

West Somerset OA FUNDED PROGRAMMES: ACTIVITY, TWINNING, COVID RESPONSE AND SUSTAINABILITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

West Somerset was the lowest ranking district in the Social Mobility Index (January 2016), a measure that compares the chances that a child from a disadvantaged background will do well at school and get a good job. Not enough children were achieving the same level of attainment at school as in Somerset or nationally. There are signs that West Somerset is starting to narrow the gap within the next generation with the achievement of all pupils and of disadvantaged pupils at the end of key stage 4 now in line with the national average, but still too few young people then progress to higher education and good careers. Allied to this West Somerset's position at the bottom of the index was largely due to economic factors with the Median gross weekly pay being less than in Somerset or England, whilst house prices are relatively expensive. A core purpose of the Opportunity Area programme was to develop young people who have the skills and aspiration to access more highly skilled jobs in the area, an example being those that will be required at Hinkley Point both during its construction and when fully operational.

OA DELIVERY PLAN, PRIORITIES AND TARGETS

The original delivery plan set out four main priorities:

Priority 1. ((1) Increase the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the early years foundation stage to at least 70%, so it is above the current national average and (2) Increase take up, so that at least 80% of disadvantaged two year olds access early education, which is well above the current national rate of take up.

Priority 2. (1) At least 85% of children will meet the expected standards in phonics in all schools in West Somerset. (2) The proportion of children reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths outcomes at key stage 1 will put West Somerset in the top half of the country, and the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils will be half what it was in September 2017.

(3) Outcomes at key stage 2 will be in the top half of the country and we will close the gap in West Somerset between disadvantaged pupils and all pupils as for key stage 1. The 2019 data supports this is progressing from 46% in 2016 to **57%** (England 65%).

Priority 3. (1) To increase the percentage of young people achieving level three qualifications, such as A levels, at age nineteen and close the gap between West Somerset and Somerset in both academic and vocational qualifications. By 2020/21, we want achievement in West Somerset to equal the strong results already being achieved in the best performing parts of Somerset. (2) All young people leaving West Somerset College will go onto further education, employment or training.

Priority 4. (1) The proportion of young people progressing to higher education will put West Somerset in the top half of the country. (2) To increase apprenticeship starts so that start rates and completion rates are as high as or better than, the rest of Somerset.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Priority 1: (1) The 2019 data supports this target has been exceeded at **73%**. (2) 2019 data identifies that whilst progress has been made, it is currently **72%** and target is not achieved.

Priority 2: (1) 2019 data supports good progress against this target at **83%** (2) The 2019 data shows Reading 72% Writing 64% and Maths 73% (England R 75% W 69% M 76%) and the 2019 data for WS FSM pupils R 64% W 52% M 61% (England R 60% W 53% M 61%). This shows progress is quite mixed and more should be done to develop sustainable higher levels of attainment. (3) The work on closing the attainment gap remains a challenge, however, as the 2019 data shows the gap as: 41% disadvantaged against 57% all children (16%) compared with the 2017 gap: 36% disadvantaged against 50% all children (14%).

Priority 3: (1) The lagged 2018 data identifies 27% Academic and 26% Vocational against the target of 34% and 28% respectively. (2) The 2019 data supports good progress at 95% (in 2018) up from 87% in 2016.

Priority 4: (1) There is a lag in data for this target but 2017 data supports progress at 42% as opposed to 39% in 2016 (In 2017, overall destinations for Somerset was 398%, England 50%) (2) Unfortunately, due to LA changes during the programme this target cannot be reported against.

YEAR 4 PRIORITIES

The key priorities for Year 4 are: In Early Years to ensure continued development of sustainable, high quality teaching and learning in the EYFS which has demonstrated good progress but remains key, and to continue to deliver evidence based: literacy strategies, maths mastery and SEND practice in later phases of education. Whilst progress has been made over the past three years, partners recognise there is still work to be undertaken to ensure West Somerset delivers sustainable and consistent high levels of attainment. One new priority allied to the schools agenda is the need to recruit teachers to the area. To address this Year 4 would deliver, with schools, a focused children's workforce recruitment campaign and training that promotes opportunities within West Somerset. The final priority is supporting schools to meet requirements of the national careers strategy and engage young people in the world of work, together with reducing NEET. This has further been reinforced since Covid-19. Job prospects within the area have been significantly affected by the pandemic as employers in the area, many of whom are in hospitality and tourism, are closed.

