs are graded changed in 2017. They're graded using 9 to 1, rather than A* to G. Grade 9 is the highest grade.
- Grade 5 at GCSE is described as a 'Strong Pass' and compares with the former grading system as between a low B and a high C grade.
- This measure shows the proportion of pupils who achieved a Grade 5 or above in both GCSE English and maths.

Appendix 1

Key Stage 4 ATTAINMENT Grade 4 or above in English and maths ('standard' pass)	2022	2023	2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	65.1	61.0	63.9	upward
National	69.0	65.4	65.4	no change
LA ranking	116	118	86	upward
Stat neighbour (SN) average	64.3 6th	59.7 6th	60.6 4th	above SN average and moved up 2 places
Commentary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry has improved in 2024 by 2.9% compared to no change in the national rate. Grade 4 at GCSE is described as a 'Standard Pass' and compared with the former grading system is equivalent to a grade C. This measure shows the proportion of pupils who achieved a Grade 4 or above in both GCSE English and maths. 				

Key Stage 4 PUPIL DESTINATIONS	2020/21 cohort in 2022	2021/22 cohort in 2023	2022/23 cohort in 2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	91.7	92.0	91.0	downward
National	93.8	93.6	92.8	downward
LA Ranking	131	126	127	similar
Stat neighbour (SN) average	92.7 Joint 8th	92.0 Joint 5th	91.3 Joint 5th	Below SN average and maintained position
Commentary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry decreased by 1% compared with a national decrease of 0.8%. The city maintained its position with its statistical neighbours Destination measures provide information on the success of schools and colleges in helping young people continue in education, apprenticeships or employment. KS4 destination measures follow pupils at the end of key stage 4 study (GCSE and equivalent qualifications) and reports their destinations in the following academic year. They show the percentage of pupils going to an education, apprenticeship or employment destination. To be counted in a destination, young people have to have sustained participation for a 6-month period in the destination year. 				

Appendix 1

6. 16-18 (provisional)

16-18 ATTAINMENT Average A level result	2022	2023	2024	Trend since 2023
Coventry	Grade B- 35.53	Grade C 31.09	Grade C+ 32.11	upward
National	Grade B- 37.86	Grade C+ 34.16	Grade C+ 34.34	upward
LA Rank	118	129	113	upward
Stat neighbour (SN) average	Grade B- 35.87 Joint 9th	Grade C 32.06 10th	Grade C+ 32.70 9th	upward and moved up 1 place
<p>Commentary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry increased by 1.02 points compared to a smaller increase nationally of 0.18 points. Coventry is below national and the statistical neighbour average. The attainment measure shows the average point score per entry, expressed as a grade and average points. 				

Appendix 1

7. Attendance 2022 – 2024 (part)

Primary School Overall Attendance	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024 Autumn and Spring terms	Trend since 2022/2023
Coventry	93.8%	93.7%	94.4%	upward
National	93.7%	94.1%	94.6%	upward
LA ranking	76	120	Not available	awaiting update
Stat neighbour (SN) average	93.6% 4th	94.0% Joint 4th	Not available	awaiting update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Summer term data for 2023/2024 academic year is not yet published First 2 terms of 2023/2024 show an improving position. 				

Secondary School Overall Attendance	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024 Autumn and Spring terms	Trend since 2022/23
Coventry	90.8%	90.6%	91.6%	upward
National	91.0%	91.0%	91.5%	upward
LA ranking	82	105	Not available	awaiting update
Stat neighbour (SN) average	90.8% 5th	90.6% 6th	Not available	awaiting update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Summer term data for 2023/2024 academic year is not yet published. First 2 terms of 2023/2024 show an improving position. 				

