



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

Date: 26th February 2026

Subject: Coventry Education Performance 2025

1 Purpose of the Note

1.1 To update members on Coventry's 2025 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)
- Post-16 participation in education, employment or 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 Please refer to the glossary at Appendix 4 for an explanation of key terminology.

1.4 This report includes published data available through government sources. The DfE releases updated performance tables data each year, which means there may be slight difference in previous year figures. For operational and planning purposes the Local Authority (LA) also use NCER Nexus and FFT Aspire, which are used as management information by most Local Authorities. This enables further in-depth analysis but is not quoted as not published and 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 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. Coventry's statistical neighbours have been updated for 2025, therefore the statistical neighbour data in the appendix (including previous years) has been updated to reflect that.
- 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.
- 3.3 KS1 data has not been provided because this is no longer a statutory assessment point.

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), facilitate and support schools in the city on their improvement journey. The Coventry Education Improvement priorities for the 2025/26 academic year are included at Appendix 3.
- 4.3 From September 2024, Ofsted removed single headline (overall effectiveness) judgements for state funded schools as part of national inspection reform. From November 2025 **School Report Cards** replaced the former single grade system to provide parents with a broader, more comprehensive picture of school performance across multiple measures. As a result of these changes, previous measures—such as reporting the number of children in Coventry attending schools judged 'good' or better—can no longer be included, as overall effectiveness judgements are no longer issued under the current inspection framework.
- 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.
 - There has been a steady increase in **pupil population** over the last 5 years from 57,739 in 2021 to 61,603 in 2025 – making the number on roll 6.7% higher than it was in 2021
 - The number of children eligible for **free school meals** has increased from 23.0% in 2021 to 28.0% in 2025 – an 5% increase over 5 years.
 - There has been an increase of 7.2% in **non-white British** children from 2021 to 2025.
 - The proportion of the pupil population receiving **SEN support** has also increased by 2,601 (3.3%) since 2021, and 926 (increase of 1.3%) 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 just below statistical neighbour average in 2025. However, outcomes for 2025 **improved** from 2024 and at a **faster rate** than national.
- 4.6 There has been a **decrease** in performance in the Year 1 phonics screening check in Coventry in 2025. Outcomes remain below national and statistical neighbours.
- 4.7 In KS2 attainment for reading, writing and maths combined, there has been an **improvement** in performance in Coventry in 2025 and at a **faster rate** than national. Outcomes remain below national, but we have maintained performance when compared with statistical neighbours. The individual attainment for each of reading, writing and maths **improved**.
- 4.8 In KS4 the Attainment 8 measure for 2025 **decreased** whilst national slightly increased from the previous year. This was following a significant increase in 2024. There will be no Progress 8 measure for the next two years (2024-25 and 2025-26) due to the lack of KS2 national assessment data from the pandemic. In English and Maths combined, for both the standard pass (GCSE grade 4) and strong pass (GCSE grade 5), there has been a **decrease** in performance in Coventry in 2025. Coventry is below national but **above** statistical neighbours for most KS4 measures.
- 4.9 In KS5 attainment, the average A level grade has **improved** since 2024. Coventry is below national and just below statistical neighbours.
- 4.10 Coventry continues to demonstrate strong post 16 participation, with its September Guarantee performance remaining consistently above both national and regional for the third consecutive year and improving further in 2025. Despite a slight rise in the combined NEET and Not Known rate in 2025, Coventry still performs better than England and the West Midlands for the eighth year running, reflecting sustained success in supporting young people to remain in education, employment or training. Post-16 participation, with its September Guarantee performance, remains consistently above both national and regional for the third consecutive year.
- 4.11 The full year attendance data for the 2024/25 academic year is not yet published. Compared to the 2023/24 academic year there has been an **improvement** in attendance during the first two terms of the 2024/25 academic year in all phases.
- 4.12 The last published suspension data is for the 2023/24 academic year. Compared to the 2022/23 academic year the suspension rate in primary and secondary has **risen** whilst in special it has **decreased**. The rate for secondary is below national and statistical neighbour averages. The rate for primary and special is above national and statistical neighbour averages.
- 4.13 The last published exclusion data is for the 2023/24 academic year. Compared to the 2022/23 academic year the permanent exclusion rate in primary has **increased** and is above national and statistical neighbours. In secondary the permanent exclusion rate has **increased** and is above national but below statistical neighbours. In special the permanent exclusion rate has **decreased** and is now in line with national but above statistical neighbours. The local authority is continuing to work in partnership with schools to develop pathways that aim to reduce suspensions and permanent exclusions over time.
- 4.14 For further detail on attendance, suspensions and exclusions please refer to the **'Children Absent from Education'** Briefing presented at Scrutiny Board 2 on 27 November 2025.

- 4.15 In Coventry the 'gender' gap narrowed at both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 2 male attainment increased more than the increase in female attainment. At Key Stage 4 male attainment decreased but less than the decrease in female attainment.
- 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 the gap in attainment **widen** with national in most measures. However, Early Years and KS2 attainment **improved** from 2024 and the gap to national for Early Years **narrowed**.
- Children with an EHCP** in Coventry saw an **improvement** in attainment data in most measures. The cohort size is growing but remains small. Attainment remains below national averages but with the gap **narrowing** for most of the measures.
- SEND Support children** in Coventry saw an **improvement** in attainment for Early Years and the gap to national **narrowed**. Year 1 phonics attainment remained the same but the gap to national **widened**. KS2 attainment **increased** and the gap to national **narrowed**. KS4 attainment **decreased** and the gap to national **widened**.
- Children Looked After (CLA)** in Coventry saw an **increase** in attainment 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 some measures – 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.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Data

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. Post-16 participation in education, employment and training
8. Overall Attendance Rates by Phase 2023– 2025
9. Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions by phase 2022 – 2024
10. Performance KS2 and KS4: difference between males and females in 2024 and 2025
11. Performance of vulnerable groups
12. 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, Strategic Lead Education