

KNOWSLEY EDUCATION STRATEGY 2023-2026



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FOREWORD

As Cabinet Member for Children's Services, I am pleased to share with you our vision and priorities for children and young people in the borough.

Education in Knowsley has come along way since we launched our last strategy 'Securing Greatness so our young people thrive' in 2018; our strong ambition, corporate investment and robust partnership working has improved the quality of education in our schools; increased the capacity and quality of Council services for children and families and enabled collaborative school improvement projects to make a tangible difference.

In addition, our Borough of Culture strategy has enriched the lives of children and families and our Education Awards have celebrated the achievements of students and the education workforce. The Pupil Place Sufficiency Strategy has increased the number of school places available in the borough and our early years strategy has ensured that families have a broad and high-quality childcare offer. Our work has been acknowledged positively by our partners including OFSTED and the Department for Education.

There is much to celebrate – we have seen an increase in the number of schools graded Good by OFSTED; by 2021 outcomes had improved Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4, improvements were evident in the attainment of some students with SEND – particularly those with Education, Health, and Care plans; behaviour has improved in our schools and there has been an increase in the number of students in Education, Employment or Training at 16.

I am incredibly proud of the achievements to date of our school and all those who contributed to our improvements for their work since

2018. Since 2020 our system has been stretched beyond capacity to respond at pace to a unique set of circumstances brought about by unprecedented times. The strength of our partnership meant that we were able to respond at pace, meet need well, whilst also continue on our improvement journey. Together we have achieved a great deal and I am grateful to everyone that has played a part in our success.

This strategy has been developed in the context of the pandemic, the experience of our schools and students and the learning we have taken from our response to unprecedented times. In developing it we have tried to balance existing local education inequalities and associated priorities, with the challenges of responding to the impact of the pandemic; the health and well being of students and our workforce; our capacity to deliver in challenging economic times and the shifting sands created by The White Paper.

The coming years will focus on building upon our foundations of success, further strengthening our partnership work and aligning ourselves to the core vision this strategy articulates. Allegiance to place will be critical.

Good quality education and qualifications transform lives, I look forward to seeing all that we achieve together as we begin this next chapter in the transformation of education and outcomes in Knowsley.



Councillor Margaret Harvey
Cabinet Member for Children's Services



KNOWSLEY THE PLACE

KNOWSLEY IN 2022

Growing population of **154,500** people



From **145,800** in 2011
8,700
more people



The experience of COVID-19 has been challenging in Knowsley – with **38%** of population reporting infection – highest rate nationally.



Knowsley schools offer good quality education, with **95%** of primary schools judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted.



In 2022, **20%** of Knowsley school pupils have a Special Educational Need or Disability, compared to **16%** nationally.



Knowsley's child population is stable:

- **6%** growth in the 0 to 4 population (despite falling birth rates during COVID-19), and **14%** growth in 5 to 9 age group
- Fall in population aged 10 to 24 in the last 10 years



Despite the challenges, Knowsley's economy has shown recovery from the pandemic – with employment at **78%** compared to **75%** nationally.



POLICY LANDSCAPE

National Policy: The Schools White Paper

The Department for Education published The Schools White Paper in March 2022. The White Paper set out a series of reforms which would have a significant impact on the way in which the local school system operates and sits alongside the Government's wider programme of reform including the Levelling Up White Paper; SEND Green paper; Skills for Jobs White Paper.

The Schools White Paper introduced Education Investment Areas and Priority Education Investment Areas. Knowsley has been selected as a Priority Education Investment area and as such is eligible for further school improvement funding and bespoke school improvement interventions. At the time of writing this strategy the details in relation to this have not been shared with the local authority and the school's white paper did not progress to its third reading in Parliament although the government has said that it remains committed to the objectives that underpinned the schools bill. It remains to be seen what elements of the Bill will create the greatest impetus for future national policy.

The reforms set out in the White Paper were structured around three core Government ambitions, all to be achieved by 2030:

1. 90% of primary school children to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (nationally, performance in this respect stood at 65% in 2019 – 63% in Knowsley 2021)
2. The percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by 33% (Knowsley was in the lowest quartile in 2019)
3. National GCSE average grades in both English language and maths will increase from 4.5 in 2019 to 5 by 2030 (this data is not currently published).

The Schools White Paper is structured around four main areas of reform, with the year 2030 set as the target year for full implementation:

- School system reform
- Support for children falling behind
- Curriculum, behaviour, and attendance
- Teaching

The proposals in the White Paper will have a major impact on schools in Knowsley and the way in which education is delivered to children and young people. Some of the proposals will also have implications for the Council and fundamentally change its role in supporting education in the future. In this context, the key reforms to note are:

- Full academisation of the school system by 2030
- Reduced roles and powers for local authorities in the school system with the Department for Education having increased direct oversight of individual schools (via Regional Directors)
- Some local authorities being able to establish multi-academy trusts
- New statutory expectations of local authorities for attendance services including the duty on local authorities to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State in respect of how they use their service to improve school attendance. New statutory guidance will outline the minimum attendance support offer local authorities are expected to provide pupils and families in their area through existing powers, duties, and services

This Education strategy has been developed within the context of emerging government policy and seeks to support Knowsley schools to navigate the political changes as they transition into a new era for education.

