

Report Title:	Standards and Quality of Education – A Review of the Academic Year 2021-22
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Carroll, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education, Health, Mental Health and Transformation.
Meeting and Date:	30 th March 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Kevin McDaniel, Executive Director of People Services and Lin Ferguson, AfC Director of Children’s Services
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the progress across the Borough’s schools during the academic years 2021-22, summarising the available qualitative and quantitative data that is contained in the Education Pack 2021-22 and other appendices. It is of note that attainment data has not been published nationally for specific groups of pupils and the results are not comparable to pre-pandemic years due to the pandemic.

This report outlines some of the support provided by the Education Service and the next priority steps for continued improvement in education to give every pupil the best chance of success.

The priorities for further action will help the borough achieve its corporate objective of ‘Thriving Communities’ by making it easier for children and young people to achieve their ambitions and fulfil their potential.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Congratulates local schools on their continued success.**
- ii) Endorses the key priorities set out in section 2.87.**
 - Maintain school improvement focus on all schools.
 - Continued focus on disadvantaged pupil plans and outcomes.
 - Transform therapy services with health for additional needs.
 - Designated Schools Grant finance management.
 - Inclusion and Access for Pupils who may be vulnerable to missing education.
 - SEND Ofsted Inspection.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Background

- 2.1 This is the twentieth annual report on the quality of education in the borough. The last report was reviewed in March 2022 by Cabinet. The report presents

an analysis of the performance of pupils in state funded schools located within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in the academic year 2021-22 against national and statistical neighbours. Several key education terms are described in Appendix 1 (The Education Data Pack 2021-22) along with the nationally published education data.

2.2 This report highlights several areas:

- Current position of Ofsted inspection results for schools and other settings.
- Key stage 4 attainment (teacher-assessed).
- Pupil absence levels
- Elective Home Education
- Current exclusion statistics for schools.
- Progress in tracking the participation of 16- and 17-year-old students.
- NEET data (Young people not in education, employment, or training).
- Current status of our Education Inclusion Service.
- Current status of our SEND (Special Education Needs and Disability) Services.
- SEND Improvement.
- Current status of our SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) Service.

Ofsted judgements of school quality

2.3 The percentage of schools judged to be Good or Outstanding in RBWM was 97% in January 2021. Since January 2021, a further 10 schools have been inspected which has resulted in maintaining the percentage of schools judged to be Good or Outstanding as 97%, well above the national average 86%. 22 (33%) schools are Outstanding above the national average of 18% for Outstanding schools.

2.4 Since January 2021, Ofsted have inspected 10 schools. Of the 10 schools inspected, three schools (Bisham Academy, Dedworth Middle Academy and Eton Wick First school) have increased their Ofsted judgement from Requires Improvement to Good, so 64 schools in the Royal Borough are currently judged to be Good or Outstanding.

2.5 There is only one school in the Royal Borough that currently has a judgement of Requires Improvement. This is a maintained school, and Riverside Primary School is expecting an Ofsted Inspection this academic year and we are confident in the improvements Riverside have made.

2.6 All Saints Junior CofE School was judged to be Inadequate in February 2022 and a rapid improvement plan was put in place. All external assessments were showing positive impact on the areas for improvement up to December 2022. This school converted to an Academy on 1st January 2023 under the Department of Education sponsorship route and therefore is no longer a maintained school and is currently out of the Ofsted cycle of inspection.

2.7 School link advisers continue to ensure that there are robust Ofsted action plans in place with all schools seeking to improve their judgement to at least good and school link advisers continue to monitor progress for those schools currently good or outstanding to maintain and improve standards.

2.8 Since September 2019, all schools have been judged on the new Ofsted framework, which has a knowledge-based curriculum focus. The Link Advisors worked with schools prior to the new framework being released to ensure all schools have a broad-balanced curriculum. The curriculum provides all pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to develop into well-rounded, informed individuals. The new Ofsted framework means all Outstanding schools are no longer exempt from Ofsted Inspections. Some of these schools in the Borough have not had an Ofsted Inspection for twelve plus years. The risk is that leadership in most of the schools has changed and these schools were inspected under previous Ofsted Frameworks. School link advisers are working with maintained schools judged as Outstanding to ensure successful judgement outcomes.

2.9 A recent Schools Week article published that four out five schools will be downgraded from outstanding and the current national statistic states that the majority, (62%) became good, but over 17% fell to Requires Improvement and 4% fell to inadequate. (<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/four-in-five-outstanding-schools-lose-top-ofsted-grade/>). Currently we have had two schools in RBWM keep the outstanding grade and one declined too good in recent inspections.

Early Years

2.10 Currently, we have 70 Independent Private and Voluntary Nurseries (PVI) in RBWM. Ten of these are new providers and have not yet been inspected by Ofsted. With the exception of those ten, 57 (95%) PVI are judged as Good or Outstanding. Three PVI (5%) are judged as Requires Improvement.

2.11 Nursery classes attached to schools are not inspected separately. The Ofsted judgements for the Borough's three maintained nursery schools are not included in the figures in point 2.10. All three of our maintained nursery schools are currently judged as Outstanding and they contribute to our 97% of Good/Outstanding school Ofsted percentage.

Disadvantaged pupils

2.12 In November 2022, schools attended our first face-to-face Pupil Premium (PP) network meeting of this academic year. The focus was on ensuring that schools publish their updated strategies in the new Department for Education (DfE) format which needed to be on the school websites by the 31 December 2022. A key change is that this format requires schools to demonstrate they have considered evidence when developing their Pupil Premium Strategy.

2.13 The focus for schools currently, therefore, is ensuring they: have identified their pupils' needs; are using strong evidence to support their strategy; and have started the implementation of the revised strategy post pandemic.

