



DORSET EDUCATION BOARD

Business Plan

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1.1 Background and context

The education landscape nationally has been undergoing significant change over the last decade, particularly driven by the growth in academies since the introduction of the Academies Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

In 2010 there were only 203 academies in England, all of which were secondary schools. The number of pupils attending academies (including free schools) has continued to grow, along with the number of academies albeit at a slower rate over the last four years. As at June 2021, while 39% of all schools in England were academies¹, over half of all pupils (52%) were attending an academy. This is due to higher proportions of secondary schools being academies than primary, with typically much higher numbers of pupils. At January 2021:

- 37% of primary schools in England are now academies or free schools, accounting for 39% of the primary school population;
- 78% of secondary schools in England are academies or free schools, accounting for 78% of secondary school pupils.

Whilst the governance and increased autonomy of schools and their improvement has changed fundamentally over the last decade, toward a greater focus on centralised control and monitoring by the Department for Education through the Regional Schools Commissioner; the need for the education system to sit at the heart of its wider community remains a priority for the Council as set out in the [Children, Young People and Families' Plan](#).

During the pandemic and first school closures, Dorset Council provided system leadership to place-based partners through the Strategic Alliance to bring together wider education partnership. The partnership of council services, educational settings (including maintained schools and academies), health, social care, police, the parent carer forum and the voluntary community sector mobilised a holistic response to the issues that were affecting our children and young people whether they were at home, in school or in the community.

Dorset Council has worked collaboratively with maintained schools and academies alike, regardless of their governance, to ensure Dorset can be the best place to be a child, where communities thrive and families are supported to be the best they can be.

Leadership of the pandemic response to navigate the unprecedented challenges that affected children and young people demonstrated the importance of:

1. local knowledge of communities;
2. coordinated action across partners; and
3. trusted relationships built on transparent and productive communication.

¹ As at the end of the last academic year (2020/21) based on the Schools, pupils and their characteristics census data published in June 2021.

