



# **Portsmouth Education Partnership Education Strategy 2020 - 2023**

**Year 3: 2022 - 2023**

**Approved by the PEP Strategic Board 11/10/2022**

## 1. Introduction

This document sets out the final year of a three year PEP Education Strategy for Portsmouth 2020-23.

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to create significant challenges for all education settings in 2021/22, particularly in terms of staff absence, but its impact is now lessening following an end to routine testing. Despite this, further challenges are now presenting themselves most notably in terms of the cost of living crisis and rising wages.

This is not a reason to hold back from the development of a clear collective strategy for education in the city, however. More than ever, the city needs strong education leadership with clear individual school/settings and city wide priorities, around which all education leaders focus their efforts. We must do all we can to ensure that the education of children in Portsmouth is not a casualty of the difficult demands of this time.

While the strategy sets the direction until 2023, it outlines specific actions to be taken in Year 3 of the strategy, 2022 - 2023, so that there is complete clarity on our focus during this period.

The delivery of the strategy will be done under the auspices of the Portsmouth Education Partnership (PEP) recognising the part that all partners of the PEP will play in delivering the priorities that are set out in the strategy, and will be overseen by the PEP Strategic Board.

This year the PEP Strategic Board will be taking on new responsibilities in order to respond to the requirements of Priority Education Investment Area status. Portsmouth is one of 12 new priority areas that were announced earlier this year. A sub group has been established to lead this work, agree the priorities and prepare the delivery plans.

The PEP structures have been kept under review to effectively lead the work of the partnership. The current structures are set out on page 5.

## 2. The vision

Our vision is that through working together we can ensure that:

*All children and young people make good progress through education which sets high expectations for them, is infused with restorative high support and high challenge and which is supported through leading edge use of digital technology, empowering them to drive their own learning anywhere.*

## 3. Shared values and accountability

The shared values and accountability that were agreed five years ago will remain in place. All members of the Portsmouth Education Partnership are committed to:

- Shared accountability for improving standards and the educational outcomes and life chances of all children and young people
- Promoting a culture of openness, trust and collaboration

- Putting the interests of children and young people first at all times
- Ensuring no child should fail to reach their educational potential because of disadvantage or vulnerability
- Ensuring no education settings are left isolated
- Ensuring all our joint actions add value, are evidence based and as far as possible are preventative rather than a response to a crisis.

#### 4. Priorities

The eight priorities that form part of the PEP Education Strategy 2020-23 are set out below with details of the Boards / Groups that will be responsible for their delivery. This strategy document provides a high level summary of the plans that support each priority with cross references and links to other documents and action plans.

Two priorities have been removed from the final year of this strategy reflecting the reduced impact of Covid-19 and the robust safeguarding policies and processes that are now in place in all schools:

- Ensure all schools and education settings have access to clear and up to date infection control and health & safety information and are able to respond appropriately to local Covid-19 outbreaks
- Ensure all schools and education settings have robust safeguarding policies, processes and culture in place

A new priority focusing on improving outcomes in maths will be added, to reflect the agreed priorities for the Priority Education Investment Area. Details of this will be worked up during 2022/23.

Whilst all of the priorities remain important and will be implemented in 2022/23, the Board has agreed to continue to focus on the four priorities that were agreed last year (as set out below) in addition to those that are agreed as part of the Priority Education Investment Area.

The four priorities that will continue to be a focus for 2022/23 are:

- a) Digital learning strategy (priority 2)** - the links to the highlight report and the digital strategy which were recently presented at the PEP Strategic Board are given below. This sets out the next phase of our ambition to become a digital learning city and to build on the progress that has been made during the pandemic in terms of the application of digital technology to improve learning both in school and at home.

[Digital Learning - highlight report](#)  
[Portsmouth as a Digital City](#)

- b) Peer review (priority 1)** - following a survey to all schools and academies earlier in the year, the PEP School Leadership and Effectiveness Board have been working on the development of a framework for peer review that all schools can sign up to regardless of designation, whether part of a Multi Academy Trust or LA Maintained. The framework sets out a minimum set of expectations and a 3 stage review

process. The link to the highlight report which was recently presented to the PEP Strategic Board is given below.

[Peer Review](#)

**c) Improving literacy outcomes (priority 3)** - led by the PEP Early Language and Literacy Development Group, the objective is to work collectively to look at how as a city we can improve literacy outcomes for all children and young people regardless of age or phase of learning. A link to the most recent highlight report presented to the PEP Strategic Board is given below. There are 3 workstreams. :

- Relaunch of the Portsmouth Early Language Plan on a Page document, now renamed as the Portsmouth Commitment to Early Language
- developing reading in Portsmouth, including a focus on the importance of the robust teaching of phonics and early reading skills
- improving literacy at transition points for every phase of education

[Early Language and Literacy - highlight report](#)

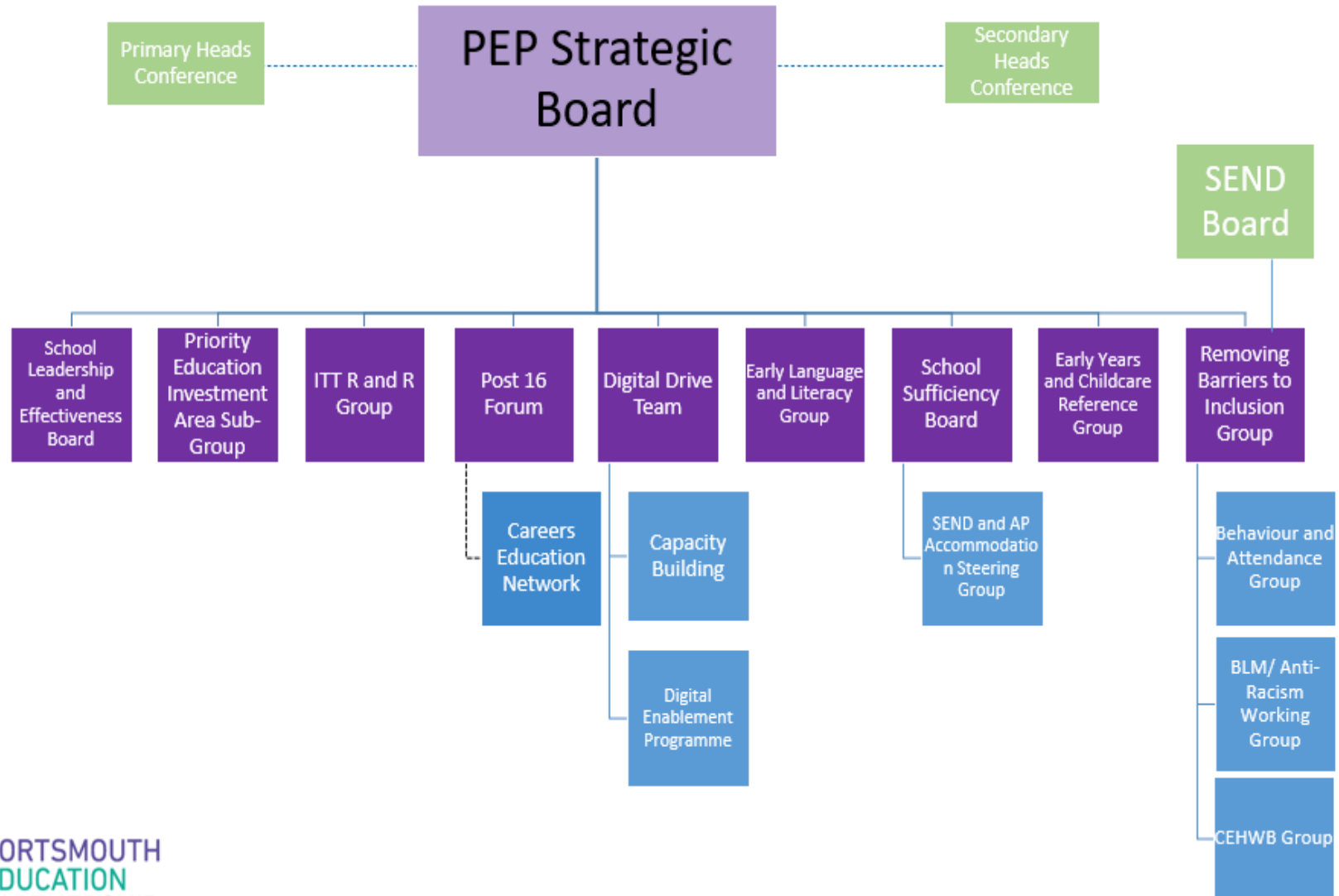
**d) Improving school attendance and reducing fixed term exclusions (priority 8)** - a link is provided below to a paper that was presented to the PEP Strategic Board and which considers the case for a renewed collective PEP focus on reducing time lost from school through non-attendance, exclusion or reduced/part-time timetables against the background of learning loss through the pandemic, holding ourselves and each other to account in a restorative and relational *high support: high challenge* way.

