

Cabinet February 2021	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: James Thomas, Corporate Director, Children and Culture	Classification: Unrestricted
Annual Schools Report 2020 - 2021	

Lead Member	Councillor Asma Begum, Cabinet Member for Education & Children's Services
Originating Officer(s)	Tracy Smith, Executive Director, Tower Hamlets Education Partnership, (THEP) and Steve Nyakatawa, Director of Education
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Forward Plan Notice Published	29 October 2021
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	Priority 1: People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities - through people accessing a range of education, training, and employment opportunities.

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of education within the context of the pandemic in 2020/21 academic year.

A summary of the results compared to pre-pandemic year's is provided and the national average attainment, (including those Children in Our Care – 'CIOC'). The report highlights the successes and challenges that are barriers to further progress, and any support interventions thought to prove particularly effective in meeting these challenges.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is recommended to note the 2021 Annual Education report, and to comment on the proposed strategies for support and challenge in the areas identified below:

1. To continue to develop school capacity in supporting children and young people with SEND
2. To develop consistently high-quality employment, education and training

pathways for young people of all abilities and interests and,

3. To work with any school that has significantly underachieved to improve standards through effective leadership, data analysis and improved teaching and learning strategies.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Report requested by Cabinet

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Not applicable – the report is on education assessment outcomes for each key stage

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1. BACKGROUND

- 3.2. Our schools continued to do a magnificent job last year as they navigated their way through the pandemic. Leaders and teachers have learned a huge amount – and quickly – during the first lockdown and by September 2020 were much better placed to teach pupils remotely when they needed to be.
- 3.3. While schools were open to all pupils during the autumn term, there was continued coming and going with staff, pupils, class and year group bubbles having to self-isolate at various points as the term progressed. This placed huge demands on teachers who, in some cases, taught lessons from home to their supervised class, because the teacher was self-isolating, or simultaneously taught their class while streaming their lesson online to pupils at home or taught a whole class self-isolating at home.
- 3.4. In secondary schools, the bubble system usually meant that teachers and pupils had to cope with reduced facilities, for example, with pupils restricted to one classroom meaning that they could not access science labs or Design and Technology workshops. Nevertheless, the experiences from the first lockdown meant that schools and teachers were much better prepared to deliver high quality blended teaching when necessary and it is to the huge credit of our headteachers and teachers that they were able to do so.
- 3.5. Schools also drew on their experiences and learning from the original lockdown in March 2020 when it was announced that schools would not reopen in January 2021. The work done to improve digital equity proved to be invaluable. Strategies such as the local authority's 'Every Child Online' campaign, THEP's 'Tackling Digital Poverty' campaign as well as THEP's work with Tech Inclusion UK was accompanied by school-based initiatives to

ensure that all children were able to access education at home. Schools continued to work together, in partnership with THEP, sharing practice and ideas about the most effective ways of teaching remotely.

- 3.6. Our primary schools worked together in subject and phase meetings to share ideas and findings from academic research on the most effective teaching approaches. In the absence of any primary school national assessments, primary school teachers worked together in cross-school groups, to build and share their understanding of pupils' attainment. THEP put a raft of support in place, including through 'Ready to Progress in English' training, training in maths recovery in Key Stages 1 and 2 and language and vocabulary development for the youngest children. Tower Hamlets Oracy Hub also worked in collaboration with THEP to promote strategies to maintain and improve children's oracy skills in the face of the extended periods of isolation many children faced.
- 3.7. Schools continued to be absolutely central to their communities during the second lockdown, just as they had in the late spring and summer of 2020. They continued to distribute food to their families and maintained close contact with pupils at home to check on their well-being.
- 3.8. Our secondary schools and their pupils had to deal with uncertainty over the 2021 exams. It was only in January 2021 that the government announced that exams would again be cancelled and not until late February that the detailed plans emerged. Our schools did a tremendous job in navigating the guidance from Ofqual and the DfE, supporting students' well-being, managing their anxieties in face of continued uncertainties and ensuring that transition arrangements to post-16 were in place. THEP brokered training from the Chartered College for Educational Assessment for school assessment leads to strengthen their confidence and expertise in making judgements about pupils' attainment at this critical time.

4. STATUTORY ASSESSMENTS IN 2021

- 4.1. In 2021 the government again made the decision to cancel all statutory assessments for summer 2021. The following did not take place:

- end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assessments (including tests and teacher assessment)
- phonics screening checks
- multiplication tables check
- science sampling tests at Key Stage 2.

