



## PAPER B

Purpose: For Noting

# Committee report

Committee	<b>POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>
Date	<b>26 SEPTEMBER 2019</b>
Title	<b>THE IMPACT OF THE MATHEMATICS PROJECT AT KEYSTAGE 2 IN ISLE OF WIGHT SCHOOLS</b>
Report of	<b>DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>

---

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Pupils' performance in mathematics in primary schools needed to improve in Isle of Wight Schools, especially through keystage 2. Whilst there have been improvements over the past years, the gap with national performance needs to close more quickly.
2. An improvement in pupils' performance in mathematics should provide the basis to improve the proportion of pupils who reach age related expectations (ARE) in reading, writing and mathematics combined (RWM), the DfE's preferred performance measure for primary schools at the end of keystage 2.
3. The local authority devised the Isle of Wight mathematics project in 2017 to achieve a step change in performance and was successful in winning a bid of £155 000 from the DfE through its Strategic School Improvement Fund in early 2018.
4. This has enabled the local authority to work closely with approximately half the primary schools on the Isle of Wight to bring about improvements in mathematics over the past four terms.
5. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching ARE in KS2 mathematics in the project schools has improved by 15% based on "early" provisional data. This has led to an improvement of 9% in the proportion of pupils achieving ARE in RWM combined in these schools
6. This strong improvement in the performance of half the primary schools has led to an 8% increase in the proportion of pupils reaching ARE in mathematics and 5% in RWM combined, for the Isle of Wight as a whole.

## BACKGROUND

7. The detail of the project was set out in the previous paper “Improving the performance in mathematics at keystage 2 in Isle of Wight Schools”.
8. In summary, the project programme is based on four, ten week cycles that stretch across Y5 and Y6 in which the blocks that pupils have to understanding areas of mathematics are identified. Teaching strategies are then developed to help pupils “get back on track”. Expert external support is used to help pinpoint these blocks precisely, to devise these teaching strategies alongside the pupils’ teachers and then review their impact alongside the school’s leadership.
9. This programme started whilst pupils were in their last term in Y5 and continued through Y6. This cohort has taken their KS2 tests in summer 2019.
10. The intention was not just to improve the performance of these pupils, but for schools then to reflect on the lessons learned from the programme and make modifications to their schemes of work, identify areas of teaching that require development and generally improve their expectations of pupils’ performance across the school so that improvements can be secured for the future.
11. The DfE had strict criteria regarding the schools that could be supported through the Strategic School Improvement Fund. This enabled the local authority to support twenty schools through the project.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

12. The project commenced in the summer term of 2018, following a launch meeting that was well-received by schools. Throughout its lifetime, progress was monitored every term by the local authority and the DfE separately. This monitoring showed high levels of engagement from nearly all schools, a high regard for the developmental approach used, for the focus on children and their learning and for the quality of support.
13. This careful monitoring ensured that the project remained within budget and on track against the initial plan.
14. The on-going improvement in mathematics was measured against a set of interim targets based on pupils’ attainment, with a final target set of 74% of pupils in the twenty schools reaching age related expectations in the national curriculum tests in July 2019. This figure represented a 12% improvement for this group of schools based on their 2018 performance; a substantial improvement that would lead to the group performing in line with the national average.
15. If pupils in the non project schools made the same progress through KS2 mathematics in 2019 as they did in 2018, and the project schools made these improvements this would be sufficient for the proportion of children who had reached ARE in mathematics across the Isle of Wight to be broadly in line with the anticipated national figure.

16. The data received from the project schools through the local authority's monitoring indicated that anticipated improvements in pupils' performance were being seen, with the trajectory of improvement following that planned. Indeed in a number of schools, it was exceeded.
17. All school performance data is still provisional and subject to change. However, this initial data shows that the proportion of pupils who reached ARE in mathematics in the group of twenty project schools improved by at least 15% - an improvement greater than targeted. This is a particularly large improvement across a significant number of schools and a real testament to the drive and tenacity of leaders in these schools, the commitment and skills of the teachers and the engagement of the pupils involved. Standards in all but four of the schools improved to a greater degree than did nationally.
18. The headline performance in mathematics for this group of schools improved from 61% to 76.4%, bringing it broadly in line with the national average.
19. This improvement has resulted in the mathematics for Isle of Wight schools improving overall by approximately 8%. We anticipate this being the largest improvement for any local authority in 2019. Whilst the KS2 figures have yet to be finalised, they suggest that approximately 74% of pupils have reached age related expectations in mathematics.
20. A key element of the project was to enable the schools to use the improvement in mathematics to improve the proportion of pupils who reached ARE in RWM combined, the DfE's preferred measure of primary school performance, by ensuring that they secured their performance in reading and writing without being "distracted" by the project.
21. The project schools have successfully achieved this, with the proportion of pupils reaching ARE in RWM in these schools improving by 9%. Consequently, this has underpinned an improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching ARE in RWM at KS2 for the Isle of Wight from 54% to 59% based on the provisional data.
22. It is important to secure these improvements for future years. However, the DfE will no longer fund the work. The local authority is currently working to secure the future of the project. We are keen to expand the work to all Isle of Wight primary schools and to draw upon the developing expertise from some of this first cohort of schools to support the wider roll out of the project for the future.

#### FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

23. There are no additional financial considerations resulting from the recommendations in this report.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

24. The “Duty to promote high standards in primary and secondary education,” originates from the 1996 Education Act. This provision was amended in the 2006 Education and Inspections Act to include, “...and the fulfilment of potential.” The 2006 Act spells out the responsibility of the Local Authority to promote high standards; ensure fair access and promote the fulfilment of every child’s educational potential. This duty applies to children of compulsory school age and those of any age (up to 20) who are registered as pupils at maintained schools.
25. It is the 2006 Act which also introduces the inspection of LA statutory functions by Ofsted. “The Framework for Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement,” based upon sections 135 and 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, was published in May 2013. The LA duty to write an action plan following an unsatisfactory Ofsted inspection had already been introduced in the 2005 Education Act.

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

26. Improved educational outcomes benefit all groups but have the most marked impact upon the life chances of the most vulnerable. Outcomes are assessed specifically against the needs of a range of vulnerable groups and the performance of children with special educational needs, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those living in relative poverty and children in the care of the Local Authority.

## SECTION 17 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

27. The attainment of better educational outcomes has a direct impact upon future economic wellbeing and, therefore, upon potential involvement in criminal activity.
28. Success at school promotes self-esteem, attendance and good behaviour leading to greater community cohesion, adult independence and active citizenship.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

29. A clear understanding of examination results and priorities for improving them is necessary in order to improve school performance of the Isle of Wight and mitigate against poor educational outcomes for children and young people.

## EVALUATION

30. Standards in mathematics have improved at KS2 as a result of the Isle of Wight mathematics project, and this has led to an improvement in RWM combined.

**RECOMMENDATION**

31. Members are asked to note the contents of this report

Contact Point: David Hardcastle, County Education Manager, School Improvement,  
☎ 01252 814755 e-mail david.hardcastle@hants.gov.uk

**STEVE CROCKER**  
*Director for Children's Services*

**CLLR PAUL BRADING**  
*Cabinet Member for Children's Services*