Local Policy

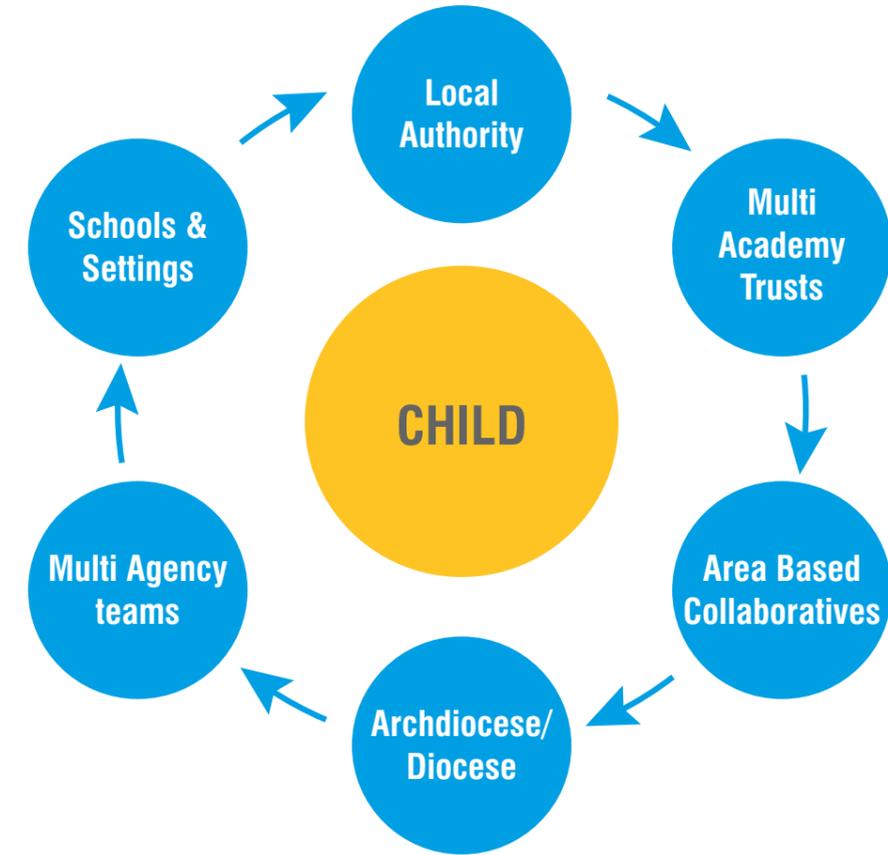
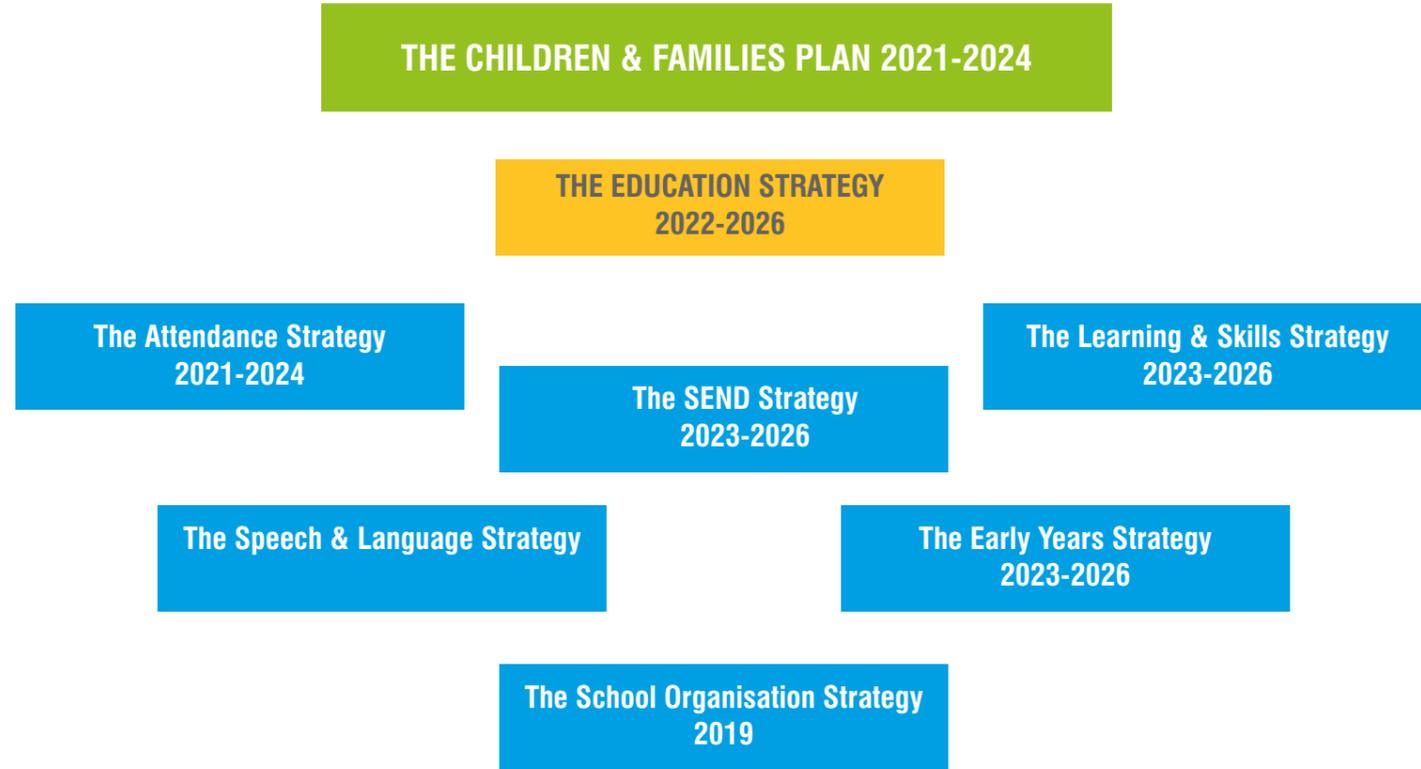
The Education Strategy supports the priorities identified in the Knowsley Children and Families Plan 2021-2024:

- 1. Prevention – to give children the best start in life
- 2. Education – to improve life chances
- 3. Family – supporting families to thrive

How we work together

This strategy has been co-produced with our partners across the council, schools and education services using Knowsley Better Together principles. Knowsley Better Together encourages everyone to play their part to achieve more. By pooling our resources and our expertise we know that we will have greater impact.

Key Partners







REFLECTION: KNOWSLEY EDUCATION STRATEGY 2018-2021

WHAT WE ACHIEVED



PRIORITY 1: RAISING STANDARDS

WHAT WE DID

Introduced The School Evaluation Handbook, first published in July 2019 providing a framework for evaluation and peer review which has been implemented effectively every year by all schools.

Several school improvement projects were commissioned by the Local Authority. These include Challenge Partners and Voice 21 & ICAN. Pathways to Success has been a key driver of improvement and has led to successful Ofsted outcomes meaning that Knowsley Primary School Ofsted measures are now 8% above the national average. The Bradford Twinning project has supported schools, two of which improved from Requires Improvement to Good.

Improved outcomes at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4; reduction in persistent absence in some schools; reduction in exclusions and suspensions.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

A shared understanding and collaborative approach to identifying schools in need of support and the clear targeting of the monitoring and brokering grant to support school improvement in vulnerable schools.

All supported schools which have been inspected have been judged as 'good'.

2 High schools and 3 primaries have moved from Requires Improvement to good. In 2021/22 – 10 out of 13 schools supported were removed from the vulnerable school category following positive inspections or successful data in the 2022 Key Stage tests. In Knowsley 90% of all schools and 95% of primary schools are graded good or outstanding which is the same as schools nationally and there are no inadequate schools in the borough.