[Education Recovery: Attendance and Exclusions](#)

No	Priority	Governance
1.	Strong leadership and ambition at all levels within individual schools and education settings to improve effectiveness and outcomes for children and young people	School Leadership and Effectiveness Board
2.	Implement a digital learning strategy for the city that supports learning both at school and at home	Digital Drive Team and sub groups
3.	Improve pupil outcomes in literacy (reading, writing and oral) with a high priority focus on early language development	Early Language and Literacy Development Group
4.	Recruit, retain and grow the best teachers, practitioners and leaders and provide high quality continuing professional development	ITT, Teacher Recruitment and Retention Group
5.	Promote emotional health, wellbeing and resilience in education	Children's Emotional Health & Wellbeing Group
6.	Ensure all pupils regularly attend school	Removing Inclusion Group / Behaviour and Attendance Group (BAG)
7.	Invest in school buildings to create additional school places, focusing on secondary, even more inclusive	School Sufficiency Board

	mainstream schools and a continuum of specialist provision for children with additional needs	
8.	Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) through NEET prevention and re-engagement activities	Post-16 Forum

# PEP Structure September 2022



## 5. Inclusion

Inclusion remains a central theme for the 2020-23 strategy - *creating an educational environment that is welcoming to all children and young people and not giving up on any child whatever their circumstances.*

Inclusion is about ensuring that: there is in place comprehensive Ordinarily Available Provision that meets the educational needs of the majority of children: that any additional needs are identified early and support is put in place, as part of a graduated response, to avoid exclusion and enable children to make progress with their learning; and that children are able to attend their local mainstream school wherever possible

The strategy has strong links with the SEND and SEMH Strategies and these are set out in the relevant priorities, focusing on improving inclusion for all children but with a particular focus on the provision of education for children with SEND / additional needs and improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people including children in need, looked after children, children at risk of or already being exploited and/or experiencing the criminal justice system, children receiving targeted early help and other children identified by schools as requiring additional support.

Underpinning the objective of inclusion has been the work around self- assessment and peer moderation to identify strengths and areas for development in relation to inclusive practice e.g. through Peer Review and the Portsmouth Inclusive Education Quality Mark (PIE QM). Linked to this will be the continued offer of support through the **Inclusion Outreach Service** which has been in operation since 2019 and will continue to offer support for schools in meeting children's additional needs. The outreach support is available to all mainstream schools, delivered by a range of professionals from a partnership of services including Multi-agency Behaviour Service (MABS), Solent Academies Trust, Children's Therapy Service, and experienced Outreach SENCOs from mainstream schools in the city.

The priority in this strategy to improve literacy, with a focus on early language skills, is particularly critical to improving outcomes for many vulnerable groups of children and young people. We know that research has shown the clear links between the ability of children and young people to read well and to express themselves in writing and, especially, orally, to the quality of the relationships they are able to make with adults and peers, their success in education and their long term life chances.

The strategy will also have running through it a commitment to engage with schools, other education settings and partners to develop and share anti-racism training and resources. A dedicated page for these resources has been developed on the PEP website and can be found [here](#).

## 6. Early years

Critical to the PEP Education Strategy is a clear understanding of the importance of early years provision and practice upon which future stages of education are built. Well established research continues to emphasise the importance of early childhood education as an essential building block of a child's future success.

Central to early years success has to be the partnerships between families, education, health and other community sectors. A current priority (originating from the 2019 peer review in Portsmouth) is to ensure sector wide responsibility, commitment and understanding of the strategic approach to support early language development and its impact on the outcomes for children and young people. In order to address the issue, this strategy will have a commitment to consider the early years element within each priority, as it is early years that provides a strong base for lifelong learning and learning abilities, including cognitive and social and emotional development.

## **7. Key performance indicators**

A range of key performance indicators will be used to judge the impact of the strategy and each of the eight priorities. They include:

- Ofsted inspections of early years settings, schools and post-16 providers
- Attainment and progress data at all key stages
- School attendance, exclusions, reduced timetables and elective home education
- Post-16 participation and destinations
- Teacher / practitioner vacancies
- ITT trainees and % finding permanent placements in Portsmouth's schools and other education settings



## **Priority 1: strong leadership and ambition at all levels within schools and education settings to improve effectiveness and outcomes for children and young people**



### **Background**

The leadership of schools and education settings, both at the most senior level but also at all levels, is critical to effectiveness.

Over the last seven years there has been a significant improvement in the Ofsted inspection grades for schools and academies in the city, improving at a faster rate than nationally. The quality of early years settings in the city as judged by Ofsted is also encouraging. 90% of inspected schools and 98.5% of early years settings in Portsmouth are currently judged by Ofsted to be Good or better.

At the same time while school leaders, teachers and practitioners in the city work hard and many go the extra mile for children, as Ofsted inspections testify, the city has seen its position in rankings for local authority areas decline across a number of key indicators, to the point where many are significantly out of line with those of comparable areas. This undoubtedly affects the life chances of children in the city.

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the cancellation of all end of year assessments and exams there is no published data available in 2020 or 2021 to determine if the position has improved or worsened. Additionally, primary accountability guidance for 2022 strongly advises against making any comparisons with 2019 data, with local authority and national averages and between individual schools. However, whilst the education strategy for 2020-23 and the actions set out for the three years, have a somewhat different focus in response to Covid-19, the focus on standards, and in particular attainment and progress measures, should continue given recent trends and the inevitable fact that disadvantaged children will have lost ground to those who are not disadvantaged and this will be most felt in areas like Portsmouth where there are higher levels of deprivation.

