

Update from Council Actions – July 2019

Motion: Educational Performance (March 2019)

Continue investing in capacity building at good and outstanding schools, so that more of our young people can attend the school of their choice

The council's investment programme aimed at building capacity in good and outstanding schools across the borough is continuing. Supplementing the council's established investment timetable, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority have recently announced a £6.95 million investment to create a new Construction Skills Centre at the Oldham College, which is rated good by Ofsted.

Work with partner organisations and parents to ensure all children arrive on their first day at school ready to learn

A significant amount of work is taking place with parents and partner organisations to improve school readiness including:

- Early Literacy
 - 31 Oldham schools are currently working with the National Children's Bureau delivering the evidence based *Making it REAL* (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) family literacy programme. The Making it REAL programme promotes early literacy and helps practitioners to build parents' knowledge and confidence so that they can help their children with reading and writing and create an early home learning environment. The programme has offered families eight home visits and eight group literacy events. The programme will continue to be delivered with a smaller cohort of schools during 19-20.
 - REAL beginnings home learning programme (Making it REAL programme for children 1-2 years) is currently being delivered through Oldham's Right Start service with 30 targeted families. The programme has offered families 6 home visits and six early literacy events.
 - 21 non maintained early years settings are currently involved in an early literacy programme. Practitioners receive training and follow up coaching support from Oldham's teaching schools specialist leaders of education for early years.
- Communication, speech and language
 - Implementation of the evidence based ELKLAN Speech and Language training has been highly successful over the past 2 years at helping the early years workforce develop key speaking and listening skills, proved to ensure later success in school, of all children especially those with SLCN. An annual training programme is in place for both the Speech and Language Support for 0-3s and the 3-5s. Over 200 practitioners from schools, settings and partner agencies have been trained in ELKLAN.
 - The Wellcomm¹ screening and intervention tool is becoming well embedded across the borough. The Wellcomm Toolkit provides a complete, sustainable speech and language toolkit that can be used by all early Years practitioners.

¹ <https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/products/wellcomm/>

A comprehensive training programme has been delivered over the past two years with practitioners from schools, early years settings, children centres, health and wider stakeholders services. Over 260 practitioners from schools, settings and partner agencies have been trained in Wellcomm. Anecdotal evidence from practitioners is that Wellcomm is having an impact on children's progress in communication and language.

- *Babbling Babies* and *Little Talkers* parent and child interaction groups, co-produced with Oldham's Speech and Language Therapy Service, are delivered by the Right Start service in children's centres. The groups focus on improving interactions in order to facilitate an increased development rate in children's development of play, attention, listening, understanding, expression and use of language.
- The Ages and Stages Questionnaire, has been introduced as part of the Healthy Child Programme and the wider Right Start model. The questionnaire pinpoints the developmental progress of children between the ages of one month to 5 ½ years. Results are analysed by the Right Start Service and LA to inform delivery and access to interventions for families and children and to inform strategic decisions and resource deployment.
- Maternal mental health
 - One of the strongest predictors of wellbeing in early years is the mental health and wellbeing of the mother or caregiver. Maternal depression can lead to impaired parent and child attachment, emotional and behavioural problems, language delay.
 - Two clinically proven key assessment and relationship based interventions i.e. Newborn behavioural Observation (NBO) and Neonatal Behavioural assessment (NBAS) are being delivered to babies (from birth to 3 months) by Right Start health visitors to support improvement in maternal confidence and self-esteem, parental sensitivity and responsiveness, attachment and bonding, parent-infant interactions, parents understanding of their baby's language and ultimately improved developmental outcomes.
 - Implementation and delivery of the Solihull Approach within the Right Start service The Solihull Approach aims to increase emotional health and wellbeing through both practitioners and parents by using a model of containment, reciprocity and behaviour management. The service also delivers a targeted *Solihull Understanding Your Child's Behaviour* 10 week parenting group for parents with children from universal to complex needs and aged 0-18 years

Continue to support schools to work together and share best practice, learning from one another for the benefit of all our young people

Some examples of the ways Oldham Council is working with schools and sharing best practice include:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage Hub is well embedded. The aim of the hub is to promote and support collaborative working between the council early years team and practitioners in schools to support school improvement and school readiness. Recent work includes facilitating early years settings and schools coming together to share practice in relation to assessing and tracking children's progress and supporting effective transitions to school.
- Teaching schools and specialist leaders of education are utilised across the borough for instance a teaching schools delivers a *Sharing Best Practice around Phonics workshop* for senior leaders in schools.

