

## Progress Report

### 2018/19 Early Years Improvement Plan - overall impact and future challenges Actions suggested for the 2019-2021 “Best Start” Strategy

#### A. Background Data

##### 1. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) results 2018

In 2018, 69.7% of Nottinghamshire pupils achieved a good level of development which represents an increase of 1.5 percentage points (from 68.2%) since 2017. National data suggests 71.5% of children achieved this measure which is a 0.8 percentage point increase (from 70.7%) since 2017.

Data for statistically similar local authority neighbours shows that Nottinghamshire is ranked 13<sup>th</sup> out of 16 councils. Nottinghamshire is currently working with our closest neighbours Staffordshire and Derbyshire to share learning.

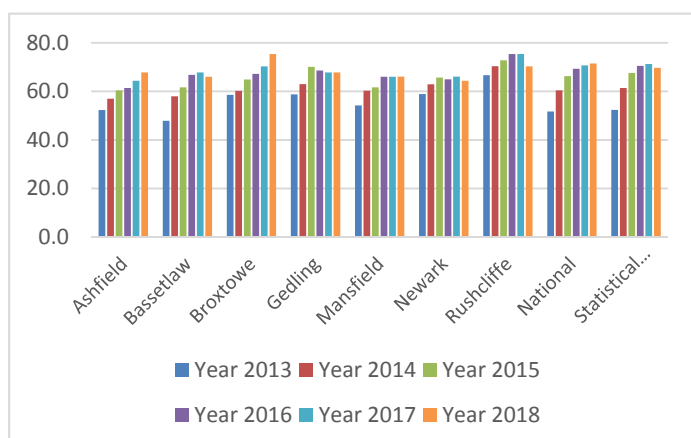
**Figure 1:** Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results for Nottinghamshire and Statistical Neighbours 2018

Area	Recent Trend	Neighbour Rank	Count	Value	95% Lower CI	95% Upper CI
England	↑	-	466,668	71.5	71.4	71.6
Fourth less deprived decile (IMD2015)	-	-	6,582	69.7	68.8	70.6
Kent	↑	15	13,614	75.1	74.5	75.8
Staffordshire	↑	1	7,146	75.0	74.1	75.8
Essex	↑	10	12,570	73.8	73.1	74.4
Warwickshire	↑	4	4,720	72.3	71.2	73.4
Somerset	↑	14	4,134	71.8	70.6	73.0
Norfolk	↑	11	6,700	71.6	70.6	72.5
Suffolk	↑	9	5,735	71.5	70.5	72.4
Northamptonshire	↑	7	6,792	71.3	70.3	72.2
Worcestershire	↑	6	4,605	71.2	70.1	72.3
Derbyshire	↑	2	5,911	70.8	69.8	71.8
Leicestershire	↑	12	5,534	70.8	69.8	71.8
Cumbria	↑	13	3,535	70.0	68.7	71.3
Nottinghamshire	↑	-	6,582	69.7	68.8	70.6
Lancashire	↑	3	9,796	69.5	68.7	70.3
Gloucestershire	↑	8	4,743	69.2	68.1	70.2
Lincolnshire	↑	5	5,440	69.1	68.1	70.1

##### 2. District Progress

Progress to improve children’s development has been increasing steadily since 2013, however there are some local variations, which often reflect the socioeconomic status of an area. Rushcliffe continues to be the only district that performs better than the national average; and Broxtowe and Ashfield saw the greatest improvement since 2017.

**Figure 2:** % Children Achieving a Good Level of Development – district progress 2013-2018



Ashfield continues to have the widest gap against national progress, however this has reduced from 7.9 percentage points in 2016, 6.3 in 2017 and 5.2 this year. Ashfield and Broxtowe Districts have seen the greatest improvement since 2017.

**Figure 3:** % of children achieving a Good Level of Development by District - progress 2017 to 2018 and attainment gap against National progress.

District	Pupils	% GLD	Change from 2016	GLD Gap between national
Gedling	1,380	67.8	-0.8	-2.9
Mansfield	1,433	66.0	0.0	-4.7
Rushcliffe	1,340	75.4	0.0	4.7
Bassetlaw	1,357	67.8	1.0	-2.9
Newark	1,352	66.1	1.1	-4.6
Nottinghamshire	9,738	68.2	1.1	-2.5
Ashfield	1,520	64.4	3.0	-6.3
Broxtowe	1,356	70.3	3.1	-0.4

*Good level of development by school district and percentage point increases from 2016. Change from 2016 shading is based on national increases from 2016. Gap shading is based on district / national gap.*

### 3. Attainment Gap

When examining 2018 data for children who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), it is clear that poorer children do less well than their peers. In 2018, 49.9% of children eligible for FSM in Nottinghamshire achieved a good level of development. When comparing Nottinghamshire's progress against statistical and regional neighbouring authorities, it is evident that most local authorities are seeing similar results with the exception of Kent where 60% of children eligible for FSM achieved a good level of development.

