

## **Manchester City Council Report for Information**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 9 October 2024

**Subject:** How is Manchester addressing the impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes for our children and young people?

**Report of:** Strategic Director of Education and Children's Services

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### **Summary**

Across all measures of disadvantage and poverty, Manchester has seen considerable increases in the size of this cohort of children and young people which is disproportionate to that seen nationally.

Across all phases of education, the relative performance of this cohort of children points to the existence of pernicious gaps nationally and to a lesser extent in Manchester. These became even more pronounced after the pandemic and the gap was particularly evident in the early years and in writing at all phases of education.

However, when attainment of children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds is compared against this group nationally, children attending Manchester schools do better than their peers at every phase of education and this is particularly evident by the end of key stage 4. This shows the value added that our schools and settings provide to children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

This report and attached presentation outlines how we aim to close this pernicious gap in educational outcomes for our disadvantaged children and young people by working together with schools and partners to take targeted action as set out in our Education Strategy which was published in the summer.

### **Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- Note the contents of this report and the attached presentation
  - Agree with the Chair any further reports to come to this committee providing further detail about some of the actions taken to address the impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes.
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### **Wards Affected:**

All

<p><b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</p>	<p>The Education Strategy includes ensuring schools/settings/college buildings are net zero carbon as one of its ambitions.</p>
<p><b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments</p>	<p>Our Education Strategy includes ensuring schools and settings are inclusive, promote equality and challenge discrimination. The ambition is that children are proud of their identity and have a sense of belonging and that the education workforce better reflects the communities it serves. This report shows the impact that our education system is having on children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and how we can go further to address the gap.</p>

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS</b>
<p>A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities</p>	<p>Improving educational outcomes will contribute to Manchester’s young people becoming happy, safe and highly skilled and have increased life chances. Improved educational outcomes will enable Manchester’s young people to contribute to the economic growth and take advantage of the job opportunities created.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success</p>	<p>Improving educational outcomes amongst the Manchester school population is essential for young people to gain qualifications and contribute to Manchester’s economic success.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>This paper sets out a number of actions to ensure that the potential of our children and young people is unlocked through our education system.</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>A strong and ambitious education system will make Manchester an attractive place to live and work.</p>
<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>An improving education system contributes to generating future growth by a highly skilled workforce and young people committed to reducing the carbon footprint.</p>

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

**Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Met within existing resources.

**Financial Consequences – Capital**

None.

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

Manchester Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025  
First 1000 Days Strategy  
Manchester's Work and Skills Strategy  
Manchester's Education Strategy 2024 to 2034

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Child Poverty Statistics based on 22/23 show that the number of children living in poverty in the City has risen by 12.5% since 2014/15 and by 3.2% since 2021/22. In 2022/23, Manchester had 63,266 children aged under 19 living in poverty which is 47.9% of the child population. This is the 3rd highest in UK after Birmingham and Tower Hamlets and the highest in the North West and Greater Manchester.
- 1.2 If we compare these statistics to other measures of deprivation we see a similar picture. In 23/23, 45.2% of our school age population were eligible for pupil premium which is a measure of deprivation and based on May 2024 census. 45.7% of our school age population are now eligible for free school meals which has significantly increased post COVID and is above the national average of 23.8%.
- 1.3 The attached presentation looks at the impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes for children and young people in Manchester in 2023/24. It also outlines the work that settings, schools, the Council and partners are doing to mitigate the impact of poverty and close the gap in attainment between those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those from non disadvantaged backgrounds.

## **2.0 Impact of disadvantaged on educational outcomes**

- 2.1 Nationally there is a gap between educational outcomes for children who come from disadvantaged background and those children who do not. In the summer 2023 nationally the gap between those from disadvantaged backgrounds and other children achieving at the expected level in reading writing and maths and the end of key stage 2 was 22% (44% achieved compared to 66% for peers from non disadvantaged backgrounds) and by the end of key stage 4, 28.4% pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds achieved a grade 5 in GCSE English and Maths compared to 55.4% of their peers. This gap has increased nationally since the pandemic and although it reduced slightly in 2023, it remains greater than in 2019.
- 2.2 Similarly, in Manchester there is also gap between educational outcomes for children who come from disadvantaged background and those children who do not. This gap also increased following the pandemic which had a significant impact on educational outcomes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds particularly in the early years and particularly in relation to writing at all phases of education. However, this gap between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and not disadvantaged is smaller than the national gap at every phase of education.
- 2.3 When we compare educational outcomes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in Manchester with educational outcomes for disadvantaged children nationally, children in Manchester at every phase of education do better than the national cohort. By the time children reached the end of their secondary education in Manchester in 2023, children from disadvantaged

background achieved significantly better than children from similar backgrounds nationally across a full range of performance measures including achievement of grade 5 GCSEs in both English and maths, attainment 8 and progress 8 measures.

