

Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

UNITAS				
Title	Educational Standards in Barnet 2022/23			
Date of meeting	7 th March 2024			
Report of	Chris Munday - Executive Director Children's and Family Services			
Wards	All			
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Urgent	No			
Appendices	Appendix A: Summary of Educational Standards in Barnet, 2022/23			
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Summary

Barnet is well known for the quality of its schools and the diversity of its educational offer.

The quality of Barnet's schools is a significant contributory factor to making the borough a popular and desirable place to live and supports our strategic drive to be the most family friendly borough in London. This report provides information on validated results for 2022/23 assessments and national examinations in Barnet schools, set out in Appendix A.

Recommendations

That the scrutiny committee note the validated results for school performance in Barnet for the academic year 2022/23 as set out in Appendix A: Summary of Educational Standards in Barnet, 2022/23



1. Reasons for the Recommendations

The report informs the committee of progress in implementing the School and Settings Improvement Strategy 2021-2024. National assessments and examinations are used to report on and monitor schools' performance. Data available in the public domain provides an opportunity for benchmarking Barnet's performance, celebrating successes and identifying areas for improvement to ensure Barnet's schools remain popular and successful.

- 1.1 Appendix A provides validated results for the 2022/23 academic year for Barnet's state-maintained schools (including Academies and Free Schools) and comparisons with statistical neighbours, the national average, and the London average (where available). It provides information on the attainment (i.e. the standards reached) and the progress of pupils across all key stages. The appendix will be made available to schools and will be published on the Barnet Council website.
- 1.2 For some years, Barnet has been among the top performing local authority areas in the country in relation to the achievement of children and young people and the quality of our schools. Barnet Council's aspiration is to be among the top 10% of local authorities in relation to the quality of provision in its schools.
- 1.3 In November 2020 the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee considered and approved a report entitled Education Strategy 2021–2024, which set out an education strategy for the Borough for the period 2021 to 2024. The Education Strategy sets out the shared ambition of the strategic partnership between the council, schools and Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS) to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people in Barnet.
- 1.4 Results for the national examinations and assessments that took place across the early years, primary and secondary phases in summer 2023 have now been published. Barnet schools continue to perform very well and there have been significant improvements across early years and some improvements in other key stages and subjects; with Barnet performing in the top quartile of local authorities for most indicators and in the top ten per cent on most measures at KS4.
- 1.5 Appendix A provides an analysis of school performance issues in Barnet based on the validated assessment and examination results. This data refers to pupils being educated in Barnet schools and colleges; not all of these pupils will be Barnet residents. Headline results from this analysis include:

Good and outstanding schools

At the end of January 2023, the percentage of Good and Outstanding schools in Barnet was 95.3%, above the national average and in line with the London average. The percentage of primary and secondary schools in Barnet rated Good or Outstanding is in the top 20% of the country. 100% of Secondary schools, Special schools, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and Nursery schools are rated Good or better by Ofsted. All schools with Additional Resourced Provision for pupils with special educational needs are rated good or outstanding.

Attendance

• Provisional attendance data shows that attendance in Barnet schools in 2022/23 was comparatively strong at 93.4% (national 92.6%). Primary Attendance placed Barnet on the 44th percentile with Secondary Attendance on the 14th percentile. However the attendance in Special Schools and PRUs was below national. The Persistent Absence rate of 18.6% in all Barnet schools was below the national percentage of 21.3% as was the Severe Persistent Absence rate of 1.1% (national 2%).

Early years

Attainment of a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (70%) has moved back above the national average (67%). Barnet has seen a greater increase in attainment (5.5pp) compared with Barnet's statistical neighbours (0.92pp) and national (2pp). Barnet's national ranking has therefore increased to being in the top 15% of LAs nationally.