In 2018, the attainment gap for pupils eligible for FSM attaining a good level of development and their peers had widened slightly. The LA gap now stands at 23.0 percentage points which is a 0.4 percentage point increase from the 22.6 percentage points reported in 2017.

### 4. Children most at risk of poor outcomes

2018 EYFS results highlight key groups less likely to achieve a good level of development. Results reflect national data with the same groups consistently being identified as 'at risk'.

Following the EYFS results in 2017, 2 specific projects were progressed to focus on key priority groups including Polish children across the County and White British Boys in Ashfield. This work is ongoing for 2019/20 and progress should be reflected in 2019 EYFS results.

**Summer born** – in 2018, 80% of all children born in the autumn term achieved a good level of development compared to 59% of children born in the summer term.

**Boys** - in 2018, 76.8% of girls achieved a good level of development compared with 62.8% for boys. Analysis of the Early Years Foundation score by gender identifies a 14% point gap between boys and girls. This gap has narrowed from 15.6% in 2017 and progress for boys has improved by 2.1% in 2017/18.

**Summer Born Boys** - summer born boys perform less well with 51.1% achieving a good level of development compared with 71.2% for autumn born boys. Autumn born girls was the highest performing group at 85.9%. All groups witnessed an increase from 2017 outcomes.

**Summer Born White British Boys eligible for FSM** - analysis for White British free school meal eligible boys by term of birth shows a marginal increase from 2017. Outcomes remain low at 40.4% achieving this threshold of a good level of development. When broken down by term of birth the White British FSM eligible boys cohort achieve broadly 30 percentage points lower than the equivalent cohort who are not eligible for free school meals. The gap also widens the younger the pupils are (e.g. the gap for summer born pupils is 32.8 percentage points while the gap for autumn born pupils is 23.6).

**Figure 4:** 2018 Early Years Foundation Stage results – White British Boys eligible for Free School Meals by term of birth.

*White British boys who are eligible for free school meals:*

Term of Birth	2017		2018		Increase from 2017
	Pupils	% GLD	Pupils	% GLD	
Autumn	158	51.9	189	54.5	2.6
Spring	161	37.3	167	40.7	3.4
Summer	167	30.5	156	23.1	-7.4
<b>Group Total</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>0.7</b>
<b>All Pupils</b>	<b>9,738</b>	<b>68.2</b>	<b>9,432</b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>1.5</b>

*2018 GLD shading based on 2018 national GLD figure of 71.5%, difference shading based on pupil group increases between 2017-18.*

**Ethnicity** - Ethnic groups show a wide spread in the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development. White and Asian pupils have the highest attainment at 84.5% achieving this threshold compared with 25.0% for Traveller of Irish Heritage after removal of groups with small cohort numbers. There is a difference of 59.5 percentage points between the highest and lowest group.

**English as an Additional Language** - analysis by language shows a wide spread in pupils achieving a good level of development. Although the number of pupils in certain language groups is low, the highest achieving group in 2018 was French (87.5%) and the lowest was Turkish (11.1%) after removal of groups with small cohort numbers. Polish speaking children will continue to be a priority due to the large cohort size; in 2018, 58% of Polish speaking children achieved a good level of development.

## **B. Progress against Actions**

### **5. Understand the profile of children who did not achieve any area of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Similarly to last year, a review has taken place to understand the profile of 845 children who did not achieve any area of learning in the EYFS to identify possible trends, additional needs of children and/or improve current practice. This cohort is the same as in 2017 and includes:

- Just under half the total cohort (49.5%) who failed to achieve expected or above in any area of learning were summer born.
- When broken down by gender and term of birth summer boys make up the largest proportion at 33.0%.
- Nearly a fifth (18.8%) of the cohort live in Ashfield district followed by Mansfield district (18.2%).
- Most of these pupils were from a White British background (73.7%).
- Just under two thirds of pupils (63.8%) who failed to achieve expected or above in any areas of learning had no form of special educational need (SEN) provision.
- Just under three quarters (72.7%) were not eligible for FSM.