Special School Overall Attendance	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024 Autumn and Spring terms	Trend since 2022/23
Coventry	86.6%	86.3%	87.6%	upward
National	86.8%	87.0%	87.0%	maintained
LA ranking	92	98	Not available	awaiting update
Stat neighbour (SN) average	86.6% 8th	86.8% Joint 8th	Not available	awaiting update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Summer term data for 2023/24 academic year is not yet published. First 2 terms of 2023/2024 show an improving position. 				

Appendix 1

8. Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions 2021 – 2023

Primary School Suspension Rate	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	Trend since 2021/2022
Coventry	1.3%	1.8%	2.2%	upward
National	1.0%	1.4%	1.8%	upward
LA ranking	126	120	114	position change 6 places
Stat neighbour (SN) average	1.1% 10th	1.7 7 th	1.9% 8th	higher than SN average, moved down 1 place
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry's primary suspension rate increased by 0.4% in line with the national rate increase. Coventry's rate is higher than national and the SN average. Suspension rate: (Number of suspensions recorded across the whole academic year / Number of sole and dual main registered pupils on roll as at January census data) X 100 				

Secondary School Suspension Rate	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	Trend since 2021/2022
Coventry	7.9%	14.7%	17.5%	upward
National	8.5%	14.0%	18.9%	upward
LA ranking	78	98	78	position change 20 places
Stat neighbour (SN) average	9.8% 4 th	17.2% 4 th	23.5% 3rd	below SN average, moved up 1 place
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry secondary school suspension rate increased by 2.8% and at a slower rate than national at 4.9%. Coventry's rate is lower than national and the SN average. 				

Special School Suspension Rate	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	Trend since 2021/2022
Coventry	13.0%	22.9%	33.2%	upward
National	7.3%	9.6%	11.0%	upward
LA ranking	na	135	146	position change 11 places
Stat neighbour (SN) average	7.1%	10.1% 10th	13.8% 11th	above SN average, moved down by 1 place
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry special school suspension rate increased by 10.3% and at a faster rate than national at 1.4%. Coventry's rate is higher than national and the SN average. 				

Appendix 1

Primary School Permanent Exclusions Rate	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	Trend since 2021/2022
Coventry	0.00%	0.05%	0.02%	downward
National	0.01%	0.02%	0.03%	upward
LA ranking	1	141	85	position change 56 places
Stat neighbour (SN) average	0.01% Joint 1st	0.02% 11th	0.02% Joint 2nd	matches SN average and moved up 9 places
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry primary permanent exclusion rate decreased by 0.03% and is below national which increased by 0.01%. The city is equal to the SN average. Permanent exclusion rate: (Number of permanent exclusions recorded across the whole academic year / Number of sole and dual main registered pupils on roll as at January census data) X 100 				

Secondary School Permanent Exclusions Rate	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	Trend since 2021/2022
Coventry	0.07%	0.14%	0.26%	upward
National	0.10%	0.16%	0.22%	upward
LA ranking	55	69	94	position change 25 places
Stat neighbour (SN) average	0.10% 6th	0.16% 5th	0.23% 8 th	above SN average and moved down 3 places
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry secondary permanent exclusion rate has increased by 0.12% and at a faster rate than the national increase of 0.06%. The city is above the SN average. 				









Special School Permanent Exclusions Rate	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	Trend since 2021/2022
Coventry	0.18%	0.09%	0.66%	upward
National	0.01%	0.06%	0.08%	upward
LA ranking	na	na	148	
Stat neighbour (SN) average	0.01% na	0.06% 8th	0.10% 10th	above SN average, and moved down 2 places
Commentary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry special school permanent exclusion rate has increased by 0.57% and at a faster rate than the national increase of 0.02%. The city is above the SN average. 				