Year 1: 2018

- Attainment in EYS, Y1, KS1, KS2 improved in all measures in 2018
- Progress measures (P8) for 50% of secondary schools improved in 2018
- Attendance improved in all of secondary schools (Autumn 18 datasets)
- Exclusion data was for the first time in line with national data sets for Knowsley secondary schools
- The % of pupils leaving Knowsley at Y6/7 transition points reduced by 3.9% to 38.1% in 2019 from 42% in 2018



PRIORITY 1: RAISING STANDARDS Continued

WHAT WE DID

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Year 2: 2019

- Attainment at KS1 and KS2 improved in all measures
- Attainment in reading at KS2 was above the national average
- Quality of primary education was judged by OFSTED is inline with national averages
- Culture changes – feedback from key stakeholders has demonstrated increased confidence in the Local Authority and support for its vision to improve
- Although still too high persistent absence rates reduced in the primary and secondary sector
- The use of fixed term exclusions reduced in 66% of secondary schools

Current Picture 2022: The pandemic and associated periods of lockdown and disruption had an impact on all schools. Schools were well supported throughout the period by the Education Improvement Team and other council services as well as Public Health.

End of Key Stage tests and assessments were reintroduced in 2022 following 2 years of teacher assessments.

The percentage of pupils in Knowsley achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined is 56.0% compared to 58.7% nationally in 2022. This represents a -2.7 ppts difference. This is 7 ppts below Knowsley's previous result of 63% in 2019 compared to a 6.3 ppts decrease in national from 65% in the same year. Although there has been a decrease in the number of children achieving the expected standard this is broadly in line with the national decrease. In the context of high levels of infection, disruption and periods at home this reflects the commitment of Knowsley schools to ensure children were able to continue to learn.

The majority of schools recorded better results this year than in 2019. The number of pupils gaining a Grade 4 and above in both English and Maths has increased at all schools. In addition, all schools have also seen improvements in the percentage of students achieving a strong pass in both English and Maths (Grade 5 and above).

Pre pandemic Knowsley had higher than average suspensions and permanent exclusions. However, as the strategy began these figures started to reduce. Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions were very low during 2020 and 2021.



PRIORITY 1: RAISING STANDARDS Continued

WHAT WE DID

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Despite a rise in suspensions and exclusions this year this was to be expected due to the transition back to school post-Covid and the introduction of new behaviour policies under new headteachers in 3 of our secondary schools. However in summer term 2022 these have reduced dramatically. The percentage of children excluded with EHCP and SEND needs has also reduce.

WHAT WE DID

The Knowsley Speech and Language Strategy was launched in September 2021 and is aimed to support the speech, language and communication skills of children and young people aged 0 – 25. The strategy was co-produced through a multi-agency partnership with health professionals; early years providers; all school age phases, post 16 providers and Local Authority representation.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Early Years Communication and Language Pathway was developed.

We now have an indication of the impact of using the Welcomm Screening Tool. This is based on data collected between September 2021 and July 2022 for all children with a first and last assessment (age 0 to 5) from both Schools and PVIs. The data set includes 949 children. Those screened at red were 45% at baseline testing, decreasing to 24% after intervention. Similarly, those children baselined as amber decreased from 28% to 25% following intervention and those baselined as Green increased from 27% to 51%

Schools, collaboratives and the Local Authority have a clear and accurate overview of performance at an authority and school level. Mime reports and FFT are provided for schools.

WHAT WE DID

There have been significant changes in the Senior Management of Educational services since 2018. The Education Improvement Team, Early Years Service and SEND teams have all been reviewed and re-structured.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Functions have been re-purposed and new posts have been created to ensure that capacity is improved and that our structures are fit to meet the needs of the locality. Through investment a Governor Support Officer post was created. A further restructure meant the work of the Virtual school came into the Education Service. Other posts that were introduced include a Schools Sufficiency Officer, additional Education Improvement Officer, and an Education Services manager.



PRIORITY 2: TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANGES

WHAT WE DID

- The Attendance Strategy was launched in September 2021 aiming to support schools, families and children following periods of disruption during the pandemic. The attendance of vulnerable children education group is effective in working across agencies to support children in attending school.
- The Council published its SEND strategy in 2018 and it is currently being refreshed.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

The strategy has been noted as an example of best practice by the Department of Education and the Chief social worker.

Attendance in Knowsley had been historically 2% below national figures pre pandemic. The Knowsley Attendance Strategy was implemented in September 2021 and throughout 2020 and 2021 Knowsley matched national figures for attendance despite high levels of Covid infection.

WHAT WE DID

We have completed a review of our Elective Home Education provision and Children Missing from Education procedures and refreshed our approach.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

This is due to the consistent graduated response as set out in the strategy and greater multi agency working to support families. As the need to self isolate for more than 3 days has been removed in 2022 we expect to see schools build on this success.

Current Context:

- Overall attendance in Summer 1 2022 remained in line with the national average from the Autumn Term 2021
- Secondary attendance has increased significantly from 88.7% in the Autumn, 88.21% in the Spring to 92.7% in Summer 1 2022
- OFSTED (2022) noted many strengths in the recent inspection including co-production; joint commissioning; quality of EHCP

Through additional investment the Council has launched 2 new settings to support vulnerable children in the borough. Flourish which is a post 19 learning centre for young people with complex learning difficulties and a turnaround programme and nurture provision for primary school children.

Electively Home Educated children numbers had doubled in the years prior to the strategy. However, during 2019, 2020 and 2021 home educated numbers remained stable. Knowsley was one of only two local authorities in England that had decreased its EHE figures during the pandemic. This is due to greater efficiencies in processes led by the Education Improvement Team.



PRIORITY 2: TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANGES Continued

WHAT WE DID

WHAT WE DID

A School Organisation Strategy has been developed to ensure that Knowsley has sufficiency of school places.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

More challenge has been put in place to ensure home education is in the interests of the child both with families and schools. Last year over half of the children new to home education returned to school. Knowsley chairs the North West Home Educated group and is part of the National body of Home education representatives.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

496 school places have been created since 2019.

Pupil Place Planning Board and Steering groups are established and there is a full time School Places Sufficiency Officer.





PRIORITY 3: BUILDING A HIGH QUALITY LEARNING COMMUNITY

WHAT WE DID

In 2018 The Education Commission worked with all Knowsley schools to promote a culture of innovation, creativity & research-based practice and this was a springboard into the launch of The Education Strategic Partnership Board & SEND Strategic Partnership Board.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

System Leadership in Knowsley is strong as evidenced in how schools operated and were supported during the pandemic.

