

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

<b>Subject:</b>	School Readiness
<b>Committee:</b>	Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	18 July 2018
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Sue McDonald (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People) Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation)
<b>CMT Member:</b>	Alison Botham (Director of Children's Services)
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<b>Ref:</b>	DB/AB/JAH/060718
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Part:</b>	I

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### **Purpose of the report:**

To provide members with an overview of the key issues facing the city's children regarding their readiness for school; the organisations involved in helping children become ready for school and how members of the Early Years Team of Education, Participation and Skills are supporting organisations to help children become, and remain ready for school.

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### **Corporate Plan**

This supports 'A growing city'. It helps to make sure children get the best possible start in life; develop the necessary skills to be productive citizens who can make a sustained contribution to both the society and economy of the city. It will also help to reduce inequalities within the city. The work reflects our values of co-operation between partners and the recognition that as a society we are responsible for each other.

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### **Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land**

All resources are met from the present Revenue/Dedicated School Budgets.

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### **Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:**

- It will support the reduction of child poverty by giving children a better opportunity to achieve at school.
- It will improve the health and safety of children by allowing them to become more aware of everyday dangers, and provide them with the skills to understand how to live healthy and safe lives.

**Equality and Diversity**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No.

**Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:**

To note the report.

**Alternative options considered and rejected:**

**Published work / information:**

N/A

**Background papers:**

N/A

Title	Part I	Part II	Exemption Paragraph Number							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

**Sign off:**

Fin	djn18.19.42	Leg	lt/30 807/ 0907	Mon Off		HR		Assets		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member: Judith Harwood, Service Director (Education, Participation and Skills)													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report? Yes													

## **'School Readiness' - Educational achievement in the city.**

### **The Challenges we face:**

It is clear from pupils performance data, conversations with and visits to early years settings and schools that we face an increasing challenge in making sure children are 'school ready' by the time they enter Reception Year. Consequently, some children enter school with levels of understanding and skills that are below what is expected for their age i.e. below national expectations. Some children not only display relatively low skill levels in literacy, numeracy and communication and language, but also struggle to master basic social skills and to manage their personal hygiene in pre - school and school settings.

### **Key results in 2017:**

In 2017 the proportion of children making the expected progress in a number of basic skills by the end of Reception Year was as follows:

- The proportion of children reaching the expected standard of a 'Good Level of Development', by the end of Reception Year was 66%. This is 5% below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals who reach the required standard by the end of Reception year is 51%. This compares to 69% of non-free school meal pupils who reach the required standard.
- The proportion of SEN children reaching the required standard by the end of Reception Year is 23%. This compares to a national average rate of 25%.
- The percentage of children reaching the expected standard in Communication and Language was 75%. This is 7% below the national average.
- The proportion of children reaching the required standards in literacy and numeracy was 66% and 74% respectively. Both these figures are well below national averages.
- In terms of the personal, social and emotional development, the percentage of children reaching the expected standard was 82% which is 3% below the national average.
- Phonics tests at the end of Year 1 show that our results equal the national average i.e. 80% of pupils passed the test. However, only 63% of disadvantaged pupils passed the test last year
- Pupils' progress accelerates through KS2 so that standards are broadly in line with national averages. However, gaps in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils remain.
- By the time students finish their KS4 studies the progress they make, and the standards they reach, are well below national averages. The gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils are still evident.

Whilst the data over time does show an improving trend many results in the city in primary and secondary schools do not compare favourably with the national picture, nor with our regional and statistical neighbours. Disadvantaged pupils continue to achieve less well than non-disadvantaged pupils.

In addition to 'academic' outcomes feedback from settings and schools indicates that a growing number of pupils display 'challenging behaviours' indicating a limited amount of social skills and many pupils struggle being able to toilet themselves. A number of children's settings are reporting to us with a Child Protection Plan/Children in Need Plan. The numbers of families that have a high level of need including mental health issues, poor housing, domestic abuse, low parenting skills is increasing.

## **Actions being taken to support settings and schools to help children to become school ready:**

Within the city there is a range of partners working hard to meet the challenges we face:

- Children's Centres and the Health Visiting Service offer advice, help and support to them around many parenting issues. These issues include behaviour, toilet training, eating and sleeping all of which are fundamentally important to children's development and readiness for school.
- SEN Education Advisers organise early intervention, enhanced transitions which has the effect of helping children make a brisk start to their schooling and help many to reach the required standards in literacy and numeracy.
- Early Years Advisers have delivered training around the National Association of Head Teachers school ready survey. This has increased the knowledge and understanding amongst settings and school leaders about what it means to be 'school ready'.
- All advisers visit settings annually to talk about the narrowing the gap agenda and school readiness. This means that settings are better able to monitor the impact of their work and enjoy advice on further improvements from specialists. Feedback indicates that this is having a positive impact on the teaching of all pupils and the progress made especially by disadvantaged children and pupils.
- Our universal and in-house training – upskilling the workforce to help children become school ready.
- We offer the Bristol Standard Quality Improvement framework that supports self-evaluation and settings/schools to improve on their previous best. As a result schools and settings have a much clearer and accurate picture of their strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do next to improve.
- At April's Maternity, Early Years System Optimisation Group (MEYSOG) a task and finish group was set up to develop a 'school readiness' work stream. They have held their first meeting to analyse data on children's attainment and/development and will report to the next MEYSOG meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July. At this meeting next steps will be agreed.