Appendix 1

9. Performance KS2 and KS4: difference between males and females in 2023 and 2024

Key Stage and Performance Measure	Year	Males (national)	Female (national)	Difference (national)
Primary Key Stage 2 % Reading, Writing & Maths combined (RWM)	2023	52.2 (56.3)	59.2 (63.0)	-7.0 (-6.7)
	2024	53.3 (57.1)	60.4 (64.3)	-7.1 (-7.2)
	% pt change	+1.1 (+0.8)	+1.2 (+1.3)	-0.1 (-0.5)
Secondary Key Stage 4 Attainment 8	2023	41.1 (44.0)	46.5 (48.6)	-5.4 (-4.6)
	2024	41.2 (44.0)	47.4 (48.4)	-6.2 (-4.4)
	% pt change	+0.1 (-0.7)	-0.3 (-0.5)	-0.8 (+0.2)
<p>Commentary</p> <p>In Coventry the “gender” gap was similar to national at KS2 but at KS4 it widened with female attainment increasing as male attainment was almost static.</p> <p>This local trend was mirrored nationally at KS2; however nationally the small decrease in female attainment and static male attainment meant the gender slightly narrowed</p> <p>The net effect is the Coventry differences are now similar to the national pattern at KS2;</p> <p>KS2 (City -7.1 v Nat -7.2)</p> <p>but at KS4 the increase in female attainment saw greater gender differences locally</p> <p>KS4 (City -6.2 v Nat -4.4).</p>				

10. Performance of vulnerable groups 2022 – 2024

Phase	Vulnerable group [cohort size for each year]	2022 (national)	2023 (national)	2024 (national)	2023 to 2024	Gap with national
Early Years Good Level of Development (GLD)	Disadvantaged pupils [587;621;631]	46.5% (49.4%)	50.1% (52.0%)	49.8% (51.9%)		Widened by 0.2
	Education, Health and Care Plan [51;100;127]	3.9 (3.7%)	0% (3.8%)	0% (3.9%)		Widened by 0.1
	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support [393;476;571]	24.7% (23.0%)	21.8% (24.5%)	21.5% (25.0%)		Widened by 0.8
	Children looked after (CLA) [27;14]	59% (40%)	42.9% (40%)	36.4% (39%)		Was above but now below by 2.6
Year 1 Phonics	Disadvantaged pupils (1026;967;941)	63.5% (62.5%)	65.6% (66.8%)	68.2% (68.3%)		Narrowed by 1.1
	Education, Health and Care Plan (127;131;165)	15.7% (18.8%)	6.9% (19.8%)	9.1% (20.2%)		Narrowed by 1.8
	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support (581;601;640)	45.8% (43.5%)	53.4% (48.5%)	54.7% (51.6%)		Widened by 1.8
	Children looked after (CLA) [9;23;13]	44% (60%)	73.9% (61%)	53.8% (60%)		Was above but now below by 6.1

Appendix 1

Phase	Vulnerable group [cohort size for each year]	2022 (national)	2023 (national)	2024 (national)	2023 to 2024	Gap with national
Primary Key Stage 2 Reading, Writing & Maths combined (RWM)	Disadvantaged (na ;1558;1561)	40.3% (42.8%)	42.2% (44.3%)	43.8% (45.5%)	↑	Narrowed by 0.2
	Education, Health and Care Plan [na;184; 216]	2.3% (7.1%)	1.6% (8.5%)	6.5% (8.8%)	↑	Narrowed by 4.5
	Special Educational Needs Support [na;909;920]	18.2% (21.1%)	22.0% (23.6%)	22.8% (25.7%)	↑	Widened by 1.3
	Children looked after (CLA) [34;27;33]	41.4% (32%)	22.2% (36%)	18.2% (34%)	↓	Widened by 2.0

Appendix 1

Phase	Vulnerable group [cohort size for each year]	2023 (national)	2024 (national)	2023 to 2024	Gap with national
Secondary Key Stage 4 Attainment 8	Disadvantaged [1124;1237;1319]	34.7 (35.1)	35.9 (34.6)	↑	Narrowed by 1.9 and now above national
	Education, Health and Care Plan [135;158;163]	9.8 (14.0)	9.4 (14.2)	↓	Widened by 0.6
	Special Educational Needs [436;562;730]	33.0 (33.3)	34.7 (33.1)	↑	Narrowed by 1.9 and now above national
	Children looked after [51;49]	26.9 (18.7)	16.5 (na)	↓	Downward (national not available)