In addition, schools were not required to complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) but they were encouraged to make 'reasonable endeavours' to do so. Data was not collected by the LA.

- 4.2. In the secondary phase, external GCSEs, AS levels, A levels and BTEC assessments were cancelled. Instead, pupils' results were based on Teacher

Assessed Grades (TAGs), which drew on school-based assessments of pupils' performance.

- 4.3. The government also announced that it would not publish any school or college level performance data based on tests, assessments, or exams for 2021. Neither would any performance information from 2020 and 2021 be used for the purposes of Ofsted inspections.

5. THE PARTNERSHIP CONTEXT

Agreed protocols with schools regarding collection and scrutiny of 2021 results

- 5.1. All the schools have agreed a data protocol which allows THEP to collect data and share it across all member schools. In light of the second year of disrupted Key Stage 4 and 5 assessment arrangements, THEP consulted with secondary headteachers about whether they wanted to submit their TAGs and share them. All schools agreed to share their 'on the day' headline results to see how Tower Hamlets schools fared compared to schools in the rest of England.
- 5.2. THEP continues to provide an individual 'School Profile' data pack for schools that request it.

6. CHANGES TO ASSESSMENTS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS 2021/22

- 6.1. In autumn term 2021, the DfE requested all schools to undertake a phonics screening check for pupils in Year 2 as they had not taken the test in the summer term of Year 1. Schools submitted this data to the LA and it is in the process of being transferred to the DfE, so currently no conclusions can be drawn.
- 6.2. Also, in autumn term 2021, a new Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) was introduced for all children in their first six weeks of Reception year. The purpose of the RBA is to form the starting point for cohort-level school progress measures. Data from the RBA will be compared to key stage 2 outcomes in 7 years' time to form the overall progress measure for a school. It will only be stored in the National Pupil Database (NPD). The data, including numerical scores, is not shared with external bodies, including schools, teachers, pupils or parents/carers.

7. PRIMARY TO SECONDARY TRANSFER IN TOWER HAMLETS IN 2021

- 7.1. In order to support secondary transfer, THEP asked all primary schools to submit teacher assessments for their Year 6 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This data was transferred to the appropriate secondary school

as part of the transfer of pupil records from primary to secondary school through Tower Hamlets Pupil Services in July 2021.

- 7.2. It was agreed that the data was only for the purpose of informing secondary schools about their Year 7 intake and was not to be shared beyond this.

8. OVERVIEW OF TOWER HAMLETS 2021 RESULTS

- 8.1. *Note that comparisons are made with 2019 data, the most recent year in which normal examination arrangements were in place. While secondary school headteachers agreed to share headline data with each other in 2020, in the face of uncertainty and variability in assessment in awarding grades in 2020, they also agreed that the data should not be shared more widely or used for accountability purposes. It should also be noted that, although Ofqual expectations for the award of Teacher Assessed Grades were more prescriptive in 2021 than 2020, there remained huge scope for variation in practice between schools nationally. Hence, extreme caution is advised in drawing any conclusions from available data).*
- 8.2. **GCSE:** Attainment at GCSE in 2021 was higher than in 2019. The rise in Tower Hamlets' GCSE results compared to 2019 was very similar to that seen in the rest of England. For example, overall attainment 8 scores (the average grade achieved by students in their best 8 subjects) rose by +4.1 points, in comparison to a national uplift of +4.3 points when compared to 2019.
- 8.3. This means that in Tower Hamlets, the average attainment 8 score was 53.9 in 2021 vs 49.8 in 2019. (National data, as available, indicates that the average attainment 8 score for England was 53.4 in 2021, compared to 48.0 in 2019). Whereas the EBacc entry rate fell slightly across England to 39% (down 3% on 2019), it rose by 10% to 58% in Tower Hamlets compared to 2019.
- 8.4. **A level:** Attainment at A level was also higher in 2021 than in 2019. Again, this was closely aligned with the national picture. The most striking rise both locally and nationally was in the proportion of students attaining the highest grades. For example, 36.9% of A level entries in Tower Hamlets resulted in grades A*/A compared to 15.7% in 2019, representing a 21.2% increase. Across England, the proportion of A*/A grades increased by 19.1% from 25.2% in 2019 to 44.3% in 2021.
- 8.5. **BTEC:** As per GCSE and A levels, attainment in Level 3 BTEC qualifications rose in 2021 compared to 2019 with a significant rise in the proportion of students attaining Distinction* and Distinctions compared to 2019. *(There is no nationally comparable data for 2021).*