TWINNING / SHARING LEARNING

The Year 4 plan has drawn upon the successes identified in OAs such as Bradford, Blackpool, Hastings and North Yorkshire Coast, indeed West Somerset has shared its successes an example being the work we have done with GLD in Early Years. In Year 4, we intend to work more closely with neighbours that share a similar socio-economic profile and attainment levels such as: Mendip (low early years results, three tier with a behaviour partnership reflecting the West Somerset Education structure; district is ranked 231 out of 324 LADs in the 2017 Social Mobility Index and early years ranking is 284) and Wiveliscombe (serves a proportion of West Somerset students for Secondary Education and students experience similar mental health challenges), and Weymouth and Portland (ranked 322 out of 324 in 2017 SMI). There is evidence to support neighbouring areas that sit within other areas such as: Barnstaple, Ilfracombe and Combe Martin in Devon. These towns have links with Exmoor and provide community involvement, youth participation, and employment and training opportunities for West Somerset residents. This work will include shared interventions, working groups, knowledge-sharing sessions, joint projects and thematic summits

COVID-19 RESPONSE AND AGILITY

The year 4 plan reflects priorities identified by the local partnership as relevant to the fourth year of the programme and contingent with anticipated needs during the Covid-19 recovery period. Implementation will be kept under review and flexibilities introduced if delivery is disrupted or superseded by national initiatives.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability will be a standing agenda item as part of the Year 4 priority group monitoring meetings. The outcome of these meetings and action points will then feed into the Partnership Board management group. Throughout the Year 4 planning process a significant focus has been on ensuring that improvements can be sustained beyond the OA funding period and Partnership Board members are committed to the need to do this. There is a shared vision for strong partnership working across the area between schools and the voluntary sector together with Education and Business. Equally, the need to ensure that the voice of young people is developed and considered in planning of services for the area is key to that vision.

Project and Theme/Delivery Plan Priority	Proposed Activity/Twinning and Objectives (including Underpinning Evidence, Justification for Investment and Scale)	COVID response	Sustainability	Cost (£k)
<p>1. Continued development of sustainable, high quality teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)</p>	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage 31 early years settings in implementation of evidence based practice that supports strong attainment by children in the Early Years Foundation stage, especially those at an educational disadvantage, in the Early Learning Goals associated with: communication and language development, mathematics and physical development Ensure settings identify special educational needs accurately and in a timely way that accelerates referrals to specialist service Develop a champion at each setting help embed evidence based approaches Engage partner organisations from the community and health services to reinforce the importance of the home learning environment by engaging families in EYFS by providing bespoke activity such as Story Start and the PEEP parenting programme Support development of the West Somerset Early Years community as the partnership which will sustain outcomes beyond the OA Create an EYFS action learning initiative in partnership with settings in the Mendip District and, potentially, other locations depending on levels of interest Ensure sufficiency of childcare places in West Somerset, especially for eligible two year olds and working families <p>Underpinning Evidence:</p> <p>Impact already achieved in this OA:</p> <p>a) The target was to increase the proportion of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) at the end of the early years foundation stage to at least 70% the work to date has achieved 73%.</p> <p>The current programme delivery is based on the EEF guidance <i>Preparing for Literacy</i>, 2018 and will continue to be adopted and implemented, together with <i>Improving Maths in the Early Years & KS1 EEF</i> (2020)</p> <p>b) The original target was to increase take up, so that at least 80% of disadvantaged two year olds access early education, which is well above the current national rate of take up. 2019 data identifies that whilst progress has been made it is currently 72% and target is not yet achieved and vulnerable to annual fluctuations.</p> <p>Justification: Maximising impact, building on success over years 1 – 3 Embedding and normalising practice to deliver longer-term sustainability. Ensure take-up of funded places childcare places so that maximum children benefit.</p> <p>Investment and scale:</p> <p>31 Settings engaged. The outcomes of engagement to date demonstrate that this has had a marked improvement in EYFS outcomes. Whilst this is good, the rurality of the area combined with a network of many small settings requires further embedding and, critically, the need to support the 31 settings for a further transition year.</p> <p>Circa 500 families engaged across a range of initiatives</p> <p>Sharing/Twinning: Work closely with our neighbouring areas as identified and local authorities to share learning and build a sustainable legacy for the programme, specifically in the Mendip District in Somerset where attainment at the end of the EYFS is weak. As some of the identified beneficiaries and neighbours are some distance from West Somerset this could be could delivered via an end of programme conference together with regular monitoring and sharing workshops throughout the Year.</p> <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure take up of 2 year old funded places remains above 80% (Jan 2019 national average take up = 68%) The percentage of children achieving a GLD reaches 73% (2019 national average= 71.8%) The percentage of children at SEN support level in West Somerset achieving a GLD reaches 60% (58.8% in 2019) The percentage gap for children eligible for Free School Meals achieving a GLD compared to other children decreases to 3% 	<p>Many of the most disadvantaged families live in isolated areas of West Somerset and during COVID have further withdrawn from the community. The OA has made swift efforts to address this by ensuring all vulnerable pupils are supported through digital connectivity together with planning local digital support for parents and guardians.</p> <p>The EYFS work is best delivered face to face and during the COVID period, this has not been possible but the OA team has ensured that regular contact has been maintained.</p> <p>This activity will be focussed directed to COVID recovery. It will take time and sustained effort in this area to ensure that families and children are supported and fully engaged in education again as previously experienced, but the COVID experience and lessons learned has ensured that these learners will be fully supported.</p>	<p>This is a concentrated investment in strengthening Early Years provision in West Somerset and which will build on the previous 3 years having upskilled the West Somerset Workforce. Training will be embedded in the settings and will further support long term good quality provision led by the West Somerset Early Years Community, which is a specific self-directing professional group established in 2019 to drive improvement in West Somerset.</p>	<p>£200k</p>