Phase	Vulnerable group [cohort size for each year]	2023 (national)	2024 (national)	2023 to 2024	Gap with national
Secondary Key Stage 4 Progress 8	Disadvantaged (1080;1137;1189)	-0.46 (-0.57)	-0.37 (-0.57)	↑	Narrowed by 0.9
	Education, Health and Care Plan (133;127;142)	-1.17 (-1.12)	-1.27 (-1.13)	↓	Widened by 0.6
	Special Educational Needs Support (424;545;701)	-0.39 (-0.45)	-0.33 (-0.45)	↑	No gap – remains above national
	Children looked after (CLA) [69;72]	-1.24 (-1.39)	-1.25 (na)	↔	little change and was above national in 2023

Sources: NEXUS based on NPD and DfE LAIT as of January 2025

Appendix 1

References and sources

Much of the data contained in the tables above is currently accessible to the public via the DfE's Government Data website:

[Statistics at DfE - Department for Education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-at-dfe)

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

[Statistics: early years foundation stage profile - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-early-years-foundation-stage-profile)

Published: 28 November 2024

Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments

[Statistics: key stage 1 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-key-stage-1)

Published: 10 October 2024

Key Stage 2 (National curriculum assessments)

[Statistics: key stage 2 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-key-stage-2)

Published: 12 December 2024

Key Stage 4 (GCSEs and equivalent results)

[Statistics: GCSEs \(key stage 4\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-gcse-key-stage-4)

Published: 05 December 2024

16-19 attainment (A levels and other 16-18 results)

[Statistics: 16 to 19 attainment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-16-to-19-attainment)

Published: 28 November 2024

[Accountability Measures: Technical Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/accountability-measures-technical-guidance)

Published: 13 Jan 2025

Local authority interactive tool (LAIT)

[Local authority interactive tool \(LAIT\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait)

A tool for comparing data about children and young people across all local authorities in England

Absence 2019-2024

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england>

Appendix 2

Number of Local Authorities = 153

Statistical Neighbours – LAIT, December 2024

Statistical neighbour models provide one method for benchmarking progress. For each local authority (LA), these models designate a number of other LAs deemed to have similar characteristics. These designated LAs are known as statistical neighbours.

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) was commissioned in 2007 by the Department to identify and group similar LAs in terms of the socio-economic characteristics, each LA was assigned 10 such neighbours. These are Coventry's:

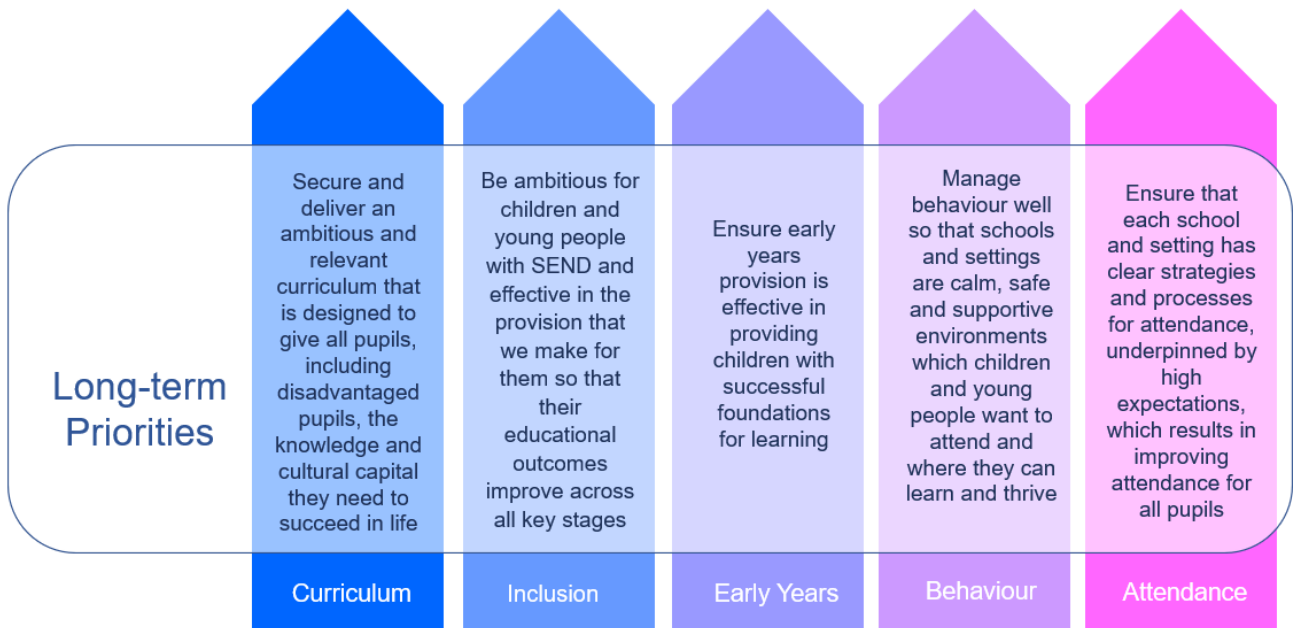
Portsmouth
Tameside
Southampton
Sheffield
Derby
Bolton
Medway
Walsall
Peterborough
Leeds

See in the [LAIT Tool guide](#) to see the socio-economic characteristics used.

Advanced Level Performance Points Tables

A Level	Tech Level
A* 60	Distinction 50
A 50	Merit 35
B 40	Pass 15
C 30	
D 20	
E 10	

Appendix 3 Coventry Education Improvement Priorities 2024-25



Action 2024 to 2025 – People at the heart



Enabling our people to support all pupils to flourish, including those with the greatest needs.
 - We will focus on four interlinked areas:

Professional Development
Recruitment
Retention
Wellbeing



Appendix 4 Glossary of key terminology

Attainment 8	Attainment 8 is a way of measuring how well pupils do in key stage 4, which they usually finish when they are 16 years old. Each grade from 8 subject areas (with English and Maths counted twice) a pupil gets is assigned a point score from 9 (the highest) to 1 (the lowest). Each pupil's Attainment 8 score is calculated by adding up the points for their 8 subjects.
Best Start for Life Programme	The Best Start for Life programme focusses on 1001 days of a child's life, from conception to their second birthday. In Coventry, this programme involves collaboration of a wide range of partners working together (more information available here).
CLA (Children Looked After)	This refers to children who have been taken into the care of the Local Authority.
Coventry Education Partnership	All Coventry schools working in partnership with the Local Authority.
Disadvantaged	Students are classes a disadvantaged if either or both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they were eligible for free school meals at any time during the last six years (Ever 6 FSM or FSM eligible). • they are looked after (in the care of the local authority for a day or more or who have been adopted from care).
EHCp (Education, Health and Care plans)	An Education, Health and Care plan is a legal personalised document. It sets out the education, health and social care needs of a child or young person: aged 0 to 25 years old with special educational needs or disabilities.
Exclusions and Suspensions	An exclusion is where a child is permanently taken off a school roll. A suspension is where a child is given a fixed period of time when they must not attend school.
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage – the framework which covers children's education from birth to 5 years of age. This includes children's reception year in school.
FSM	FSM stands for "Free School Meals" and denotes children who are eligible for Free School Meals (i.e. where parents/carers have made this application).
GLD (Good Level of Development)	The age-related expectation for the children by the end of their reception year (the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage). Attaining GLD means attaining the expected standard across a range of key areas.
Key Stages	Key Stage 1 (KS1) consists of Year 1 and Year 2 (5 to 7 year olds) Key Stage 2 (KS2) consists of Year 3 to Year 6 (7 to 11 year olds) Key Stage 3 (KS3) consists of Year 7 to Year 9 (11 to 14 year olds) Key Stage 4 (KS4) consists of Year 10 and Year 11 (14 to 16 year olds) Key Stage 5 (KS5) consists of Year 12 and Year 13 (16 to 18 year olds) – this is covered within 16-19 attainment within the report.