Primary

- Barnet's attainment in Phonics is above the national average, equal to the Outer London average, and just below statistical neighbours' averages in 2023. Barnet's attainment since the pandemic dropped from the top 10% of LAs (in 2019) to rank 40 in 2022 but has improved to rank 25 in 2023.
- By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment at the expected standard is above the national average in all subjects and is consistently at or just above the London average. Barnet's national ranking is in the top 20% of LAs for writing (Expected Standard EXS+) and Writing (Greater Depth GDS), Maths (GDS) and Science (EXS+). The relative lowest attainment in Barnet in 2023 was in Science (ranked 31st). Notably, the expected standard and greater depth Barnet rank in pupils' reading rose in 2023 from 51st to 17th (EXS+) and 39th to 22nd (GDS)
- By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment at the expected standard across Reading, Maths, Writing, Science and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) was ranked in the top 10 of all local authorities. However, the expected standard for the combined Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) was just below this at 11th in 2023. Further, only the expected standard Barnet ranking in Reading and Maths attainment fell from 2022 to 2023 (still ranked within 10th).
- By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment of the high standard in Reading, Writing and Maths combined (RWM), Reading, GPS, Maths and Writing was above national averages and either above or in line with London and statistical neighbour averages. Barnet's ranking in RWM GDS and Writing GDS improved significantly (10 places and 22 places, respectively) from 2022 to 2023, yet Barnet rankings for Reading, GPS and Maths GDS fell by 4, 7 and 7 places, respectively.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 Barnet' average scaled score in all three subjects (Reading, Writing and Maths) remained above or equal to the London and statistical neighbour averages, and was consistently above the national average.
- The average progress made by all pupils between end of KS1 and end of KS2 across Barnet was above the national, London and Statistical Neighbour averages in Reading, Writing and Maths, an improvement from 2022, where Writing was only equal to the London average. Barnet has further closed the gap in Writing since 2022 with an average progress score increase of 0.4, raising the Barnet ranking from 26th to 14th. In this regard, Reading's average progress score fell but remained the same rank, whilst Maths' progress score remained the same but fell by 2 places in ranking.
- By the end of KS2 Barnet's disadvantaged pupils outperform London's disadvantaged pupils in RWM by four percentage points (pp) and national disadvantaged pupils by 11pp. Relative to other LAs, Barnet's disadvantaged pupils outperform Barnet's non-disadvantaged pupils in all subjects except for Reading and Maths EXS+. The gap between disadvantaged and not disadvantaged pupils remains large in Barnet yet is still 3pp below the national gap.
- By the end of KS2 all ethnic groups outperformed the national average in meeting the expected standard, whilst "Asian" pupils had the highest attainment of the expected standard in Barnet across RWM (also within the top 15% of LAs). "White" pupils outperformed the national average more than "Asian" pupils in Barnet, ranked 9th nationally. "Any other ethnic group" pupils had the lowest

- attainment of the expected standard in Barnet (in keeping with the national trend), and also ranks the lowest of the ethnic groups.
- Overall, by the end of KS2, SEN Support pupils in Barnet attain very well, ranked 17th for RWM EXS+. Progress is particularly strong for Reading and Maths (9th and 10th), and within the top 10% of LAs nationally. Progress in Writing is within the top 15% of LAs for SEN pupils (ranked 14th). Understandably Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils made less progress than their non-SEN counterparts, however the progress of SEN pupils overall, and for Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and SEN Support pupils individually, is above the progress that the same groups make nationally in these KS2 subjects. Interestingly SEN Support pupils in Barnet made more progress than non SEN pupils nationally in Reading and Maths.

Secondary

Key Stage 4

- Despite a slight drop in attainment between 2022 and 2023 Barnet's Attainment 8 ranking is within the top 3 LAs nationally in 2023 well above national, London and Statistical Neighbour averages.
- The average Progress 8 score ranks Barnet 2nd nationally, KS4 progress 8 remains significantly above the progress made by pupils across England, within London and against statistical neighbours.
- The percentage of pupils who attained a 4 or above in English and Maths is in the top 5% of LAs nationally (ranked 3rd) remaining well above the London and national averages.
- The percentage of pupils who attained a 5 or above in English and Maths is in the top 5% of LAs nationally (ranked 3rd) remaining well above the London and national averages.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Barnet have higher attainment than disadvantaged pupils in London and National, yet, unlike previous years, lower than its statistical neighbours. The gap between Barnet's disadvantaged pupils and national non-disadvantaged pupils narrowed slightly in 2023 to -5.4pp, and this gap remains significantly smaller than the disadvantaged Barnet/national gap (-9.8pp) and slightly wider than the disadvantaged Barnet/London gap (-4.1pp). The attainment gap between disadvantaged and not-disadvantaged KS4 pupils in Barnet remains similar to 2022 (-15.9pp in 2023), narrowed slightly in London from 2022 to 2023 (-13.9pp to -13.7pp), and remains the same (-15.2pp) in national attainment.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Barnet make less progress than their non-disadvantaged counterparts in Barnet, but they do make more progress than non disadvantaged pupils nationally. Barnet is ranked 4th and 3rd against other LAs for disadvantaged and not disadvantaged pupils, respectively. Barnet's gap in progress between Barnet's pupils (-0.6) is smaller than the national gap (-0.74).
- At secondary level in the headline measures, Asian, White and Mixed ethnic group pupils achieve very highly, generally in the top 10% of LAs nationally. Black pupils perform relatively less well compared to the same groups in other LAs: Black pupils in Barnet ranked 29th for attainment (still in the top 20%) and ranked 35th for progress 8. Comparatively, Asian, Mixed and White pupils ranked above 10th in all categories, other than Asian pupils' Progress 8 scores, which ranked 20th.
- Performance in the headline KS4 measures by each SEN cohort (SEN Support, EHCP, No SEN needs) is strong for all groups. The attainment and progress of pupils without special educational needs ranked 4th and 2nd, with average scores of 10.4 and 0.65, respectively, above the national. Barnet pupils with either an SEN Statement/EHCP or SEN support understandably achieved scores below those without SEN. However, Barnet pupils with an SEN Statement/EHCP or SEN support continued to reach attainment and progress scores above the national averages. As with KS2 pupils on SEN Support made better progress than non SEN pupils nationally.
- Educational achievement data for Looked After Children in the 2023 academic year is due to be published in March 2024.