In 2018/19, the following actions were progressed to meet the needs of the children who did not achieve any area of learning:

- Early Years settings have been identified to offer targeted quality improvement support from the Early Years Quality and Attainment Team, including 15 schools.
- Explored the category of SEN support and how schools interpret this at foundation stage.
- Understanding shared at all summer term EYFS school networks and family SENCo meetings.
- Further analysis of referrals of children with SEND to Schools and Families Specialist Services (SFSS) from schools for F1 children in 2016/17 and 2017/18 to establish how these children may have been overlooked.
- Focus group established to consider vulnerable groups. Shared with stakeholders

**6. Understand the profile of children who achieved all but one of the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Similarly to last year, a review has taken place to understand the profile of 374 children who achieved all but one of the areas of learning in the EYFS to identify possible trends, additional needs of children and/or improve current practice. 374 children are in this cohort compared with 501 children in 2017. This cohort has the same characteristics as children who did not achieve in any area of learning and the following action has been completed:

- Re-focused Early Years Quality and Attainment team to target quality improvement in settings where children did not achieve a good level of development. New service standards are now in place which includes a RAG rating for interventions depending on need.

**7. Additional research and work with statistical neighbours to understand what practices are most effective in improving the level of development of children**

- Early Years Strategic Managers have been working closely with colleagues across the East Midlands Network and Statistical Neighbours Network to learn from successful authorities.
- The first meetings identified common challenges including:
  - Traded services
  - Low take up of 30 hour funding entitlements for foster carers
  - Low take up rates for Care to Learn childcare funding for teenage parents in education or training
  - Weak links with health practitioners
  - Working with children with SEND and targeting vulnerable groups

**8. Close the attainment gap for children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their peers, ensuring that progress is on par with statistical neighbours**

- See point 3 above
- Work continues to target areas with a greater number of low income families including work to improve attainment and take up rates for children accessing early education and childcare.

**9. Improve the tracking of vulnerable children to help early identification and intervention of developmental needs**

- The Better Start tracking tool has been launched and early years settings are asked to use this to evidence the impact of supplementary funding for the most vulnerable children including the Early Years Inclusion Fund, Disability Access Fund, Deprivation Fund and Early Years Pupil Premium.
- Systems are in place to enable Early Years providers to submit progress data of vulnerable children, to ensure appropriate support leads to improved outcomes.

**10. Development of a school readiness tool for the early years sector (including schools), Children's Centre Service and health practitioners**

- A Home Learning pathway is in development which is suitable for use by practitioners and families. This will be published through the Notts Help Yourself website and Families Information Service, and County Council webpages during summer 2019.

#### **11. Active engagement with parents to promote home learning environments**

- Focus Groups with parents took place in autumn 2018 with more planned for the spring term. Results of what works well for parents has informed the content of Home Learning Pathway.
- There has been a substantial update of the online information available on the Notts Help Yourself website, Families Information Service Facebook page, Nottinghamshire Language for Life Facebook page and Recap, all of which provide accessible universal advice on parenting, behaviour management, SEN, and childcare.
- Notts Help Yourself received 64,435 visits to childcare and early years pages in September 2018 compared with 74,304 visits during September 2017. The Families Information Service Facebook page had a total of 712 followers and 42 new 'likes' by September 2018.
- Schedule of promotional activities for Bookstart and early years library services are now published on Notts Help Yourself and the Families Information Service.
- "Journey to School" booklet for parents of 2 - 5 year olds has now been disseminated to all children countywide through Healthy Families Teams at 1 and 2 year old reviews.

#### **12. Improve the aspirations that target parents have of themselves and their children, through opportunities for parent volunteering, adult education, job readiness and parenting programmes**

- Parents have access to volunteering opportunities that support them to move closer to the labour market. Children's Centre volunteers deliver universal Stay and Play activities, breastfeeding peer support and perinatal mental health support. As at December 2018, the service worked with 183 volunteers.
- The Empowering Parents and Empowering Communities peer support programme has now been launched by the Children's Centre Service and Family Service. A co-ordinator has been appointed and the first tranche of parent trainers have completed training, with sessions due to start in autumn.
- 173 (95%) parents who received a Children's Centre Service 'Ready for Work' intervention reported greater skills and confidence that will encourage or support them to gain a qualification (1st September to the end of December 2018).
- 61 (56%) parents who received a Children's Centre Service 'Ready for Work' intervention reported an increase in skills and confidence to improve their employment status (1st September to the end of December 2018).
- 98 (96%) parent volunteers across the Children's Centre Service reported greater skills and confidence that will encourage and support them to gain a qualification (1st September to the end of December 2018).
- Evidence based parenting programmes continue to be facilitated by the Children's Centre Service and Family Service with evidence of a range of improved outcomes.

#### **13. Work with early years providers to ensure there are sufficient high quality and sustainable early years places available to disadvantaged children**

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2018 was published in September 2018 and the impact of the actions taken can be demonstrated below:

- 6,621 parents applying for 30 hours entitlement with 99% of those eligible having their codes validated by a childcare provider; 93% of whose children took up the additional funded hours with a Nottinghamshire provider.
- The completion of two capital projects at Holgate Primary School and Robert Mellors Primary School creating 45 and 55 additional 30 hours childcare places respectively.

