

Briefing note

To:	Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Board
Date:	01 February 2024
Subject:	Coventry Education Performance 2023

1 Purpose of the Note

1.1 To update members on Coventry’s 2023 performance on the following:

- Ofsted profile
- Trends in pupil numbers
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Phonics and Key Stage 1
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 4 (provisional)
- Age 16-19 attainment
- Post-16 participation in education, employment and training
- 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 for the data.

1.3 This report includes published data available through government sources. For operational and planning purposes the Local Authority (LA) also use NCER Nexus and FFT Aspire, which are used by most of the Local Authorities for data analysis. This enables further in-depth analysis but is not quoted in this report as regional and national comparisons may not represent the total cohort.

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 January.
- 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.
- 3.2 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. This will continue to be important given the ongoing impacts of the pandemic which we know affected individual schools/colleges and pupils differently.
- 3.3 KS4 data and 16-18 performance measures based on qualification outcomes cannot be compared between 2021/22 and 2022/23. This is because for the majority of qualifications that count in performance measures, a different grading approach was used in 2021/22, to take account of the impact of the pandemic. Within the report the 2022/23 data has therefore been compared to 2019. 2022/23 KS4 data can be used to make cautious comparisons between schools/colleges, trusts, local authority and national averages from the same year.
- 3.4 Unlike KS4 and 16-18 performance measures, users of KS2 data can make comparisons with KS2 data from 2021/22 as the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) has maintained a consistent standard since 2016.
- 3.5 KS1 and EYFS data follows the same principles as for KS2 in that cautious comparisons can be made with previous years and between schools, trusts, local authority and national averages from the same year.
- 3.6 Last year, Ofsted set out that 2022 outcomes would only be used with caution, that 2021/22 data would only be used to inform discussion with the schools about pupil outcomes, and that no school would be marked down on the basis of 2021/22 data alone. That continues to be the case for 2021/22 data, but 2022/23 performance data will be used to inform inspection in the normal way.

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 their culture or background. Statutorily it is the responsibility of school leaders to secure improvement in their school, but as part of our working partnership with all schools and settings, the LA acts as champions of educational excellence, forging strong professional relationships and networks.

- 4.2 The LA, in partnership with the primary school networks and secondary collaboratives (including special schools), supports all schools in the city on their improvement journey. Additional improvement, through school-to-school support is also provided to schools most in need to ensure they can maintain/achieve an Ofsted outcome of Good or better. The Coventry Education Improvement priorities for the 2023/24 academic year are included at Appendix 3.
- 4.3 In line with our expectations, the overall trend for Ofsted inspection outcomes in the last 12 months has been mainly positive. However, the proportion of children attending a good or better school remains below national. It is worth noting that many inspections are imminent with positive outcomes anticipated which will improve Coventry's current Ofsted profile.
- 4.4 It's important to note the trends in pupil numbers and the increase in certain groups, particularly over the last year.
- There has been a steady increase in **pupil population** over the last 5 years from 56,833 in 2019 to 60,135 in 2023 – making the number on roll 5.8% higher than it was in 2019
 - The number of children eligible for **free school meals** has increased from 18.3% in 2019 to 27.5% in 2023 – making a 9.2% point increase over 5 years.
 - There has been an increase of 5.9% in **non-white British** children from 2019 to 2023. The population of white British children had continued to decrease at a steady 1% point rate per year however this year the decrease was over 2% points as ethnic diversity accelerates.
 - **SEN support** has also increased by at least 0.6% per year since 2019, with a total of 1,610 (1.9%) more children on SEN support and 571 (0.8%) more children on an EHCP since 2019.
- 4.5 In the EYFS there has been an improvement in performance in Coventry in 2023 and at a faster rate than national. Outcomes remain below national, but we have seen improved performance when compared with statistical neighbours. Early years continues to be a citywide priority through the Early Years Strategy and the Best Start for Life programme.
- 4.6 In the Year 1 phonics screening check there has been an improvement in performance in Coventry in 2023 and at a faster rate than national. Outcomes remain below national, but we have maintained our statistical neighbour position.
- 4.7 In KS1 attainment, for each of reading, writing and maths, there has been an improvement in performance in Coventry in 2023 and at a faster rate than national. Outcomes remain below national, but we have improved performance when compared with statistical neighbours.
- 4.8 In KS2 attainment, for reading, writing and maths combined, there has been an improvement in performance in Coventry in 2023 and at a faster rate than national. Outcomes remain below national, but we have improved performance when compared with statistical neighbours. Individually our position improved for writing and maths but declined in reading. For all KS2 progress measures, rates declined from 2022 with reading showing the largest decline.

