

**January 2023**

**Title of the Report: Schools White Paper, Schools Bill and Education Investment Areas**

**Ward(s): All**

**Portfolios: Councillor Mark Statham**

**1. Aim**

The purpose of this report is to highlight:

- a) Developments within Schools White Paper and Education Investment Areas.
- b) To provide update on Schools Bills movement to third reading in House of Lords.

**2. Recommendations**

The Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the contents of this report and decides whether there should be further information or updates.

**3. Report detail – know**

3.1 The Schools White Paper ‘Opportunity for all: Strong schools with great teachers for your child’ sets out a long term vision for a school system that helps every child to fulfil their potential, founded on achieving world class literacy and numeracy. It has targets that, by 2030, 90% of primary school children are meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths; and that the average GCSE grades in both English language and maths are raised to 5. It aims to achieve these ambitions by ensuring an excellent teacher for every child; high standards of curriculum, attendance and behaviour; targeted support for every child who needs it; and a stronger and fairer school system that works for every child.

3.2 The schools white paper includes:

**Chapter 1: An excellent teacher for every child by 2030**

Every child will be taught by an excellent teacher trained in the best-evidenced approaches. To achieve this, the government will expand on existing policies by:

- delivering 500,000 teacher training and professional development opportunities across Initial Teacher Training (ITT), the Early Career Framework and National Professional Qualifications by 2024
- raising teachers starting salaries to £30,000 by 2023 and offering incentives for new teachers in specific subjects who choose to work in disadvantaged schools
- retaining the focus on pupil premium as a driver of attainment for disadvantaged pupils
- asking Ofsted to inspect all ITT providers by July 2024 and then every three years

New proposed policies include:

- a new scholarship to attract talented language graduates and training to support more engineers to teach physics
- a new Leading Literacy National Professional Qualification available from September 2022
- a new National Professional Qualification for Early Years Leadership
- initiatives to attract trainees and recognise high-quality teaching qualifications from all over the world

### **3.3 Chapter 2: Delivering high standards of curriculum, behaviour and attendance**

By 2030, every child will be taught a broad and ambitious curriculum in a school with high expectations and strong standards of behaviour. To achieve this, the government will expand on existing policies by:

- establishing Oak National Academy as an arms-length curriculum body, offering free resources for teachers
- working closely with the Education Endowment Foundation and Ofsted, to ensure work is informed by the best available evidence and aligns with best practice
- making no changes to the national curriculum, with GCSEs and A-levels remaining in place
- introducing Mental Health Support Teams that provide extra capacity for early support and advising school staff
- strengthening Relationships, Sex and Health Education, as well as statutory safeguarding guidance

New proposed policies include:

- all mainstream schools to run a 32.5-hour week minimum by September 2023
- revising the behaviour, suspension and permanent exclusion guidance
- introducing a National Professional Qualification in Behaviour and Culture for all teachers and leaders
- launching a National Behaviour Survey to gather stakeholder views on behaviour and wellbeing in their school
- introducing legislation to establish a register for children not in school
- legislation to create statutory guidance on attendance that requires every school to publish a clear attendance policy
- a new literacy and numeracy digital test for a sample of year 9 pupils to estimate performance nationally

- legislation to modernise rules on recording attendance which will provide a blueprint for other parts of the system
- a network of modern foreign language hubs, and effective professional development for language teachers
- updating plans to support sport and music education and producing a new cultural education plan
- a new careers programme for primary schools in areas of disadvantage and improved professional development for teachers and leaders on careers

### **3.4 Chapter 3: Targeted support for every child who needs it**

By 2030, every child who falls behind in English or maths will get the right support to get back on track. To achieve this, the government will expand on existing policies by:

- providing up to 6 million tutoring courses by 2024 cementing tuition as a permanent feature of the school system
- equipping schools to robustly and routinely identify children who need support, including those with SEND

New proposed policies include:

- a Parent Pledge – that for any child “falling behind” in English and maths, parents should receive timely and evidence-based support, funded largely by pupil premium, making it easier for schools to use this money to support literacy and numeracy where needed
- new guidance on providing catch-up support and conducting effective assessments for children who have fallen behind
- tutoring as a core academic option in the pupil premium menu
- reform of the SEND and Children’s Social Care systems
- an investment of £2.6 billion in high needs capital investment over the next three years to deliver new places and improve existing provision for children and young people with SEND or with those requiring alternative provision
- equipping the DfE new Regions Group to hold local authorities and academy trusts to account for local delivery for children and young people with SEND

### **3.5 Chapter 4: A stronger and fairer school system**

By 2030, all children will benefit from being taught in a family of schools, with their school in a strong multi academy trust or with plans to join or form one.

