



Report to Policy Committee

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Report of: *Meredith Dixon-Teasdale Strategic Director of Children's Services.*

Report to: *Education, Children and Families Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: *19th March 2024*

Subject: *Pupil outcomes in Sheffield School settings and the impact of the Learn Sheffield commission*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(2620)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Committee with an update on Pupil outcomes in Sheffield School settings and the impact of Learn Sheffield.

Recommendations:

That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee note the progress in relation to pupil outcomes and demographics in school settings following national releases of comparative data and demonstrating Learn Sheffield's impact in supporting settings.

Background Papers:**Independent Evaluation of Learn Sheffield**

Learn Sheffield has undertaken an evaluation of their work over the eight years since they were incorporated in 2015. The Learn Sheffield Independent Evaluation 2015-2023 was published ahead of their 2024 AGM on 8 February 2024.

The following colleagues contributed to the independent evaluation: Sir David Carter, Dame Christine Gilbert, Fiona Gowers and Helen Lane. They used the supporting documents below (produced by the Learn Sheffield team), the 2018 Peer Review of Learn Sheffield and conducted a range of interviews and other activities as an evidence base for their findings. There are substantial documents for the evaluation and these can be found on the Learn Sheffield Web Site – www.learnsheffield.co.uk - including Sheffield Performance Analysis 2023.

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: <i>Kayleigh Inman</i>
	Legal: <i>Nadine Wynter</i>
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>Bashir Khan</i>
	Climate: <i>n/a</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	SLB member who approved submission: <i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted: <i>Cllr Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.

Lead Officer Name: <i>Andrew Jones</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Education and Skills</i>
Date: <i>5th March 2024</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

The Committee have previously sought a perspective on the effectiveness and impact of Learn Sheffield, who are currently commissioned to deliver a small number of statutory duties on behalf of Sheffield City Council.

This current commission (circa £60k per annum) is in its first of two years to provide primary writing moderation, KS2 SATs monitoring, support school headteacher recruitment in maintained schools and speak to and support Ofsted inspections in maintained schools. This commission is below the threshold for Committee approval.

This update also addresses city performance, as would routinely be the case at this point in the work plan for this Committee.

1.1 Evaluation Executive Summary

1.1.1 Independent Evaluation of Learn Sheffield

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The following colleagues contributed to the independent evaluation: Sir David Carter, Dame Christine Gilbert, Fiona Gowers and Helen Lane. They used the supporting documents below (produced by the Learn Sheffield team), the 2018 Peer Review of Learn Sheffield and conducted a range of interviews and other activities as an evidence base for their findings. There are substantial documents for the evaluation and these can be found on the Learn Sheffield Web Site – www.learnsheffield.co.uk - including Sheffield Performance Analysis 2023. This analysis has been produced in partnership between Learn Sheffield and Sheffield City Council provide an overview of performance in relation to: Ofsted judgements, pupil characteristics and SEND, attendance, exclusions & attainment and progress.

A selection of slides from this analysis have been selected and will be shown in the Committee but the data below provides headlines of performance analysis. The full report includes trails for further investigation in each section and Learn Sheffield have also produced Insight Reports in three areas where further analysis could be helpful.

On the Learn Sheffield web site one can find a more detailed background on the organisation and its history. This includes a description of what Learn Sheffield is and does, as well as reflections on what has changed between 2015 and 2023.

Some of Learn Sheffield's research methods include: sharing questionnaires with school leaders, those involved in governance and wider stakeholders as part of the evaluation process. The responses include overall perspectives on Learn Sheffield as well as feedback on the services offered by Learn Sheffield.

1.1.2 Evaluation Executive Summary

The Committee is encouraged to access the independent evaluation in full, but the excerpt below provides a short independent assessment of Learn Sheffield.

The scale of engagement with Learn Sheffield has remained very high over the past eight years. Leaders and other stakeholders say that Learn Sheffield continues to successfully foster an 'excellent, collaborative culture'.

All of the leaders who responded to a questionnaire agreed that Learn Sheffield acts with integrity and reflects the values education settings promote for their children and young people. Leaders typically described Learn Sheffield as an 'ethical partnership which fosters a real sense of loyalty and fraternity' and as 'something we should be proud of.' Leaders agree that a key strength of Learn Sheffield is that it deeply understands Sheffield. Indeed, 98% of leaders who responded to the questionnaire agree that they would recommend Learn Sheffield to a colleague.

