

Oldham



Oldham Opportunity Area Progress to date

Priority one: Ensuring all children are school ready by the age of five

We know that better literacy, communication and numeracy leads to improved results for pupils across a wider range of subjects in school and that the home learning environment has a significant impact on children's learning and outcomes. Despite the proportion of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) increasing year on year, Oldham remains seven percentage points below the national average in 2018. The Opportunity Area therefore committed to invest in early education, targeting an increase in the proportion of children achieving GLD to 70%, greater improvements for disadvantaged children and closing the gender gap.

Investing in early literacy

We have committed £710,000 to expanding **'Making it REAL'**, a programme developed by the National Children's Bureau, which aims to improve children's early literacy skills by teaching parents/carers strategies to support children's learning at home.

We have rolled out Making it REAL in 31 schools where the percentage of children achieving GLD by age five is lowest, or where the data showed the biggest gender gap. We have also commissioned Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust to deliver a 'Making it REAL' programme for younger children between one and two years of age.

A programme to improve the teaching of literacy is also being delivered by Oasis Academy Limeside to nursery schools and other early years settings.

31 schools are engaged in the project with:

- ✓ 61 active practitioners
- ✓ 254 children directly involved
- ✓ 709 home visits and 83 events have taken place
- ✓ 19 parents have completed the Sharing REAL with Parents training with 17 going on for accreditation

"The best part was realising how simple things can help your children... and most importantly it bonds your child with you."

(Parent of a child participating in the Making it REAL programme)

Building capacity to improve speech, language and communication

We are investing in a multi professional team to increase early years practitioners' access to specialist advice, coaching, and mentoring support in early language development. The team will also aim to improve the timeliness of referrals to specialist services and develop *'Language Champions'* across all early years settings, children's centres, wider services and partner organisations.

What's next?

The most recent data (2018) shows that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the EYFS has increased, but Oldham remains six percentage points behind the target set in the delivery plan. We will continue to build on local good practice, enabling faster and more sustainable improvements.

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Priority two: Raising attainment for all, and raising it fastest for disadvantaged pupils

In our delivery plan, we committed to investing in training for teachers to enable more pupils to benefit from expertise in the classroom; to developing the next generation of Oldham's school leaders; and to supporting headteachers to focus on increasing the pace of school improvement across Oldham. Our targets included:

- raising the percentage of Year 1 pupils who achieve the expected standard in phonics;
- raising the percentage of Year 2 pupils who achieve the expected levels in reading, writing and attainment; and
- raising the average 'attainment 8' scores achieved by Key Stage 4 pupils.

- ✓ 24 schools are in receipt of OA funded school-to-school support and have plans in place
- ✓ 34 schools have received targeted continuous professional development
- ✓ 24 schools are receiving support from the Department for Education (DfE) funded Strategic School Improvement Fund projects
- ✓ 9 schools have taken up DfE Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund programmes, which includes phonics, STEM and leadership training

Supporting schools to help each other

We have commissioned 10 teaching schools and national support schools to provide school improvement support for up to 25 schools, and we are monitoring the impact on outcomes. We are developing a model to support and improve local leadership, to broker school improvement support, and to deepen and widen teaching mastery.

Developing teaching skills in literacy

Harmony Academy Trust, Oasis Teaching School Alliance and Oldham Research School are delivering training to improve the teaching of literacy to up to 50 schools. These bespoke packages include literacy from early years through to Key Stage 2, Leading Literacy, Reading Recovery and ways of maximising the use of teaching assistants.

Improving KS4 attainment for boys

We have commissioned Oldham Sixth Form College to deliver a project to improve the Key Stage 4 outcomes in the core subjects for disadvantaged boys in six secondary schools. The project will also draw on expertise from Manchester Metropolitan University focussing on how best to support, motivate and teach year 11 boys from disadvantaged backgrounds.

"I feel inspired to go away and implement changes"

"Good to see a re-invigoration in improving Literacy across Oldham"

(Teachers at the OA Literacy Conference in November 2018)

What's next?

We are looking closely at all interventions being delivered to ensure we are creating the right impact in Oldham, and we will develop these further following assessment of their impact. We are also providing support to young people approaching Key Stage 4, through the provision of tutoring, and are improving pedagogy, for example, by developing 'Local Leaders of Maths education'.

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Priority three: All children and young people to be ready for life, learning and work

In our delivery plan, we committed to helping Oldham's schools and colleges to provide the best mental health support for pupils; for each school and college to appoint a senior mental health lead; for each school and college to have members of staff trained to deliver programmes aimed at improving resilience; and for additional support for pupils to be made available. We also pledged support for building pupils' resilience and employability through the provision of extra-curricular activities, and enabling every eleven to eighteen year old in Oldham to benefit from at least four high-quality encounters within the world of work.

Building capacity to support emotional health and mental wellbeing

The OA is investing up to £1m towards a range of activities that will help Oldham embed a 'whole school and college approach' to the emotional health and mental wellbeing of pupils. Three specialist advisers have been recruited to support, advise and train school/college staff and facilitate a collaborative approach between pupils, staff, parents, the community and outside agencies in addressing emotional health and mental wellbeing issues.

Schools have also been provided a small amount of funding to identify a senior emotional health and mental wellbeing lead with responsibility for plans to embed the whole school and college approach. We are also building capacity and capability through training for school/college staff and additional support for pupils.

Essential Life Skills (ELS) funding

DfE has provided an additional £2.4m to Oldham for schools to promote opportunities for children and young people to develop key character traits, to ensure that they are school-ready, life-ready and work-ready through the Oldham Pledge. These traits are delivered through 14 pledges such as: taking responsibility for your own health and wellbeing, actively engaging in the world of work, and becoming monevwise.

- ✓ 94% of schools have returned self-assessments
- ✓ 9 secondary schools have attended mental health first aid training and over 50 schools are participating in the schools link programme
- ✓ 11-18 year olds have benefitted from 82,000 work/employer encounters to date,
- ✓ 96% of schools have plans in place to deliver the Oldham Pledges and 50% of schools are using their Pledge Passports to record evidence and impact of their activities

We are listening to young people

- Over 66 young people have helped to design a consultation on school culture and environment to support young people's emotional health and mental wellbeing
- 38 Young Ambassadors have been trained to champion social mobility and the work of the OA
- 43 young evaluators trained to review Oldham Pledge providers and ELS activities

"After doing the fresh programme at school I have talked to my mum about the way she cooks our food"

(Year 7 student at Hathershaw College participating in Fresh Minds (ELS))

What's next?

We are working with a small number of schools and colleges to pilot bespoke support for technical education progression pathways which prepare young people for the world of work.