2.14 We will continue with termly PP Network Meetings, free of charge to our schools, to support Pupil Premium leads to: share good local practice; keep their three year plans up to date; inform them of any changes to guidance and, where possible, having speakers in with a range of expertise in this area.

2.15 Research is showing that the pandemic has led to a growing gap nationally between our disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers according to a research piece by the Education Endowment Foundation (<https://www.nfer.ac.uk/news-events/press-releases/disadvantage-attainment-gap-remains-wide-after-pandemic-reading-skills-particularly-affected/>). Staff in

RBWM schools are also reporting this. The PP Network will focus on the impact of recovery initiatives such as the use of tutoring during the current academic year.

- 2.16 Given that our disadvantaged gap in RBWM is widening. Our Phonic results for disadvantaged have widened by 10 percentage points and this has followed through to Key stage 1 results. Research is showing that the drive towards Quality First Teaching is having a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils catching up from the pandemic, the School Improvement Team have been in discussions with Tom Sherrington (Walkthrus) to put together an exciting year long, teacher development package.
- 2.17 The aim of the project is to support schools to develop their use of instructional coaching using Walkthrus as a tool for teacher development. The project is planned to run for a year starting with a launch for school leaders early in June 2023 to enable the project to align with School Development Plan objectives and Pupil Premium priorities for 2023-24. The project will then involve monthly training days with Tom Sherrington using a blended approach of face to face and virtual sessions. This will be open to school leaders, middle leaders, coaches/mentors, and teachers. This incurs a cost to each school and an expression of interest has so far resulted in 29 schools signing up to the programme.
- 2.18 The Department for Work and Pensions announced the launch of a £170m COVID Winter Grant Scheme (CWGS) in November 2020. The CWGS aims to support children and families in need with food and household essentials over the winter period. RBWM has provided vouchers to all Free School Meal children and young people throughout each holiday period since this began. This was replaced by the Household Support Fund in October 2021 and those eligible for Free School Meals again received vouchers worth £40 per child for this winter break. These vouchers have been delivered via schools through a coordinated scheme operated by the Council's Education Team. This funding will continue in 2023/24 as funding has been confirmed by Department for Work and Pensions.
- 2.19 FUEL is a Department of Education funded free holiday activity and food programme. It offers participants the opportunity to take part in a range of fun activities and have a nutritious meal during school holiday periods. To be eligible to attend the programme, children and young people must receive benefits related to Free School Meals and be of school age. RBWM ran a summer and winter programme for our disadvantaged children and young people in 2022. The Fuel Summer 2022 programme had 4791 attendances and feedback has been very positive.

Key Stage 4 attainment

- 2.20 This academic year saw the return of the summer exam series, after they had been cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, where alternative processes were set up to award grades (centre assessment grades, known as CAGs).
- 2.21 Whilst year on year comparisons are unhelpful for estimating school improvement, they do provide a degree of context.
- 2.22 The latest headlines are as follows, for 2021/22:

- Overall, 55% of pupils in RBWM achieved English and Maths GCSE at grade 5 or above. State funded schools nationally achieved 49.6%.
- RBWM is rated as the 35th Local Authority on this measure.
- The percentage of RBWM pupils attaining English and Maths GCSE at grade 4 or above is 76.2%. This is well above the state funded national figure of 68.8%.
- The average Attainment 8 score across RBWM was 51.1. This compares to 48.7 for state-schools nationally.
- 45.4% of RBWM pupils were entered for all elements of the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) in 2022, above the national figure of 38.8%.
- The England state-maintained Average Pont Score for the Ebacc was 4.27, and for RBWM 4.57. RBWM was ranked 36th best Local Authority on this measure.

School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT)

- 2.23 RBWM has been running a School-centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) Programme for many years to help with recruitment of teachers in RBWM (Grow our own). The school-led teacher training programme leads to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). SCITT teacher training is one of the most popular ways to gain QTS, offering trainees a chance to get hands-on teaching experience in at least two schools within RBWM.
- 2.24 Last academic year (2021-2022), RBWM SCITT successfully trained 30 teachers: 20 Primary and 10 Secondary. 100% went onto employment in teaching. In February 2022 RBWM (SCITT) was Ofsted Inspected and this resulted in a 'Good' judgement.
- 2.25 Recruitment has been challenging this year both nationally and locally and the current cohort (2022-2023), is made up of 24 trainees, 13 primary and 11 secondaries.
- 2.26 September 2022 is the second year of the Early Career Framework to support Early Career Teachers over the first 2 years of their career. This has replaced a one-year programme for Newly Qualified Teachers. RBWM currently have 132 Early Career Teachers with Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Special Schools split into two cohorts. Cohort one had 71 and Cohort two 61.
- 2.27 The DfE has published its response to the initial teacher training (ITT) market review report in 2021. The central recommendation is that all ITT providers implement a new set of quality requirements and that a robust accreditation process should take place to ensure that all providers meet the requirements in full, both at the point of accreditation, and on a continuing basis. However, in September 2022, the Department for Education awarded the RBWM (SCITT) accreditation to deliver ITT from 2024-25 under the new quality requirement process. This is an outstanding achievement for this service.

Absence data

- 2.28 Overall absence is measured by the % of half day sessions missed. COVID restrictions were lifted on attendance from 8th March 2021 for all pupils, four school weeks prior to the end of term. Due to the disruption faced during the spring term, caution should be taken when comparing data to previous years (table 1).