Our strategy over recent years to try and improve standards and accelerate progress has been based on a combination of:

- **Support for leadership development** at all levels which to date has focused on: aspiring leadership programmes for groups of teachers preparing for their first leadership role; middle and senior leaders ready for whole school responsibility; development of potential senior leaders who have the talent and commitment to become headteachers within 2-3 years; and programmes for aspiring or existing Executive Headteachers and CEOs of Multi Academy Trusts.
- A **collaborative school improvement approach** through the Portsmouth Education Partnership, led by the PEP School Leadership and Effectiveness Board, in order to generate more locally co-ordinated support for schools and encourage the sharing of resources and best practice, with a particular focus on peer review.

- **Academisation** whereby the majority of schools in the city become part of strong and effective Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) which can act as strong engines for school improvement, bringing in support and challenge from outside the city as well as from within. Two thirds of schools are now part of a MAT.

The last set of official results in 2019 made it clear that the strategy has not yet succeeded despite the best efforts of our strategic leaders. The improvements made in terms of Ofsted judgements have been welcomed and it is hoped that this will translate into improved outcomes but clearly more needs to be done. The lack of government funding available for school improvement support has not helped, with the exception of short term SSIF and NLE support for schools requiring improvement and those judged inadequate. The identification of Portsmouth as one of only 12 Priority Education Investment Areas across the country is welcomed with the opportunity for investment and further rigorous development of current work of the Portsmouth Education Partnership. This can only be effective with the commitment and actions of our school leaders.

Research suggests that school-led improvement is the most sustainable way to make genuine and bespoke changes in schools. David Hopkins describes this as the 'third age of school improvement'. The PEP peer review process aims to create a community of colleagues and partners who share a common focus linked to school improvement and improving education throughout the city. This is not about a rubber-stamping that school intentions and actions are in operation, as that merely reinforces the status quo, but rather much more sharply focused on improvement. It is the action of continuous incremental improvement that, over time, leads to cumulative and exponential effects.

Addressing our specific local agenda foci is vital. The PEP peer review process allows us to build upon the strategies and elements of our work that seek to embed both inclusive practice and the improvement of attainment and opportunities for all children and young people across the city. Through the PEP peer review process we have the opportunity to look at the evidence and impact of initiatives, such as the PIE QM, relational practice, curriculum development, use of digital learning (Priority 2 within this strategy), reading and language development programmes, with impartiality but common purpose. Clear and agreed principles, minimum expectations and ways of working have been developed collaboratively to support the complete sign up by all schools across the PEP.

To drive the effectiveness at individual school level which contributes to the collective education standards for Portsmouth, the PEP peer review process recognises that we must also develop outward-facing opportunities e.g. utilising staff and expertise from schools and MATs from both within and beyond the city, scrutinising school improvement plans for actions that are based on evidence-informed research and exploring strategies to achieve ambitious targets that are benchmarked against attainment and progress by schools elsewhere in the country that have similar pupil profiles, such as the comparison tools of the Fisher Family Trust or the Education Endowment Foundation.

The PEP School Leadership and Effectiveness Board will have oversight of the peer review process and outcomes in the form of feedback from the enquiry based 'To what extent ...' themes that review teams explore with recipient schools. This high-level review will enable opportunities for initiating new learning or different CPD, a better understanding of how school leadership can be supported, the wider development of good practice and impactful networks, and where resources and support can be best targeted.

The system leadership reforms announced by the Government offer another opportunity in terms of what a **Teaching School Hub** can do for the city and future investment by the Government in **National Leaders of Education (NLEs) and National Leaders of Governance (NLGs)**. A key partner for Portsmouth is the HISP Teaching School Hub who will be working with the local Salterns MAT to deliver National Professional Qualifications for our established and emerging school leaders.

### **Key actions for 2022/23**

1. Continue the work of the **PEP School Leadership and Effectiveness Board** initiated in the first year of the Portsmouth Education Strategy 2020 - 2023, strengthening partnerships, sharing best practice and school priorities through the 3H's document and ensuring a clear focus on outcomes as we emerge to the recovery from the pandemic.
2. Organise access to the training for, and implementation of the **PEP peer review process** to impact upon ambitious target levels of attainment and progress.
3. Oversee and shape a **coordinated leadership support programme** to help individual school leaders at all levels to achieve their targets, building on current and the new leadership programmes available.
4. Strengthen the support and development for **leaders and managers in early years settings** so that high quality provision provides a firm foundation for good outcomes and secure progress through future stages of education.
5. Continue to organise and assist **subject networks** in the city in order to provide more support for middle leaders to develop subject knowledge, high quality curriculum planning and a clear understanding of the importance of sequencing learning in order to improve the quality of education.
6. **Support the progress of disadvantaged pupils**, with opportunities from the Education Endowment Foundation to focus on priority schools funded through the HISP Research School and the Priority Education Investment Area identification and implementation of the delivery plan.
7. Develop a programme of support for early years settings and schools in terms of **communication and literacy** (refer to Priority 3).
8. Continue to focus on **improving outcomes for pupils in mainstream schools with SEND** and support the development of the middle leadership of SENCOs, building on the work of the previous SSIF programme, the PIE QM and the proposed new National Award for SEN Coordination (NASENCo).
9. Ensure the effective delivery of **moderation at KS1 and KS2** including monitoring the **Year 1 Phonics Screening Check** and the **Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)**.

## Priority 2: implement a digital learning strategy for the city that supports learning both at school and at home



### Background

Home Learning UK's report [Protecting Learning](#) reflects on the experiences of educators, parents and pupils during Covid-19. It credits leaders' determination and passion to protect learning despite not all schools having the digital infrastructure, devices, experience and confidence to shift at speed to remote learning supported by technology, and considers where different schools are on the continuum of adoption.

Covid-19 has brought the potential of digital technology to effectively deliver remote learning to fore, but exploiting its use is not new and discussions were underway early this year before the pandemic about how a city wide approach could be developed which supported learning both in school and at home and which could ultimately drive improved outcomes in terms of attainment and progress.

The DfE published [Realising the potential of technology in education](#) in April 2019, setting out the strategy to 'support the education sector in England to develop and embed technology in a way that cuts workload, fosters efficiencies, supports inclusion and ultimately drives improvements in educational outcomes'. In December 2019 the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) published [Using digital technology to improve learning](#). This guidance report put forward that the question is no longer *whether* technology should have a place in the classroom, but *how* technology can most effectively be integrated in ways which achieve improved outcomes for young people'. Its key message was that to improve learning, technology must be used in a way that informed by effective pedagogy.

In response to the pandemic and the closure of schools and as part of the arrangements that were put in place through the Portsmouth Education Partnership, a *curriculum, digital and home learning work stream* was established. An early piece of work was to establish some principles for protecting learning for all pupils and what schools would do to support this and advice for parents to support their child's learning whilst not at school [HERE](#).

Towards the end of June 2020 a comprehensive baseline survey was undertaken to establish what schools were offering in the way of home learning, what was going well and where the problems or barriers might be and to understand schools' experience of using digital technology to support home learning. The summary report can be found [HERE](#). A key finding from the survey was [variability](#) and the different stages schools were at with home learning and the application of digital technology to support both home learning and learning in school. Other key findings included: *access to devices and internet* was variable affecting disadvantage pupils the most; the *CPD offer* to support digital learning was still in its infancy; *assessment and feedback* was variable; *parental involvement and engagement* increased significantly; a wide range of *software or websites* were being used to support home learning but the *monitoring and quality assurance* of home learning was mixed; almost all schools had run sessions on *online safety*.