- 8.6. Ofqual issued guidance to schools, parents and pupils about how to appeal their results. Very few appeals were submitted. We are still awaiting confirmation of final data in order to assess the impact of TAGs on disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEND.
- 8.7. **It is important to note that there is no attainment or progress data for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.**
- 8.8. **Arrangements for assessment in 2022**
- 8.9. Currently the DfE are planning for all primary statutory assessments to take place in 2022 including:
- the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
 - phonics screening checks for all Yr1 pupils and those pupils in Yr2 who did not achieve the expected standard in autumn term 2021
 - end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assessments (including tests and teacher assessment)
 - multiplication tables check.
- 8.10. Primary performance data will not be published for data collected in 2022, but results will be shared securely with primary schools, academy trusts, local authorities and Ofsted for school improvement purposes.
- 8.11. Similarly, in the secondary phase, the DfE is planning to run the full round of GCSE, A level and BTEC external assessments, though with some adaptations to content and the use of support materials. For example, in some subjects, such as English literature and history, exam papers will include more optional topics and content, while in mathematics, students will be given a formulae sheet to use in their GCSE exam. Full details are scheduled for release by no later than 7 February 2022.

9. CURRENT OFSTED OUTCOMES

- 9.1. Ofsted continues to recognise the high quality of education our schools provide.
- 9.2. Currently, 96% of our schools are judged to be good or outstanding, including maintained nurseries, special schools, maintained primary and secondary, academies and free schools. This compares to 86% of schools nationally (to August 2021).
- 9.3. Since Ofsted recommenced routine inspections, after a pause between March 2020 to September 2021, twelve Tower Hamlets schools have been inspected and all bar one has been judged to be good or outstanding.

9.4. Not only is this in the context of the pandemic, but also through a much more exacting inspection framework.

9.5. The one school that dipped to 'Requires Improvement' had already been identified as a school causing concern and continues to receive support and challenge from THEP.

9.6. **THEP SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS DURING 2021**

9.7. **Supporting leadership**

- Providing executive coaching for all Headteachers.
- Increasing the range and number of networks to facilitate collaboration and support.
- THEP have continued to develop and deliver exceptional Leadership Development Programmes.
- Introducing new ways to connect and support leaders, including continuing weekly KiT bulletins, virtual coffee mornings, 'Spotlight' events and 'Teach Meets'.

9.8. **Supporting schools with digital inclusion and remote learning**

- THEP engaged a local social enterprise, Tech Inclusion UK, to work with us to secure IT devices from companies and repurpose them for schools. To date well over 200 devices have been distributed to schools through this project.
- THEP 'Tackling Digital Poverty' campaign raised around £60,000 in corporate and individual donations enabling us to procure over 250 new devices with every member primary school benefitting.
- Worked closely with the local authority on their 'Every Child Online' campaign, helping to purchase and distribute around 300 new devices across 40+ schools.
- THEP facilitated a number of schools working together in peer review clusters to share, develop and support practice in delivering remote learning. Findings were shared in a publication with all schools.
- Both primary and secondary practitioners shared their practice through THEP 'Teach Meets', focusing on areas such as giving feedback remotely, supporting lower attainers remotely, increasing submission of work for EYFS and KS1 learners and using the chat function during live teaching.
- Ideas were shared in all subject and phase networks and external research findings, recommendations and resources considered.

9.9. Supporting schools with assessment

- In the absence of statutory Year 6 assessments, THEP worked with primary and secondary headteachers to devise a mechanism for primary schools to indicate to the receiving secondary schools teachers' judgements about pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6
- Central training sessions delivered to support teachers in understanding national expectations and standards across different year groups in order to support internal assessments and identify gaps in pupils' learning.
- THEP facilitated cross school moderation groups so that schools could share and moderate their assessments as a way of building confidence and expertise and to drive consistency.
- All subject networks had assessment and moderation as a standing item on their agenda.
- THEP also brought together A level teachers in smaller subjects from across schools to support assessment and moderation.