Table 1: Overall and persistent absence

	Overall Absence (%)			% Persistent absentees		
	2017/8	2018/9	2020/1	2017/8	2018/9	2020/1
England Primary	4.2	3.9	3.6	8.7	8.3	8.8
Statistical Neighbours Primary	3.9	3.6	3.0	7.1	6.6	6.7
RBWM Primary	3.8	3.8	3.1	6.6	7.1	6.5
England Secondary	5.5	5.5	5.5	13.9	13.6	14.8
Statistical Neighbours Secondary	5.3	5.2	4.9	12.7	12.0	12.5
RBWM Secondary	5.0	5.0	4.9	10.9	11.0	12.6

Source DfE SFR

- RBWM attendance continues to be better than national.
- RBWM Primary School attendance level has increased in line with national, resulting in a small ranking change from equal 24th Local Authority in 2019 to equal 18th LA in 2021.
- Secondary School attendance level increased slightly compared to 2018/19. RBWM's attendance ranking has increased from equal 28th Local Authority in 2019 to equal 21st Local Authority in 2021.

Persistent Absenteeism

- 2.29 A pupil enrolment is identified as a persistent absentee if they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions.

RBWM figures continue to be better than national and are in line with statistical neighbours:

Education Welfare

- 2.30 The Education Welfare Team continue to support schools with persistent absence in schools through a traded service. The service conducts regular attendance/register checks with the allocated school. It provides the school with an allocated Education Welfare Officer who supports the young person, family and school. The service works closely with partner agencies to support and increase school attendance.
- 2.31 Schools who do not buy into the service, can contact the Education Welfare Team for advice and guidance. All updated information and guidance is sent to all schools, regardless of buy in status. The Education Welfare Service processes Fixed Penalty Notices on cases from all schools and leads in rare cases where legal action is taken.
- 2.32 All RBWM schools can contact the service for advice and guidance on attendance in general. Support from the Child Missing from Education Officer and Elective Home Education Coordinator and legal procedures is provided to all schools, regardless of buy-in into the traded offer.
- 2.33 The New [“Working Together to Improve School Attendance”](#) was in place from September 2022 and is on target to become statutory from September 2023. This will mean an end to the current Traded Service as every school in RBWM (including Independent and Special Schools) will have an allocated Education Welfare Officer as a named point of contact. They will support schools

strategically regarding attendance and signpost to Local Authority support services for those children and young people with persistent absenteeism (<90%) and become directly involved with cases of severe absenteeism (<50%).

- 2.34 The Education Welfare Service will also provide Attendance Support Meetings to all 88 schools (including Independent) in the Borough each full term. The service will provide networking opportunities to share effective practice through Attendance Network Meetings.
- 2.35 The allocated EWO and Local Authority will provide legal support and process all Fixed Penalty Notices.
- 2.36 Schools will be required to have a robust day to day process for recording, monitoring, and following up attendance. They will be required to share data electronically with the DfE and continue to inform the EWS of pupils not attending regularly or being added to or removed from the roll. Schools will be required to publish their Attendance Policy on their website and have a named Attendance Lead on the Senior Leadership Team.
- 2.37 Schools will be required to inform a pupil's social worker and Virtual School if they have an unexplained absence or leave the school roll. In 2021/22 the LA received funding to resource the Virtual School Head to work with early years settings, schools, colleges, and social care leaders to create a culture of high aspirations that helps all children with social workers to make educational progress
- 2.38 Please see appendix 6 for a full breakdown and analysis of the Education and Welfare Service and next steps.

Permanent exclusions

- 2.39 National comparisons relate to 2020/21 academic year and come from the DfE Statistical First Release (SFR). National data for 2021/22 is expected to be published in August 2023.

Table 2: Permanent exclusions from Royal Borough schools, by year

Academic Year	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Number of pupils:#	20	20	15	31	21	18
% of total pupils:	0.09%	0.09%	0.07%	0.14%	0.09%	0.08%

SFR rounds total pupil numbers to nearest 10 until 2018/9

- 2.40 As with 2019/20, while suspensions and permanent exclusions were possible throughout the academic year, covid restrictions will have had an impact on the numbers presented and caution should be taken when comparing across years.
- 2.41 The number of permanent exclusions in RBWM has decreased to 18 in 2020/21.

- 2.42 The national exclusion rate in 2019/20 (the latest year for which data is available) was 0.05% (i.e. on average 5 students in every 10,000 were permanently excluded).
- 2.43 In 2020/21 all RBWM permanent exclusions were in the Secondary phase.

Next steps

- RBWM schools and Inclusion services to continue working together to support young people to remain in mainstream education where possible via early intervention support and measures.
 - SEMH service to continue to support both primary and secondary pupils who are at risk of further suspension/permanent exclusion.
 - Inclusion Manager to continue to support children to return to mainstream education following permanent exclusion from school by working closely with RISE alternative provision.
 - Social Workers are now invited to attend exclusion hearing meetings. The service will ensure social care colleagues are aware of children at risk of suspension/permanent exclusion.
 - As of 2022/23, the virtual school responsibilities are extended to children subject to a Child Protection and Child in Need plans. The inclusion service will join up with the virtual school, ensuring any child open to social care who has received a suspension/permanent exclusion is receiving multi-agency support and professionals are joined up with the support the child is receiving.
- 2.44 Please see appendix 2 for a full breakdown and analysis of permanent exclusion for 2021-22 by the service and next steps.

Elective Home Education

- 2.45 In 2020/21 and 2022/23, the Education Welfare Service has seen a significant increase in children and young people being Electively Home Educated (EHE) in RBWM. In 2022/23, a total of 231 children have been recorded as EHE and currently, 193 pupils are on the register and 38 have returned to school. This significant increase in referrals has also been seen nationally with fears about the pandemic given as a factor in many cases.
- 2.46 To ensure that all children and young people who are electively home educated are receiving a good level of education, we appointed an additional fixed term, full time position which is currently being funded by a one-off pandemic grant. This will need to be reviewed if the number of children and young people who are home educated does not fall back to pre-pandemic levels so that RBWM continues to fulfil its statutory duty.
- 2.47 The local authority has a duty to be satisfied that all young people are receiving a reasonable education. This includes conducting home visits; making virtual calls; liaising with the school and family and involved professionals; chasing the Education Proposal Form; and analysing the returned form to ensure we are satisfied. The DfE have recently supported a local authority in a legal case which has confirmed that the level of assurance needed is higher than just knowing that a child or young person is registered for elective home education.