There appeared to be two natural groups of schools emerging in the short to medium term: those who are well on their way with digital learning and could be used as a digital pioneer or strategy group to drive the agenda forward; and those interested but still at an early point and needing support and who could benefit from the Ed Tech Programme.

### **Key actions for 2022/2023**

1. Develop and expand the **Digital Drive Team** to bring together the sectors of business, education and the community to shape the digital strategy and provide a link between local employment and education that addresses the digital skills gap and seeks to 'future proof' opportunities for all citizens of Portsmouth pioneering the way towards Portsmouth being known as a Digital City
  - a) **Develop, in consultation with schools, MATs, and other partners a five year digital learning strategy for Portsmouth** with clear expectations about the way in which secondary, primary, infant, junior and special schools, colleges and early years settings will
  - b) increase their use of technology to enhance teaching and learning, support accessibility and inclusion and reduce workload, over the five years and beyond.
2. **Support schools and other education settings to effectively exploit the potential of digital learning both in school and at home.**
3. **Ensure all schools retain appropriate contingency arrangements for remote education** which meet the expectations set out in the DFE guidance in the event of a local outbreak in a school or a local lockdown in a community.
4. **Continue to work with schools to reduce the number of children with no access to either appropriate devices or to the internet.** This will include supporting schools and education settings with auditing, reviewing and identifying pupils and families who require access to an appropriate device and/or the internet then working together to facilitate this through deployment of current devices and securing of additional devices through citywide links.
5. **Upskill parents and pupils** in order to support home learning and a blended offer of digital and non-digital and support schools and other education settings to build and develop better relationships with parents about their child's learning. To also enable adults with developing their own knowledge, skills and understanding around digital literacy and the necessary skills to enter the workplace.
6. Develop and establish **support networks for IT support / IT curriculum managers & subject managers in schools** across the city which encourage and support the implementation of digital learning.
7. Continue the development of the **digital apprenticeship programme** that is available through **Primary Goal** to promote digital champions who can enhance capacity and sustainability, bridging technology and teaching and learning, through a personalised and bespoke offer aligned with the city-wide vision. This will initially be for teachers

and/or senior leaders from January 2023 before being offered to support and admin staff from September 2023

8. **Ensure the appropriate leadership and governance** of the “Portsmouth: The Digital City” project through the role of the Lead of Digital Learning, Education and Innovation, a nominated Digital Champion from each school, the Digital Drive Team and other stakeholders such as governors.
9. **Develop a City wide vision and 5 year plan, which aligns with the Shaping Portsmouth Digital vision** so that we can work together as a city to ensure the best outcomes for all.
10. **Review the current use of technology for SEND/EAL pupils** so that we can share best practice across the city and provide these learners with life long skills that they can use within and beyond the classroom and into their working lives.
11. Develop a system that enables **persistent absentees and those on a reduced timetable** to access the full curriculum in a flexible manor so that they are able to succeed.
12. **Raise the reputational capital** of the project across Portsmouth and beyond in order to support the development of the project and ensure that all stakeholders are able to have a vested interest.

### Priority 3: improving pupil outcomes in literacy (reading, writing and oral) with a high priority focus on early language development



#### Background

Improving early communication, language and literacy development is a key priority for the city. We know that by the age of four, a child from a disadvantaged background has heard 30 million fewer words compared to their more advantaged peers. We know that a child with a poor vocabulary when they are five is more than twice as likely to be unemployed in their thirties and one and a half times more likely to have mental health problems compared to a child with a good vocabulary. There is also significant research linking poor speech and language skills to a range of poor outcomes including offending.

Some of the most disadvantaged children in Portsmouth start school months behind their peers and the gap can grow through their school years. As a result of Covid-19 the likelihood is that disadvantaged children in Portsmouth will have lost more ground in their language development, exacerbating the situation.

Our performance through EYFS and KS1 and KS2 underlines the issue, the latest figures for which are from 2019 due to the cancellation of all assessments and exams in 2020 and 2021 as a result of Covid-19, and the DfE strong advice not to use primary 2022 results for any comparative or accountability measures.

#### Literacy related outcomes for 2019 EYFS - KS2

Key performance indicator	% achieving expected standard	Gap to national (% points)	LA ranking
EYFS GLD	70%	2%	
EY goals: listening & attention	87%	+1%	
EY goals: understanding	86%	0%	
EY goals: speaking	85%	0%	
Phonics Year 1	79%	3%	141
KS1 Reading	74%	1%	99
KS1 Writing	66%	3%	130
KS2 Reading	66%	7%	148
KS2 Writing	75%	3%	131

In **Early Years** there has been a collaborative effort across the city to develop a cohesive communication and language strategy which is helpfully summarised on the co-produced Portsmouth Commitment to Early Language ([link here](#))

Other work has included continuation of the 'Read with Me' project - a collaborative initiative bringing together the School Library Service, public libraries, EY settings, Yr R practitioners and parents. The development of communication and language skills underpins this project, but we also seek to foster a love of reading and focus on literacy skills in this project. The roll out of 'Read with Me' was hampered by Covid-19 in 2020, but this work was continued in 2021 and 2022 with a universal approach of identifying 10 key quality and popular texts to be shared in EY settings, accessed over the summer holidays by families and revisited by schools in the early Autumn term 2022. The recent support of the Portsmouth Cultural Education Partnership for the '50 things to do before you're 5 in Portsmouth' initiative (now

titled 'Portsmouth Pioneers') will help to secure further understanding of the vital importance of all partners working together to promote early language development in our own locality, making it everyone's business. Again, the Covid pandemic has hindered the launch of Portsmouth Pioneers but this is now planned for Autumn 2022.

The city has actively supported and promoted the national **Hungry Little Minds campaign** which was launched in 2018 as part of the government's ambition to halve in ten years the proportion of children who finish reception year without the communication, language and literacy skills they need to thrive. The campaign seeks to encourage parents and carers to engage in activities that support their child's early learning and help prepare them for school and beyond.

Schools have been strongly encouraged to apply to be involved in the **national reception year early language programme for 2020/21** which was launched and then extended for 2021/2022 to help close the Covid language gap as an additional element in its catch up support programme, including delivery of the **Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI)**; a high-quality, evidence-based, 20-week intervention designed to improve the language skills of reception age pupils. The programme provides schools with training and resources, helping them deliver one-to-one and small-group support for five-year-olds whose spoken language skills may have suffered as a result of the pandemic. In 2020/21 we had 12 schools who registered to take part in this programme.

Within the **primary** sector, previously schools have been involved in a **Reading Research Project** in partnership with the Portsmouth Teaching School Alliance, Thornden Research School and the Education Endowment Foundation. Specifically trained and deployed SLEs worked with schools on their own bespoke projects based on proven research and principles from the Challenge the Gap and SEN projects already successfully undertaken through SSIF. In 2020/21 and 2021/22 by twinning with Hastings through the Government's social mobility Opportunity Areas Programme 18 Portsmouth KS2 schools were enabled to implement Hackney Learning Trust's **Destination Reader** programme with positive impact on pupil attitudes and progress in reading in spite of lockdowns and the challenges of remote education. Continuation of the support DR network group already instigated and a new development into Year 7 plus the support of the Schools' Library Service has been praised by Hackney Education advisers on a visit to the city in May 2022.