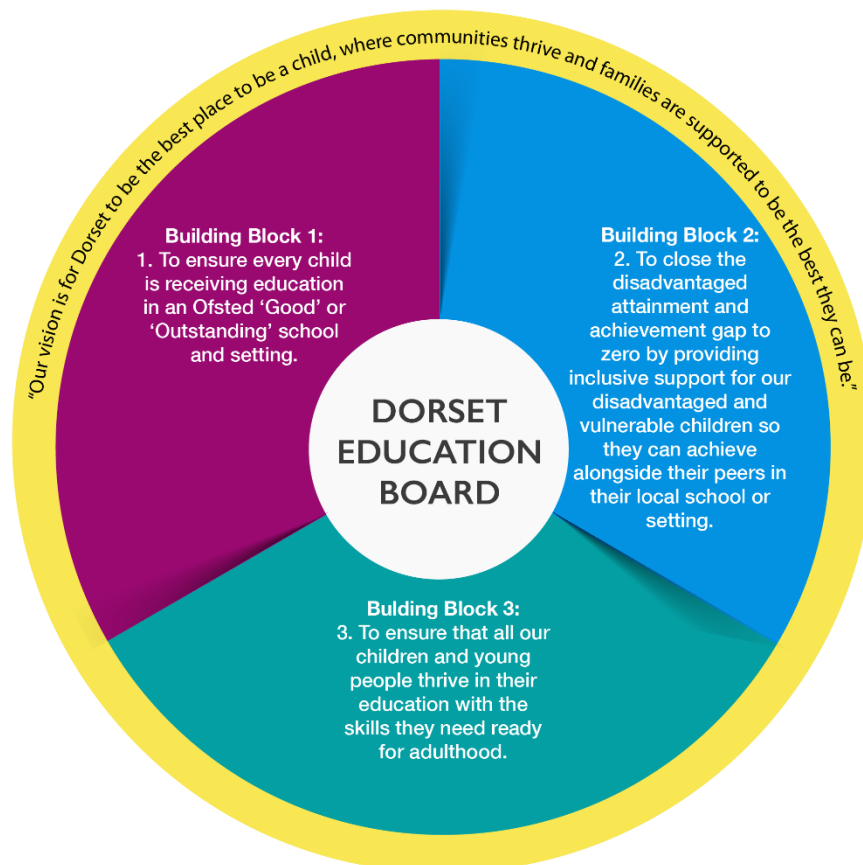
1.2 Education Board for Dorset

The establishment of an Education Board for Dorset would retain the strength of partnership working through the pandemic and mobilise our partnership to deliver the opportunities and tackle the challenges of the education system in Dorset.

The Board will include key educational leaders in Dorset who have the passion and expertise across the education ecosystem. It will use local, regional and national evidence and research to inform its foci. The Board will set a clear direction and a positive culture to support partners to deliver ambitious educational outcomes for all children and young people into adulthood.

It will be essential to engage children and young people in the work of the Board to ensure that the strategies are co-produced and they feel ownership of the decisions that affect them. The committees will review and engage with existing School Councils and Advocacy structures in place across Dorset so that the Board can be informed by the views and experiences of children and young people in the development of each committee.

The culture of the Board will be to create an open and innovative dialogue, where the strength of the partnership offers novel solutions to systemic challenges built on the strong links within the communities where educational settings remain at the heart.



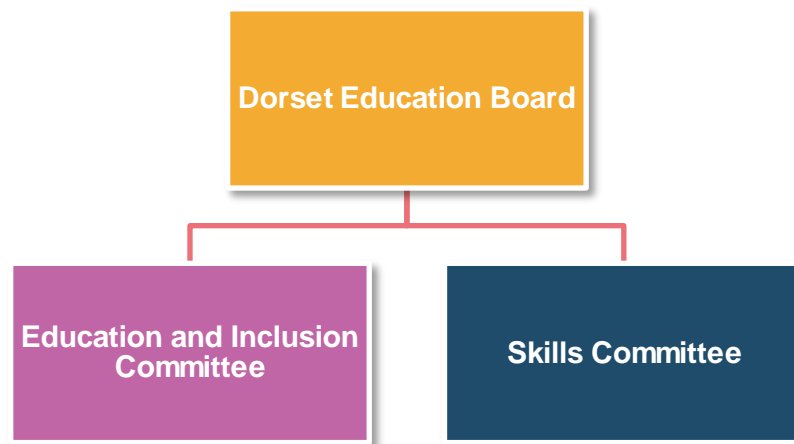
The Board will oversee delivery of the three core building blocks which will enable the education system in Dorset to thrive. These include:

1. To ensure every child is receiving education in an **Ofsted 'Good' or 'Outstanding'** school and setting.
2. To close the **disadvantaged attainment and achievement gap** to zero by providing inclusive support for our disadvantaged and vulnerable children so they can achieve alongside their peers in their local school or setting.
3. To ensure **that all our children and young people thrive** in their education with the skills they need ready for adulthood.

1.3 Dorset Education Board Structure

The Education Board will be led by an Independent Chair and report through the Strategic Alliance governance. Two sub-committees will be formed under the leadership of the Board to research ideas and provide oversight of the key priorities.

The Chair of each sub-committee will report progress to the Dorset Education Board. Sub Committees will meet twice a term. Members after the Chair are identified in alphabetical order.



Dorset Education Board Members

The Dorset Education Board is the Board where improvement and progress are made to Dorset's Education system, it includes all key partners and will meet on a termly basis.

The role of the Board Members is to provide leadership, expert advice and partnership support to ensure the appropriate development and delivery of the aims of the Board. It is essential that Board Members represent their thematic area rather than their organisational goals and thus their role is to provide a sector led view to inform strategic discussions.