To achieve this, the government will expand on existing policies by nurturing a system of strong trusts where all schools will be in or joining a multi academy trust (MAT). This will include:

- new powers enabling the Secretary of State to bring a local authority’s-maintained schools into the academy system where a local authority has requested this as part of their local strategic plan
- an expectation that most trusts will be on a trajectory to either serve a minimum of 7,500 pupils or run at least 10 schools
- local authorities establishing new MATs where too few strong trusts exist. Local authority trusts will be regulated in the same way as any other trust, and the government will ensure that safeguards are in place

to effectively manage any potential for conflicts of interest, both for the trust, and the local authority.

- clearer expectations for trusts over providing high-quality, inclusive education, school improvement, financial management, parental engagement and workforce deployment, training and retention
- investing in 55 Education Investment Areas across the country where outcomes are poor in English and maths
- transitioning to a direct National Funding Formula, without local amendment

New proposed policies include:

- a CEO development programme for established leaders
- £86 million to be committed to trust capacity funding over the next 3 years
- all trusts having local governance arrangements for their schools to be responsive to stakeholders.
- good schools requesting that the regulator agrees to the school moving to a stronger trust
- local Safeguarding Partnerships to commission safeguarding audits every three years

To support the new policy proposals of the white paper, the DfE, through the 2022 Queen's Speech included a government commitment to a Schools Bill to reform education. The government said the bill would “help every child fulfil their potential wherever they live, raising standards and improving the quality of schools”. It also said the bill would deliver “essential safeguarding measures to ensure that more children receive a suitable and safe education”. The background notes accompanying the speech explained this would be achieved through legislation on: the structure and regulation of academies; implementing a direct funding formula; the school attendance regime; a register for children not in school; an increase in Ofsted's power to inspect non-registered schools; and strengthening the current teacher misconduct regime. Most of the commitments in the bill had been included in the government white paper on schools, 'Opportunity for all: Strong schools with great teachers for your child' as described above.

The bill, introduced in the House of Lords on 11 May 2022, included 69 clauses, of which 32 dealt with the regulation of academies and trusts.

The bill was due for its third reading in the Lords but during her first appearance as education secretary before the Commons committee, Gillian Keegan said the government would not be progressing with the schools bills.

Gillian Keegan told the education committee that many of the bill's ambitions could still be implemented without legislation, including reforms to schools funding in England, and said the government remained committed to legislating on protections for faith schools joining multi-academy trusts and development of a children not in school register.

Whilst we await further information, in Walsall, we are still moving towards the National Funding Formula working with Schools Forum and we have a working group looking at the attendance guidance to agree what we would still continue to implement as good practice. We are also continuing to record our 'Children Not in School' including, but not exclusively, children who are electively home educated and children missing education. We are also moving forward at pace with our

'Family of Schools' model and supporting all schools to become part of a stronger family of schools either through joining a MAT or Federation.

### **3.6 Priority Education Investment Area Update**

In March 2022, the Secretary of State (SoS) for Education announced the selection of 24 Priority Education Investment Areas (Priority Areas), in Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child.

The Priority Areas Programme will address entrenched underperformance, including in literacy and numeracy, in areas with some of the highest rates of disadvantage in the country. Walsall was identified as a Priority area.

During the Autumn term the Regional Directors group convened a Local Area Partnership board to move this work forward. Partnership Boards are advisory groups whose members offer expertise and knowledge relevant to the local Priority Area. Partnership Boards have no legal status or statutory authority.

The Partnership Board's role is to use data, their expertise, and their knowledge of the local education landscape and challenges to inform decision making by the DfE Regional Director on how to improve attainment at both KS2 and KS4. The Partnership Board will share and analyse school performance and other relevant data to help identify the main challenges to improving outcomes for children and young people. The Partnership Board will help identify a range of interventions, each with a strong evidence base, to address these challenges, using a robust theory of change model to ensure that activity leads to the desired impact.

Following a Local Needs data analysis the following emerging areas of focus were agreed for Walsall

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Key Stage 2 maths
- SEND Learners
- Progress 8
- Attendance

The Partnership Board will support the monitoring of progress on key metrics that will evidence the impact of interventions and suggest any necessary adjustments. Recommendations made by the Partnership Board are advisory.