NEET	(Young people) “not in education, employment or training”.
Phonics	Synthetic phonics is the standard approach used nationally for teaching early reading. Children’s understanding of phonics is checked with a standard assessment at the end of Year 1.
Progress 8	Progress 8 aims to capture the progress that pupils in a school make from the end of primary school to the end of KS4. It is a type of value-added measure, which means that pupils’ results are compared to other pupils nationally with similar prior attainment. Every increase in grade a pupil achieves in their Attainment 8 subjects counts towards a school’s Progress 8 score.
SEN (Special Educational Needs) Support	SEN Support is a designation for children and young people who are on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Register at their school. This level of need is significant but typically lower than that for children and young people with Education, Health and Care plans.
STA (Standards and Testing Agency)	The STA are an executive agency, sponsored by the Department for Education, who develop and deliver assessment for children between reception and the end of Key Stage 2.
Statistical neighbours	Local Authorities with similar demographics who are directly comparable in terms of performance (see Appendix 2 for the list of our eleven statistical neighbours).

This page is intentionally left blank



Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

13 February 2025

Subject: Children's Services Resources and Efficiency Peer Challenge

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the Local Government Association Children's Services Resources and Efficiency Peer Challenge outcome and next steps.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:
- 1) To note the outcome and current progress
 - 2) Identify any recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 Corporate and political leaders in Coventry are passionate and committed to achieving the best for children. Over the past decade, Children's Services have been focused on improvement and there has been a political and corporate commitment to making the necessary resources and funding available to support the Children's Services journey.
- 3.2 In August 2022, Children's Services were rated as a 'Good' service by Ofsted. The Youth Justice Service were graded 'Outstanding' after an Inspection by HMI Probation in February 2023. Followed by a Joint Targeted Area Inspection focusing on Serious Youth Violence receiving a positive report in May 2024. The service has five Children's Homes, all rated as 'Good' by Ofsted in the last twelve months and ambitious residential homes expansion programme to increase the number of Children's Homes further, with a further two due to open this year.
- 3.3 Building on the significant improvements within Children's Services, the integration of Children and Education on 1st April 2024 provided an opportunity and capacity to explore new ways of working. The integration has resulted in changes to the roles and responsibilities of the senior leadership team and the external appointment of a new Director of Children and Education Services appointed in August 2024.
- 3.4 The financial position remains a challenge for all local authorities, the One Coventry Transformation Plan sets out how the Council will respond to the challenges and embrace new approaches and technology. The council currently faces a budget gap and needs to deliver savings and efficiencies.
- 3.5 A Local Government Association Peer Challenge team were invited by the Council to review how Children's Services provide services to children and young people to identify potential opportunities to control and reduce costs and ensure efficiencies. Peer Challenges are improvement focused and are not an inspection.

3.6 The challenge is similar to one that the Council underwent in January 2024 and does not result in any grade. The Council was given positive feedback about the Corporate Peer Challenge and many great comments about the Councils work, highlighting some areas for improvement on how the council can work in the future. The Children's Services Resources and Efficiency Peer challenge has provided a further opportunity to build on the excellent work and identify areas for improvement.