Colleagues working for Learn Sheffield have a wealth of knowledge about the context of the area and about individual schools and trusts. Leaders know that the work of Learn Sheffield is driven by the desire to improve outcomes for children and young people in Sheffield. Leaders have absolute trust in Learn Sheffield and in particular of the integrity shown by the Chief Executive of Learn Sheffield. They are confident that help and support would be found or signposted, adding 'Learn Sheffield are always willing to be involved, even in the most difficult of times. You are never turned away.'

Learn Sheffield oozes collaboration. Leaders consider Learn Sheffield has been instrumental in 'keeping many schools working together' and 'maintaining partnerships and trust.' Leaders particularly valued the work of Learn Sheffield during the Covid pandemic.

Learn Sheffield believes that an infrastructure of partnership meetings is essential. The vast majority of leaders who responded to the questionnaire agree, typically commenting that: 'Learn Sheffield is very proactive in developing a strong infrastructure' and acts as a 'vehicle for partnerships.' Some leaders say partnerships are 'shaped in the right way'. On the other hand, others are of the view that it would be beneficial to reconsider the current structure of groups and

partnerships, as ‘there seems to be some duplication’, particularly regarding the information shared.

Since Learn Sheffield was formed in 2015, the proportion of good or better settings in Sheffield has improved markedly. The vast majority of school leaders spoken to during the evaluation confirmed the view that Learn Sheffield’s support before and during Ofsted inspections is excellent. They talked about the positive impact of Learn Sheffield through providing support and challenge for senior and middle leaders during school reviews, as well as a strong professional development offer for example, in particular subject areas. Leaders were almost unanimous in their view that the work of Learn Sheffield contributes positively to school improvement and therefore to rising inspection outcomes.

Despite the very impressive Ofsted trend, pupils’ outcomes in Sheffield largely remain below the national average. Data continues to be forensically analysed by the Learn Sheffield team with a view to identifying and addressing any underlying trends. Analysis shows that priorities need to focus primarily on supporting leaders of various settings to address common challenges, such as: improving attendance; helping all pupils do as well as they can, particularly disadvantaged children and those with SEND; improving pupils’ outcomes and improving behaviour.

The development and training programme offered by Learn Sheffield has developed significantly over the past eight years. Analysis of the numbers of settings accessing Learn Sheffield training suggests leaders consider that the training offered is helping to improve key aspects of their work. Nevertheless, leaders say that it would be beneficial if Learn Sheffield planned its CPD programme much earlier in the school year. It is suggested that Learn Sheffield routinely canvasses the views of setting leaders, Multi-academy Trust (MAT) leaders and the Learn Sheffield Improvement Partner Team (LSIP) team to ensure the CPD programme aligns with the key MAT, individual school and Sheffield priorities and to avoid replicating training already scheduled.

Learn Sheffield is currently reviewing its subscription model to ensure it is financially viable and to ensure CPD and in-school support provided continues to meet the needs of its subscribing settings. As Learn Sheffield reviews the structure and shape of its work and its financial viability, it is important it maintains and continues to build on its many strengths. Succession plans need to be in place to consider the ‘future proofing’ and leadership of Learn Sheffield. It is vital that the leadership structure of Learn Sheffield going forward has enough capacity to respond to future opportunities and the need for strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of the school improvement services (including requests from other local areas) and has more distributed leadership.

It is recommended that Learn Sheffield continues to build both its Improvement Partner team and its team of school-based Support Partners, through rigorous recruitment and induction processes. Learn Sheffield continues to deliver very well on its motto, 'By Sheffield. For Sheffield. In collaboration'.

1.1.3 Learn Sheffield Future Shape

The purpose of the evaluation was to help Learn Sheffield ensure its improvement priorities are the right ones for education settings, children and young people in Sheffield and to help ensure that the structure and shape of its work is relevant for the next stage of its development.

By the time of this Committee meeting, Learn Sheffield expects to have produced a document responding to the evaluation. This will address the recommendations made to Learn Sheffield and sharing what it has learned for the city, the organisation and for place-based education partnerships.