WHAT WE DID

A new Education Improvement team was launched.
A review of schools forum was commissioned in October 2018.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

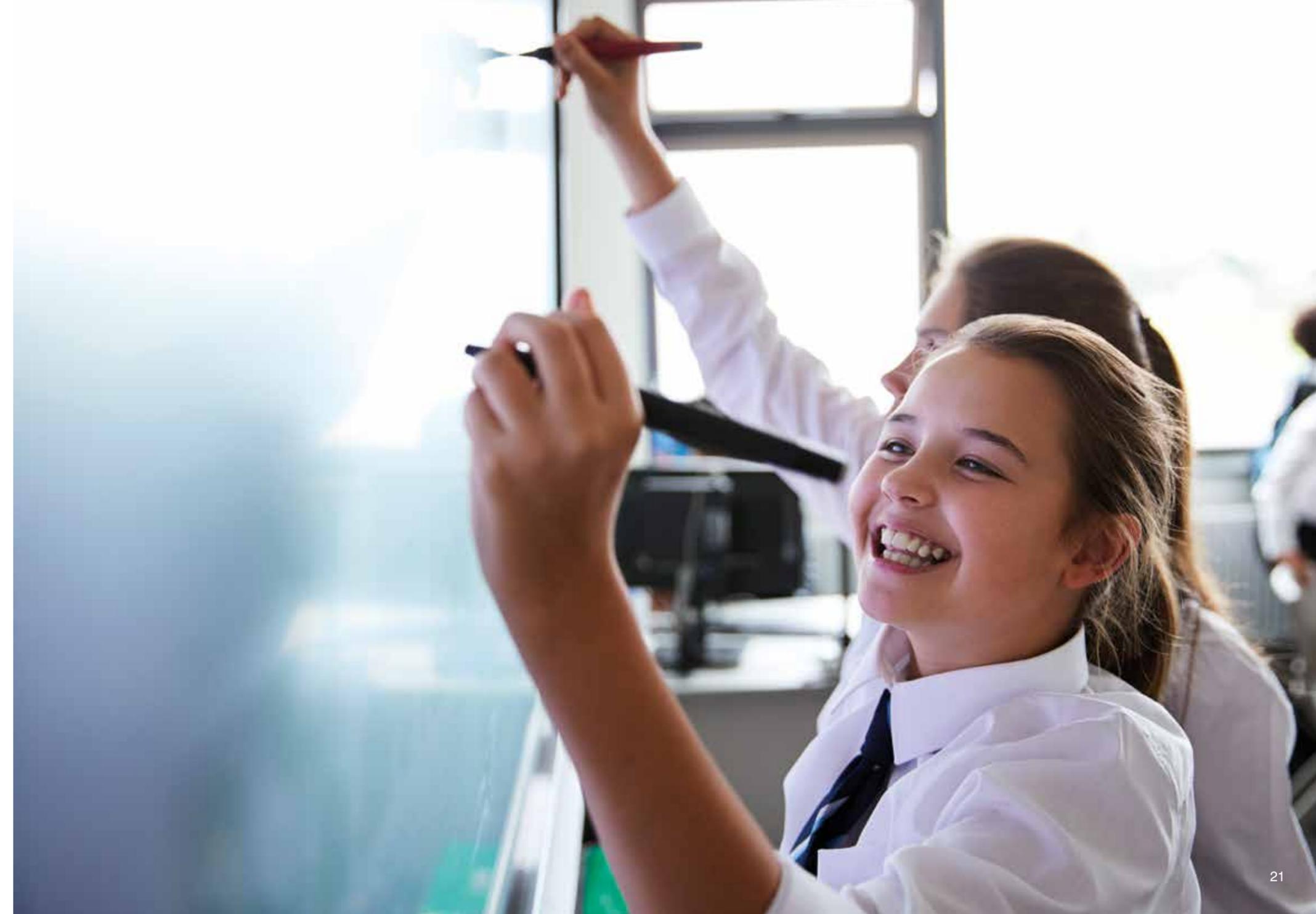
Each school has a link officer in the Education Team and are supported by them on a wide range of issues. The school improvement team complete school rag rating in partnership with collaborative leads and schools and commission school improvement activity which is timely and effective.

WHAT WE DID

The Local Social Partnership meetings between Trade Unions and the Council have been re-established in Knowsley. Termly meetings, chaired by the AED/Head of Education & Inclusion are held with a view to better utilizing professional associations in the improvement work.
The Education Awards were created to celebrate the achievements of schools, children and staff.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Increased effectiveness and strengthening of financial decision making in relation to education.
The Dedicated Schools Grant and the funding of collaboratives and non-statutory school improvement work was reviewed leading to increased efficiency.
This has resulted in effective partnership working particularly during the pandemic leading to schools being well supported and able to continue school improvement work.
The Awards were not held during the pandemic but will be held in the Shakespeare North Playhouse in November 2022.



WHAT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE TOLD US ABOUT EDUCATION IN KNOWSLEY

Young people have told us they enjoy the welcoming family feel in our schools and feel school is a calm and happy place. They feel they are well supported to achieve their very best and are delighted to come to school. Young people feel schools have high expectations for them and that they live up to these expectations.

Young people have good relationships with their teachers and feel well supported by the pastoral staff in school. They feel cared about as individuals and safe in school and understand that school attendance is important for their life outcomes.

However, young people have told us that mental health in young people is one of their greatest concerns and barriers to thriving in education. Some young people were also concerned about their future and felt that schools needed to better link subjects and attainment at school to careers advice and guidance.

Young people are proud to be part of their schools in Knowsley and feel valued.

Schools should help in getting you ready for work, looking for work and making applications.

Secondary school student

Being aspirational means having lots of different lifetime goals.

Kirkby primary school student



WHAT FAMILIES HAVE TOLD US ABOUT EDUCATION IN KNOWSLEY

From our consultation and engagement with children and families and from work undertaken with services, we know that children and young people are ambitious for their future and that one of Knowsley's key strengths is the resilience of families. Yet, whilst many children and families are able to live happy and healthy lives in Knowsley, there is still a high proportion who face greater challenges and inequalities.

Conversations with families have told us that:

- Education isn't one size fits all and it is important to remember people learn and develop differently
- Beyond academic achievement and exams it is important to remember that learning is about more than grades
- Confidence and self esteem building is important for our young people
- Showcasing the achievements of local young people encourages others to aim high
- Listening to parents and carers and their views about their child is important
- Some parents and carers worry about transition in education and some don't feel well prepared to help their child make choices about education, employment or training





FUTURE CHALLENGES

Political

The pandemic has had a significant impact on education services locally and nationally. Whilst our partnership learnt to become more responsive and adaptable to external change our core business of school improvement changed swiftly, diverting resource and diluting some of our intended school improvement activity, creating 'drift' in some planned areas for improvement.

Nationally expectations of schools shifted considerably, at school level the National Tutoring Programme, new catch-up programmes and resources were introduced that reduced the capacity of schools to engage in other improvement activity and in some cases created a shortage of high quality supply teachers; high COVID rates exacerbated school attendance issues and further impacted on the sufficiency of supply staff within the school workforce.

At a strategic level, the Government response to the pandemic; the levelling up agenda and the subsequent Schools White Paper radically changed the school system and introduced 'new' priorities such as academisation; reduced funding available to the Council through the ceasing of the Monitoring & Brokering Grant and changed statutory duties in relation to attendance and admissions.