The highly successful Portsmouth **'Big Read'** event in 2021 where Year 6 pupils were provided with their own copy of Michael Morpurgo's book 'Boy Giant' was further developed in July 2022. Over 2,600 Year 6 pupils across 37 Portsmouth schools were each gifted a copy of Ross Welford's 'When We Got Lost in Dreamland' and were able to attend a live-streamed interview with the author. A transition unit of work to accompany the novel was written by representatives of Year 6 and Year 7 teachers to support pupils from different schools coming together in their new secondary school. The impact is reflected in feedback from a parent *"Taking part in the Year 6 Big City Read was a fantastic experience for my daughter in Year 6 and she thoroughly enjoyed hearing the author answer their questions and talk about the book they had all read. It also had a big impact on her settling into her Secondary School at the start of Year 7, as it meant that despite all the pupils in her English class being from various feeder schools in the city, they all had something in common. They were able to discuss the shared experience of the Year 6 Big City Read as well as the book itself."*



Delayed by Covid, the nationally recognised Challenge Partners **Excellence for Everyone** programme has been completed in 2021 and thus enabled schools to access a whole school approach designed to deliver transformational support for disadvantaged pupils and provide quality professional development for school staff. This has been augmented by the HISP research School **Making the Difference for Disadvantaged Pupils** enabling schools to review their principles and processes of effective implementation. The 100% assessment pass rate of Key Stage 1 and 2 moderators for Writing highlights that our practitioners understand the standards that pupils need to achieve, the focus must be on the delivery of a quality curriculum by highly effective education staff.

At **secondary** we know that literacy is key to learning across all subjects and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life. Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum which should be encouraged. It recognises that literacy skills are both general and subject specific, emphasising the value of supporting teachers in every subject to teach students how to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects. This guidance challenges the notion that literacy in secondary school is solely the preserve of English teachers, or literacy coordinators. The emphasis on disciplinary literacy makes clear that every teacher communicates their subject through academic language, and that reading, writing, speaking and listening are at the heart of knowing and doing every subject in secondary school. Secondary literacy is being supported in the city through the secondary Portsmouth English Network and the innovative **Destination Reader Plus** which extends this primary high quality reading pedagogy programme into Year 7. In 2021/22 this has been trialled in the secondary sector by two of our schools.

All sectors from early years, through primary, into secondary and post-16, plus parents and carers, can now benefit from the 5 minute videos '[Phonics in 5](#)' that have been developed and posted on the Portsmouth Education Partnership website. The Portsmouth Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) have also supported work on phonics by writing a helpful document which outlines **research and top tips about how to approach phonics with pupils learning English as an additional language**. To further support Key Stage 2 and 3 staff in particular a **Phonics and Spelling Mapping Progression** lists different and increasingly more difficult words from Year R to Year 6 that share the same phonetic sound. Action research from local Portsmouth schools successfully using this tool and identifying its early impact have been written up as case studies supported by the University of Portsmouth.

The **PEP Early Language and Literacy Development Group** established in the Autumn of 2020 has completed much work to drive this priority of the Education Strategy forward in spite of the pandemic, culminating in the highly engaging and successful Literacy session of the PEP Summer Education Conference in July 2021 and a follow up in October 2022. The group has enabled partners from different age phases and sectors, ranging from education, childcare and inclusion to health and cultural services to align and connect initiatives in a coherent and strategic manner. Partners have contributed to a **Portsmouth Approach to Reading** document which outlines helpful advice and guidance to schools, settings and colleges. Next steps include exemplification of strands of the Portsmouth Commitment to Early Language, improving the implementation of robust and effective phonics teaching and learning strategies, and developing high expectations and experiences around vocabulary acquisition at transition points. **Language development, vocabulary extension and oracy** will be the focus for the work of this group in 2022/23.

## Key priorities for 2022/23:

### 1. Improve EYFSP outcomes but with a particular focus on communication and language. This will include:

- Engagement by schools with the national reception year early language programme for 2020/21 and in subsequent years.
- Launch of the 'Portsmouth Pioneers' initiative to engage parents and families in supporting communication and language for their children.
- Regularly refresh and publicise Hungry Little Minds on social media platforms.
- Provide training for early years settings and the reception year with communication and language focus.
- Support the early years workforce and partnerships with health e.g. evaluation and updating of key tools (EL monitoring tool, Language Top Tips for Talking) based on current research and a training programme (e.g. masterclass in language theories).
- Develop programme of shared support for early years settings and linked to reception year practitioners based on communication and language provision leading to improving literacy provision.
- Use of the 'Best Start' Speech and Language resource, which is funded for 2 years and shared between Health and Early Years. The impact of the resource will not be seen in EYFSP outcomes until beyond 2022, as the focus is on support and training for EY settings.

### 2. Continue to implement the strategic Portsmouth Commitment to Early Language which includes:

- Ensuring the **early years workforce** understand early language development and support children to achieve their very best.
- Ensuring that **families** understand the importance of early language development and the vital role they play and take an active interest in supporting children to develop a wide and rich vocabulary.
- Develop a **data-led approach** to the delivery and analysis of the effectiveness of early language programmes across the city.
- **Develop appropriate tools, training and practice sharing** that support schools and early years providers to deliver robust and effective approaches to all children's early language development.
- Work with **health service providers** to ensure they use a range of resources and tools, share key messages about language development with families at every contact and develop mechanisms to share best practice across the health workforce, supporting families at all levels of the Healthy Child Programme.
- Work with **early years providers and schools** to ensure key staff are trained in a way which provides them with a high level of understanding around the acquisition of early language. Ensure that provision has a culture in which early language and communication development is a primary focus and integrated into all activity and promote engaging and stimulating language rich environments.

### 3. In our **primary schools** we will focus on supporting schools to deliver the following:

- Develop pupils' **speaking and listening skills** and wider understanding of language development.

- Use a wide range of explicit and implicit approaches including **planning the teaching of vocabulary, modelling and extending children's language and thinking** during interactions and activities such as shared reading.
  - Use a balanced and engaging approach to **developing reading, integrating both decoding and comprehension skills**. Both decoding (the ability to translate written words into the sounds of spoken language) and comprehension (the ability to understand the meaning of the language being read) skills are necessary for confident and competent reading, but neither is sufficient on its own.
  - Teach pupils to use strategies for developing and **monitoring their reading comprehension**. These include: prediction; questioning; clarifying; summarising; and activating and applying prior knowledge.
  - Effectively oversee that schools and early years settings implement a **systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP)** which explicitly and robustly teaches pupils a comprehensive set of letter-sound relationships for reading and sound letter relationships for spelling with resources that closely match the phonics cumulatively taught.
  - Develop progression in phonics resources and guidance so that Key Stage 2 and 3 practitioners are supported in their subject knowledge and pedagogy in order to improve levels of literacy in Portsmouth children and young people.
  - Teach pupils to use strategies for planning and **monitoring their writing**. Producing quality writing is a complex process but a number of different strategies are likely to help, depending on the current skills of the writer. These include pre-writing activities, drafting, editing and revising and sharing.
  - Promote **fluent written transcription skills** (handwriting, spelling or typing) through encouraging extensive and purposeful practice and explicit teaching. Children must develop fluency in these skills to the point that they have become automated.
  - **Collect high quality, up-to-date information about pupils' current capabilities, and adapt teaching accordingly** to focus on exactly what pupils need to progress. This approach is more efficient because effort is spent on the best next step and not wasted by rehearsing skills or content that a child already knows well.
  - **Embed and build upon the partnership work with Hastings** as part of the Government's social mobility Opportunity Areas Programme which has drawn down funding to support the **literacy programmes 'Destination Reader' and 'Daily Supported Reading'** as part of a twinning arrangement with Hastings.
4. In our **secondary schools** we will focus on supporting schools to deliver the following:
- Phonics intervention with trained and skilled staff to support older students who are struggling with the early stages of reading.
  - Disciplinary literacy across the curriculum.
  - Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject.
  - Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts.
  - Build upon the trial of the newly designed Destination Reader Plus programme for Year 7 students.
  - Break down complex writing tasks.
  - Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject and provide opportunities for structured talk.
  - Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students. This will include the continuation and extension of the **Literacy Hubs' successful programme** (Pompey Pirates and Portsea Sailors) which delivers an intensive year long after school