1.1.4 Sheffield Performance Analysis Headlines

As discussed earlier, the Committee may wish to access the full Sheffield Performance Analysis 2023 and the three Insight Reports (SEND / Attendance / Outcomes) which were amongst the supporting documents for the Learn Sheffield evaluation. Accompanying slides will be shared at the Committee Meeting, on the projector, to support any further lines of enquiry by members. The public can access the full report on the Learn Sheffield website.

- **Ofsted Judgements**

Sheffield has the strongest Ofsted outcomes that it has ever had. In 2015 Sheffield was almost 10 percentage points below national for the proportion of its schools that were judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted. In September 2023 Sheffield is national (+0.9% points) for the second consecutive year.

For example, on 30th September 2023 Sheffield had 89.8% of its settings judged as good or better by Ofsted. The previous year it was 88.6%. We are 0.2% 'behind other core cities but (as mentioned) 0.9%+ above national average. We have made progress each year and have increased in 4.1% since 2020.

This means that there are twenty-one thousand more Sheffield children and young people attending good or better schools in September 2023 than there were in September 2015. At the start of the current academic year just over ten thousand Sheffield pupils were attending a school not currently judged to be good by Ofsted.

- **Pupil Characteristics and SEND**

There are 76,581 pupils in Sheffield. 14,881 have an identified Special Educational Need. This is 19%. 3,099 have an Educational Health Care Plan. Roughly 4%. Speech and Language; Autism and Social, Emotional and Mental Health are the three main 'primary needs' in SEN. The SEND Insight Report notes that, despite the increase in demand in this area, Sheffield's level of demand is around half of what would be expected according to national data.

27,478 pupils are eligible for Free School Meals. (Though Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils all receive a Free School Meal despite a family's income. This equates to 35%. 18,131 have English as an Additional Language. 58% of Sheffield's school children are classified as White British. 8% are classified as Pakistani; 5% are classified as Black African; 5% as White and Black Caribbean. The remaining 24% is equally shared across 'other Asian;' 'other white European;' 'Roma;' 'Other Eastern European;' 'other Ethnic' or 'other mixed' backgrounds. Arabic; Urdu; Punjabi; Slovak & Somali are the 5 main additional languages spoken in Sheffield Schools.

Since 2016 there has been an increase in 6,000 young people in Sheffield's schools. This will be down to birth rates and moving to Sheffield. Most of the increase is in the Secondary Sector. There are an additional 500 pupils in Special Schools since 2016. There has been an increase in 1,400 of pupils with an EHCP since 2016. Autism has risen from the 5th to the 2nd most prevalent need in Sheffield's schools.

- **Attendance**

Current attendance data states that in all schools, the National Picture is 93.4%. Persistent absence is still 20%.

In the first term of 2023 (September – December) Sheffield's Primary School attendance was 94.5%.

Sheffield's Secondary School was 91.5%. Sheffield's Special School attendance was 86.7%.

In the Autumn term, 16,600 young people missed at least one day of school every fortnight. 13% of young people in Special Schools are attending less than half the time and 38% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals are missing at least one day a fortnight.

The attendance of around 1,100 young people would need to improve to above 90% to bring persistent absence rates in Sheffield in line with National, but this would still mean that over 1/5 of young people were missing at least one day a fortnight.

Sheffield's attendance figures are below national but in line with Core Cities and levels of deprivation, which has not previously been the case.

The analysis now includes, however, outcomes by attendance band. This demonstrates the extent to which the likelihood of achieving the expected standard at each stage of education declines at each band of attendance.

- **Attendance and Outcomes correlations:**

If a child in Foundation Stage (often called Reception year: circa 5 years old) attends over 95% of the time 78% of these pupils will achieve a Good Level of Development at the end of their first year at school. If they are persistently absent (<90%) then only 48% will achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD).

In Year 1 if a child attends 95%+ 85% will pass their Phonics Screening Test (PST). If they are persistently absent (<90%) then only 61% will pass their PST.

At the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6 SATS) those pupils who attend 95%+ 64% will pass their SATS whereas if a child is persistently absent only 34% will pass their SATS.

In Secondary Settings, we see a similar pattern. Once attendance drops below 90% the chance of achieving a grade 4+ in English & Maths drops significantly. Nearly 28% of the KS4 cohort (Year 10&11) had an average attendance below 90%.

If a child in KS4 attends 95%+ 77.8% will go on to achieve a grade 4+ in English and Maths. If they are persistently absent, then only 42.8% of the cohort will achieve a grade 4+ in core subjects.

