

# **EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Friday 21 November 2025**

## **2025 Provisional Attainment Outcomes**

### **Report by Director of Children's Services**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the provisional attainment outcomes for Children and young people across Oxfordshire in 2025.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. This paper sets out the provisional statutory attainment outcomes for children and young people, aged 5-16 years, who are attending Oxfordshire Schools in 2025.
3. The assessments included in this report are Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) taken by children at the end of Reception Class, phonics assessment at end of year 1, Key Stage 2 assessments in Reading, Writing and maths taken by children at the end of primary school and GCSE exams taken by children at the end of Year 11.
4. Along with the attainment outcomes for all Oxfordshire children, the report provides further information on outcomes for specific pupil cohorts, where they form a focus both nationally and locally. Children who are disadvantaged children (those in receipt of Free School Meals) and the most disadvantaged group in Oxfordshire, white British children, children with Special Educational Needs, at SEN Support and those with an EHC Plan.
5. The information in this report should be considered provisional until validated Statistical First Releases (SFR) are published by the DfE. This data should therefore be considered provisional and is subject to change.

#### **Background**

6. Nationally children are required to undertake or be part of national attainment tests or exams at different points of their learning. This provides a useful snapshot of children and young people's attainment across Oxfordshire schools, when compared to national and regional and against the previous year.

7. Children are tested against the early Years foundation stage profile (EYFS), on phonics development at Year 1, at the end of Key stage 2 (end of primary education), at the end of Key Stage 4 on GCSE results (end of secondary education) and after 16 on a range of Post 16 qualifications including A levels.
8. Evidence shows direct correlation between children's well-being and attainment. Poverty, family circumstances and additional needs can all impact upon a child's attainment and impact upon their life outcomes and the impact of the pandemic is still being seen sharply across all key stages.

## **Oxfordshire Attainment Outcomes**

9. The 2025 provisional attainment data for Oxfordshire's children and young people shows a mixed picture, with positive outcomes for all children but some significant persistent challenges across specific pupil cohorts.
10. Oxfordshire performs above the national average in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) and at Key Stage 4 (GCSEs), with 71% and 66% of pupils meeting expected standards. However, Year 1 Phonics and Key Stage 2 results are slightly below national averages, with limited progress since last year.
11. Disadvantaged pupils in Oxfordshire continue to underperform compared to national averages at all key stages. While there have been small improvements in some areas, the attainment gap remains significant, particularly in early years and phonics.
12. Outcomes for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are above national averages at EYFSP and Year 1 Phonics, but overall attainment remains low, especially at Key Stage 2 and 4. There have been small year-on-year improvements. SEN Support pupils show strengths at EYFSP and Key Stage 2, with results above national average and showing improvement since 2024. However, phonics outcomes have declined and are below national benchmarks.
13. Oxfordshire broadly then continues to perform strongly in the early years and at GCSE level, maintaining or exceeding national averages in these areas for all children. However, challenges remain in phonics and at Key Stage 2, where results are slightly below national and show slow progress year-on-year. The biggest gaps however remain for pupils in specific cohorts: disadvantaged (FSM), pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), pupils at SEN Support, with disadvantaged White British pupils showing the biggest gaps in educational attainment across the County.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage, Phonics and Key Stage 2**

14. At the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), 71% of Oxfordshire pupils achieved a good level of development, which is 3 percentage points above the national average and an improvement of 2 points from 2024.

15. However, in Year 1 Phonics, Oxfordshire's performance dipped slightly, with 78% of pupils meeting the expected standard—2 points below the national figure and 1 point lower than last year.
16. At Key Stage 2, 60% of Oxfordshire pupils achieved at least the expected standard in reading, writing, and mathematics (RWM), which is 1 point below the national average and unchanged from 2024.

## **Key Stage 4**

17. For Key Stage 4, 66% of pupils achieved a grade 4 or above in English and maths, placing Oxfordshire 1 point above the national average and matching last year's result.

## **Specific Pupil Cohorts**

18. The attainment outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Oxfordshire in 2025 remains a significant concern. Across all key stages, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils meeting expected standards is below the national average. For example, only 44% of disadvantaged pupils achieved a good level of development at EYFSP, 6 percentage points below the national figure and significantly below the aspiration for all children.
19. Year 1 Phonics and Key Stage 2 results are also notably lower than national benchmarks, with phonics 10 points and KS2 RWM 9 points below. However, there are some positive trends: the EYFSP result improved by 2 points, KS2 by 1 point, and KS4 by 3 points compared to 2024, evidencing a persistent attainment gap and highlighting the need for continued focus and support.
20. Within the disadvantaged group in Oxfordshire white British children are facing the most significant challenges across all key stages, being below national averages at EYFSP (6 points below), Year 1 Phonics (6 points below), and KS2 RWM (8 points below).
21. Small improvements at KS2 Reading, writing and Maths are evidenced but other measures have declined. This attainment data is reflected within the focus for on-going targeted, evidence-based early interventions to support greater progress and improved attainment at Key stage 4 and beyond.
22. For pupils with an EHCP, Oxfordshire's results are mixed. Attainment at EYFSP and Year 1 Phonics is above the national average by 2 points, and there are marginal gains at EYFS however attainment at KS2 and KS4 remains below national averages.
23. For children at SEN Support EYFSP and KS2 are above national (EYFSP by 3 points, KS2 by 1 point) and attainment at both these stages have improved when compared to 2024 (EYFSP up by 5 points and KS2 by 2 points). However,

challenges persist in Year 1 Phonics, where attainment is 4 points below the national average and has declined by 3 points since last year. This suggests that while some interventions are effective, further work is needed to address early literacy for SEN Support pupils.