9.10. Supporting pedagogy

- Based on national research findings about the impact of the pandemic on pupil attainment and local knowledge from member schools, THEP produced the 'English Ready to Progress' document to support pupils to get back on track in 2021-2022.
- Tower Hamlets Oracy Hub in collaboration with THEP produced 'Keeping Oracy Going – suggestions and tools to support in-class and remote learning'.

9.11. Central training specifically targeted areas of learning and year groups based on gaps in learning and research findings. For example:

- Fractions, decimals and percentages for LKS2 pupils
- Improving mental mathematics in KS1
- Getting writing back on track
- Language and vocabulary development for young children.

10. VIRTUAL SCHOOL - CHILDREN IN OUR CARE (CIOC)

10.1. The outcomes for Children in Our Care (CIOC) during the last exam series, national results are only available for those in Year 11 at GCSE and Post 16 taking Level 3 qualifications. This has been due to the pandemic and the barriers encountered in attaining progress scores that we would normally use for reporting.

Even outside of the context of a pandemic, the Virtual School provides educational support for CIOC whatever their circumstance 365 days of the year. We have therefore supported young people, carers and social workers through all lockdowns and challenges to provide the best educational offer possible for every child.

- 10.2. A Virtual School's impact is not measured just on educational outcomes, but therefore this report highlights the further support, enrichment and quality of education plans we provide for our CIOC. The Virtual School aims to boost aspiration and engagement with learning as it is critical to a child's safety and their long-term ability to be an independent, productive adult in our community.
- 10.3. Comparing outcomes for CIOC year groups to mainstream or even to previous years should be treated with caution because:
 - a) Groups are statistically too small,
 - b) The variety of need and challenge in a cohort can vary greatly. CIOC will include for example a number of children who cannot access the mainstream or national curriculum.
- 10.4. The makeup of cohorts fluctuates greatly from year to year creating large changes in overall outcomes.

11. KS4 outcomes for Children in our Care

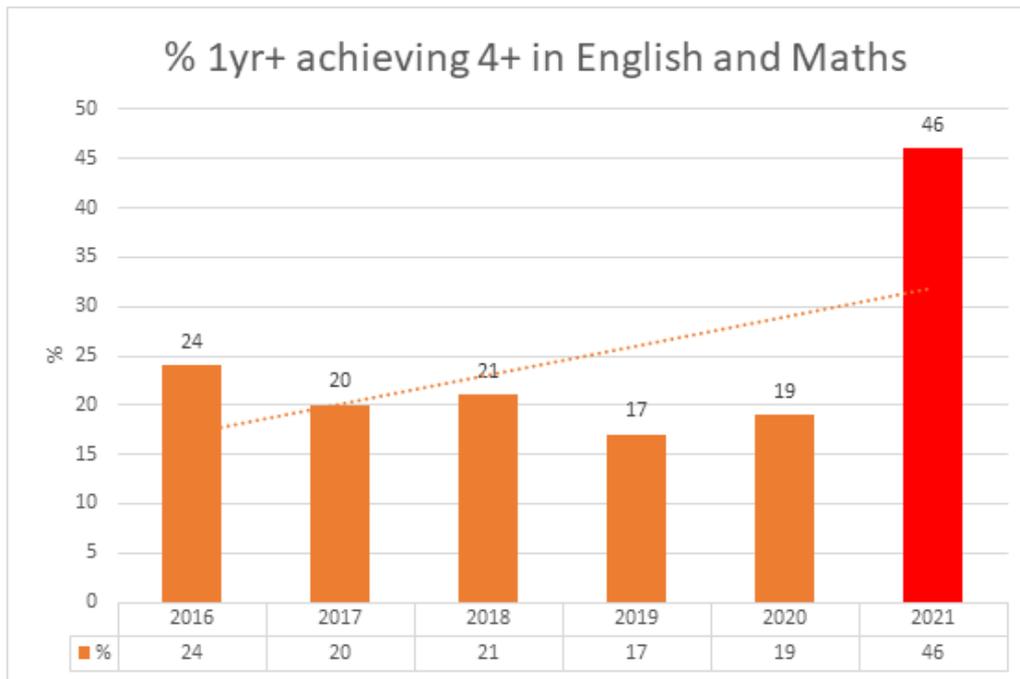
- 11.1. Statistical reporting of CIOC results is for children taking exams who have been CIOC for 1 year plus.