2.48 It is important to highlight that the overall number of children and young people who are Electively Home Educated, does not reflect the amount in referrals on a monthly basis. For example, 10 children may return to education and 10 new referrals for home education are received. Whilst the overall number remains the same, a large amount of work is put in to supporting the children, young people and families making the transition to return to school and processing and supporting new notifications.

Pupil destination

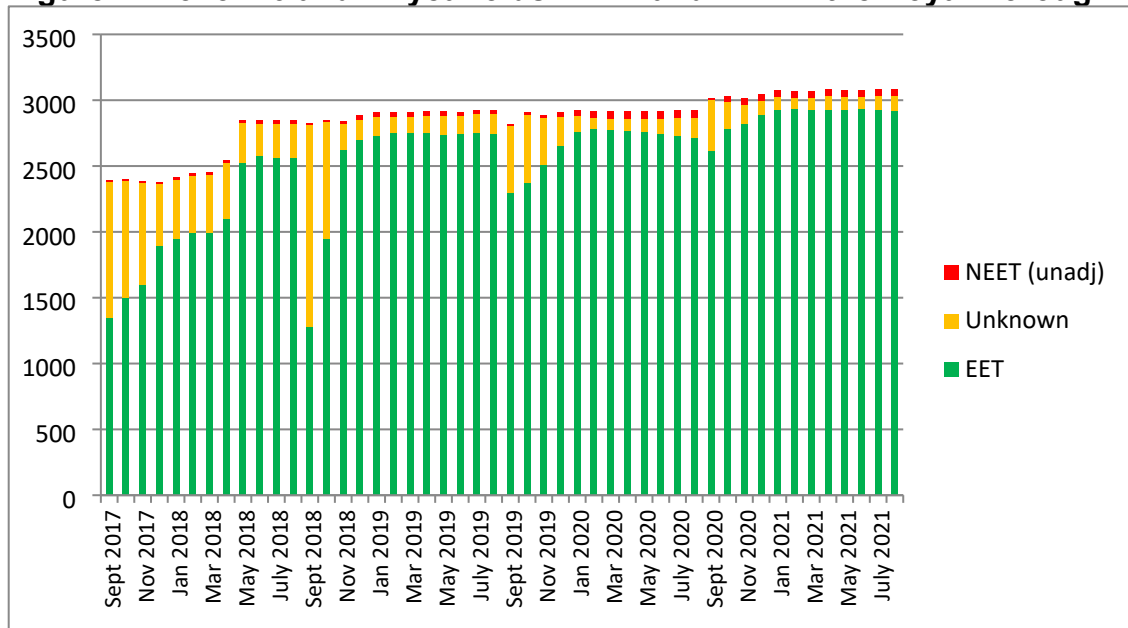
2.49 The pupil Key Stage 4 (e.g. GCSE) and 5 (e.g. A Level) destinations for 2020/21 are taken from the DfE Statistical First Release. The key points are:

- **Education and employment – at the end of Key Stage 4.** The proportion of RBWM students (95%) that went on to, or remained in, education or employment was similar to national (94%) and South East (94%)
- **Types of Institution – at the end of Key Stage 4.** The proportion of RBWM pupils in school sixth forms (56%) continues to be well above national and South East averages (38% and 39%).
- **Disadvantaged pupils – at the end of Key Stage 4.** The proportion of disadvantaged students at KS4 in sustained education or employment in RBWM was 92%, above South East and national averages (both 88%).
- **Education and employment – at the end of Key Stage 5.** The proportion of students from RBWM (school sixth forms) recorded in sustained education and/or employment in the year after A levels is 89%, three percentage points above the South East and national average. Nationally and locally the sustained destination rate declined in 2020/21 with lower numbers going into apprenticeships and employment, likely due to the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The increase in the proportion of students progressing to further education is mainly due to a change in the underlying cohort.
- **Disadvantaged pupils – at the end of Key Stage 5.** The proportion of KS5 students in RBWM schools and colleges who were disadvantaged and were in sustained education or employment/training is 68%, just below the national figure. The RBWM disadvantaged cohort at Key Stage 5 is very small, so each student contributes around ½% to the figures.

Young people Not known to be in Education, Employment & Training (NEET)

2.50 Figure 1 shows the numbers of RBWM 16–17-year-olds identified as NEET (not in Education, Employment and Training), EET (in Education, Employment and Training) and the number for which the information is unknown from September 2016.

Figure 1: No. of 16 and 17 year olds NEET and EET in the Royal Borough



2.51 The percentage unknown was 9.1% for August 2022 up from 3.7% in August 2021. This is higher than the England average of 7.0% for the same period and places Windsor and Maidenhead in the bottom quintile. The percentage unknown was 3.7% for August 2021. This is higher than the England average of 2.3% for the same period. RBWM now uses the same processes as Richmond and Kingston since moving to Achieving for Children and the proportion of 'unknown' has fallen from 19.7% in 2017.

2.52 There was a very high Not Known in year 2022 compared to year 2021. This is due to the data gaps in collecting the admissions data from Windsor & Maidenhead schools/colleges. It had a very big impact on Windsor & Maidenhead's performance. We will be working with schools more closely in the future to collect early admissions data. We have received a warning from the DfE requesting the need for a plan to improve.

Social Emotional Mental Health Service (SEMH)

2.53 The SEMH Intervention Service was established in September 2019 to reduce the risk of primary permanent exclusions and increase capacity within the Primary Schools across the Borough.

