



Department
for Education

Social Mobility

Oldham



Opportunity Area 2017-20

A promise to children and young people in Oldham

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OUR VISION

A message from the Secretary of State for Education and the Chair of the partnership board



Raising standards and broadening horizons for Oldham's young people.

I want to level up opportunity across this country so that all young

people get every chance to go as far as their talents and drive will take them. Education is at the heart of that ambition, and is central to breaking down the barriers to social mobility that too many face in our country today.

I want to see more disadvantaged young people attending the very best universities, winning places on apprenticeships, entering top professions, and progressing through the most rewarding careers.

I visited Oldham last year and was privileged to observe outstanding teaching, and meet local leaders who are passionate about delivering the best opportunities for young people in their area. I am delighted that we are working with those leaders to help local children get the best start in life, no matter what their background. We will focus not just on what we can do to help inside schools, but also to create the opportunities outside school that will raise sights and broaden horizons for young people.

Rt. Hon. Justine Greening MP

Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities



Oldham's children and young people are intelligent, creative, caring and ambitious. They deserve to have the best chance possible to do well at school, so they can approach adulthood

confident of getting a job with good prospects and of achieving their life ambitions.

But the evidence shows that people growing up here find it much harder to achieve these things, compared to those elsewhere in England. It does not have to be this way.

The Opportunity Area – working through the partnership board – is a promise, made by national and local government, education leaders and teachers, voluntary organisations and employers, to make change happen. Together, our goal is to ensure children and young people across the borough get the opportunities and support that they need and deserve.

Please do contact us through the email address below with your thoughts on this plan, and if you want to be part of our work to deliver it.

James Kempton

Independent Chair of Oldham Opportunity Area partnership board

GET IN TOUCH

 opportunityareas.oldham@education.gov.uk

 @OldhamOA



Our vision for Oldham, and our priorities

All young people start out in life with high ambitions. However, research shows that children living in disadvantaged areas are less likely to be able to access high quality early years education and good schools, and are more likely to fall behind as they move through the education system.

When parents and carers take an interest in their children's learning, and are confident and able to help their children access educational, cultural and social activities, they are more likely to be emotionally and physically healthy, and develop the 'soft skills' that employers value. However, we know that providing this support can be a challenge for some parents and carers, particularly for those in disadvantaged areas.

Where a child grows up also affects their life chances. The twelve Opportunity Areas were chosen because the data shows that children in these areas are less likely to have access to high quality education, employment opportunities and support when they need it than children from similar backgrounds, elsewhere. These are the challenges facing children and young people in Oldham, and their families.

Oldham's children and young people deserve better and we believe that change is possible. The Opportunity Area is a promise, made by national and local government, education leaders and teachers, voluntary organisations and employers, to give children and young people across the borough the opportunities and support they deserve.

By looking at the data on children and young people's attainment in Oldham, and by listening to and working with our local partners, school leaders, young people and others, we have identified three priorities for the Opportunity Area. This plan confirms the funding and support programmes we will focus on this year, how we will develop the plan in future years and what we hope to achieve by 2020. The priorities are:

Priority 1: Ensure all children are school-ready by the age of five.

From September this year, we will be making a significant investment to grow the 'Making it REAL' programme, developed by the National Children's Bureau to help parents and carers develop their children's literacy skills. This will be the first of a series of investments we will make in early education in Oldham. By 2021 we want the percentage of children who have achieved a 'good level of development' to have increased above the national average, with the biggest increases for disadvantaged children.



Priority 2: Raising attainment for all, and raising it fastest for disadvantaged pupils.

Every pupil in Oldham deserves to be taught in a good or outstanding school and by excellent teachers. From September this year, we will be investing in: training for teachers, so more pupils will benefit from expertise in the classroom; in developing the next generation of Oldham's school leaders; and in supporting headteachers to increase the pace of school improvement across Oldham. We want to see pupils' attainment improving at a faster rate in Oldham than nationally with the biggest increases for disadvantaged pupils.

Priority 3: All children and young people to be ready for life, learning and work.