This year there was 24 1 year+

The total number of children supported by the Virtual School in Yr11 was 39

11.2 Headline results:

46% - L4-9 with English / Maths and 3 other subjects
25% - L5-9 with English / Maths and 3 other subjects



11.3. National comparison: 2019 National CIOC 1+ year average = 14%

46% of CIOC achieved a Level 4+ pass in English, Maths with 3 other subjects. This is a key level of attainment to progress to further study. Our Corporate Parenting responsibility to the child, as an individual, means this is a key measure showing the young person is equipped to progress to Level 3.

This year's results for this indicator are more than double last year's results and twice any national figures for children in care.

11.4. Outstanding attainment

Within these results are a large number of outstanding results: these results would be outstanding for a child in any context. There is also an overall picture of CIOC making very good progression from KS2 to KS4.

The top 3 results are anonymised below to show the level of excellence achieved by CIOC. Level 9 was introduced to highlight the top attainers in a subject and this has been achieved in Maths by 3 CIOC. This puts their attainment in the top 5% of all children in England.

Student 1 – F In-borough school	Student 2 – M Out-of-borough school	Student 3 – M Out-of-borough school
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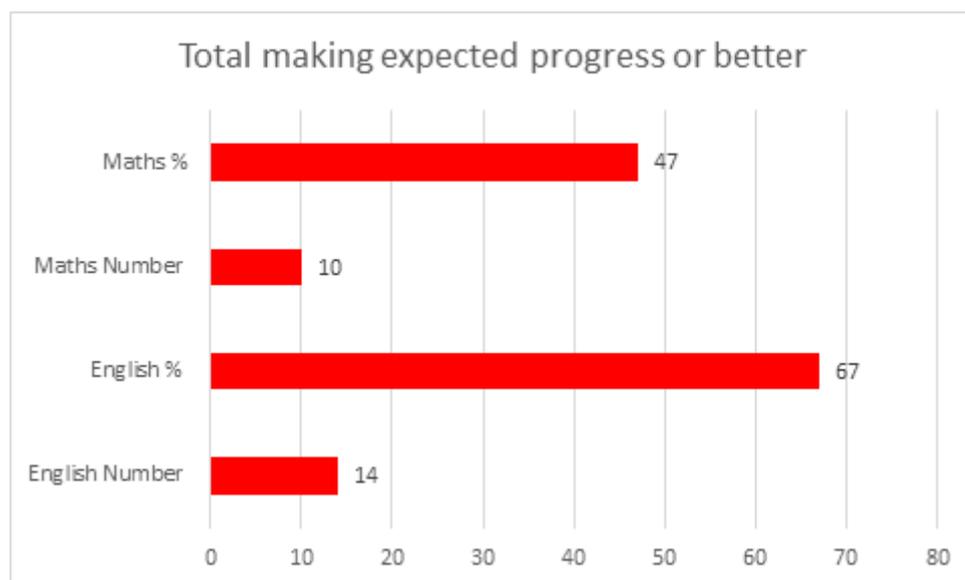
Student 1 – F In-borough school	Student 2 – M Out-of-borough school	Student 3 – M Out-of-borough school
7 English 6 English Lit 9 Maths 7 Biology 8 Chemistry 7 Physics 8 Geography 4 MFL 7 RE 7 Dance	6 English 7 English Lit 9 Maths 8 Biology 8 Chemistry 7 Physics 6 History 3 MFL 8 Business	8 English 6 English Lit 9 Maths 8 Biology 8 Chemistry 8 Physics 7 History 9 MFL Distinction BTEC – Graphic Design

11.5. Progression

These results indicate that many CIOC have made good progress from KS2 to KS4. With the suspension of exams, it has been difficult to get data on progress using the online CIOC data tools. However, the Virtual School tracks all students every term to agreed National expectations.

This shows 67% of CIOC 1 year + made expected or better progress in English and 42% in Maths. 3 children were not included in this calculation as they did not follow the National Curriculum.

Despite exceptional attainment in Maths, this is still a challenging subject for our young people and a key focus of our targeted exam support programme.



11.6. Post 16

Last year, 10 young people were supported studying academic level 3 courses.

80% of these students progressed to university and 90% achieved at a level that exceeded projections from their KS4 attainment.

This year's result includes a student achieving 2 A*s and an A at A level. Results at BTEC this year were far more robust than A level and this is a consistent pattern for CIOC. A concern moving forward is the replacement of BTEC with less flexible T-Levels.

It must be stressed that these results are for CIOC who complete their courses. Supporting young people to maintain engagement is a critical area of our Post-16 CIOC support.