## **National Policy Changes; A Case for Change.**

24. The Education and care system including schools are subject to significant policy change currently, whilst remaining in an ongoing financially challenging landscape. Collectively these policies set out a significant case for change to drive improved outcomes for children, these are broadly welcomed but require significant collaboration and leadership across partners for implementation.
25. “Working Together to Improve School Attendance” sets out a collaborative national framework for improving school attendance as a key driver for improving outcomes for children and improving attainment, on the simple basis that for most children school is a place of safety and learning. It sets out the need to identify and remove barriers to attendance, supporting a focus on early intervention and inclusion, and reflected in other recent policy developments.
26. The new Ofsted framework, introduced in September 2025, places a strong emphasis on inclusion across all phases of education with a new focus on Inclusion Threaded Throughout Inspection with Inspectors evaluating how well schools support disadvantaged children and those children with SEND, and considering whether curriculum adaptations are meaningful and accessible to all, School leaders are expected to have robust systems for early identification and support of pupils with additional needs, focussing on children’s behaviour and attitudes especially their sense of belonging, attendance and sense of safety within the school community, all factors which are known to impact upon attainment. Inspectors will gather the views of learners, parents, and staff on inclusion.
27. The 2025 Curriculum and Assessment Review has recently reported on recommendations to modernise the curriculum and assessment system in England for children aged 5-19 and has recommended a greater emphasis on oracy (speaking and listening), reading, writing, and maths from early years through secondary, alongside a clear curriculum structure, with subjects taught in a logical sequence to build on prior learning, a focus on inclusion and diversity to better represent the diversity of modern society and enhanced support for children with SEND and disadvantaged backgrounds, with evidence-based adaptations for teaching and learning.
28. The SEND White paper, now delayed until 2026 is widely expected to continue the focus on mainstream inclusion, supporting children to stay within their local communities, with investment into an appropriately trained and skilled

workforce. Wider systemic changes are also expected however details are not as yet available.

29. The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill is a major piece of legislation introduced to improve school standards, strengthen safeguarding, and put children's wellbeing at the heart of education and care systems. It aims to break the link between background and future success, ensuring every child can achieve and thrive, strengthening safeguarding in schools and expanding the role of education in safeguarding partnerships, requiring education and childcare settings to be represented at both strategic and operational levels, establishing multi-agency child protection teams, the development of free breakfast club provision in all primary schools and a stronger focus on children not in schools.

## **Oxfordshire Initiatives**

30. There are several important key initiatives supporting the vision of working collaboratively and strategically across systems to help children thrive and improve educational outcomes, and specifically for those children who are disadvantaged and for those with SEND.
31. Family Hubs-will provide integrated support for Children 0-19 and their families through community based or hubs where services can be accessed easily and without stigma. A strong focus on the Best Start in life and first 1000 days will support early literacy and oracy, building of strong relationships and preparation for school.
32. Families First Partnership is focused on early intervention and integrated support for families, a partnership approach to supporting Families through integrated assessments and linking with services through the family hubs and builds on the already strong Local community services offer.
33. Expanding holiday activity fund and breakfast clubs supporting children to be ready for learning before school and through school holidays.
34. Expanding child-care age range and number of available places for children from 2 years old.
35. Increasing the number of places to support children with SEND, alongside training for early years practitioners, teachers and school staff in relational practice, a focus on supporting schools to increase attendance and reduce exclusions and in focussing on early literacy and oracy development.
36. Oxfordshire Education and Inclusion partnership is strengthening collaboration with and between schools, supporting identified priority areas and focussed activity on attendance, transitions, workforce development and improving outcomes for children, supported by the national policy context.

37. Local Area Partnership for children with SEND is working collaboratively together to improve outcomes for children at SEND support and with EHCP's across a range of outcomes from early years and through to preparing for adulthood.
38. Oxfordshire is a Marmot Place, which focuses on collaboration across all key partners to influence and impact positively on wider social determinants impacting health, with an identified priority on the Best Start in life.

## **Conclusion**

39. The recent and anticipated national Policy framework reflects the need for collective focus on inclusion, requiring Oxfordshire schools and partners to demonstrate effective support for all children and for children experiencing disadvantage and for children with SEND. These alongside identified local strategic priorities will contribute and support early intervention narrowing the impact of disadvantage and supporting improved attainment across all key phases of education.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

40. The issues raised in this report relate directly to our corporate vision and Children and young people plan. The identified challenges and the work to address these links directly to 2 of the 9 strategic priorities: To tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire and to create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential, as we seek with partners and through collaboration to address the drivers and impact of disadvantage to create a more inclusive and sustainable Oxfordshire.

## **Financial Implications**

41. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

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## **Legal Implications**

42. There are no significant legal implications arising from the content of this report.

Craig Cochrane, Principal Solicitor, Child Care Legal Team,  
[craig.cochrane@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:craig.cochrane@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

## Information Governance and GDPR Implications

43. There are no issues relating to data protection legislation; the information provided is aggregated or anonymised and there is no identification of an individual person or setting, and the information is available to the public.

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## Staff Implications

44. There are no staffing implications arising from anything contained in this report.

Amy Warner, Strategic People Partner, [amy.warner@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:amy.warner@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

45. There are no equality or inclusion implications arising from directly from this report. However, the report identifies inequality in educational attainment for some children in Oxfordshire.

## Sustainability Implications

46. There are no sustainability implication arising from this report.

## Risk Management

47. Generally, Oxfordshire's schools continue to support pupil attainment well. This performance mitigates risks to the council in terms of the life chances of most children and young people. However, specific cohorts have less favourable attainment outcomes, and these are significantly below their peers. Further work is required to achieve our ambitions.

## Consultations

48. Information from consultations does not form any part of this report. Data shared does not enable identification of either an individual school or child. All data shared is publicly available but is unvalidated therefore is subject to change

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