2.54 In November 2018, it was agreed by Schools Forum, following a consultation with schools, to complete a 0.5% block transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support the SEMH programme.

2.55 Since then, the service has supported 53 pupils who were at risk of exclusion across all phases of school. Only three pupils who have received support from the service have subsequently been excluded. The coach/mentor has supported all three pupils through their transition to Alternative Provision.

2.56 The SEMH Coordinator and Inclusion and Access Manager provides a reactive and relational approach to support leaders in schools, to reduce the risk of permanent exclusion for pupils with SEMH and increase capacity within schools.

- 2.57 SEMH training has been attended by 863 school staff members and 191 have received follow up or bespoke training including the ITT cohort (Initial Teacher Training).
- 2.58 The project has evolved to include a Middle/Secondary/Upper School model that is purchased through a Buy Back initiative.
- 2.59 SEMH Network Meetings were launched in September 2021. This is a virtual network meeting for the 133 SEMH Leads across the Borough by providing information sharing, new initiatives of support, examples of good practice and networking opportunities in an easily accessible way. The meetings are well attended and recorded to provide training opportunities and cascading information where necessary.
- 2.60 RBWM have purchased 65 Boxall licences for all school settings across the Borough. We are the first Borough to provide this in the country. Each setting has 300 subscriptions and can assess a child as many times as required throughout the academic year. This is tracking the impact of interventions, Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and transition for those children with SEMH across RBWM. This provides a way of tracking SEMH progress throughout a child's time in school, supports transitions between settings and aid consultation meetings see appendix 3 for service outcomes.

Next steps

- Continued funding for the SEMH intervention Project concludes July 2025 There are a few other initiatives around SEMH across the Borough which includes an application for SEMH Special School and the SEMH Early Years Hub which will commence in academic Year 2023/24.
 - Continued promotion of the Online Boxall Profile targeting secondary provision.
 - Continued evaluation of impact of the SEMH Network Meetings through feedback and participation. In addition, the opportunity for two Virtual meetings to act as an SEMH surgery to discuss individual cases.
 - Embed the Peer-on-Peer Toolkit with schools and early years settings
- 2.61 Please see Appendix 3 for a full breakdown and analysis of the SEMH service.

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Services

- 2.62 The SEND Service is responsible for carrying out statutory Education, Health & Care Assessments of children and young people with significant special educational needs in our Borough, and managing a caseload of around 1,100 children and young people with SEN. Its main role is arranging SEN provision and placement for all Children and Young People (CYP) with Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) along with coordinating multi-agency EHC Assessments for those CYP who require significant additional educational support.

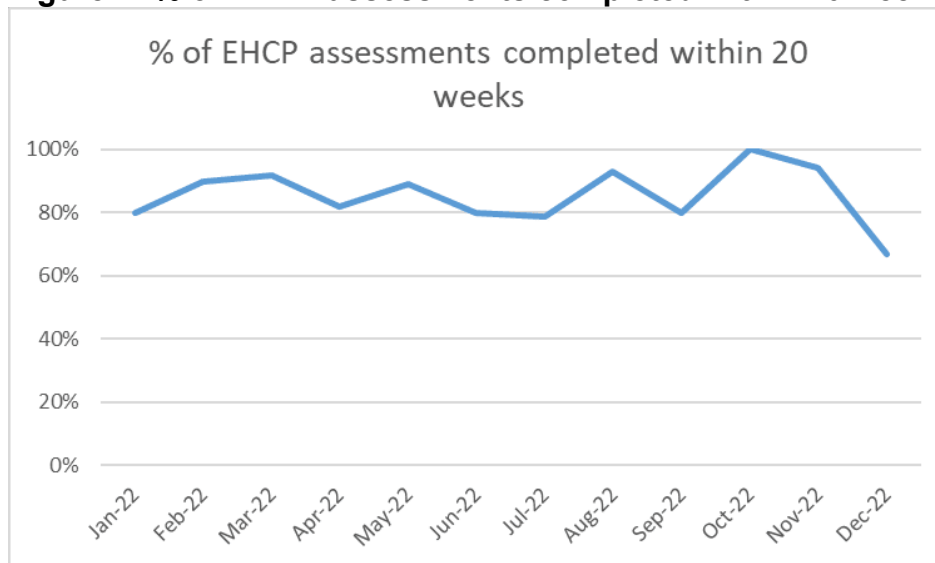
Table 3: Primary EHCP need in the Royal Borough

Primary Need	Total Pupil No.	Total Pupil No.	% Increase/ Decrease
	Dec -21	Dec -22	
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	392	443	13
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	177	195	10
Hearing Impairment	16	17	6
Moderate Learning Difficulty	85	84	-1.2
Multi-Sensory Impairment	0	0	0
Physical Disability	58	60	3
Profound & Multiple Learning	16	15	-6
Speech, Language and	176	186	6
Severe Learning Difficulty	17	19	12
Specific Learning Difficulty	46	42	-9
Visual Impairment	13	12	-8
Other	39	41	5
Total	1035	1114	