Virtual School Headteachers are a lobby group and have consistently lobbied the DfE and Ministers for funding to mentor CIOC. It is expected that funding to support Post-16 as Virtual College could start this September: an overdue and welcome change Virtual School is planning for.

Student	In borough or out of borough school	COURSE	GRADE	DESTINATION	Progress from KS4
1	OOB	Level 3 Hairdressing	Pass	Employment	Y
2	IB	A-level Economics A-level Islam A-level Mathematics	A A* A*	University	Y
3	OOB	A-level Business A-level English Lit Level 3 CTEC (full award) in ICT	B C Pass	University	Y
4	OOB	Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production & Technology	MMM	University	Y
5	OOB	Level 3 Extended Diploma in IT Networking and Systems	D*D*D*	University	Y
6	IB	Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma in Health & Social Care	PPP	University	Y
7	IB	Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma in Health & Social	D*D*D*	University	Y

Student	In borough or out of borough school	COURSE	GRADE	DESTINATION	Progress from KS4
		Care			
8	OOB	Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma in IT	PPP	University	Y
9	OOB	Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma in Health & Social Care	D*DD	University	Y
10	OOB	A-level Sociology A-level Politics A-level English Language & Literature	E D D	Additional support	N

11.7. Additional support for CIOC

Boosting engagement and aspiration for CIOC who have had disrupted educational histories is a key component of the Virtual School's work. We have a full enrichment programme for our young people, which includes partnership work with the West Ham Foundation, University of East London, Half Moon Theatre and English Ballet. This enrichment includes academic, arts and sports activities which bring together children, carers and supportive adults as part of our Corporate Family model. This work has been undermined by COVID and we are pleased that the Mayor has allocated funds to help us restart the programme.

Our enrichment work sits alongside mentoring and academic tuition driven by a detailed multi-agency Pupil Education Plan (PEP). In the last term, 96% of students had a full planning meeting and 76% of the resulting completed plans were RAG rated Green.

This outstanding level of support is only possible due to the excellent work of Designated Teachers assigned to support CIOC in our physical schools.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The key equality implications are concerned with the ability of all children and young people to access effective and high-quality education provision to enhance their life chances, ensuring every child has every chance.
- 4.2 The work of the THEP extends to monitoring the performance of all schools in the borough and supporting those which are members and or maintained schools, which accounts for 97% of schools.
- 4.3 Schools of concern have enhanced support and in addition intensive work takes place to address areas of poor performance with regard to subjects, as well as and with target groups who are under-attaining in relation to national averages, such as with children on free school meal.

OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.4 THEP provides good value for money for the Council through delivering statutory school improvement services through a lean and flexible structure. Its effective operation reduces the risk of school standards deteriorating and thus schools providing poor opportunities for children and young people than is currently the case.
- 4.5 Effective schools make a key contribution to keeping children and young people safe, particularly the more vulnerable, links to crime reduction and importantly through the pandemic continuing to provide access to a range of education, training, and employment opportunities giving young people a sense of hope and accomplishment.

5 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 5.1 The Statutory school improvement provision provided by THEP has previously been funded through a separate grant. This grant has been confirmed as ceasing through a phased reduction with a 50% reduction in 2022/23 and a 100% reduction in 2023/24. Agreement has been confirmed from maintained Schools that the balance of funding would be met by Schools de-delegating funding for 2022/23. This agreement is for one year only and further discussion with Schools on the funding of School improvement services going forward will need to take place. Funding for support for the virtual School comes through both a separate pupil premium grant and central spend of the dedicated schools grant and currently has no impact on General Fund.]

6 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 6.1 The report provides performance information. It is consistent with good administration for the council to consider performance related monitoring information. This also assists the council achieve Best Value and may demonstrate continuing improvement.
- 6.2 When considering its performance, the council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (the public sector equality duty). The council's targets are formulated by reference to its public sector equality duty and monitoring performance against those targets should help to ensure they are delivered.
- 6.3 The Education Act 1996 sets out the requirement for local authorities to secure that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population in their area. Section 13A of that Act imposes a duty on local authorities to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential of the population being educated.
- 6.4 In relation to children who are looked after by the local authority (children in care), section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out the corporate parenting principles which a local authority is required to follow. These include the requirements to promote high aspirations and to seek to secure the best outcomes for those children and young people, and to

prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

6.5 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- NONE

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A