We want every child and young person in Oldham to be able to access, alongside their academic education, opportunities and support to develop personal, social and soft skills, improve their resilience and explore and develop technical and professional skills. From September this year, the Opportunity Area will be making a significant investment

in the 'Oldham Pledge' to help young people develop these essential life skills. We will also be investing to ensure teachers in every school feel better equipped and confident in supporting pupils when they feel vulnerable. We want to see reductions in the hours of learning lost to poor mental health.

STRENGTH THROUGH PARTNERSHIP



Oldham's Opportunity Area partnership board

The Oldham Opportunity Area partnership board brings together local school and council leaders, businesses and community organisations with an understanding of the area and a commitment to making Oldham a better place to learn and achieve.

The board has shaped this plan and will work with the Department for Education and other partner organisations to make sure the Opportunity Area makes a difference now, and for the future. Board members will work with schools, early years and post-16 education providers, employers, young people and parents and carers, to keep developing our plan and make sure it delivers for Oldham.

Oldham Opportunity Area partnership board

James Kempton – Independent Chair

As the senior non-executive director on Ofsted's board, and a former Chief Operating Officer of the Chartered College of Teaching, James understands the quality and commitment required of school leaders and teachers to deliver outstanding education. As former elected member and leader of Islington Council, James oversaw significant improvements in standards of education, as part of the London Challenge programme. From that experience and his own research into the London Challenge programme, he brings valuable expertise in building and energising partnerships to drive up school standards. He is committed to helping Oldham's children and young people.

Partnership board members

- **Antony Hughes:** CEO of the Harmony Academy Trust – running five primary schools in Oldham
- **Clare Hutchinson:** As Opportunity Areas Lead for the Careers and Enterprise Company
- **Craig Dean:** CEO of Web Applications UK (an Oldham employer) and a trustee of Oasis Community Learning
- **Dr Cathy Hamer:** As the lead for the North West Regional SEND network, hosted by Oldham, and as an Early Years Consultant
- **Dr Joanne Pearson:** As Research Lead for the Oldham Research School and Head of the Teamworks Teaching School Alliance
- **Helen Lockwood:** As Executive Director for Economy, Skills and Neighbourhoods at Oldham Council
- **Jayne Clarke:** As Principal of Oldham Sixth Form College, and Executive Principal of Pinnacle Learning Trust (multi-academy trust)
- **Nicola McLeod:** Leading on fourteen to nineteen education and skills for Greater Manchester (GM) Combined Authority
- **Raz Mohammed:** As Assistant Chief Executive at Mahdlo Youth Zone

The meetings are also attended by the Regional Schools Commissioner for Lancashire and West Yorkshire and by the Department for Education Head of Delivery and Area Lead, who provide advice and support to the partnership board.

National organisations supporting Oldham

Alongside our local and regional partners, children, young people and schools across Oldham will benefit from a comprehensive package of support from three national partner organisations:

The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC)

– is a national organisation, connecting schools and colleges to employers and careers advice organisations. The CEC’s aim is to help young people understand the world of work, and inspire them to set and achieve challenging and exciting career goals. The CEC’s network of national and local ‘cornerstone employers’ have made a commitment to support young people in Opportunity Areas.



- **Willmott Dixon** – a leading national construction company with offices in Failsworth. Willmott Dixon has a strong interest in education, as a builder of many new schools, and a strong track record in investing in apprentices, and local communities.

Working with the CEC and our local partners, these cornerstone employers are helping to recruit more businesses to support our work in Oldham, including through volunteers from local businesses, who will act as ‘Enterprise Advisers’, tasked with connecting Oldham’s schools and colleges to employers.

In Oldham, these employers include:

- **Adecco** – one of the country’s leading and largest employment and recruitment organisations.
- **Barclays** – Oldham’s young people will benefit from Barclay’s ‘Lifeskills’ programme, gaining interview skills and more, to prepare them for the 21st century workplace.
- **Lloyds Banking Group** – whose ‘Helping Britain Prosper’ strategy is already making a significant contribution to social mobility, including by strengthening school governance, helping young people develop employment skills and recruiting apprentices.
- **Unity Partnerships** – a professional services company based in Oldham, working primarily with education and local authority clients.
- **Web Applications UK** – our partnership board member Craig Dean’s travel software company. Web Applications UK already run coding clubs in local schools, and offer high quality work experience and apprenticeships.