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<p>2. Continued delivery of evidence based: literacy strategies, maths mastery and SEND practice in West Somerset schools.</p>	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage 18 schools (plus additional schools through twinning initiatives) in a mixed package of activity that strengthens delivery of evidence based programmes focused on core curriculum areas: phonics, Literacy and Maths Mastery, that are tailored to meet continuing needs in West Somerset schools and raise attainment of disadvantaged students Deliver group and on-line training focused on a sustainable model of delivery beyond the OA by identifying and training local champions in the core curriculum areas and develop models of practice that increase specialist capacity Provide each school with specialist expertise to develop three year development plans Maximise the curriculum gains by a school led programme to deliver effective pupil transition in West Somerset and curriculum coherence across the three tier schools and primary schools that feed into schools outside of West Somerset Further embed the West Somerset <i>Team Around the School</i> approach and partnership with community organisations such as Home Start, Minehead Eye and GPs, which offer family engagement, alternative and extra-curricular experiences Develop the mental health and well-being of children and young people that ensures more children attend school regularly and that vulnerable children and families are supported as part of Covid-19 recovery working with Somerset Public Health <p>Underpinning Evidence: Impact already achieved in this OA:</p> <p>1. The proportion of children who met the expected standards in phonics in in West Somerset schools in 2019 is 83% (above England average but below local target of 855)</p> <p>2. Other target areas are showing some promise but results are variable across schools:</p> <p><u>Key Stage 1 literacy</u> 2019 data shows reading (72%) and writing (64%) is still below England average for Reading(72% compared to (75%) and writing (70%) but Free School Meal Pupils are making strong progress compared to attainment in England as a whole</p> <p><u>Key Stage 2 literacy</u> 2019 data shows all groups of pupils for reading and writing are still below England average; the attainment gaps between the WS disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils are Reading (1924%) and Writing (198%)</p> <p><u>Key Stage 1 maths</u> 2019 data shows Maths at 73% and still below England benchmark (76%) but Free School Meal pupil outcomes are in line with England scores.</p> <p><u>Key Stage 2 maths</u> 2019 data shows outcomes are below England (69.5% compared to 79%) and there is still a 16% gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Enabling activities, such as the attendance and well-being programmes need time to embed.</p> <p>The programme will deliver evidence-based approaches in year 4 and will draw on learning from successful approaches such as the Hastings maths project and ONE Vision</p> <p>Justification: Maximising impact building on success over years 1 -3. Whilst there are some early promising results of current interventions, more is required to raise attainment. The RSC SW is particularly concerned to see improvement at Key Stage 2, reduce the disadvantage gap, and strengthen community engagement. Further time is required to embed the policy and process developed and currently in place to ensure rigour of implementation, and engage with families and multi-disciplinary teams to support the more vulnerable</p> <p>Investment and Scale: 17 Schools to cover KS1 and KS2 and 1 KS4 14-19 school</p> <p>Sharing and Twinning: Work closely with our neighbouring areas as identified and local authorities to share learning and build a sustainable legacy for the programme working with Wiveliscombe and Sedgemoor District. As some of the identified beneficiaries and neighbours are some distance from West Somerset this could be could delivered via an end of programme conference together with regular monitoring and sharing workshops throughout the Year.</p> <p>Target: Maintain attainment in phonics, and move attainment at Key stage 1, 2, and 4 to national benchmarks for English and Maths</p>	<p>COVID has required a large proportion of pupils to remain away from the school settings and this plan is predicated on face-to-face intervention to be effective. Strengthened digital connectivity, achieved as Covid-19 response so far will support delivery of this priority, however.</p> <p>Year 4 implementation focused on key areas of English, maths and well-being responds to identified local needs.</p> <p>The OA team has worked with the schools and maintained regular contact throughout this period to monitor the support schools are giving to their pupils. This will remain a focus during the Covid-19 recovery to ensure the OA continues to meet the needs of the area.</p>	<p>This investment in strengthening the school improvement for all ages in West Somerset will continue to build upon achievements to date and embed in a strengthened school system.</p> <p>A coherent curriculum in West Somerset, coupled with evidence based practice across core subjects will deliver as sustainable legacy in West Somerset Schools, led by the West Somerset Education Partnership.</p> <p>Reducing weak transition at key stages will deliver a school system that helps more children and young people attain at and above national benchmarks.</p> <p>Strong community partnerships with <i>Team around the School</i> (including health) create a sustainable early help offer for wider community that helps develop resilient families.</p> <p>Effective governance of Behaviour Partnership ensure effective identification of need and intervention to maximise young people's ability to learn</p>	<p>£360k</p>