Educational

There can be no doubt that the pandemic hindered pupils' learning and personal development at all levels of the education system. Leaders describe gaps in pupils' knowledge, particularly in mathematics, phonics, and writing. Whilst schools have worked hard to ensure effective 'catch up' strategies are in place it is inevitable that the closure of schools in 2020 and 2021 will impact negatively on attainment and progress for some students in forthcoming years.

School Leaders have described how the disruption caused through the closure of schools and settings has particularly impacted on the development of very young children in the early years and key stage 1 and on the school readiness of students at Year 7 and Year 11.

Leaders talked about pupils having lower levels of resilience and confidence, fragile friendships, and increased levels of anxiety which will impact on attainment, progress, behaviour, and attendance.

Following the national pattern there is an increasing cohort of students in Knowsley that have special educational needs. Knowsley has seen a rise in requests for statutory assessment and a subsequent increase in the numbers of students with Education, Health, and Care plans. This is impacting on the sufficiency of school places and placing increased pressure on the High Needs Block.

Responding to the pandemic and managing staff absence alongside increased costs in utilities has had an impact on school budgets; reducing the capacity at school level for investment in school improvement.

Social & Economic

Child poverty is a complicated issue that currently affects around one in four children in the UK. There is no single agreed definition of child poverty, but in short, it means that parents cannot afford the basics of food, clothing, and shelter, and can often mean that children go to school hungry and suffer social isolation. Child poverty is known to have a lasting impact on life chances, and a child that experiences persistent poverty is much more likely to experience poorer life outcomes in the long-term.

The latest statistics from the Department for Work and Pensions indicates that there were 6,500 children in Knowsley (under the age of 16) living in a low-income family in 2021. This equates to one in five (20.8%) of all children in the Borough. In comparison, 18.7% of children were in low-income families across all of the UK. When housing costs are taken into account, this increases to 30.5% of all children in Knowsley (9,300 children).

It is clear that significant disruption to family income has occurred as a result of the pandemic, as shown through other measures:

- The number of families receiving Universal Credit has increased by 7,000 since the start of the pandemic to 17,000 families in May 2022
- Families with children represent 43% of those new families receiving Universal Credit over that time
- The proportion of primary age children receiving Free School Meals increased to 34.5% in 2021 (from 28.5% in 2019)
- The proportion of secondary age children receiving Free School Meals also increased to 43.3% in 2021 (from 36.5% in 2019) – this is the third highest in England

Recruitment and Retention of a talented workforce

The impact of the pandemic on the numbers of great teachers joining the profession is not yet known. The National Foundation for Educational Research 2020 workforce survey, alongside local intelligence tells us that many experienced teachers and head teachers are considering leaving the profession in the next few years. Challenges have also been experienced in recruitment at Local Authority level for key posts in educational services – these have been exacerbated not only by the pandemic, but also by the evolving government policy in relation to duties of Local Authorities.



OPPORTUNITY & ACTION

Our aim

“A place where all our children have the best start in life, where every family thrives and where all our young people aim high and achieve their potential”

We believe we can achieve our mission through ensuring:

- 1. All children and young people can access great schools and colleges**
- 2. All children and young people have the support, guidance and opportunity they need to achieve great things**
- 3. All stakeholders work effectively together, maximising partnership and resource through an allegiance to place**

OPPORTUNITIES

Education Investment Areas

The Government has announced it will further drive school improvement in England by delivering a package of measures in new Education Investment Areas (EIAs). Additional funding will be used to support targeted support for schools, digital technology (connect the classroom) and CEO development programmes and support for key priorities identified by the Education Strategic Partnership Board who will contribute to the development of a Priority Area delivery plan. Priorities will be set in the context of a data analysis of local need and input from stakeholders.

The DFE have appointed a steering group to oversee expenditure of funding received in Knowsley via the Education Investment Area programme. The steering group as an independent chair and has membership from a range of local and regional stakeholders. The steering group will recommend priorities for improvement and work with the DFE and the Regional Director's Office to commission bespoke improvement programmes for schools in the borough.

Desired outcome: Subject to government funding, this work will ensure a universal improvement programme is in place for schools in Knowsley with a focus on improving:

- **Early Years Outcomes**
- **Attendance – by reducing persistent absenteeism**
- **Maths – improving outcomes at Key Stage 4**

Cradle to Career and Right to Succeed

Right to Succeed supports communities in areas of high deprivation to work collectively to give children and young people the best start in life. Fundamental to this is the belief that every child deserves the right to succeed, no matter where they live. The project brings together residents, professionals and decision-makers to co-design a programme that is bespoke to the needs of the local community to deliver “place-based change”.

Since September 2021 Right to Succeed have been working on a Discovery Place Project in the Northwood area of Kirkby. The steering group will identify key Education, Employment and Skills priorities and explore a multi-agency response to need, with the core aim of removing barriers to success for disadvantaged young people.

Desired outcome: This work will provide a targeted school improvement focus in an area of high disadvantage.

Education, Employment and Skills Partnership

A new Learning and Skills Partnership has been introduced to ensure there is robust strategic focus on improving pathways to education, employment and skills and enhancing existing provision for the preparation for adulthood for all young people studying in Knowsley schools.

This work seeks to ensure:

- Education providers have a better understanding of needs of pupils at transition (early years to primary and primary to secondary), and consistent approaches across settings to addressing those needs
- NEET levels reduce by providing the right interventions for young people, preventing young people from becoming NEET by developing a sustainable approach to early identification and targeted support needs
- Families are better supported with information, advice and guidance that supports child development and provides access to early help

services/referral systems

- Youth services are developed with community involvement to ensure appropriate youth provision is available for all young people
- More Knowsley young people enter education, employment, or training at 16
- The achievements of all Knowsley students are celebrated and well understood by the community
- That all opportunities for extending sixth form provision in the borough are explored as part of our ambitious plans for the regeneration of town centres

Desired outcome: This work will ensure that more Knowsley young people access education, employment and training.

Family Hubs

On 2 April 2022, the Government announced that Knowsley had been selected as one of the 75 local authority areas eligible to receive a share of the £302m Best Start for Life funding which, “aims to support children and families to get the best start in life”. The Government have stated that they expect Family Hubs to be open and have “demonstrated change” by the first half of 2023.

Finalised Programme Guidance was produced in August 2022 setting out the requirements to be met in signing up to deliver Family Hubs. The overall aims of the programme are to:

- Provide support to parents and carers so they can nurture their babies and children, improving health and education outcomes for all
- Support the reduction inequalities in health and education outcomes for babies, children, and families across England by ensuring that support provided is communicated to all parents and carers, including those who are hardest to reach and/or most need support
- Build the evidence base for what works when it comes to improving health and education outcomes for babies, children, and families in different delivery contexts

These align with the three priority areas of prevention, education, and family as set out in Knowsley's Children and Families Plan 2021-24. It is expected that the total indicative allocation of funding will be around £3m distributed over three financial years.

