

Report to Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board

20 March 2023

Subject:	Education Investment Area and Priority Education Investment Area developments
Director:	Director of Children & Education (DCS) Michael Jarrett, MBE
Contact Officer:	Interim Assistant Director - Education Services Julie Andrews Julie_Andrews@sandwell.gov.uk


1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments upon the Education Investment Area and Priority Education Investment Area developments.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Members requested an update on Education Investment Area and Priority Education Investment Area developments

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>The Priority Areas Programme links with the Directorate Business plan commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenge and support schools to raise standards in all key stages to close the gaps with national. ▪ Increase the proportion of schools and academies rated good or better by Ofsted
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	The programme aims to bring about rapid improvement in outcomes for pupils across the borough at the end of KS2 and KS4. This will help to enable them to be better prepared for the next stage in their education or employment and enhance their life chances and choices.
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4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Education Investment Areas (EIAs) and Priority Education Investment areas (PEIAs)

In February 2022, HM Government announced that it would be delivering a package of measures in 55 EIAs to further drive school Improvement in England as part of the levelling up agenda. These were comprised of local authorities where educational outcomes at the end of both key stage 2 (KS2) and key stage 4 (KS4) were the weakest and others containing an Opportunity Area or areas previously identified for additional school improvement support.

24 of the EIAs have been identified as PEIAs and are receiving more intensive investment. Sandwell is one of these PEIAs and has been allocated £2.9m in Local Needs Funding to support this initiative and deliver the agreed priorities and improvements within the life of the programme.

4.2 Local Partnership Board

A Local Partnership Board has been established to work with Sandwell. Core membership of the Board is in line with Ministerial requirements and includes expertise in the form of strong trust leaders, Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), DfE, curriculum hubs, the Local Authority (LA) and local dioceses.

The role of the Local Partnership Board includes helping to identify the main challenges to improving outcomes for children and young people, identifying a range of interventions to address these challenges and helping to drive support and activity within the PEIA. The Board has also contributed to the development of Sandwell's Local Needs Delivery Plan and will support the monitoring of progress towards the agreed criteria within it.



4.3 Local Needs Delivery Plan

Sandwell's Local Needs Delivery Plan focuses on 3 themes:

- **Maths:** Improving the quality of maths provision across targeted schools (£1.20m estimated costing)
- **English:** Improving the teaching of literacy to ensure it is of good quality in all schools to enable learners to access the rest of the English curriculum and other subjects across both primary and secondary phases. (£1.10m estimated costing)
- **Speech and language:** Development has suffered due to the pandemic, resulting in challenges in learning phonics at early years and KS1, which will have a long-term impact on KS2 attainment. (£0.60m estimated costing)

Sandwell's Local Needs Delivery Plan has now been signed off by the Minister. Funding is agreed in principle for the whole programme, with full sign-off for this this year and allocated amounts for future years, in accordance with normal Departmental processes.

4.4 Next steps

Following sign-off the Local Needs Delivery Plan, the Board is now looking to:

- Agree schools in scope for the first phase of interventions
- Agree a communication and engagement strategy for stakeholders
- Identify and agree potential delivery partners
- Issue Grant Offer letters
- Begin the diagnostic phase of interventions

It is anticipated that delivery of the plan will commence from the summer term 2023 onwards.



5 Implications

Resources:	Local Partnership Board PEIA Local Needs Funding (£2.9m) Delivery partners (to be confirmed following procurement)
Legal and Governance:	Compliance with Ministerial plans to drive intensive school improvement under the Priority Areas Programme.
Risk:	Close monitoring of progress on key metrics will need to take place to ensure that the expected improvement is achieved and can be evidenced, and that any necessary adjustments are made to the plan to support this.
Equality:	The Priority Areas Programme will address entrenched underperformance, including in literacy and numeracy, in areas with some of the highest rates of disadvantage in the country. It is closely aligned with HM Government's Levelling Up strategy.
Health and Wellbeing:	The speed at which intervention takes place for children and young people who need it will occur faster and be more targeted across the LA, ensuring that they receive the right support sooner.
Social Value:	The programme will support children and young people to progress fairly to further education, training and employment. It will also help to address the impact of the disruption to their studies caused by COVID 19.
Climate Change:	N/A

6 Appendices

Sandwell High Level Delivery Plan

7. Background Papers

Education Investment Areas - selection methodology

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-investment-areas-selection-methodology>