4 Children's Services Resources and Efficiency Peer Challenge

4.1 Children's Services Resources and Efficiency Peer Challenge was held on 15-17 October 2024. Peer Challenges are delivered by experienced officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflects the requirements and focus of the Peer Challenge. The Team consisted of five peers:

- Lead Peer – a former Chief Executive
- Social Care Peer – Director of Children and Families
- Finance Peer – Director of Resources (S151)
- Commissioning peer – Head of Commissioning
- Peer Challenge Manager – LGA

4.2 The Peer team were asked to focus on four key areas as agreed with the Council.

- Cost of placements
- Structure, capacity and opportunities through integration.
- Understanding and analysing costs, and incorporating best practice
- Use of organisational capacity, resources, and support

4.3 The Peer team used their experience and knowledge of Children's Services to review and reflect on the information presented. The team spent three days on site meeting with the Leader, Cabinet Members, Corporate Leads: Senior Managers and a range of council staff and partners. This equated to twenty-eight meetings with over seventy people.

5 Findings/ Recommendations

5.1 The Peer Challenge team provided a report in December 2024 highlighting the positive feedback and areas for development. The team were impressed with public and private sector partnership work which has contributed to attracting sponsorship and avoiding costs, whilst contributing to bringing more organisations together around Child Friendly Cov.

5.2 The service has proactively developed its in house residential provision with five homes in operation and two new homes to open this year. The planned approach of seeking to utilise available in-house residential provision for the hardest to place children with the most complex needs has the potential to significantly reduce placement spend.

5.3 The reunification project has supported thirty-four children to return home over the past two years, with improved outcomes for children and considerable cost avoidance savings.

5.4 The Children's Services commissioning function is well integrated with the operational service, the peer team saw evidence of effective and robust joint working between the sufficiency and children in care leadership leading to good outcomes for children.

- 5.5 The outcomes led quality assurance of external residential providers to ensure that Coventry children are having their needs met to high quality provision is a real strength.
- 5.6 The council's One Coventry approach is evident across the system, partners are committed and passionate about working together to deliver the best for the "Cov child" and there is evidence of organisations working effectively together: including working together to secure external funding, and co-ordinated partnership responses to serious youth violence, recognised as a strength in the recent Joint Target Area Inspection.
- 5.7 There are mature and effective relationships across the Education partnership.
- 5.8 The peer team have identified six high level key recommendations for the Council to consider supporting Coventry to navigate through the financial challenges faced, whilst keeping children's needs central:
- ***Support a strengthened culture between children's and corporate services.***
 - ***Consider an organisational review of children and education services to ensure a joined-up approach and identification of financial efficiencies.***
 - ***Have a member endorsed transformation plan approved annually at the time of the MTFS approval.***
 - ***Decision making on unplanned entrants to care should be made at strategic lead level to promote accountability and ensure consistency of thresholds.***
 - ***Consider opportunities to improve budget oversight.***
 - ***Consider social work practice opportunities.***

6 Next Steps

- 6.1 Children and Education Services are developing a plan of actions to take forward in response to the Resources and Efficiency Peer Challenge. Work is progressing and will be developed further with the Council and its partners to embrace new ways of working and support more targeted early help work to meet needs at the earliest point in the system.
- 6.2 The plan, once finalised, will be monitored monthly by the Children and Education Services Leadership team in conjunction with council leads to deliver further improvements and efficiencies to support the funding gap whilst ensuring that children and young people remain at the heart of everything the Council do.

Authors:

Sukriti Sen, Director for Children and Education Services

Sonia Watson, Children and Education Services Improvement Manager

Neil Macdonald, Strategic Lead, Safeguarding, Practice and Workforce

Contact details: Sukriti.sen@coventry.gov.uk Tel: 02476 978470
neil.macdonald@coventry.gov.uk [Tel:\(024\) 76976703](tel:02476976703)
sonia.watson@coventry.gov.uk Tel: (024) 76971402