It is proposed that a family support hub based within the Northwood community will offer early help and preventative services and signposting for vulnerable families in the first phase of this work.

Desired outcome: Services to support children and families are better integrated and easily accessible.

ACTIONS

Overview of Priorities & Strategic Actions

THEME 1 GREAT SCHOOLS & SETTINGS	THEME 2 GREAT OUTCOMES	THEME 3 GREAT PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS
WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?		
<p>All schools provide good education as defined by OFSTED.</p> <p>Broad and rich opportunities for students in and out of school.</p> <p>Increased opportunity for participation in the arts and sports.</p> <p>Sufficiency of school places and increased choice at 16.</p> <p>Strong transition for all students, especially those with SEND.</p>	<p>All pupils achieve highly.</p> <p>All settings are inclusive.</p> <p>All pupils receive the support they need.</p> <p>Students supported to attend school every day.</p> <p>Good quality mental health support for all students.</p> <p>Young people in EET increases.</p> <p>Great quality PEPs, EHCPs, SEN support plans, & care plans support achievement.</p>	<p>Co-production with children, families & professionals.</p> <p>Integrated teams working effectively at school level.</p> <p>Effective governance arrangements.</p> <p>Working together with collaboratives to improve outcomes for all our pupils.</p> <p>Sharing good practice and promoting innovation/creativity.</p> <p>System wide high-quality learning opportunities.</p>

THEME 1 GREAT SCHOOLS & SETTINGS

Work with collaboratives and MATs, Research School & Teaching School to ensure high quality professional development opportunities are available to all.

Facilitate a series of conferences on key educational issues to share good practice; develop knowledge & understanding & promote partnership work.

Work with the Regional School Commissioner, OFSTED, & other national partners to secure continual school improvement through government funding.

Increase the number of Challenge Partner Hubs in the borough to facilitate peer review, professional learning communities.

Continue to commission high quality support & coaching for school Leaders through the Pathway to Success Programme; Challenge Partner Hubs & Excellence for Everyone.

Work with MATs, Archdiocese; Diocese & other providers to ensure there is a sufficiency of school places in the borough.

THEME 2 GREAT OUTCOMES

WHAT WILL WE DO?

Refresh local school self-evaluation & accountability processes to inform our needs assessment.

Early Years

Co-produce and implement an Early Years strategy that focuses on further developing the best possible conditions for young children to develop and thrive in Knowsley.

Strengthen links between the Private Voluntary and Independent sector and the school sector to ensure children's transitions are seamless and supportive.

Provide development support and training to the sector to ensure children in the early years access high quality learning environments and first class, research informed teaching.

Support schools and settings in the implementation of The Attendance Strategy, The Speech & Language Strategy & SEND strategy.

Strengthen the multi-agency support to schools, settings, students & families through the Social Worker in Schools Programme; Mental Health Hubs; Autism in schools project.

Strengthen SEND Quality Assurance systems, invest in SEND Quality Mark & audit quality of inclusion across settings.

Refresh key pathways to support schools in meeting the needs of students, with a particular focus on Behaviour, SEMH and attendance.

Improve the quality of Careers Information, Advice and Guidance; raise the profile of pathways to education, employment and training at 16 and commission new programmes to reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training.

THEME 3 GREAT PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

Conduct regular workshops; consultation events and surveys with students, families and stakeholders to gather outcome-based data and intelligence.

Refresh Governance arrangements for Education to ensure breadth and quality membership & effective system leadership.

Strengthen student voice to evaluate the effectiveness of strategy implementation.

Work with collaboratives and MATs to facilitate the sharing of good practice & effective learning networks.

Facilitate professional learning and development opportunities for school based and multi-agency teams.

Contribute to the development of Family Hubs in Knowsley.

Support schools, colleges and services to recruit well through the promotion of local opportunity and retain great staff through high quality CPD & a culture of appreciation.





PRIORITY 1: ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CAN ACCESS GREAT SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

We will do this by:

- Working collaboratively to accurately evaluate the quality and effectiveness of all schools and settings in the borough using the Knowsley School Improvement framework on an annual basis
- Using the outcomes of self-evaluation; OFSTED inspection and school-based data to ensure a system wide understanding of performance, strengths, and priority areas and to inform the commissioning of school improvement at a local authority, trust, collaborative, and school level
- Agree with multi academy trusts and collaborative networks a commissioned programme of school improvement, utilising school based, trust, local authority, and Education investment area funding
- Support the commissioning and delivery of bespoke school improvement projects focussing on key priority areas such as Early Years; Phonics; Reading at KS3; SEN support provision
- Maximising opportunities for participation in sports and arts through local partnerships with providers, including the Shakespeare North Theatre, Liverpool Football Club, Everton in the Community as well as Borough of Culture programmes
- Conducting area reviews of sufficiency planning and establish a pupil place planning steering group which involves collaboratives and Headteachers. We will support schools with their SCAP returns through the post of School Sufficiency Officer and use this intelligence to inform future commissioning of schools
- Considering & exploring opportunities presented by the Free School Programme; full system academisation & the White Paper to increase the number of schools within the borough
- Working with schools and colleges to consider the feasibility of expanding existing educational provision to establish A level provision in the borough

- Continuing the Pathway to Success Programme to provide coaching and mentoring for school leaders
- Holding a series of conferences for schools and multi-agency professionals which promote innovate and creative solutions to local challenges based on research and good practice
- Establishing a 2nd Challenge Partner Hub in Knowsley to further promote collaboration on a regional and national level
- Utilising national partnerships to deliver Excellence for Everyone Training; NASEN Inclusion training & Behaviour & De-escalation training for school leaders and the wider workforce
- Working with maintained, special and faith schools to help inform decision making in relation to academisation, promoting allegiance to place and prioritisation of the Knowsley child and to encourage robust due diligence

What will success look like by 2026?