Members will be active in supporting the identification of future priorities, areas of opportunity and the subsequent plans for each committee. It is expected that they will leverage support across the sector and ensure that that key staff and stakeholders are engaged in contributing and supporting the work of each committee so that progress can be made each term.

The Board will not review individual school or academy trust performance and this is not within its remit. Its purpose is to facilitate and enable discussions focused on leading practice both nationally and internationally and provide peer learning opportunities, challenge and support. A key focus for the Board will be to identify solutions and strategies to reduce inequity in the education system to promote inclusion.

Areas of Focus

Board Members will give leadership to the following areas of focus:

- Strategic oversight of the direction of the education ecosystem in Dorset to deliver the ambitions set out in the building blocks:
 - to ensure every child is receiving education in an Ofsted ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ setting or school;
 - to close the disadvantaged attainment and achievement gap to zero by providing strong focused support for our vulnerable children so they can achieve alongside their peers in their local setting or school; and
 - to ensure that all our children and young people thrive in their education with the skills they need ready for adulthood.
- Create mechanisms to bring together key educational data and intelligence across the education ecosystem to inform its work.
- Develop campaigns, policies and interventions to deliver its ambitions.
- Oversee the work of its Committees and ensure that resource and expertise is available to deliver.

Main Board

Independent Chair	
Executive Director for Children’s Services (Vice-Chair)	Dorset Council
Academy leaders	3 Academy CEOs
Chair of Birth to Settled Adulthood	Dorset Council
Director of Education and Learning	Dorset Council
Director of Care and Protection	Dorset Council
Director of Commissioning and Partnerships	Dorset Council
Early Years representative	Nominated by Sector
Faith Education representative	Salisbury Diocese Board of Education
Further Education College Representatives	Weymouth College and Kingston Maurward College
Lead Member for Education	Dorset Council Cabinet
Parent Carer representative	Dorset Parent Carer Forum
Police Safer schools and Neighbourhoods Lead	Dorset Police
Primary Care Lead	Dorset NHS
Regional Schools Commissioner	Department for Education
School phase leaders: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Representatives of WALE• Representatives of DASH• Representatives of DAMS• Representatives of SSHAD	Primary phase leader association Secondary phase leader association Middle School phase leader association Special School association

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of DALCH 	Learning Centres association
<i>Committee Representatives</i>	<i>Will be invited to join the Dorset Education Board to present the work and progress of their Committee at each meeting</i>

Education and Inclusion Committee

Key education leaders will work together to realise the accelerated improvements for our Education system so that no child is left behind, with inclusion being at the heart of our programme of work.

Areas of Focus

The data section of this business plan sets out areas of consideration for the Education and Inclusion Committee. For each phase of Education, the committee will discuss and identify the opportunities for the partnership to work together to utilise leading practice both nationally and internationally in recognition of the increased need children and young people have. A key focus will be to raise standards for all children and young people and create incredible opportunities for children and young people to grasp.

This committee will also focus on targeted initiatives for improving outcomes for all children, in particular key disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of children, and ensure they are educated in settings and schools that are good or outstanding. The Committee will also focus on the impact of children missing out on education and how the wider partnership can work together to deliver ambitious outcomes for them. This Committee will also oversee the progress of Dorset's SEND Strategy 2021-23 which has six key priority areas as identified below.

1. Early identification and support: We will make sure we identify, assess and support children's needs both early in life and when issues arise.
2. Inclusion: We will make sure there is a commitment to services and support that is inclusive of children, young people and adults with special educational needs and disabilities.
3. SEND pathway: We will make sure that children and young people with SEND and their families can access the right support from services easily and quickly.
4. SEND Sufficiency and provision: We will make sure we increase the education we provide for all children and young people with SEND so that our children can stay in Dorset and thrive in their local communities.
5. Transitions and preparation for adulthood: We will make sure that transitions between phases of education or changes in what we provide as support are smooth and supportive across all ages (linking with the 0 to Settled Adulthood Board)
6. Managing money and resources: We will make sure that we manage our SEN funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) effectively and efficiently so that we can have the best impact and outcomes for our children and young people with the resources available.