Key Stage 5

- Despite a drop in attainment the proportion of Barnet pupils who attained 3 or more A grades at A level in 2023 places Barnet within the top 10% of LAs nationally, and above the national and statistical neighbour averages.
- Despite a drop in attainment the proportion of Barnet pupils who attained grades AAB or higher at A level in 2023 ranks Barnet 7th LA nationally, and above the national and statistical neighbour averages.
- The average point score per entry across A levels is ranked in the 10th percentile of LAs for pupils in Barnet. The average point score across the vocational qualification groups of technical qualifications or applied general qualifications is in the lowest 50% of LAs, ranked at the 147th and 145th percentile of LAs, respectively
- By the age of 19, a higher proportion of both FSM and non-FSM CYP have achieved at least two academic results, compared to the national and London averages. Attainment for non-FSM pupils in Barnet is ranked 6th, while attainment of FSM pupils is ranked 17th. For the proportion of pupils who achieve at least two academic results, the gap in Barnet is wider than the London average, but narrower than the national gap. (-7.9pp compared to -5.5pp and -8.4pp respectively).
- Post 16 Engagement 16-17 year olds are required to remain in education and training in England following raising the participation age legislation in 2013. Barnet has a significantly lower proportion of its children and young people (CYP) not in education, employment or training compared to its statistical neighbours and the national average. Barnet is ranked 1st of the local authorities in this measure of Post-16 engagement.
- 1.6 The report identifies a number of areas for development, which reflect the key priorities in the Education Strategy approved by the Children, Education, and Safeguarding Committee in November 2020. The following areas have been identified as priorities for 2023-24 by the School Standards and Settings Partnership Board. These are based on the education performance data from 2023 and our information about schools:

Attendance and Exclusions

Raising the attendance of pupils in Barnet Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units is a priority this year.

There has been an increase in suspensions and pupils at risk of permanent exclusion particularly at primary and a rise in the total number of permanent exclusions in 2022/23. There is a multiagency approach to reducing exclusions in Barnet including forming part of the Action Plans in both the Youth Justice Plan and Serious Violence Strategy.

KS2 Reading

Reading was the only subject at KS2 where attainment dropped between 2022 and 2023. However this drop was not as great as the drops nationally, in Outer London and Statistical Neighbours. The national ranking for Reading remains in the top 10% but is below the rankings for Writing, Maths, Science and GPS.

Vocational results at KS5

The percentage of examinations awarded a Distinction* or Distinction is lower than the national average in a lot of our schools. We need to continue to work with schools to raise aspirations and further improve the quality of provision.

Progress and Progression Pathways of low attaining pupils across all key stages

It remains a priority for us to ensure that sufficient quality and learning opportunities (e.g. vocational qualifications) exist for children and young people to succeed across a range of skills

and abilities, particularly those with SEND. This is particularly a concern with the recent changes to the vocational routes and the uncertainty about the continuation of BTECs and the recent commencement of T Levels. We will continue to support schools to try and ensure the options available for students are as wide ranging as possible.

Achievement of Disadvantaged Pupils, pupils with SEND and other Vulnerable Groups (including Children in Need)

Although Barnet's Disadvantaged pupils perform better than national Disadvantaged pupils, there are still significant gaps in achievement between those pupils who are Disadvantaged and those who are not. SEND pupils achieve well compared to SEND pupils nationally at all Key Stages but we prioritise the achievement of SEND pupils in order to try to reduce the gap between their achievement and pupils with no SEN. We are still awaiting more detailed information on Children in Need pupils. This remains an important priority.

