

4.1.02 Educational Attainment and Needs

Introduction: why is this important?

Improving the district's educational attainment is essential to driving up the skill levels in the districts future adult and working population, to increasing choice for the districts young people in the type and level of employment they can access and ultimately to increasing the prosperity of the district.

With one of the fastest growing child populations in the country, Bradford District had approximately 2,144 more 5 year old children attending schools than there are 15 year olds (measured by the schools census of October 2015) requiring the continuation of an expansion programme in the district's schools.

The district's level of deprivation provides a challenging context. The Department for Education has estimated that 58% of the district's 2 year olds are eligible for the early learning programme for deprived 2 year olds, compared to their figure of around 40% nationally.

As of January 2016 the district had 213 schools, plus a virtual school for Looked After Children (LAC). The school estate is diversifying, with an increasing number of schools having academy status and a small but growing number of Free Schools in the district.

What do the facts and figures tell us?

The proportion of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) in Bradford increased from 55% in 2014 to 62% in 2015. This is below the national average of 66%. The 2015 GLD result represents a closing of the gap by 1% to Bradford and the national average. This means that Bradford's ranking against 151 other Local Authorities (LAs) has improved from 125th to 122nd.

Girls continue to outperform boys in Bradford with 71% of girls achieving a GLD compared to 53% of boys. The gap between the performance of boys and girls has widened over three years to 18% from 15% in 2013. Nationally girls also outperform boys with 74% of girls achieving a GLD and 59% of boys.

Bradford's Key Stage 1 results in reading, writing and maths at Level 2b+ (L2b+) have improved at a faster rate than the national figures from 2014 to 2015. Whilst Bradford's results are still below the national averages, the gaps have reduced in 2015 and Bradford's rankings against 150 other local authorities have improved.

In 2015 74% of Bradford's Year 1 children (6 year olds) were successful in the phonics screening check. This is higher than in 2014 when 71% were successful. Nationally 77% were successful in 2015, increasing from 74% in 2014. Bradford's ranking against 150 other local authorities remained 117th in 2015.

Bradford has matched the national improvements in three of the seven key attainment and progress measures and exceeded the national improvement in four for Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils achieving level 4 or better in reading, writing and maths combined in Bradford is 76%, compared to 80% nationally.

Bradford's percentage of students achieving 5 or more GCSE A* - C including English & Maths was reported at 45.5% for 2015, increasing from 44.0% in 2014. Although this is below the national average of 54.8% in 2014, the gap between the national average and Bradford's result has reduced. It is also encouraging that at a time when there is much turbulence in GCSE performances, particularly in English and maths, Bradford is the 48th most improved local authority out of the 150 local authorities that report KS4 results.

This year's final A Level results show some significant improvements. The key observations are: Bradford's Level 3 average points per entry for all pupils from 2014 to 2015 have increased from 203.9 to 209.3. This makes Bradford's result the 14th most improved of 150 local authorities (LAs). Over the

same period the national figure has increased from 214.6 to 215.9. This result ranks Bradford 102nd out of 150 LAs, an improvement of 33 places.

Bradford's Level 3 average points per pupil from 2014 to 2015 have increased by 21.6 points to 682.0 from 660.4 points. The general trend this year across all 150 authorities is one of improvement. Nationally the points per pupil figure have increased by 3.8 points from 714.0 in 2014 to 717.8 in 2015. This means that Bradford is the 35th most improved LA on this measure and the current ranking of Bradford for level 3 average points per pupil has improved markedly from 108th to 88th out of 150 local authorities.

What strategies, policies and best practice have been developed locally and nationally?