It is recognised that the quality of educational provision cannot exceed the quality of its professionals and therefore the Committee will promote:

- the sufficiency of educators and professionals working with children and young people;
- high quality training and development opportunities available; and
- their wellbeing.

Committee Members

Corporate Director, Education (Chair)	Dorset Council
Academy leaders	3 Academy CEOs
CWAD Service Manager	Dorset Council
Designated Clinical Officer	Dorset Commissioning Group
Early Years representative	Nominated by Sector
Faith Education representative	Salisbury Diocese Board of Education
Head of Locality Service	Dorset Council (Adult Services)
Parent Carer Representative	Dorset Parent Carer Forum
Police Safer schools and Neighbourhoods Lead	Dorset Police
Principal Educational Psychologist	Dorset Council
Principal Teacher	Dorset Council
Public Health Lead	Dorset Council
School phase leaders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of WALE • Chair of DAMS • Chair of DASH • Chair of SSHAD • Chair of DALCH 	Primary phase leader association Middle School phase leader association Secondary phase leader association Special School leader association Learning Centre association
Schools Forum Chair	Schools Forum
SEND Strategic Lead	Dorset Council
Teaching School representative(s)	Delta Education Trust Teaching Alliance Association for Special Schools

It is anticipated that other stakeholders will be invited to join this Committee for thematic discussions. This may include Officers from Quality Assurance Functions such as Dorset's Principal Social Worker, wider Organisational Development colleagues alongside specialist areas from partners across Dorset.

Skills Committee

We will ensure that our children and young people are ready for their future education and careers with positive aspirations and clear routes for their future employment and further education. This committee will focus on ensuring that our young people have the qualifications and skills needed to match the changing needs of the local, regional and national economies.

Director of Commissioning (Chair)	Dorset Council
Economic Growth representative	Dorset Council
EET Service Representative	Dorset Council
Further Education College Representatives	Weymouth College and Kingston Maurward College
Further Education representative	Further Education Post 16 Mainstream
Higher Education Representative	Higher Education / University sector
Local Education Partnership, Dorset (LEP) representative	Head of Enterprise, Skills and Industry
Principal Teacher	Dorset Council
SEND Commissioner	Dorset Council
Virtual School Head Teacher	Dorset Council
Voluntary and Community Sector Representative	Sector representative

As with the Education and Research Committee representatives from specialist areas e.g. Education Technology organisations will be invited to thematic discussions as required.

Areas of Focus

This Committee will ensure that all our children and young people thrive in their education with the skills they need ready for adulthood. The Committee will interface with existing governance in Dorset such as with the Local Education Partnership (LEP) and current programmes being delivered within Dorset Council. The Committee will support programmes focus on:

1. Promoting social mobility within Dorset by ensuring that our young people have the skills needed to match the economic requirements of Dorset.
2. Reviewing the pathway and experience of our young people who are currently Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET).
3. Developing more opportunities for work and training for our most vulnerable children and young people.

4. Working creatively with the business community and schools in partnership to improve access to work opportunities and to support local economic growth.
5. Leading the research and coordination of the opportunities for ed-tech and future technologies for all educational settings and our children and young people to develop our educational offer and ensure no child is left behind in the adoption of new technologies.

1.4 Educational Achievement in Dorset

The following section provides a high-level overview of outcomes for our children and young people in Dorset. Due to the pandemic much of the achievement data used below dates back to 2019, despite this the data identifies some long-standing trends that are unlikely to have changed significantly through the pandemic.