Looked After Children (LAC)

Provisional results indicate that the attainment of LAC children in Barnet is still a concern. The overall achievement of LAC remains a priority. The BELS Virtual School and Post 16 Teams, along with Family Services prioritise the achievement and outcomes of all Looked After Children.

Pupils' Mental Health

Following the pandemic, which is backed up by a recent survey of secondary pupils, the mental health of all pupils still needs to be a priority, including support for pupils with managing test and exam stress.

Recruitment

Recruiting and retaining good quality teachers, school leaders and support staff is a challenge for schools across Barnet. Supporting recruitment of staff and giving the necessary support to staff at all levels remains a priority for us.

Safeguarding

Findings from Ofsted continue to identify that children in state schools are effectively safeguarded. We are establishing a group focusing on Independent Schools to ensure effective safeguarding in all Barnet schools. We facilitate a group of Designated Safeguarding Leads and work effectively with them through our BELS School Safeguarding Lead

Curriculum

To support all schools in the effective planning and delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum which is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and including pupils with SEND, the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life. This is a priority to reflect the changes introduced in the 2019 Ofsted inspection framework.

The factors that both research and Ofsted inspection evidence indicate contribute most strongly to an effective education where pupils achieve highly are:

- The school's curriculum is rooted in the solid consensus of the school's leaders about the knowledge and skills that pupils need to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. In this way, it can powerfully address social disadvantage.
- That each school's own curriculum builds towards clearly defined end points, matched to the requirements of the National Curriculum. All schools carefully select the knowledge that pupils acquire and the age-related expectations they need to reach.
- > The school's curriculum is well planned and carefully sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and towards its clearly defined end points.
- The curriculum reflects the school's unique local context by addressing typical gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills.

- The curriculum remains as broad as possible for as long as possible. Pupils are able to study a strong academic core of subjects, such as those offered by the EBacc.
- There is high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all pupils, and the school does not offer disadvantaged pupils or pupils with SEND a reduced curriculum.
- Schools understand that pupils need solid foundations in the basic skills of communication, reading, writing and maths in order to succeed across the curriculum.
- > School leaders are supporting staff to implement the intended curriculum as designed so that children achieve well.
- Assessment, both formative and summative, remains key to determining the success of the curriculum.

The above priorities are underpinned by:

- A curriculum which also contributes well to pupils' behaviour and welfare, including their physical, mental and personal well-being, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School leaders who take effective steps to secure good behaviour from pupils and a consistent approach to discipline.

It is recognised that schools are having to manage pupils with more complex behaviour challenges. We work closely with colleagues from the SEND and Inclusion Teams to offer support to schools in managing more complex behaviour.

In addition, the following remain as 'monitoring' priorities due to the fact that attainment, although improved, is not in the top 10% of the country:

- Early Years
- Phonics
- Key Stage 1 Achievement
- KS2 Writing
- Mainstream School Attendance

We will review these areas on a regular basis, particularly when more data/information becomes available. We may decide to increase the focus if data and intelligence suggests that the area needs to be a higher priority.

1.7 Each of these priorities has an Action Plan associated with it, outlining the steps we are taking to address these areas for development. Progress against these priorities will be monitored by the Schools and Settings Partnership Board.

2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

None

3. Post Decision Implementation

- 3.1 Data will be shared with schools. Appendix A will be published on the Barnet website and available for parents and residents. The analysis will be used to continue to raise standards across Barnet schools, maximising the impact of Barnet's school improvement approach.
- 3.2 Barnet Council's strategy for continuing to deliver high standards in Barnet schools is set out in the Education Strategy 2021-2024, which was approved by the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee in November 2020. Barnet Education and Learning Service will continue to

work with schools to address the priorities included in the School and Settings Improvement Strategy 2023/24

4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

4.1 Corporate Plan

Barnet's Corporate Plan

Family Friendly is a key driver of our corporate planning with the vision of "Creating a Family Friendly Barnet, enabling opportunities for our children and young people to achieve their best". The quality of the education offer in Barnet is at the heart of Barnet's continuing success as a place where people want to live, work and study. It plays a crucial part in making Barnet a popular and desirable place with many families attracted to the area by the good reputation of Barnet's schools. The London Borough of Barnet's Education Strategy 2021-2024 sets out that good leadership and governance is a key driver to the achievement of the improvement of schools and educational outcomes.