- 2.63 The highest frequency primary need in our Borough is Autism, followed by Speech & Language Needs and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties. See table 2 for full Borough breakdown of need for CYP with EHCPs.
- 2.64 Table 3 shows an increase of 8% in EHCPs across the 2022 calendar year. While national statistics are not yet available for this period, the previous year showed an increase across the country of approximately 10% so locally this is not unexpected. This significant and ongoing pressure is most likely to be due to the following factors:
- Pressure on school budgets leading to more requests for EHCPs as a way to access high needs funding.
 - An increase in Emotionally Related School Avoidance, in part due to post-pandemic factors
 - Difficulties recruiting support staff in schools making it more challenging to effectively meet the needs of all children with additional needs.
 - An increase in the complexity of children's needs.
 - Ongoing difficulties in accessing key paediatric Health services such as CAMHS and Children's Occupational Therapy.
- 2.65 The majority of CYP with EHCPs are placed in state-funded mainstream and special schools and Further Education colleges, with around 39% in mainstream schooling, 23% in state-funded special schools and 14% in Further Education colleges.
- 2.66 Around 12% of CYP with EHCPs are educated in the independent sector, which represents the highest cost placements and accounts for 26% of the overall High Needs Block expenditure.
- 2.67 The percentage of EHC assessments completed within the 20-week statutory timescale remains in the 80%-100% range across the year, compared to national averages of 60% within timeframes. This includes during the pandemic period. See figure 2 for timeline. We experienced high volume of

EHCP submitted by schools during November/December 2022 which impacted our statutory return.

Figure 2: % of EHCP assessments completed within 20 weeks



2.68 Workforce capacity issues continue to be frequently reported by several Local Authorities, with reported impacts on meeting statutory timeframes. This includes Educational Psychology and SEN Team capacity as well as that of health professionals following residual impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.69 We have appointed an Annual Review Officer to monitor and improve the completion rate of EHCP reviews and measure our compliance with statutory annual review timeframes.

2.70 The service will continue to focus on minimising the number of children and young people with an EHCP who are not able to access all of the provision in their EHC Plan. This typically occurs when schools struggle to provide the required services and relationships breakdown, resulting in the young person not accessing full-time education. The SEND Team challenge this through actions such as:

- Ensuring schools follow the statutory SEN process and arranging interim reviews to discuss placement concerns rather than moving to exclude pupils.
- Closer monitoring of annual reviews to more proactively identify where changes to placements or provision may be needed for SEN pupils.
- Regular monitoring of placements at risk / pupils out of education through fortnightly team discussions.
- Continuing to look for long term placement solutions for those children in interim/alternate placements.

Resource Base Investments

2.71 Two Resourced Provisions were opened in September 2021 to support primary and secondary aged pupils who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) with ASC as the primary need. One is at the Dedworth First/Middle School campus and the other on the Furze Platt Primary Federation campus.

- 2.72 Pupils are expected to eventually spend at least 50% of their time in school in the mainstream classrooms alongside their peers. Additional, bespoke support is provided for the remainder of the time in the Resource Provision, in smaller groups or 1:1.
- 2.73 South Ascot Village Primary School's SEN Unit for pupils with slightly more complex ASC needs is scheduled to open in September 2023. In this base, pupils are likely to be spending more than 50% of their time in the Unit rather than the mainstream school. This provides the time to deliver the additional support that the pupils require.
- 2.74 Cabinet has previously approved a new Resourced Provision at Wraysbury Primary School, which is now at the design stage.
- 2.75 Proposals for additional new SEND and AP provision are the subject of a separate report to March Cabinet "Special Educational Needs and Alternative Provision Capital Strategy", along with an update on the bid for a new Special School.
- 2.76 The planned additional capacity will ensure that fewer pupils need to be placed in specialist or independent specialist settings, possibly out of Borough.
- 2.77 Please see appendix 4 for a full breakdown and analysis of the SEND service and next steps.

Update of Statement of Action (SEND)

- 2.78 A Statement of action was written in response to the 2017 RBWM SEND inspection. After a successful revisit in October 2019, we had shown sufficient progress in 6 of the 8 areas for improvement. We are currently under the Department of Education (DFE) monitoring cycle.
- 2.79 Waiting times for Occupational Therapies (OT) and Speech and Language Therapies (SALT) remain an issue both locally and East Berkshire wide. A transformative approach is being implemented in addition to one-off waiting list investments by the Integrated Care Board (ICB).
- 2.80 The government is making an unprecedented level of investment in high needs funding with revenue funding increasing by more than 40% between 2019-20 and 2022-23. However, nationally spending is still outstripping funding. Two thirds of local authorities have deficits in their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget because of high needs cost pressures. By the end of 2020- 21, the national deficit was over £1 billion. This would equate to an average deficit across 128 authorities of £7.813M, or an average across the two thirds that have a deficit of £11.765M. RBWM has a planned deficit of £2M by March 2023.
- 2.81 RBWM has been invited to be part of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme that was announced by the Department for Education (DfE) in February last year. The DBV programme is designed to provide dedicated support and funding to help 55 local authorities with substantial deficit issues in their High Needs Block of the DSG. This aim is to reform their high needs systems, with the aim that more local authorities are on a sustainable footing. LAs are then better placed to respond to the official forthcoming special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms. There is currently £85m

allocated to this programme. A further 14 authorities – with more severe deficits – are engaged in the Safety Valve project which involves contractual arrangements with the DfE.

- 2.82 RBWM is currently on WAVE2 of the DBV programme and data collection started in December 2022. This intervention will last through to the Autumn Term. Regular meetings with the provider, Newton, are happening and we are on track with required progress. It is worth noting that this is also taking a great deal of officer time from several services.

Area SENCo and SEND Strategy

- 2.83 A new Five year SEND Strategy was created through consultation with key stakeholders, including parents and carers and has now been published. It will be launched at the Inclusion Summit February 2023.
- 2.84 The SEND Steering Board continues to be a multi-agency Board with representation from parents and carers, schools, LA SEND and education services as well as social care and health. SEND Strategy Implementation work streams report directly to the board.
- 2.85 The SEND data dashboard is regularly updated and monitored. The data gathered reflects information from a wide variety of services and external providers. Through these multi-agency meetings there is opportunity for support and challenge as well as analysis of trends and action planning as a result. This robust process will continue.
- 2.86 After our Council Disability for Children training, it was identified the SEND data was focused on service evaluation. Alongside this, new outcome led approaches have been added to give intelligence on the lived experience of RBWM residents.
- 2.87 The Area SENCo and our SEND Consultant are currently working on improving our SEND services by building a community of practice through initiatives to; support SENCos, share good practice and celebrate inclusion. (appendix: 5).