- All children in Knowsley will attend a primary school that has been graded as Good by OFSTED
- All young people in Knowsley will attend a Secondary school that has been graded as Good by OFSTED
- 100% of school leaders will be able to articulate the local area priorities and understand their contribution to improvement work at a local, collaborative and school level
- Government funding will have been utilised to introduce meaningful and impactful school improvement projects within the borough
- There will be a sufficiency of school places across the sector and all partners will understand their duties in relation to school sufficiency

PRIORITY 2: ALL STUDENTS HAVE THE SUPPORT, GUIDANCE, AND OPPORTUNITY THEY NEED TO ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS

We will do this by:

- Producing a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Education in Knowsley that informs strategic planning
- An Early Years strategy will be developed to further promote the critical importance of children's early years and bring together all stakeholders to develop a shared vision and understanding
- Maximising the uptake of two year old offer for all families, through enhanced engagement
- A programme of support for the early years sector will be delivered to focus on recovery and address the impact of the pandemic, providing essential support to develop transition, focus on progression for all children and ensure children's wellbeing and involvement is prioritised
- To further develop the use of the WELLCOMM tool and approach to ensure children are supported and develop their Speech and Language skills
- Commissioning of SEN and Inclusion support for Early Years departments in schools, with a local Special school providing development opportunities, training and case support for children with additional needs and the staff supporting them
- Implementation of the Attendance Strategy – We will build on the work so far since the launch of the strategy supporting a graduated multi agency approach and listening to feedback from schools, children, and families to continue to improve our approach
- Commissioning of an Attendance Avoidance Project – We will develop an emotional school avoidance strategy and commission training for schools and agencies
- Co-production and implementation of SEND & Inclusion Strategy/ Behaviour Pathway refresh-refining our approach to behaviour, trauma informed practice and self-regulation

- Introduction of Social Worker in Schools Programme – We will provide social worker support for vulnerable pupils in schools to enhance early intervention and provide a model which is sophisticated and responsive for families
- We will continue to identify, in collaboration, any vulnerable schools which we will support through the schools' monitoring and brokering grant
- Implementation of the Speech & Language Strategy to improve the identification of speech and language needs and improve the quality of provision through workforce development
- Raising the profile of the Virtual School; providing training and support to improve the quality of PEPS and ensure that accountability systems are effectively implemented to maximise the attainment, progress and opportunities for children looked after
- Embed the work of the Mental Health Hubs across all Knowsley schools and monitor the impact and effectiveness of their work
- Support schools to improve the quality of their Careers Information, Advice and Guidance curriculum through the Learning & Skills strategy; improved partnerships with local businesses & facilitating an online directory for professionals, parents & young people
- Strengthen early intervention pathways and commission bespoke programmes for young people who are not in education, employment, or training
- Work with charitable organisations such as The Right to Succeed and Steve Morgan Foundation to deliver bespoke area-based interventions to tackle entrenched socio-/economic and educational issues such as attendance and engagement and empower communities to work better together. Working with the Chamber of Commerce, Further Education Colleges, Sixth Forms and other training providers, and LCR we will ensure that local provision meets the needs of Knowsley's young people and employers
- Continue to support our Elective Home Education cohort to achieve well and further reduce barriers to participation in formal education and enrichment opportunities

What will success look like by 2026?

- 80% of Key Stage 2 students will achieve age related expectations in the combined measure
- 60% or more KS4 students will achieve Grade 4+ in English & Maths
- 95% of young people will progress to education, employment, and training at 16
- Pupil and Parental survey outcomes at school and LA level will indicate higher levels of satisfaction with support, advice, and guidance from school
- Annual staff surveys will indicate that multi-agency work has improved in schools
- Persistent absence in all schools will be in line with national averages
- Whole school attendance in the secondary sector will have improved
- More schools in Knowsley will be awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark

PRIORITY 3: ALL STAKEHOLDERS WORK EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER, MAXIMISING PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCE THROUGH AN ALLEGIANCE TO PLACE

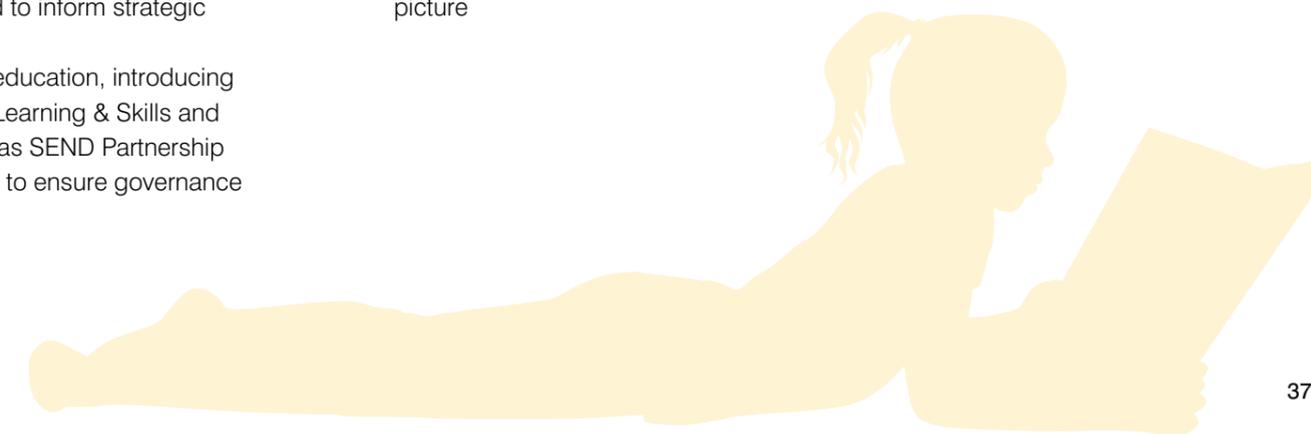
We will do this by:

- Facilitating a series of network meetings; conferences and symposiums to support professional development, share good practice and evaluate effectiveness of school improvement projects
- Develop a series of service user/stakeholder questionnaires that are integrated into our performance cycle and used to inform strategic decision making
- Refresh the governance arrangements across education, introducing new boards such as Pupil Place Planning and Learning & Skills and refining membership of existing boards – such as SEND Partnership Board & Education Strategic Partnership Board to ensure governance remains fit for purpose

- Utilise external peer review opportunities offered by external partners such as the Local Government Association and Challenge Partners to evaluate the effectiveness of our work and ensure continual improvement for all
- Formalise our partnership arrangements with Multi Academy Trusts and School Collaboratives in the borough to ensure responsibility for meeting local area priorities is shared
- Commission external school improvement activity based on our collaborative analysis of need, with a particular focus on supporting vulnerable schools
- Work with partners in health and social care to secure the effective implementation of Family Hubs in the borough
- Support the recruitment and retention of high-quality staff through the wider promotion of Knowsley the place; celebrating success through The Education Awards; implementation of Employee Assistant Programme across schools and engaging in regional and national programmes that support recruitment, retention, and well-being

What success will look like in 2026:

- All schools will demonstrate consistent attendance at key events
- Event feedback captured via survey monkey will indicate high levels of satisfaction from attendees
- System leadership will be strong as demonstrated through effective governance arrangements
- Recruitment and retention levels are at least in line with the national picture