School and academy Ofsted Status

Dorset has 159 Schools with currently 76% of these being Good or Outstanding (as at September 2021). This compares to 87% nationally, with 83% in the South West and 84% against our statistical neighbours. When considering this by phase the following can be found:

Phase	Dorset – Ofsted Good or Outstanding	Statistical Neighbours	England Average
Primary	76%	85%	88%
First	97%		
Middle	70%	n/a	n/a
Secondary	72%	78%	78%
Further Education*	100%	73%	73%

Early Years Foundation Stage (Good Level of Development) by quartile

	Q5	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
2014					9
2015				58	
2016			61		
2017		108			
2018		98			
2019			80		

Dorset performs in-line with the National profile, but the accelerated improvements that have been made in other regions of the country have not been realised in Dorset to date. Our disadvantaged pupils' outcomes are in line with our statistical neighbour average and that of the South West. A consideration for the Board will be to identify strategies to improve attainment for disadvantaged learners during their Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1.

Key Stage 2 Attainment (Expected Standard) by quartile

		Q5	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
Reading	2017				59	
	2018		93			
	2019			88		
Writing	2017	139				
	2018	123				
	2019		112			
Maths	2017	122				
	2018	136				
	2019		118			

The data shows that Key Stage 2 performance for Dorset needs to be improved and illustrates that this has been a trend for some time. From a relatively strong start at Key Stage 1, the progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is in the bottom 20% for all subjects and has been for a number of years. Positively, there have been improvements, but Dorset still lags significantly behind the best national attainment outcomes. Maths is 3% below the National attainment with the combined Reading/Writing/Maths (RWM) being 4% below. For our Disadvantaged pupils Dorset's profile is in the bottom 20% for all subjects (excluding Reading).

When considering school status i.e. maintained or Academy structure it is worthwhile to note that the performance profile is consistent regardless of school or Academy status.

The Education Board will need to focus on strategies that can improve performance starting in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Key Stage 4 Attainment

The data for this stage is more up to date, however there were changes in method of assessment due to the pandemic. Key Stage 4 outcomes were awarded by 'exams in 2019 'centre assessed grades' in 2020, and "teacher assessed grades" in 2021. Local Authority level outcomes are available for 2020 and 2021, but progress data is not available system wide. The Board may wish to discuss with key stakeholders the experiences and issues for this cohort in Dorset in the absence of quantitative data.

Dorset's profile shows that attainment is broadly in-line with the national average, although Attainment 8 is below the South West average. For Basics (GCSE English and Maths) Dorset is above the National for the grade 4 or higher, but below at the higher grade 5+. SEN attainment is broadly in line with the national average, however the disadvantaged attainment gap has been increasing, particularly at the 5+ level. When considering wider subject performance, this broadly follows the national trend, although it should be noted that attainment for languages is a concern: at the 4+ level Dorset ranks 143rd, while at the higher 5+ level it ranks 147th.

		Q5	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
Attainment 8	2019			72		
	2020			74		
	2021			81		
Basics 4+	2019				51	
	2020			74		
	2021				49	
Basics 5+	2019			89		
	2020			81		
	2021			75		

Post 16

The Dorset Education Board will need to retain a focus on the onward destinations, aspirations and opportunities for our young people and the retention of the investment in skills within the Dorset economy.

For our A Level students, the table below sets out the current profile of attainment for Key Stage 5.

		Q5	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
APS per entry (A level)	2019			70		
	2020				52	
	2021					27
% achieving AAB grades (A level)	2019			89		
	2020				44	
	2021			81		

At Post 16, Dorset has predominantly a largely school-based system (as opposed to stand alone College institutions) with a high proportion of A level students - 63% compared to 42%

nationally. Positively, 97% of Dorset pupils achieved at least 2 substantial level 3 qualifications in 2021, compared to 87% nationally.

Whilst 49% of students in Dorset go onto School 6th forms (37% nationally), less than 1% go to 6th form colleges compared to 13% nationally. With only two Further Education colleges in the county many students access provision out of the county but in a largely rural area this has significant transport challenges. The Board will focus on career pathways and choices for our young people.