These include:

- Inclusion Quality Mark or SEND Peer Review.
- Annual SEND Conference.
- Localised SENCo clusters.
- Termly SENCo Leadership Forum.
- Cross-phase SEND register moderation Clusters.
- The Collaborative responsibility resource and promotional staff meetings.
- Implementation and monitoring of RBWM's 5-year SEND strategy.
- To mitigate the risk of needs remaining unmet because of the waiting times.

Summary of key priorities

- 2.88 Based on the analysis above, the following items are the key priorities for the Council to continue to ensure that all pupils in the Borough get a Good education.

Table 4: Key priorities for the council in Education

Key Priorities	Next Steps
Maintain school improvement focus on all schools	To continue to support schools to maintain and improve their Ofsted ratings.
Continued focus on disadvantaged pupil plans and outcomes	Through network meetings, continue to support schools to establish Quality First Teaching approaches for their disadvantaged pupils. Set-up cluster groups of disadvantaged networks within schools to moderate and compare data and share good practice. To encourage schools to sign up to the Tom Sherrington Quality Teach First programme
Transform therapy services with health for additional needs	The Area SENCo and the SEND Team Manager will continue to work closely with Berkshire Health Foundation Trust (BHFT), CYPIT and ICB colleagues on the East Berkshire Integrated Therapies model.
Designated Schools Grant finance management reduce deficit	Work on an action plan to address areas of high needs spending including out of Borough and Independent places and also completing the DfE Delivering Better Values Programme.
Inclusion and Access for Pupils who may be vulnerable to missing education	<p>The EHE coordinator will work closely with all families, children and school where a child is either newly home educated or has been home educated for a period of time to encourage a return to school.</p> <p>Children who are at risk of exclusion or have been permanently excluded will be supported by the education service including the Inclusion & Access Manager. Support will be provided to help young people access early help and prevention services.</p> <p>Where a young person is ready to return to mainstream education, the Fair Access Panel will work effectively with all schools to ensure a child returns to mainstream education as quickly as possible.</p>
SEND Ofsted Inspection	Services will prepare for the New Area SEND Ofsted Inspection, likely to be in the Summer Term 2023. Education Service currently working on Self Evaluation Document, Quality Assurance and the evidence documents required for Annex A.

Options

Table 5: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Congratulates local schools on their continued success. This is the recommended option	Give schools the recognition of producing high-quality education in the borough, with of 97% of

Option	Comments
	pupils receiving a good or better education
Endorses the key priorities set out in Table 3 at paragraph 2.87. This is the recommended option	To address our development areas and improve services to meet the growing needs
Do Nothing This is not the recommended option	Statutory responsibilities will not be met and the quality of education will decrease

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Table 6: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Maintain school improvement focus on all schools (Ofsted results % Good/Outstanding)	<86%	National 86%	>86%	97%	2023 academic year
Continued focus on disadvantaged pupil plans and outcomes (Percentage gap decrease between disadvantaged and peers)	>10%	10%	<10%	5%	2023 academic year
Transform therapy services with health for additional needs decrease waiting times for OT (currently at 248)	>30%	Reduce by 30%	<30%	50% reduction	2023 academic year
Designated Schools Grant finance management reduce deficit	1.3%	1.3%	<1.0%	<0.7%	2024 Financial Year
Inclusion and Access for Pupils who may be vulnerable to missing education (Permanent exclusion figures)	>30%	Reduce by 30%	<30%	60% reduction on exclusion	2023 academic year

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 The level of overspend in the High Needs services remains unaffordable for the Council, therefore, it is important that all local partners continue to work to bring the cost of high needs services back in line with the Government grant allocation.

- 4.2 The budget relies on: promoting independence and use of the local education offer; managing increasing demand for services through increased early intervention; working with partners to ensure that everyone involved in a child's education is confident in supporting children with additional needs; and increasing the amount of local provision, ensuring that provision is aligned to need.
- 4.3 The financial trajectory will need to be carefully monitored in 2022/23 and 2023/24 to ensure that the level of spending on education services is affordable. Schools Forum and schools will have a clear role in monitoring the position and in implementing the plans in partnership
- 4.4 The DSG conditions of grant requires that any Local Authority with an overall deficit on its DSG account, or whose DSG surplus has substantially reduced during the year, must be able to present a plan to the Department for Education (DfE) for managing their future DSG spend.
- 4.5 As part of future budget setting 2024/25 historic cross charging between the DSG and General Fund will be considered with the expectation of services being realigned accordingly. This will ensure full compliance with regulations.
- 4.6 Based on current demand, pricing and estimated future grant funding the current projected cumulative deficit for the DSG by 31st March 2023 is in the region of £2m.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Threat or risk	Impact with no mitigations or all mitigations fail.	Likelihood of risk occurring with no mitigations.	Mitigations currently in place	Mitigations proposed	Impact of risk with mitigations	Likelihood of risk occurring with mitigations
Schools are not improving at the rate required to remain in or achieve the top quartile performance. Schools are judged as below “Good” by Ofsted. School attainment rates insufficient to keep schools competitive, resulting in smaller schools with higher probability of further performance decline.	Major	Medium	The actions set out in Table 3.	The actions set out in Table 3.	Major	Low
The school improvement grant, which currently comes to the local authority, could be delegated to schools. This would mean that there is no grant to run a school improvement service.	Major	High	None	The grant funding for 2023-24 has ceased and alternative funding is required through Schools Forum or other education budgets		
Waiting times for occupational therapy (OT) are increasing. As a result, too many children and young people’s needs continue to be unmet.	Major	High	Working closely with commissioners, therapy providers and school settings to broaden training offer and ordinarily available provision for those on the waiting list.	An East Berkshire project team has been established to develop a sustainable model for delivery of OT.	High	Medium
New Area SEND Inspection Framework – Inspection due in Summer Term 2023. There is likely to be a particular focus on Alternative Provision. Risk that we	Major	High	Working group set-up to be Ofsted ready across services	Preparation for SEND inspection by service areas, with a particular focus on Alternative Provision.	Moderate	Moderate