learning programme for children aged 9 to 13 who are both falling behind in their progress and are disadvantaged.

## Priority 4: recruit, retain and grow the best teachers, practitioners and leaders and provide high quality continuing professional development

your time  
to teach

Teach  
PORTSMOUTH

### Background

The shortage of teachers, particularly in certain subject areas, has been a significant cause for concern in the city for some years, which has intensified as a result of rising pupil numbers and fewer graduates entering the profession. The PEP made this one of its early priorities and established the ITT and Teacher & Retention Group to lead on this work and drive forward **Teach Portsmouth**.

National data trends indicate that whilst teaching retention stabilised during the pandemic there are signs that this is now starting to change and experienced teachers continue to leave the profession.

In May 2022, a survey was sent to all settings to find out about recruitment and retention in the city for the academic year 2020/21. 20 schools took part in the survey. When asked about how COVID-19 had impacted recruitment, schools highlighted a lower quality pool of candidates and less people moving within the profession. When asked if COVID-19 had affected how staff are utilised, schools said they had used support staff to cover lessons or had expanded their roles to take on additional responsibility. Key highlights include:

- The average number of resignations per school was 3
- Those who resigned had teaching specialisms in English, science, PE, PSHE and art
- The primary reason for resigning was to take up a new teaching role outside of the city

Both recruitment and retention rates from the schools who took part have remained stable across the previous academic year. There are no significant staff movements from schools who took part. Although, stakeholder feedback anticipates a shift in next year's statistics when more experienced teachers and senior leaders are anticipated to leave the profession entirely.

It is clear therefore that the PEP must maintain the momentum and the work that has formed part of *Teach Portsmouth* branded activities, events will need to continue and develop in 2022/23 in order to attract and retain the best teachers and leaders for the city.

### Recruiting Teaching Assistants

A key issue for all schools and colleges across the city is the issue in recruiting and retaining teaching assistants. This will be a focus for Teach Portsmouth in 22/23.

A pilot information event was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July. Partners included local schools, the employment support team and the Learning Place who deliver apprenticeships. This was a very successful event and was attended by 50 residents who were interested in becoming a

teaching assistant. This event will be developed as part of the Teach Portsmouth communications and marketing plan for 22/23.

### **Key Activities in 21/22**

A face to face Teach Portsmouth Awards was held at Portsmouth Guildhall in June 22. Schools, colleges, sponsors, and other stakeholders welcomed the opportunity to attend an in-person event and despite the pressures of 21/22, 28 schools engaged in the event. The focus of the 2023 event will be to increase school engagement.

Whilst 21/22 allowed us to return to face-to-face delivery the virtual programme that developed during the pandemic continues to be a successful part of the offer. Teach Portsmouth worked with PEP partners to develop a range of professional webinars during 2020/21 and these continued during 2021/22. The webinars allow us to focus on key areas and are then utilised as a resource on the Teach Portsmouth website. In 21/22 these were SEN teaching and Early years education.

Engagement with the website continues to grow as evidenced by the increase in newsletter subscribers to 884.

### **Initial Teaching Training**

Since September 2020, new teachers have been entitled to at least 3 years of evidence-based professional development and support.

They start with ITT, based on the core content framework, which is followed by a 2-year induction underpinned by the [early career framework](#).

Further changes which were paused during Covid now taken place and all providers wishing to offer ITT that leads to qualified teacher status from 2024 must undergo an accreditation process. Organisations will be able to apply for accreditation in one of at least 2 application rounds taking place in 2022 which are planned finish well in advance of the 2023 to 2024 recruitment cycle. There are some concerns being raised by providers who have not achieved accreditation and any potential impact for Portsmouth schools will be discussed with providers via the steering group (ITTRR)

Whilst support initial teacher training and recruiting high quality teachers to vacancies will continue to be a priority, there also needs to be a continuing emphasis on the **retention of teachers**. Before the pandemic one third of teachers in Portsmouth did not stay beyond the fifth year and many left the profession altogether. There is a recognition by the government that unmanageable workloads are a key factor in teachers leaving the profession. We cannot afford to take our eye off the issue of retention, teacher's wellbeing, and continuous professional development.

We also need to continue to recognise the intense pressure senior leaders have been under as a result of Covid-19, the current economic conditions and the additional responsibilities and workload that has been placed on our senior leaders. Their emotional health and wellbeing will be of paramount importance and the work done last year to consider how we can better support senior leaders in Portsmouth will continue in 2022/23

## **Key actions 2022/23**

- Increase nominations and school engagement with the Teach Portsmouth Awards 2023.
- Engage early years providers with the Teach Portsmouth Awards
- Deliver a communications and plan and events programme to support the recruitment of teaching assistants in Portsmouth schools. This will include the potential development of a work experience programme.
- Increase online engagement with those aspiring to a career in education
- Promote the teacher wellbeing offer via the PEP newsletter to support the retention of teachers
- Develop the Teach Portsmouth Website to meet the requirements of stakeholders, increase engagement and ensure website is fully accessible.
- Review and respond to changes to initial teacher training
- Review the membership of the Teacher & Retention Group ITTR group and increase representation from schools.

## Priority 5: promote emotional health, wellbeing and resilience in education

### Background

Meeting the emotional health and wellbeing needs of children and young people is crucial, not least in order for them to learn effectively. We believe that the wellbeing of pupils and staff, including that of our school teachers, practitioners and leaders, needs to be at the heart of all that schools and other education settings do.

This work forms part of the [Social Emotional Mental Health \(SEMH\) Strategy for children and young people 2020 - 2023](#), which has a clear, shared intention to adopt a whole system approach to developing and transforming the support for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Fundamental to this approach is the importance of partnership working, relational and restorative approaches, such that social and emotional mental health becomes 'everyone's business' in the same way as safeguarding has become 'everyone's business' across Portsmouth.

Portsmouth's *strategy for improving wellbeing and resilience in education* continues to strengthen the partnership across services and between services and education settings. This work focuses on three areas:

- To improve access to services including direct work with young people and advice and training and consultation for professionals.
- To provide a central source of information
- To develop self-help and peer support

The work on Relational and Restorative Practice in schools as part of the Improving Attendance and Reducing Exclusions Strategy, has a strong focus on emotional health and wellbeing. Feedback from schools in Wave One indicates a positive impact on staff and pupil wellbeing.