- 4.9 In KS4, the Attainment 8 measure for 2023 showed an improvement from 2019. During the same period, 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 2023 and at a faster rate than national (since 2019). Outcomes remain below national, but we have improved or maintained our performance when compared with statistical neighbours. The Progress 8 measure for 2023 showed an improvement from 2019. During the same period, national remained the same.
- 4.10 In KS5 attainment, the average A level grade has improved from 2019. However, the gap to national has widened. It is worth noting that there was an 11.7% increase in A Level entries in Coventry compared to 5.2% nationally. This corresponds to a 27.6% increase in the level 3 cohort in Coventry compared to 14.9% nationally.
- 4.11 For post-16 participation, the data is positive as shown by the number of pupils progressing to education, employment or training in the year after completing their 16 to 18 study. The number of young people 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) is at an all-time low and below (better than) national.
- 4.12 Compared to the 2018/19 academic year there has been a decrease in attendance in all phases. The decrease mirrors the national position and is largely attributed to the impact of the Covid pandemic. 2019/2020 data does not appear in the tables in the report due to the impact of the pandemic during that academic year.
- 4.13 Compared to the 2018/19 academic year the suspension rate in primary has decreased but is above national. In secondary, the suspension rate has increased and is now above national. In special, the suspension rate has increased and is now above national.
- 4.14 Compared to the 2018/19 academic year the exclusion rate in primary has increased slightly and is above national. In secondary the exclusion rate has stayed the same and is below national. In special the exclusion rate has decreased but remains above national. Schools have reported increased behavioural challenges since pupils returned to school following the covid pandemic. This can be seen in an increase in the national secondary rate. The data for 22/23 is not yet published, but early feedback suggests we will see an increase in levels of suspensions and exclusions, both locally and nationally.
- 4.15 In Coventry the "gender" gap narrowed at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 with male attainment increasing as female attainment slightly decreased. This local trend was mirrored nationally; however, the male increase was much less across the country. The net effect is the Coventry differences are now in line with the national pattern.
- 4.16 The performance of vulnerable groups is summarised below across EYFS, KS1, 2 and 4. 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, and 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 there was a closing of the gap.

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, but the gap is narrowing for a majority of these.

Children Looked After (CLA) in Coventry saw an improvement in achievement in half of measures – achievement is above national averages for most measures.

4.17 Overall, Coventry's performance is in line with or above its statistical neighbours for most measures at all key stages of education – these 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. It is important to note that as children and young people progress in education within Coventry their performance continually improves and by the time they reach the end of their school years they secure positive destinations, i.e. high levels of 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.

Appendices:

Appendix 1

1. Ofsted profile
2. Trends in Pupil Numbers
3. Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
4. Phonics and Key Stage 1 (final)
5. Key Stage 2 (final)
6. Key Stage 4 (provisional)
7. 16-18 Attainment (provisional)
8. Post 16 participation in education, employment and training
9. Overall Attendance Rates by Phase 2019 – 2023
10. Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions by phase 2019 – 2022
11. Performance KS2 and KS4: difference between males and females in 2022 and 2023
12. Performance of vulnerable groups
13. References and sources

Appendix 2

Information regarding comparative groups and A Level performance points

Appendix 3

Coventry Education Partnership – Priorities 2023/24

Appendix 4

Glossary of key terminology

Report Author

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