Family Friendly Barnet

- Family and Belonging Families and children can be together and be part of a community that encourages resilience.
- Safe and Secure Children and young people are safe protected from harm.
- Education and learning Children and young people can learn about the world around them.
- Life Chances Children and young people are able to succeed.
- Health and wellbeing Children are supported to achieve a healthy start in life, enjoy a healthy lifestyle and to build resilience.

4.2 Corporate Parenting

- We know that children and young people across all care groups are much more likely to experience
 multiple disadvantages. "Support our children in care and care experienced young people to live their
 lives successfully" and "addressing inequality and driving forward better outcomes for groups that
 include ethnic minority communities, young people with a learning disability, young carers, looked after
 children/care leavers and those who come into contact with the justice system" are key themes in our
 children and young people's plan 2023-2027
- As corporate parents it is essential that we understand the challenges and barriers in place to promote
 equity and improve outcomes for all vulnerable groups including those is social care. As part of our
 pledge we will ensure that children in our care receive the services they need to flourish and achieve
 their best.

4.3 Risk Management

The Risk Register for the education service includes a risk that inadequate monitoring of, and support for, schools may result in failure to take rapid and decisive action in relation to poorly performing schools, including using statutory intervention powers with regard to maintained schools and considering alternative structural and operational solutions (non-Academies) leading to poor delivery of education outcomes. To control against this risk, the School and Settings Improvement Strategy 2021 to 2024 includes a 'Monitoring, support, challenge and intervention strategy'. A Schools Review Group of officers from Barnet Education and Learning Services and wider Barnet Council staff monitors individual schools and agrees appropriate actions/interventions. Alternative solutions are considered for all schools that are judged by OfSTED to Require Improvement or are felt to be at risk of such a judgement. Clear systems and procedures are in place to monitor the progress of all 'Schools Causing Concern'.

4.4 Insight

None

4.5 Social Value

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders

5. Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

The work to drive the delivery of Barnet Council's contribution to the Education Strategy is delivered from within existing resources paid to Barnet Education and Learning Service Ltd.

6. Legal Implications and Constitution References

- 6.1 Section 13A of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities to secure efficient primary, secondary and further education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area. Section 13A requires local authorities to ensure that their functions are exercised with a view of promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training and promoting fulfilment of learning potential for children and young people in its area. Section 14 requires local authorities to secure sufficient schools and sufficient is defined by reference to number, character and equipment to provide appropriate education based on age, ability and aptitude, as well as ensuring diversity of provision. These duties are overarching duties and apply regardless of whether schools are maintained by the local authority or independent of local authority support.
- 6.2 In relation to academies, local authorities should raise any concerns directly with the DfE Regional Director.
- 6.3 The remit of The Children & Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee includes performing the overview and scrutiny role and function in relation to all matters which relate to services pertaining to the education and well-being of children and young people, including youth services.

7. Consultation

A summary of the key changes from the previous School and Settings Improvement Strategy was discussed and agreed at the Schools Review Group, consisting of BELS and wider Barnet council officers, in October 2023 and the School and Settings Standards Partnership Board (consisting of BELS and wider Barnet Council officers and headteachers) in November 2023.

8. Equalities and Diversity

- 8.1 Barnet Council has a duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;

- sex;
- sexual orientation.
- 8.2 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day-to-day business and to keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services. School improvement monitoring, supporting and challenging arrangements ensure that the quality of education in Barnet is maintained and improved. Outcomes for all groups of children and young people are monitored including children with special educational needs and disabilities and disadvantaged children (those in receipt of free school meals and children looked after). Barnet's Children and Young People Plan, the Education Strategy 2021-2024 and the School and Settings Improvement Strategy 2021 to 2024 all have a strong focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged groups of children and young people.

9. Background Papers

- 9.1 Key education strategies, including the Schools and Settings Education Strategy 2021 to 2024 were considered and approved by the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee at its meeting on 30th November 2020. These have been published on Barnet Council's website and can be seen here: https://www.barnet.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-support-information
- 9.2 At this meeting the update to the School and Settings Improvement Strategy for Barnet for the period 2023 to 2024 is being reported to this committee. The Report is an update of the Strategies that were approved by the Children Education and Safeguarding Committee in November 2020 as part of the Education Strategy for Barnet Council for the period 2021 to 2024.
- 9.3 Reports on education standards have previously been reported annually to the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee. The last one was reported to that committee on 20th March 2023 and can be found here: Agenda for Children, Education & Safeguarding Committee on Monday 20th March, 2023, 7.00 pm (moderngov.co.uk)