- 2.4 The attached presentation shows the outcomes in 2023 for children from disadvantaged backgrounds at each phase of Education and how this compares to this cohort of children nationally.

### **3.0 Action to reduce the impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes**

- 3.1 The presentation shows how Manchester is working with setting, schools and partners through our agreed Education Strategy to deliver our ambition for all children and young people, reduce the gap in outcomes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds by ensuring that children access an excellent education at all phases. This includes a clear set of expectations for our education providers in the City which state that our education sector should take determined action to reduce the impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes and work in collaboration and not competition with each other to ensure all children in the City achieve.
- 3.2 Many factors contribute to the attainment gap for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers and many are outside the control of schools and settings. It is therefore important that as a whole system including Council services, other agencies and partners we work together to address this gap. The Education Strategy sets out an offer for children and young people educated in Manchester with the aim of broadening their experiences and providing access to the opportunities and the many benefits available from living in the City and which will enhance their education. The presentation provides some early data from 2023/24 regarding access to this offer.
- 3.3 We have developed an approach called Building Relationship between Employers and Educators (BREE) to match our schools in the most deprived areas of the City with businesses and other employers to provide high quality work experiences, employer encounters, mentoring etc. By July 2024, this project had seen 42 opportunities with 14 employers matched with 27 education settings. Officers have also developed a Guide for Employers outlining the different ways that they could support our schools.
- 3.4 We have a dedicated education officer linking into work across the Council ensuring schools and settings are informed about wider poverty initiatives and best practice to help pupils and their families. This has included the development of a Poverty Toolkit which schools and settings can use to identify poverty related barriers to education and a cost of living web support page for schools and regular communications to support them to signpost parents and staff.
- 3.5 As part of the Education Strategy (appendix 2), the Council has supported our schools and settings by also taking assertive and targeted action to address

some of the key causes behind this gap in outcomes. These include for example targeted work to increase the uptake of the free childcare offer; our Kickstarter programme launched in April 2023 with funding from Public Health which is now being evaluated and extended to more schools and settings in 24/25; a project with Education Endowment Fund and schools to use evidence based approaches to address writing in the early years; roll out of Dingley's Promise training package to over 600 staff in Early Years settings and classes; mentoring for 350 children across 29 secondary schools and 130 children in year 6 through to support transition to secondary school and work to have a nominated Young Carers Champion in all of our schools.

- 3.6 Our settings and schools work extremely hard to reduce the impact of poverty and many of them support food banks or have community fridges, offer support with uniforms, digital inclusion and work with local community organisations to provide other support. The attached presentation concludes with a case studies from Manchester Communication Academy primary and secondary schools and Loreto College which illustrate the work our settings do to mitigate disadvantage, and which also show how this work impacts on securing good educational outcomes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 Across all measures of disadvantage and poverty, Manchester has seen considerable increases in the size of this cohort of children and young people which is disproportionate to that seen nationally. Across all attainment stages the relative performance of this cohort of children points to the existence of pernicious gaps nationally and in Manchester. These became even more pronounced after the pandemic and the gap was particularly evident in the early years and in writing at all phases of education.
- 4.2 However, when attainment of children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds is compared against this group nationally, children attending Manchester schools do better than their peers at every phase of education and this is particularly evident by the end of key stage 4. This shows the value added that our schools and settings provide to children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- 4.3 Many factors contribute to the attainment gap for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers and many are outside the control of schools and settings. It is therefore important that as a whole system including Council services, other agencies and partners we work together to address this gap.
- 4.4 Through the Education Strategy which sets out our shared ambition for our children and young people, our shared expectations of schools and settings and our offer for children and young people and by working together with schools and partners to take determined and targeted action we aim to close this pernicious gap in educational outcomes for our disadvantaged children and young people.

## **5.0 Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- Note the contents of this report and the attached presentation
- Agree with the Chair any further reports to come to this committee providing further detail about actions taken

## **6.0 Appendices**

Appendix 1: Presentation - How is Manchester addressing the impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes?

Appendix 2: Final Education Strategy 2024- 2034