Over the last year, the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC) and its educational partners, supported by the Department for Education (DfE), Ofsted and the National College for Teaching and Leadership, has developed a radical education strategy for Bradford that is founded in three key principles:

1. Bradford is a sector led school improvement system, whereby all key stakeholders have a shared vision for improving educational outcomes. This implies that every child has a school place, that the needs of vulnerable children are catered for, that no school is left behind, that schools and academies are challenged to work together, that weak or declining performance is quickly identified and corrected, that data and knowledge are shared across schools and that there is accountability to local communities
2. All schools belong to a partnership. Relationships remain vital, but are no longer enough on their own. Schools are increasingly seeing the importance of being connected to at least one formal network. For the vast majority of school leaders, relationships are being transformed into more formal, self-conscious and professional connections
3. All schools are to be good or better by September 2018. In order to achieve this ambition, underperformance will be promptly dealt with and weak leadership and teaching immediately tackled so that every child is able to attend a good or outstanding school within the next three years

What challenges have been identified in a local context?

The Government continues to set a national floor standard measure for schools:

- In the primary phase in 2015, a primary school was below the floor standard if less than 65% of pupils achieved Level 4 or above in reading, writing and mathematics combined, and if it was below the national medians for percentage of pupils making two levels progress in reading (94%), writing (97%) and mathematics (93%)
- In the secondary phase in 2015, a secondary school was below the floor standard if less than 40% of pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and mathematics combined, and it was below the national median in three levels of progress in English (73% in 2015) and three levels of progress in mathematics (68% in 2015) or, where a secondary school opted to be judged on the new Progress 8 measure, the result is -0.5 or lower. All schools will be judged on the Progress 8 measure from 2016
- A realignment of educational standards for 16 year olds has proved a significant challenge to Bradford's secondary schools, with 10 schools below the floor standard in 2014, and seven below in 2015 using the new dual measure
- Ofsted's annual report on inspection outcomes in August 2013 reported that 47% of Bradford's secondary school age students attended a good or better school at the end of the 2012-13 academic year, a significant improvement on 27% in the previous year. However this improvement has not been sustained and in August 2015 only 40% of students attended a good or outstanding secondary school, compared to 74% nationally
- In 2012, 8 primary schools fell below the minimum floor standard, whereas in 2013, judged against the new separate measures for reading, writing and maths, 24 primary schools fell below the standard. This figure reduced to 15 in 2015
- In August 2013, Ofsted inspection outcomes improved with 82% of Bradford's primary school age pupils judged to be taught in good or better schools by the end of the year. This represented a significant improvement on the August 2012 result where 65% of pupils attended a good or better primary school. However this improvement has not been sustained and by 2015 just 66% of primary aged pupils attended a good or outstanding school, compared to 85% nationally

- There is a strong and progressive commitment within the schools partnerships to raising overall levels of attainment and progress for all children and young people and to reducing the attainment gap between vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils and their peers. As part of the improvement planning during September 2015 all Bradford's educational partners signed up to a comprehensive set of challenging targets – there are 26 targets in total

What do our stakeholders tell us?

Bradford strategic partners including schools, school partnerships, teaching school alliances have all pledged their commitment to Bradford's new education strategy. So that the needs of all Bradford's children and young people are fully met. The diagram to the right shows how the strategic partners will work together and share the accountabilities for school improvement.



Recommendations: What do we need to do? How do we ensure this remains a priority?

Foundation Stage

- The CBMDC needs to work closely with partners across children aged 0-7yrs to review the arrangements for the monitoring, challenge, intervention and support for the settings and schools with children from birth to 7 to ensure there is a consistent and coordinated offer of challenge, support and guidance across all sectors
- To develop an Integrated Early Years Strategy which will:
 - enable all children to be ready for school and further learning
 - improve health and well-being for all children in the district
 - support and increase parents' knowledge and skills
 - develop leadership at all levels to ensure that all relevant leaders are well informed about good Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) practice and developments, and are able to evaluate the quality of provision so that they can plan effectively for further improvement
 - promote integrated working
- Ensure support is provided across the sector to ensure all assessment across the EYFS is used to inform practice and facilitate smooth transitions
- In recognising the performance gaps between Bradford's 5 year olds and similar children nationally need to close, there must be a focus on the unacceptable gender gap and the apparent underperformance of the youngest children in each year group