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2024-25

Last updated 4th February 2025

Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

11th July 24
Early Years Strategy
12th September 24 - cancelled
17th October 24
Family Valued and Reunification Project Child-friendly Cov
28th November 24
Cost of Children's Placements (Update Report) HAF Update Social Worker Recruitment and Retention
16th January 25
Safeguarding Board Annual Report Attendance – changes to statutory guidance
13th February 25
School Performance Children's LGA Peer Challenge
13th March 25 PM (moved from 27th March 25)
SEND Strategy Sufficiency – Early Years, Mainstream and SEND Section 19 Policy
17th April 2025
Family Health and Lifestyles Service – health inequalities Support for Care Leavers
Items for 2024-25
Youth Provision in Coventry Health and Wellbeing in Schools Early Help
Items for 2025-26
Early Years Strategy
Items taken for information
Adoption Service Annual Reports – November Fostering Annual Report - November

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2024-25

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
11th July 24	Early Years Strategy	Following a report on the Early Years Strategy, Members requested a further item including progress on and more detail on the Saplings Programme, as well as strategies to support reading in the early years. To invite Chair of SB5	Rachael Sugars Cllr Sandhu
12th September 24 - cancelled			
17th October 24	Family Valued and Reunification Project	A progress and impact report	Cllr Seaman Sukriti Sen
	Child-friendly Cov	A progress and impact report on the Child Friendly Coventry project	Cllr Seaman Sukriti Sen
28th November 24	Cost of Children's Placements (Update Report)	At their meeting on 23 rd November 2023, Member requested an update item to report on progress in addressing the cost of placements	Sukriti Sen Cllr Seaman
	HAF Update	To consider progress on delivering the HAF programme	Adrian Coles Cllr Sandhu
	Social Worker Recruitment and Retention	A progress update following the previous item in November 2024 – to consider how the use of agency staff has been reduced. To also include work being done to reduce sickness and support the well-being of staff.	Sukriti Sen Cllr Seaman
16th January 25	Safeguarding Board Annual Report		
	Attendance – changes to statutory guidance		
13th February 25	School Performance		
	Children's LGA Peer Challenge	To consider the recommendations from the LGA Peer Challenge on Children's Services	Cllr Seaman Sukriti Sen
13th March 25 PM (moved from 27th March 25)	SEND Strategy	Following on from an item on 18 th April 2024 the Board requested an update to be circulated to the Board	Cllr Sandhu Jeannette Essex

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2024-25

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Sufficiency – Early Years, Mainstream and SEND	To tie in with the Cabinet Report due in February. To provide previous report as background from 18/4/24	Rachael Sugars Cllr Sandhu
	Section 19 Policy	How the Council will support the education of pupils out of school due to medical reasons	Rachael Sugars Cllr Sandhu
17th April 2025	Family Health and Lifestyles Service – health inequalities	To looking in more detail at how the service is tackling health inequalities and targeting services at those in need on a localised basis. School nurse provision.	Bill McCann, Angela Baker Cllr Caan
	Support for Care Leavers	Following a question at SB4 an item was identified to look in more detail at the support offered to care leavers 18-25, including accommodation and the House Project	Cllr Seaman Sukriti Sen Matt Clayton
Items for 2024-25			
	Youth Provision in Coventry	How and where we work with outside partners (and specifically the third sector) to deliver it	Sukriti Sen Cllr Seaman
	Health and Wellbeing in Schools	To look at what is being done to promote health and well-being in schools and universities – including the school nursing service	
	Early Help	To include workforce plans and placements for apprenticeships etc	Sukriti Sen Cllr Seaman
Items for 2025-26	Early Years Strategy	To come in 2025 and to include progress on actions requested on 17/7/24 re: oral and dental health	R Sugars Cllr Sandhu
Items taken for information	Adoption Service Annual Reports – November	Annual report – including information about the diversity of the adoption panel and adopters as well as support to birth mothers after their children have been adopted	Cllr Seaman
	Fostering Annual Report - November	For Members to consider whether a full item is required	Cllr Seaman

Work Programme Decision Flow Chart