Attendance will be a priority for the city because of the impact that it has on the outcomes of children and young people. Sheffield is the second strongest core city (of eight) in terms of quality of education (Ofsted outcomes) but fifth strongest (on average) for both outcomes and for attendance. If Sheffield was also second for attendance it would be likely to correspond with a similar improvement in pupil outcomes.

- **Exclusions**

Exclusions are included in the performance analysis but routinely discussed by this Committee in a separate part of the work plan. The slide below provides the summary from this section in the performance analysis report.

In the primary phase, Sheffield is above Core Cities and national in relation to suspensions. It is in line with Core Cities but above national in relation to exclusions.

In the secondary phase, Sheffield is in line with Core Cities but above national in relation to suspensions. It is above both Core Cities and national in relation to exclusions.

In 2021/22 3,300 young people in Sheffield were suspended from school. Those pupils eligible for Free School Meals and with SEND were over 3 times more likely to be suspended. 92 young people were permanently excluded from school in 2021/22. This is 27 more young people than the national average.

- **Attainment and Progress.**

- 1.) At each Key Stage, the gap between attainment in Sheffield and the national average is around 2-4% points.
- 2.) Attendance; deprivation and ethnicity impact on outcomes meaning that some pupils are significantly less likely to achieve than others.
- 3.) At each Key Stage, less than ½ of pupils with attendance below 90% achieve the required standard at the end of each Key Stage.

The headlines below provide headline information for city performance at EYFS (Early Years), Key Stage 2 (primary SATs) and Key Stage 4 (secondary GCSE). More detailed information, including the performance of groups, can be found in the full performance analysis on Learn Sheffield's Web Site.

- **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Around 65% of Sheffield's children achieving a good level of development in early years settings. Sheffield continues to be above Core Cities (circa 63%) but below national (circa 67%). Although performance improved in 2023 the gap between Sheffield and national widened slightly.

Sheffield's LA ranking in this headline measure dropped in 2023 (to 117 of 152) but remained in line with deprivation. Sheffield is the third strongest core city (of eight).

- **Key Stage 2 Attainment**

In 2023, the proportion of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at the end of KS2 Sheffield was 56.9%. This is in line with Core Cities but below national (59.8%).

Sheffield's LA ranking in this headline measure improved slightly in 2023 (to 115) to be in line with deprivation. Sheffield is the fifth strongest core city.

- **Key Stage 4 (GCSE)**

Around 62% of Sheffield's Secondary pupils achieved a grade 4+ in English and Maths. This is slightly above other core cities but below National (67%)

Sheffield's LA ranking for attainment 8 improved slightly in 2023 (to 114) to continue to be in line with deprivation. Sheffield is the fifth strongest core city for this measure.

The progress of young people in Sheffield (the progress 8 measure) is above Core Cities but below national. Sheffield's LA ranking for progress 8 improved in 2023 (to 86) to out perform deprivation rankings. Sheffield is the fifth strongest core city for this measure.

Sheffield's rank amongst Core Cities has improved slightly since 2022 (average rank now 4.4). In 2019 Sheffield was 3rd Core City for KS4 performance.

Learn Sheffield, in conjunction with Sheffield City Council & our school leaders uses data, such as this, to consider further lines of enquiry and to consider trends and evaluations to support schools. It must be noted that this is last year's data and that cohorts of pupils will vary from year to year which may be a contributory factor in any changes in next years performance data.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

- 2.1 This report shows how Learn Sheffield impacts upon and supports school settings and with thorough self-evaluation and independent evaluation can continue to support children and young people's outcomes.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 We have engaged with Learn Sheffield and this organisation, in turn, engages with external evaluation

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

- 4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 An EIA has been carried out showing pupil outcomes in Education and the educational demographics in school settings will impact upon all characteristics of race, gender and ethnicity. This data is used to inform

setting's strategies to improve pupil outcomes or identifies trends in performance.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the report

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 Under the Education and Inspection Act 2006, local authorities are required to carry out their duties related to the delivery of education, as far as they are able to, with the aim of: (a) advancing high-quality standards, (b) guaranteeing equitable access to educational opportunities, and (c) encouraging every child and young person involved to reach their full educational potential.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 There are no climate implications to be considered

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 There are no other implications to be considered

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 There are no alternative options to be considered

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 For members to understand the educational landscape of pupil outcomes in Sheffield.