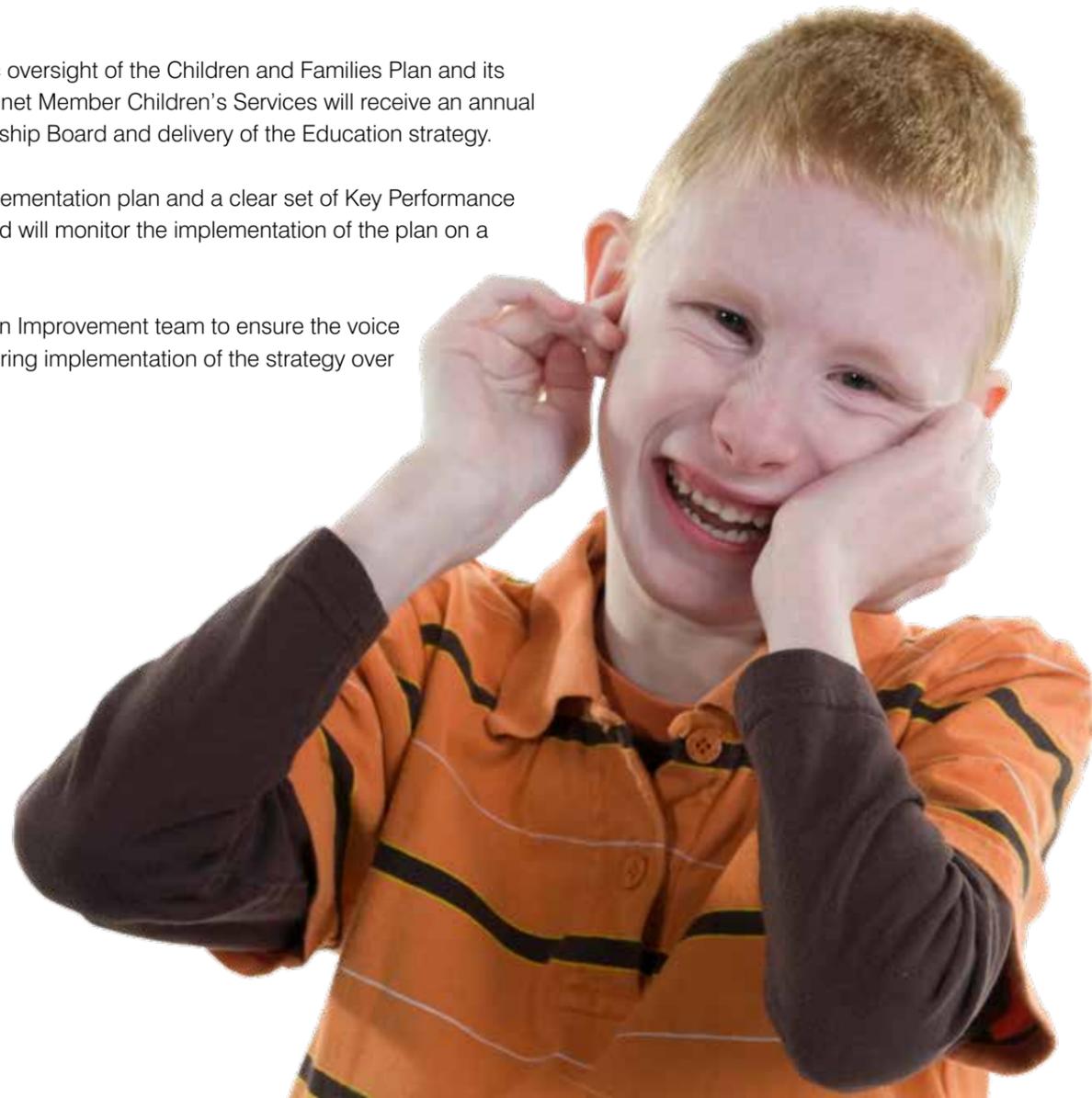


GOVERNANCE MODEL

Knowsley's Children and Families Board has strategic oversight of the Children and Families Plan and its associated strategies. The Board, chaired by the Cabinet Member Children's Services will receive an annual update on the work of the Education Strategic Partnership Board and delivery of the Education strategy.

The strategy is underpinned by a comprehensive implementation plan and a clear set of Key Performance Indicators. The Education Strategic Partnership Board will monitor the implementation of the plan on a termly basis.

Annual symposiums will be facilitated by the Education Improvement team to ensure the voice of school Leaders is captured effectively when monitoring implementation of the strategy over its life span.



PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS

To enable these priorities to be achieved we must ensure that all schools, academies, trusts and council services:

- Have allegiance to place based partnerships and improvement
- Commit to true co-production with children and families
- Demonstrate shared vision, values, and behaviours that show commitment to educational improvement in Knowsley
- Engage fully with system wide improvement priorities and buy into 'horizontal accountability systems' that promote high challenge, high support and high aspiration
- Challenge themselves and partners
- Robustly evaluate our contribution to improvement through honest and transparent self-evaluation, peer review and external assessment
- Celebrate success and acknowledge a job well done at all levels



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS/ SCORE CARD

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

	BASELINE	TARGETS		
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Primary Schools rated good or outstanding	92%	88%	98%	100%
Number of secondary schools rated good	Published Data December 22 60%	33%	67%	83%
EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE				
GLD	58.7%	71%	75%	80%
Expected levels across all Early Learning Goals	56.6%	69%	75%	80%
Speech and Communication	73.7%	82.1%	85%	90%
KEY STAGE 1				
Phonics	69.1%	82%	88%	90%
Reading	61.7%	73%	75%	80%
Writing	51.4%	65%	70%	78%
Maths	64.7%	73%	75%	80%

	BASELINE	TARGETS		
	2022	2023	2024	2025
KEY STAGE 2				
Combined Reading, writing, maths	58.8%	63%	72%	80%
Reading	74.7%	74%	78%	80%
Writing	69.6%	78%	80%	83%
Maths	71.6%	79%	85%	87%
KEY STAGE 4				
Progress 8 score per pupil	0.87	0.55	0.45	0.40
Attainment 8 score per pupil	36.0	37.8	40.0	45%
9-4 English and Maths	46.0%	51.9%	50.0%	60%
Entered Ebacc	25.5%	20.6%	29.0%	35%
Number of children registered with SLCN	28.0	28.0%	22%	15%

	BASELINE	TARGETS		
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Persistent absence:	Published Data Aut 21/Spr 22			
Primary	21.3%	20.8%	15%	8%
Secondary	39.8%	40.9%	25%	12%
Special	43.9%	40.09%	25%	10%
Parental preference:				
Primary	88%	88%	89%	90%
Secondary	81.9%	84%	86%	88%
Exclusions/Suspensions:	Published Data Autumn 2021			
Permanent Exclusions	12	8	6	6
Suspensions	505	450	400	380
PEP completion	94%	95%	96%	97%
Number of Young People:	Published Data December 22			
EET	93.5%	94%	94.5%	20.0%
NEET	6.5%	6.0%	5.5%	5.0%
Care Leavers NEET	45.0%	35.0%	30%	???