- This year the LA has funded an early years peer to peer programme with 4 primary schools. The aim of the programme is to:
 - Work collaboratively with colleagues to identify outcomes which the whole group wished to achieve and was committed to working towards.
 - Support school improvement through an iterative process of self-evaluation, peer review and exploration of good practice in the EYFS.
 - Share issues between the cluster of schools in a climate of openness and honesty and to problem-solve in order to reach agreed outcomes.
 - Develop evidence- based practice that identified effective strategies to address priorities which could be shared and celebrated.

- The work of the Oldham Education Partnership and the Local Authority alongside the Opportunity Area has given Oldham a structure for renewing its partnerships, and better supporting and enabling a system led model. The designation of the Oldham Opportunity Area has given us a unique opportunity to accelerate and coordinate improvement.
- Oldham has a good understanding of its strengths, and consultation with stakeholders and common agreement by headteachers and partners about priorities and intelligence gathering to direct action has been positive. There is the additional advantage of using the financial resource from the Opportunity Area and Oldham Education Partnership to focus on improvement and the three priorities below are key focus areas
 - Ensuring all children are school ready by the age of five
 - Raising attainment for all, and raising it fastest for disadvantaged pupils
 - All children and young people to be ready for life, learning and work

- The Oldham Education Partnership and Local Authority facilitate the collection of intelligence from all schools and academies including areas of practice they can share with the wider community. The sharing of this knowledge is further enhanced through a range of facilitated networks that include
 - Secondary Subject networks in a range of areas including English, science, geography and art
 - Primary subjects groups for English, science and mathematics
 - A range of developmental conferences where schools work together and forge additional links, areas covered have included
 - Leadership
 - Literacy
 - International New Arrivals
 - Pupil Premium
 - Leadership networks and training have been developed to include
 - Oldham Aspirant School Leaders Programme – developing opportunities for leaders that want to progress in Oldham
 - The Oldham Way to Leadership Success – a programme for Oldham aspirant Headteachers
 - Funded access to a range of leadership training including NPQH, NPQSL, NPQML
 - Working closely with a range of Teaching Schools and National Support schools to provide School to School Support and Continuing Professional Development across Oldham Schools.

- A wide range of stakeholder events have been held to support schools in supporting students with SEND. These have included training for leaders at all levels including

- Co-production workshops with SENCOs on new annual review operational plan and processes
- SENCO development days focused on role of EHC officer and role of SENCOs
- SENCO forums to develop graduated response tools now on the local offer
- Two days Leadership Conference focused on SEND
- Co-production of new SEND Inclusion Strategy due to be launched
- Co-production of SEND Inclusion Strategy with SENCOs
- Regular Chair of Governor Briefings are held to ensure Governors are aware of best practice across Oldham and to support them in their role. This is complemented by a range of optional training and development opportunities (online and face to face) that give Governors from different schools the opportunities to work together, access resources and share good practice
- Showcasing and sharing good practice workshops led by staff (at all levels) from Oldham Schools have been incorporated into the 2019 Oldham Learning Festival.
- Behaviour and Attendance partnerships are in place for primary and secondary schools. These ensure that there are forums for a range of professionals from schools, council and other agencies to review protocols and share practice which supports the inclusion of children and young people. Seven Oldham schools are currently engaged in a diminishing exclusions programme with a national provider which is intended to impact on exclusion outcomes.

Expand work to tackle holiday hunger and create breakfast clubs in schools across the borough

The third pilot exploring ways to tackle holiday hunger took place over Easter, with 1,479 meals served to children and parents. The council is currently tendering for a delivery partner organisation to support the development of a sustainable, long term approach to tackling holiday hunger. Provider selection is expected shortly.

Breakfast club provision takes place in different forms across the borough. The council has recently conducted a survey with schools and other providers to map the provision that already exists and understand better the barriers or challenges that schools face. This will inform council activity to support provision, including the creation of new breakfast clubs and work to help those already providing a service.

Submit evidence to the forthcoming Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry into local government finance, highlighting the impact of funding cuts on services and restrictions this places on the council's ability to support our schools and tackle the concerning levels of child poverty in the borough

Evidence was submitted to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee on 17th April 2019.