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<p>3. Deliver, with schools and early years settings, a focused Children's Workforce recruitment campaign that promotes education in the West Somerset.</p> <p>New priority in year 4</p>	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a mixed media campaign that promotes West Somerset as an excellent location to start Initial Teacher Training Stage, work an experienced teacher, early years educator or teaching assistant • Provide entry points to the education profession for people at different levels of attainment, in partnership with other agencies. • Extend the teacher talent academy, PGCE, Teacher Assistant and Early Years apprenticeships, and Teach First placements • Enable schools and other settings across West Somerset to access a professional resource to support their recruitment for their identified need building on Somerset's experience recruiting to other hard to fill vacancies, such as social workers <p>Underpinning Evidence</p> <p>This intervention builds on successful recruitment activity in OAs namely: North Yorkshire Coast and Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, as well as local relationships with Teach First and implementation of local PGCE Apprenticeships</p> <p>Justification:</p> <p>In the first three years of the programme, there has been some successful recruitment of new teachers through Teach First and the PGCE apprenticeship route. There remains, however, some difficulties in recruiting to posts in maths and science. Additionally, the demographic profile of teachers in West Somerset means that there will be a bulge in retirement in the next five years, plus this is the group most affected by Covid-19. There is a potential link the National Tutoring programme by encouraging interest in teaching through this route.</p> <p>Investment and Scale:</p> <p>Participation of 18 Schools and up to 31 Early Years settings</p> <p>Sharing and Twinning</p> <p>This intervention will allow for sharing of practice in recruitment to a rural isolated area with surrounding areas and in similar areas within Somerset e.g. Wiveliscombe. It will help to develop recruitment strategies that can be used in a wider geography with similar characteristics of rurally isolated communities and local infrastructure that can lack appeal for professionals.</p> <p>Target:</p> <p>- Recruitment to key posts in Maths, English Science, early years vacancies within 2020 to 2021 are successful in 90% vacancies.</p> <p>All attainment targets in priorities one and two are contingent on this project activity</p>	<p>This is a new intervention identified in the November 2019 planning workshops pre COVID. The recruitment campaigns will need to be in accordance with government guidelines for travel and movement.</p> <p>It will be directed to support schools during the recovery period.</p> <p>The identified need for the area has the potential to become more acute due to the age demographic profile of teachers across all schools.</p>	<p>The need to boost teacher recruitment campaigns in West Somerset is one that is regarded as critical by the schools. The head teachers and LA recognise that an ageing demographic of staff requires urgent attention over the next 5 years. This intervention and support requires their full cooperation in ensuring a strong teacher base can be sustained by the local school system in West Somerset.</p>	<p>£100k</p>