The Partnership Board will contribute to the development of a Priority Area Delivery Plan that will set out a vision for the future education landscape of the area, as well as a theory of change showing how the use of the local needs fund, alongside access to key DfE programmes will lead to improvements in educational attainment at KS2 and KS4.

We have completed the draft version of Walsall's Delivery Plan which is with the Regional Director prior to submission to Minister. We expect this to be agreed by January 2023.

Once Priority Area Delivery Plans have been signed off by Ministers, the Partnership Board will regularly review the progress and implementation of these to ensure that interventions and priorities remain on track and advise on

necessary action to take where this is not the case.

Decisions are the responsibility of the DfE Regional Director, who will consider the recommendations and advice given by the Partnership Board.

Partnership Boards are distinct and discrete from [Advisory Boards](#) that are responsible for advising and challenging regional school commissioners (RSCs) on the decisions they make under the RSC decision making framework.

### Membership of Partnership Boards

The DfE Regional Director appoints a chair for the Partnership Board. This may be an existing chair of a local partnership structure that will also act in the capacity as a Local Partnership Board for the Priority Area, or a newly appointed chair, or a DfE official.

The DfE Regional Director, supported by the chair, decided on the membership of the Partnership Board, to include the people with the right skills and expertise to drive improvement at KS2 and KS4 in the Priority Area.

The Chair is responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of Partnership Board meetings, keeping them focused on achieving the aims set out in the Priority Area Delivery Plan. The Chair, working closely with the DfE Regional Director, should encourage the Partnership Board to work together as an effective team, building their skills, knowledge and experience.

The membership for Walsall partnership board is

<b>Member type</b>	<b>Name and position of member</b>
<b>Independent Chair</b>	Dame Maureen Brennan
DfE member	Dawn Dandy Phil Reed, (Deputy)
LA member	Sally Rowe, Executive Director: Children's Services
LA member	Sharon Kelly, Director: Access and Inclusion, Children's Services
Archdiocese of Birmingham	Justine Lomas, Dep Director for School Improvement, Birmingham Diocese Education Service
Diocese of Lichfield	Claire Shaw, Director of Education LDBE  Matthew Welton Assistant Director of Education LDBE
MAT member	Dawn Haywood, CEO Windsor Academy Trust
MAT member	Dan Parkes, CEO The Mercian Trust
Maintained primary sector	Max Vlahakis, COO, Cadmus Family of Schools and Executive Headteacher Leighswood School. Chair of Schools Forum.
EEF Research School representative	TBC
Non- member	Rich Jones (DfE)

Once the Delivery Plan has been agreed and we have permission to publish it will be forwarded to members.

### ***Financial information***

4. The National Funding Formula changes will be approved by Schools forum and Cabinet and will come to Scrutiny as a separate paper in the New Year. We are yet to receive confirmation on the value assigned to the Partnership board. This funding will be approved by DfE and spent in line with the minister/Regional directors approved Delivery plan. There has been no new burdens money identified for any of the work in the schools bill, so anything we do choose to take forward will only be progressed through current resources, and new ways of working, or with future business cases in the next STP budget setting process.

### ***Reducing Inequalities***

5. The government's aim is to reduce inequalities across the educational sector. The white paper marks the start of a journey towards an education system in which all children benefit from the high standards of the best schools and families of schools, bringing them closer to achieving their literacy and numeracy missions year by year. It will form part of a wider programme of change, alongside the SEND Review, Independent Care Review, Skills for Jobs White Paper and Levelling Up White Paper.

### **6. Decide**

Scrutiny may decide to note the current position. The Committee may decide to request further information or assurance in respect of the progress of the Schools White Paper and work of the Education Investment Priority Area Partnership board.

### **7. Respond**

Any recommendations made by the Committee will be assessed against the Access and Inclusion work programme and performance board.

### **8. Review**

All areas are under constant monitoring and assessment via Children's Services Performance Board.

The Delivery Plan for the Local Area Partnership board will be reviewed via the Regional director and Ministers.

## **Background papers**

School Attendance Bill and Children Not in School Bill Report included in Scrutiny Pack  
6<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**Author**

Sharon Kelly

Director Access and Inclusion

☎ 652895

✉ [sharon.kelly@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.kelly@walsall.gov.uk)