Support including training and resources, continue to be available to schools. Services working alongside schools are continuing to strengthen their collaborative working through the SEMH schools' partnership. For ongoing reference, there is a dedicated page on the [PEP website](#).

Information on mental health support for young people has been centrally collated with pages aimed at parents and professionals as well as children and young people. As well as details of services, it also provides advice, information, and support on different presentations/conditions and how to manage them.

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/health-and-care/health/mental-wellbeing/mental-health-support-for-young-people-semh/>

All schools in Portsmouth have access to **Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)** which provide extra capacity for early intervention and ongoing help within a school setting. The offer continues to development in response to feedback from education settings and to meet the needs of individual schools. The MHSTs aim to provide a bespoke for each school.



A digital mental health service **Kooth** has been commissioned and is available to all young people in the city. During the summer of 2022, the age range for Kooth has been extended up to 25.

Over the last year an Anti-Racism Toolkit has been produced and training is available to support the implementation of this pack.

In response to an increased demand for supervision for school staff MABS and the EP Team are collaborating to provide this as part of the traded services offer.

A Mental Health event, led by young people in March 2022 has informed the priorities for 2022/23. Ongoing engagement with young people will support the development of this priority.

### **Key actions for 2022/23:**

1. Further develop **Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)** across all schools.
2. Develop and extend **Youth Mental Health Ambassadors** (across all our secondary schools) to work alongside MHSTs.
3. Review the offer around staff training and awareness of mental health, so that young people feel more confident that staff understand and are better able to meet their mental health needs.
4. Implement and evaluate My Happy Mind
5. Strengthen the SEMH Schools Partnership including the link with relational and restorative practice
6. Develop the role of Senior Mental Health Leads

## Priority 6: ensure all pupils regularly attend school



### Background

Whilst comparative data for the last few years is less reliable it remains true that Portsmouth's pupils do not attend school as regularly as their peers nationally and there is therefore still more work to do to improve school attendance. We know that by not attending school regularly children and young people are leaving themselves vulnerable to risks which can reduce their life chances. For our most vulnerable young people school will be the only safe and consistent part of their lives. Away from the safety and security of school, young people are more at risk of abuse and exploitation, taking part in criminal activity and missing out on support for special educational needs and mental health problems.

A school attendance action plan is currently in place to improve these indicators and implement the [new attendance guidance](#), the implementation of which is monitored by the PEP Behaviour and Attendance Group (BAG).

A school attendance campaign *Miss School Miss Out* will be relaunched this academic year following consultation with schools.

During the pandemic, systems were established with schools to **track vulnerable children** and respond to a wide range of issues impacting on families as a result of the lockdown, including RAG-rated child level data on spreadsheets, **LA Link Co-ordinators** attached to schools and colleges and the Children's Hub. These systems have now been adjusted to focus on children who are severely absent, with attendance below 50%<sup>1</sup>. The vulnerable children tracking team has now been established as a permanent team and in line with the new guidance, their part within the school attendance support team will be reviewed.

In addition to the above, there will be a continued focus during 2022/23 on a number of areas that impact on school attendance. This includes work to reduce:

- **Permanent Exclusions and suspension** through the relaunch of restorative practice in schools, the effective use of alternative provision (in house and externally commissioned) and use of alternative exclusions (where COVID plans allow)
- **Reduced timetables that go beyond 6 weeks without a clear plan** in place for returning a pupil back to full time education. The reasons for reduced timetables should be: exceptional and limited; short term; require parental consent; Early Help Assessments should be considered; and all exclusions should be accurately recorded on the attendance register
- **Elective Home Education (EHE)** adhering to the principles of the EHE protocol that was agreed with Headteachers in 2019. Following the result of Portsmouth's judicial

review, we will look to continue robustly ensuring that all pupils have a suitable education.

### **Key actions for 2022/23:**

1. **Relaunch of restorative practice in schools but on the basis of a whole-school approach**, to be jointly led by key schools where progress has already been made in this area, supported by L30 (national training provider). 17 schools have requested that they are included in phase 1 of this programme.
2. **Relaunch of the #missschoolmissout attendance campaign** including social media messaging, resources for schools and materials for partner organisations and all professionals who are working with families.
3. **Continue to deploy LA Link Co-ordinators** building on the success of the previous academic year, working with schools to identify and review how this links to the School Attendance Team. Revised guidance for a graduated response will be issued jointly through these teams.
4. **Helping parents meet their responsibilities to ensure children attend school or another education setting regularly** through effective communication / information, advice and guidance, pastoral support, intervention through Early Help and MABS where appropriate and punitive sanctions as authorised by Headteachers. The introduction of parenting contracts will be considered in line with the aforementioned guidance.
5. Ensuring **schools are supported and challenged and there is effective leadership and management of school attendance** in place, through the termly monitoring of school attendance data by BAG, half termly Persistent Absence Reviews, Attendance Audits and Multi-agency, termly, severely absent meetings, audits where appropriate, ensuring schools are aware of and access appropriate medical provision, focus on reduced timetables that exceed 6 weeks.
6. **Working with partners to provide additional needs based support that contributes to improvements in attendance**, running termly school attendance network meetings and continuing to make school attendance everyone's business including health workers, social workers, school nurses, Early Help family workers, CAHMS, GPs, etc
7. Continued **focus on chronic absence (below 50%)**, sharing information with Missing Exploited and Trafficked (MET) group and Early Help, encouraging schools to complete an Early Help Assessment and have a Lead Professional in place, working with Early Help and / or contacting MASH where school interventions and previous legal sanctions have failed.
8. **Implement the EHE protocol** and address any increase in EHE as a result of the pandemic and parents wishing to continue to educate their children at home.

## **Priority 7: invest in school buildings to create additional school places, focusing on secondary, even more inclusive mainstream schools and a continuum of specialist provision for children with additional needs**



### **Background**

Ensuring there are sufficient school places in Portsmouth is the statutory responsibility of the Local Authority (LA), but its ability to secure this is reliant on strong collaborative arrangements with schools and Multi Academy Trusts. Through the Portsmouth Education Partnership the city has a strong and stable culture of collaboration which has enabled the LA to ensure there are sufficient school places across the city whilst at the same time improve existing accommodation.

Between 2012 and 2017 the focus had been on expanding **primary school places** in response to the unprecedented rise in demand fuelled by rising birth rates, inward migration, reductions in the number of children accessing education outside of Portsmouth or accessing independent education and the impact of regeneration schemes and housing developments. In response 1,600 additional primary school places have been created since 2012. The birth rate is now falling and as a result surplus capacity is now a feature in Year R and is becoming so in Year 3. A summary of the latest position for primary is given below:

In recent years the focus has switched to expanding **secondary school places and creating places for children and young people with SEND.**

- **Year 7** numbers are due to increase year on year until they peak in 2024/25 at 2,121. Secondary capacity has been increased in the last two years through the expansion of existing schools and there are 2214 Year 7 places available for September 2021 (surplus of 6.1%). At the forecast peak in Year 7 pupil numbers, the surplus capacity for the City as a whole will be 4.2%. Without major development impact and in line with the forecast reduction in primary numbers, secondary numbers will begin to fall again at this point.
- Places for pupils with **special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)** is a far more complex issue and a very challenging one due to limited capital funding. An increase in special school places also has implications for revenue funding and pressure on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The issue is complicated further by the diverse range of needs, the increasing complexity of need and the fact that our existing specials schools and inclusion centres are largely full with limited space for significant expansion.