- Commencement of a tender process to procure childcare delivery at five Children's Centre sites, creating an additional 140 childcare places in communities where they are needed.
  - Allocation of the Deprivation supplement paid as part of the Early Years Funding Formula, to support Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) childcare providers to better address the needs of children known to social care.
  - Established the Early Years Inclusion Fund to support children with SEND.
- 14. Increase take up rates for 2 year olds from low income households to access 15 hours a week free early education**
- 68% of eligible 2 year olds took up their place in summer 2018, compared with 77.49% in autumn 2019.
  - The Children's Centre Service is now calling and supporting all eligible parents who applied but did not take up their funded place.
  - Marketing materials are currently being developed to be targeted to localities with greater numbers of children living in low income households.
- 15. Raise the quality of early years providers to ensure that all childcare settings are 'good' or 'outstanding' to enable poorer children to gain the best start in life**
- 95% of Nottinghamshire's settings are graded as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted in the last cycle.
  - Settings judged 'Less than Good' have been identified and offered targeted quality improvement support from the Early Years Quality and Attainment team, including 15 schools.
- 16. Evaluate the new early years tracker tool (Better Start) to track the developmental needs of children and assess impact of services and interventions, including analysis for Children in Need and those on Child Protection Plans**
- Systems are now in place to enable Early Years providers to submit progress data of vulnerable children, to ensure appropriate support leads to improved outcomes. Findings will be analysed in April following a year of implementation.
- 17. Increase take up and analysis of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) funding and ensure that EYPP is devolved quickly with clear advice for evidence based interventions that would improve the educational outcomes for disadvantaged children. This includes improved analysis of the EYPP for Looked After Children**
- Take up of the EYPP has increased substantially following effective promotion, resulting in 104% of funding being allocated for eligible children.
  - Better Start tracking data submitted by early years providers is now being used to monitor impact of funding on children's outcomes by Early Years Specialist Teachers.
- 18. Allocation and guidance for using supplementary early years funding (launched in April 2018) to ensure the most vulnerable children receive additional support to improve attainment levels.**
- Early Years Inclusion Funding guidance and processes have now been progressed and have been in place since May 2018.
  - Publicity for supplementary funding is in place and available on line for parents and early years settings. Further work is planned to increase take up of funding supplements for children with SEND.
  - The Early Years Quality and Attainment team routinely monitor take up with early years settings in receipt of supplementary funding.
  - A local funding newsletter was issued in 2018/2019, to alert practitioners to funding available. Promotion has also taken place at Early Years network events and training, and partnership meetings.

## **Priority Actions for 2019 to 2021**

### **Take up of funded childcare and supplementary funding**

- Delivery of the Early Childhood Services Communications Plan to actively promote supplementary funding which has poor uptake, including:
  - Early Years Inclusion Fund
  - Early Years Deprivation Fund
  - Disability Access Fund
- Review impact of all supplementary funding on children's developmental outcomes through the Better Start tracking tool.
- Increased promotion of the Care to Learn childcare grant and Tax Free Childcare Credits which have low take up rates.
- Briefings for Jobcentre Plus teams to ensure childcare funding is promoted and barriers to work are reduced.
- Demonstrate a sustained increase in take up rates for eligible 2 year olds from low income families.

### **Ensuring sufficient Childcare**

- Targeted work in areas to ensure sufficient places (in particular for 2 year olds) and establish new ways to support their take up.

### **Ensuring quality childcare**

- Continue to understand the training and support needs of the early years sector to enable appropriate support to be put in place.
- Ongoing submission of Better Start tracking data and moderation - provider workshops and Portal Support through the Training and Development Plan

### **Parental Engagement and Home learning**

- More Early Years Practitioners are confident to advise on learning and development in the home. This will be followed up with training for early years staff 'Difficult Conversations' in 2019/20.
- Home Learning Pathway to be launched in September 2019.

## **Wider Priority Actions for Consideration by the Best Start Board**

In order to ensure children have the best start, the Best Start Board and subsequent strategy will consider all of the evidence that improves outcomes for children under the age of 5 and their families. This broader approach will include a focus on the following outcomes:

- Prospective parents are well prepared
- Children and parents have good antenatal outcomes
- Children and parents have good attachment and bonding
- Parental engagement and participation
- Children are ready for nursery
- Children are ready for school
- Parents are job ready
- Mothers and babies have improved health outcomes
- Parents experiencing emotional health and wellbeing challenges are identified early and supported.
- Children and parents are supported with early language, speech and communication
- The most vulnerable families will be identified early and well supported by a skilled workforce.