could be placed on a statement of action plan						
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7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 Climate change/sustainability. There are no climate change/sustainability risks arising from this report.
- 7.2 Data Protection/GDPR. There are no data protection or GDPR implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 No consultation has been required for the completion of this report. Consultation will be carried out with stakeholders such as Youth Council and Parents for ongoing improvements.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1.1 No implementations arising from this report.

APPENDICES

- 9.1.2 This report is supported by 6 appendices:

Contained in paper copies

- Appendix 1: The Education Data Pack 2021-22
- Appendix 2: Permanent Exclusion Service
- Appendix 3: SEMH Service
- Appendix 4: SEND Service
- Appendix 5: Area SENCo Service
- Appendix 6: Education Welfare Service

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 9.1.3 This report is supported by no background documents:

10. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>			
<i>Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	14/02/2023	
Emma Duncan	Director of Law, Strategy & Public Health/ Monitoring Officer	14/02/2023	14/02/2023
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	23/02/2023	23/02/2023
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)		

Mandatory:	<i>Procurement Manager (or deputy) – if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>		
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager		
Mandatory:	<i>Data Protection Officer (or deputy) – if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>		
Samantha Wootton	Data Protection Officer	14/02/2023	
Mandatory:	<i>Equalities Officer – to advise on EqiA, or agree an EqiA is not required</i>		
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer	14/02/2023	17/02/2023
Other consultees:			
Lin Ferguson	AFC Director of Children Services	23/01/2023	01/02/2023
Directors (where relevant)			
Tony Reeves	Interim Chief Executive	14/02/2023	
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	14/02/2023	
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of People Services	07/02/2023	10/02/2023

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation	15/02/2023
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
For information	No	No

Report Author: Clive Haines - 07825862200

Appendix E: Equality Impact Assessment

For support in completing this EQIA, please consult the EQIA Guidance Document or contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

www.rbwm.gov.uk



1. Background Information

Title of policy/strategy/plan:	Quality of Education Report
Service area:	Education
Directorate:	Children Services

Provide a brief explanation of the proposal:

- What are its intended outcomes?
- Who will deliver it?
- Is it a new proposal or a change to an existing one?

This report sets out the progress across the Borough's schools, summarising the available qualitative and quantitative data that is contained in the Education Pack 2021-22 and other appendices. It is of note that attainment data has not been published nationally for specific groups of pupils and the results are not comparable.

This report outlines some of the support provided by the Education Service and the next priority steps for continued improvement in education to give all pupils the best chance of success.

2. Relevance Check

Is this proposal likely to directly impact people, communities or RBWM employees?

- If No, please explain why not, including how you've considered equality issues.
- Will this proposal need a EQIA at a later stage (for example, for a forthcoming action plan)?

Future actions plans may result in EQIA

If 'No', proceed to 'Sign off'. If unsure, please contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

3. Evidence Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

<p>Who will be affected by this proposal? For example, users of a particular service, residents of a geographical area, staff.</p>
<p>Among those affected by the proposal, are protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership) disproportionately represented? For example, compared to the general population do a higher proportion have disabilities?</p>
<p>What engagement/consultation has been undertaken or planned?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How has/will equality considerations be taken into account?• Where known, what were the outcomes of this engagement?
<p>What sources of data and evidence have been used in this assessment? Please consult the Equalities Evidence Grid for relevant data. Examples of other possible sources of information are in the Guidance document.</p>

4. Equality Analysis

Please detail, **using supporting evidence**:

- How the protected characteristics below might influence the needs and experiences of individuals, in relation to this proposal.
- How these characteristics might affect the impact of this proposal.

Tick positive/negative impact as appropriate. If there is no impact, or a neutral impact, state 'Not Applicable'

More information on each protected characteristic is provided in the Guidance document.

	Details and supporting evidence	Potential positive impact	Potential negative impact
Age	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		
Disability	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		
Sex	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		
Race, ethnicity and religion	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		
Pregnancy and maternity	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		
Marriage and civil partnership	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		

Armed forces community	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		
Socio-economic considerations e.g. low income, poverty	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		
Children in care/Care leavers	The Service focuses on the provision needed to meet the required support in schools and settings. There are no decisions relating to this characteristic.		

5. Impact Assessment and Monitoring

If you have not identified any disproportionate impacts and the questions below are not applicable, leave them blank and proceed to Sign Off.

<p>What measures have been taken to ensure that groups with protected characteristics are able to benefit from this change, or are not disadvantaged by it? For example, adjustments needed to accommodate the needs of a particular group</p>
N/A
<p>Where a potential negative impact cannot be avoided, what measures have been put in place to mitigate or minimise this? For planned future actions, provide the name of the responsible individual and the target date for implementation.</p>
N/A
<p>How will the equality impacts identified here be monitored and reviewed in the future? See guidance document for examples of appropriate stages to review an EQIA.</p>
N/A

6. Sign Off

Completed by: Clive Haines	Date: 25/01/2023
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Approved by: Lin Ferguson	Date: 25/01/2023
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If this version of the EQIA has been reviewed and/or updated:

Reviewed by:	Date:
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