In light of the above, a SEND and AP (Alternative Provision) phase 2 review was undertaken which informed the development of a 3-5 year SEND accommodation strategy.

### **Key actions for 2022/23:**

1. Recruit a permanent replacement to the Sufficiency and Capital Strategy Manager post.
2. Continue to monitor school sufficiency for primary, secondary and special school places.
3. Continue to support school organisation proposals including transfer of LA maintained schools to Academy Trust/s.
4. Update the school sufficiency data in preparation for the updated SCAP process - including SEND schools data. This may require further development of the SEND forecasting methodology.
5. Continue to implement the recommendations from the SEND and AP Strategic Accommodation Strategy
6. Commission sufficiency projects at Milton Cross and Priory Secondary Schools to create additional pupil places.
7. Agree approach to securing the additional secondary places that will be needed by 2026/27.
8. Submit an application to the DfE's SEND Free School Programme for a new 16-19 SEND school in accordance with the SEND Accommodation Strategy.
9. Continue to support the DfE and Delta Education Trust with the new SEND Free School for children with autism at Wymering - currently aiming for a Spring 2023 completion.
10. Completion of Inclusion Centre projects at Arundel Court, Flying Bull Academy, The Portsmouth Academy and successful completion of projects at Cliffdale and Craneswater Annex.
11. Commission the annual programme of school condition projects.
12. Provide advice and support to schools in respect of Land Transactions - including Change of Use (CoU) and (s77) playing field disposals.

## Priority 8: Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) through NEET prevention and re-engagement activities



### Background

Local authorities have broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. Specifically these are to:

- Secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is maintained. To fulfil this, local authorities need to have a strategic overview of the provision available in their area and to identify and resolve gaps in provision.
- Make available to all young people aged 13 to 19 and to those between 20 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training.

Tracking young people's participation is a key element of these duties. Local authorities are required to collect information about young people so that those who are not participating, or are NEET, can be identified and given support to re-engage. Since 2017, local authorities have been required to track and report on years 12 and 13.

The DfE monitors the participation of young people in employment, education or training in all local authority areas. This data is supplied by each local authority, all of whom have a statutory duty to do so on a monthly basis. The overall performance measure used is a combined average figure of young people who are NEET and unknown over a three month period (December to February). Reporting includes a combined figure for young people who are NEET or unknown to the local authority. This change was made after a number of local authorities reported low NEETs whilst having a high number of unknowns.

As a city we have made some significant improvements over the past 8 years. In 2013 NEET and unknown figures were significantly higher than the national average with NEETs at 7.7% and unknowns at 18.7%. To address this the council worked with schools and post-16 providers to improve progression outcomes for young people aged 16 to 18.

A key part of this work was the **Youth NEET Prevention Programme** which was launched in 2014. This partnership programme was initially funded by local colleges and the council. The pilot programme offered support to 108 year 11s who were considered at risk of not progressing to post-16 education. A Progression Adviser works with the young people during the spring term of year 11 through to post-16 enrolment. During the autumn term advisers are based in the colleges to support these young people and other Portsmouth students who were at risk of becoming NEET. The project has had a positive impact on the NEET figures and this combined with close and collaborative work with the Data Team brought the NEET down to 3.8% and unknowns to 1.1%

Since 2017 the NEET score card has reported data for a three month average.

**Table 1: three month average 2018 - 2021**

	<b>2017 (Dec 2016 - Feb 2017 3 months average)</b>	<b>2018 (Dec 2017 - Feb 2018 3 months average)</b>	<b>2019 (Dec 2018 - Feb 2019 3 months average)</b>	<b>2020 (Dec 2019 - Feb 2020 3 months average)</b>	<b>2021 (Dec 2020 - Feb 2021 3 months average)</b>	<b>2022 (Dec 2021 - Feb 2022 3 months average)</b>
<b>NEET</b>	3.8%	3.7%	3.8%	4.2%	4.4%	3.8%
<b>Unknowns</b>	1.1%	1.6%	1.1%	0.8%	1.1%	1.3%
<b>Combined</b>	4.9%	5.4%	4.8%	5.0%	5.6%	5.1%

The figures for 2020 and 2021 however showed a concerning trend and it was clear that the pandemic had a negative impact on participation.

Following the implementation of the NEET Prevention and re-engagement strategy the figures have improved. Key actions include:

- **Youth NEET Prevention Programme**  
This project continues to be a key activity within the strategy. In the past two academic years there have been increase in the number of young people supported via this programme from approximately 60 to 160. We are working closely with the Link Coordinators to ensure we use insight data to inform this programme.
- **The establishment of a network of Year 11 progression leads in schools** - Year 11 progression and post-16 destinations are a key responsibility for schools. At the start of the academic year each secondary school was asked to identify a lead for year 11 progression who will be the link for the school for specific progression issues including resources, group meetings, September Guarantee, updates from post-16 providers and delivery of support from Portsmouth City Council. This will be developed for 22-23
- The **STEP programme** also funds support for young people who are NEET to support them to re-engage. Advisers work within the community to support young people to re-engage and progress to education and employment with training. This programme has funded English and maths provision which has been delivered as a 1-1 option and this has been particularly successful. The programme also delivers support to those who are risk of NEET and in 21/22 we delivered the programme in Trafalgar School. The STEP programme will cease in March 2023 which will leave gap in provision.

- A **Specialist Careers Adviser** has been appointed to support looked after children/care Leavers to engage and progress. This is delivering impact both with direct work and the co-ordination of the support offered to young people.
- A **Youth Hub** has been established through DWP funding. The Youth Hub supports young people aged 16-25 who are claiming Universal Credit to progress to employment and training. Education is a partner in the Youth HUB and the Careers and Progression Team deliver support as part of the offer. Funding is due to cease in March 2023.
- A review of the **risk of NEET indicators (RONI)** has been undertaken alongside a deep dive of the NEET data for 2021/22 (3- month average). The data review has confirmed the importance of the Youth NEET Prevention Programme. Moving forward we will work with the newly created Insight Hub to improve the RONI and earlier identification of young people who are at risk of becoming NEET.
- Funding from Southern Universities Network (SUN) has supported the training and implementation of the iCAN career development programme and delivery of a year 11 transition website **Flying Start**.

#### **Key actions for 2022/23:**

##### **1. Securing suitable provision**

There is an ongoing issue of a lack of roll-on roll off provision which is vital to re-engaging young people who are NEET. The council will therefore continue to work with the City of Portsmouth College and other local providers to improve and develop provision. This work will focus on courses with regular entry points and partnerships with a wide range of organisations who can offer support. This work will be supported by building the network and re-establishing partnership meetings with providers.

**2. Review of the Youth NEET Prevention Programme** - in order to ensure the long term viability of the Youth NEET Prevention Programme we will work with colleges and schools to review the model and programme funding. A proposal will be taken forward to the Post-16 Forum in Autumn 2022

**3. Working with partners to seek funding to deliver Early Intervention** to deliver support to young people in year 10 who are at risk of becoming NEET. Data from the Insight Hub will be utilised to identify the young people most in need to support.

**4. Continue to develop the support to school progression leads to ensure appropriate data and access to support from PCC to meet their statutory requirements.**