Primary Phase

- Maintain the emphasis on raising standards in all subjects by working with school partnerships, teaching school alliances and individual schools to ensure that:
 - raising achievement remains a priority
 - resources are appropriately targeted
 - Bradford schools use the best practice from within the district and outside to support the improvements
- Work with the Bradford Primary Improvement Partnership, the Catholic Schools' Partnership, Teaching School Alliances and other partners (including academy and free school sponsors) to ensure that school improvement strategies are well focused on:
 - Improving the teaching and outcomes in Bradford's primary schools so that the progress pupils make across Key Stages 1 and 2 improves
 - Ensuring that boys' achievement is strongly supported to reduce the gender gaps.
 - Ensuring that the higher attainers meet their full potential
 - Tracking the progress of vulnerable groups and developing strategies to address their needs so that any gaps in performance between different groups are reduced within a context of rising standards. Use Pupil Premium funding effectively to raise the attainment of disadvantaged children and those receiving Free School Meals
 - Maintaining a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning in all primary schools by supporting successful development strategies, so that all teachers and teaching assistants experience continuous improvement, whilst rigorously challenging

underperformance. With Bradford's history of underachievement only good and outstanding teaching is acceptable for our pupils

- Ensuring that every pupil leaving their primary school has the basic educational and social skills which they need to be successful in their secondary education
- Ensuring all primary schools achieve the floor standard at the earliest opportunity
- Improving and developing pupils' assessment so that teachers are more accurate in predicting end of Key Stage outcomes
- Supporting all primary and nursery schools to achieve a good or outstanding judgement at their next Ofsted inspection

Secondary Phase

- All partners to continue to work closely with the Bradford Partnership of secondary schools to address the key areas of underperformance which are holding back Bradford's young people, in particular their progress and attainment in GCSE English and GCSE maths
- Support, challenge, monitor, and intervene where necessary, in targeted schools to ensure that all young people continue to improve their attainment and achievement to meet their potential. Our collective responsibility is to enable all secondary schools to achieve 'good' outcomes in their Ofsted inspections by 2018 and to ensure all secondary schools perform above, and stay above, the floor standard as it is raised further in the coming years. This will include considering structural solutions and changes to school governance arrangements in order to achieve rapid improvement where necessary
- It is essential that improvements to GCSE (and equivalent) results are accelerated. More Bradford students need to improve their performance in English and maths at GCSE level. It is important that Bradford schools ensure that student's make 3 levels progress, as a minimum expectation, in both of these core subjects across the five years of their secondary education. In addition all partners are committed to working with schools to increase the number of students making four or more levels progress – again this high aspiration is vital if Bradford is to close the gap with national averages for all measures and Bradford schools are to be judged as 'good' by Ofsted
- Support strategies to recruit the best teachers, to improve the teaching of English and maths, by sharing the very best classroom practice seen in other subjects and qualifications, and improving the leadership and management of these key curriculum areas
- Ensure the urgent development of the curricula offered by secondary schools to ensure that they meet the needs of all Bradford's young people and respond to the new national benchmarks being introduced
- Increase the number of secondary schools judged by Ofsted to be good or better so that a much higher proportion of Bradford students are educated in good or better schools
- Ensure that the performance of different groups of students is carefully monitored and appropriate developments are made to ensure any decline is addressed promptly

Post 16

- Further reduce the proportion of 16-18yr olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) and Not Known rates for young people
- Increase the number of young people achieving full Level 2 and 3 qualifications
- Source high-quality, appropriate provision for disabled and learning-disabled young people.
- Promote Apprenticeships ensuring young people are aware of this as a learning and career pathway, thus increasing uptake of Apprenticeships whilst maintaining current good success rates on these programmes across the district
- Create a more equal pattern of travel in and out of the district to learn, i.e. attracting students into Bradford from neighbouring districts

References

School and College Performance Tables <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/>