Project and Theme/Delivery Plan Priority	Proposed Activity/Twinning and Objectives (including Underpinning Evidence, Justification for Investment and Scale)	COVID response	Sustainability	Cost (£k)
<p>4 Support schools to meet requirements of the national careers strategy and engage young people in the world of work.</p>	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to ensure a programme of activity designed to broaden horizons and develop aspirations (CEC, National Citizen Service, Children's University, NCOP and wider programme of HE engagement) is delivered across West Somerset delivering to a potential 2000 young people • Deliver an integrated programme that strengthens the local Post 16 offer to deliver choice and ESF NEET reduction programme • Deliver a West Somerset Young People's participation initiative building on research concluded in year 3 of the programme • Deliver the Apprenticeship and Employer-led service <i>Skill-Up West Somerset</i> and strengthen accessibility to courses, which prepare young people for future careers and makes use of community resources thereby reducing need to travel to main centres, which are at a distance from West Somerset. <p>Underpinning Evidence</p> <p>Impact already achieved in this OA:</p> <p>Positive results for West Somerset against the Gatsby Benchmarks: 5, 6 and 8 have all reached 100% (Summer 2019); benchmarks 1 and 7 both have very low reported activity. All recipient schools will benefit from additional support to reinforce and embed practice</p> <p>Latest data shows post-16 participation at 95% but vulnerable to change due to local geographic and post-16 Covid-19 recovery context.</p> <p>HE Engagement has led to promising outcomes. The target was to increase rate of progression to education, training or employment after finishing 16-18 study increasing proportion progressing to HE to meet England average of 50% by Autumn 2020</p> <p>The sixth form schools reports that in 2018/2019 81% of pupils progressed to HE at the end of Year 13. All students that participated in a post-16 vocational study programme progressed to employment or further study. Other students participate in post-16 outside the OA</p> <p>Skill Up: Over 100 businesses have now engaged actively with Skill Up and 90 individuals have been supported into training or employment including new apprenticeships</p> <p>Justification:</p> <p>Maximising impact building on success over years 1 to 3. Embedding and normalising longer term sustainability</p> <p>Investment and Scale: 3 Schools Circa 1775 11 to 16 year olds and 370 16 to 18 year olds 100 local employers</p> <p>Sharing and Twinning: The opportunities to share learning from this work are much broader than immediate neighbours and LAs. Whilst this group will be the first to be contacted and encouraged to participate in lessons learned, which could be through a learning conference event, the partners that we work with have a bigger footprint than just West Somerset. There is an opportunity to work with these partners and share learning across a broader network in school catchments adjoin West Somerset</p> <p>Target: - Engage 1100 young people in an enriched work related CEIAG, HE awareness and extracurricular programme - Maintain post-16 participation at 95% or above - Support 30 apprenticeship starts in West Somerset</p>	<p>Covid-19 has disrupted many opportunities for young people and adults in accessing work and work experience. This activity and its need to support the need within the area is pressing for the following points:</p> <p>For the current Year 10 learners they have missed their planned work experience time and for Year 11 learners the support and guidance at face-to-face level has been unavailable.</p> <p>For Post 16 and adults the face-to-face support has also been curtailed. The OA acted swiftly to ensure the above groups were given access to support by:</p> <p>(a) Working with the Skill up apprenticeship and advice service, one that has been put in place as an output of the OA, the DfE sought confirmation that online support was available</p> <p>(b) Working with the EBP and NCOP the DfE secured confirmation that online resources were available and would be promoted to the Year 10 and Year 11 pupils.</p> <p>From the action that has been undertaken during the lockdown period and lessons learnt, the COVID recovery period will call upon this activity to support a range of learners, unemployed, employed and businesses. It will be vital in supporting an area where hospitality is one of the biggest employers and one that has been effected the most.</p>	<p>Benefits achieved to date will be sustained by participating schools that have normalised practice and developed partnerships with other organisations to support delivery.</p> <p><i>Skill Up</i> is now a recognised brand in Somerset for supporting both employers, school leavers and adults in seeking support and advice on employment choices.</p> <p>A West Somerset Business Forum that has a longer-term sustainable relationship with education at all key stages will be led by the Local Authority</p> <p>The voice of young people will be embedded in the decision-making processes across West Somerset partnerships.</p> <p>This will further ensure the work is fully embedded and become a first choice support option for the schools and employers</p>	<p>£150k</p>