Our targets for 2020/21 are:



Every eleven to eighteen year old in Oldham to benefit from at least four high quality encounters with the world of work.

More than 90,000 high quality encounters for over 19,000 young people in Oldham, over the life of this plan.

Business mentors to support young people at risk of disengaging from education, employment and training.

National Citizen Service –

working with ‘The Challenge Network’, a charity working to build a more integrated society, will increase the number of Oldham’s young people able to experience and benefit from the National Citizen Service’s four week programme of personal development and volunteering. The National Citizen Service are recruiting coordinators who will work in schools to encourage pupils to get involved. They are also building partnerships with local voluntary organisations, universities and businesses to offer additional incentives to young people to take part, including residential. Where necessary, young people will be offered additional support and activities to build their confidence and make sure they can benefit from the National Citizen Service programme. This will be delivered by a new partnership between the National Citizen Service and the Prince’s Trust.



The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) –

is a charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement by generating evidence of what works in improving teaching and learning, and supporting schools to apply effective practice in the classroom. As part of their commitment to improving social mobility in Oldham, EEF have designated the Greetland Academy, part of the respected ‘Teamworks Teaching School Alliance’ as the dedicated Research School for Oldham.



As our plan confirms, the Greetland Academy will take a lead in helping to shape our offer to schools, helping them to identify priorities for training and development, with the partnership board expecting to provide Opportunity Area funding to access training recommended by the Greetland Academy Research School, as proven to be effective in raising standards.

Our careers and enterprise offer

By 2021, we want over 1000 eligible young people from Oldham to participate in the National Citizen Service – more than double the number who participated in 2016.



The Research Schools Network is a collaboration between the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and the Institute for Effective Education (IEE) to fund a network of schools which will support the use of evidence to improve teaching practice.
www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/our-work/research-schools.

WHY IS OLDHAM AN OPPORTUNITY AREA?



Why is Oldham an Opportunity Area?



294th
out of 324 districts

Oldham's ranking in the Social Mobility Index*. The index compares the chances that a child from a disadvantaged background will do well at school and get a good job in areas across the country.

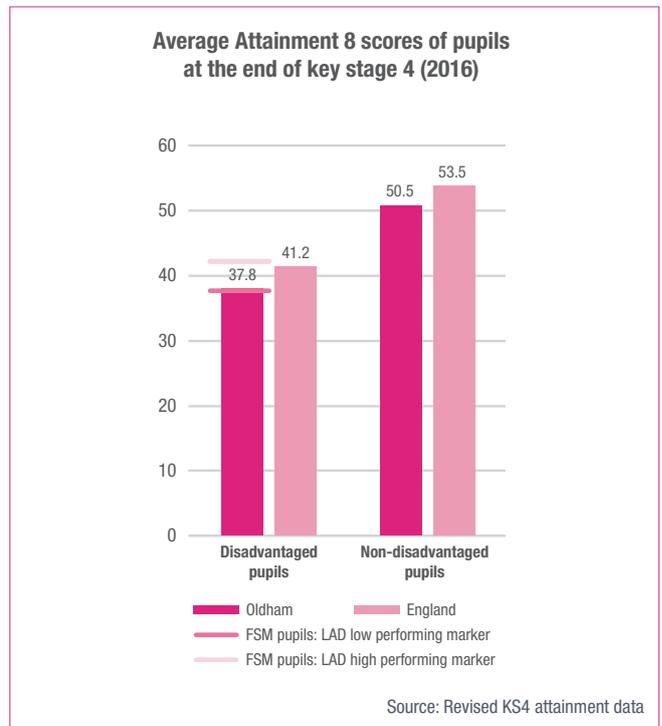
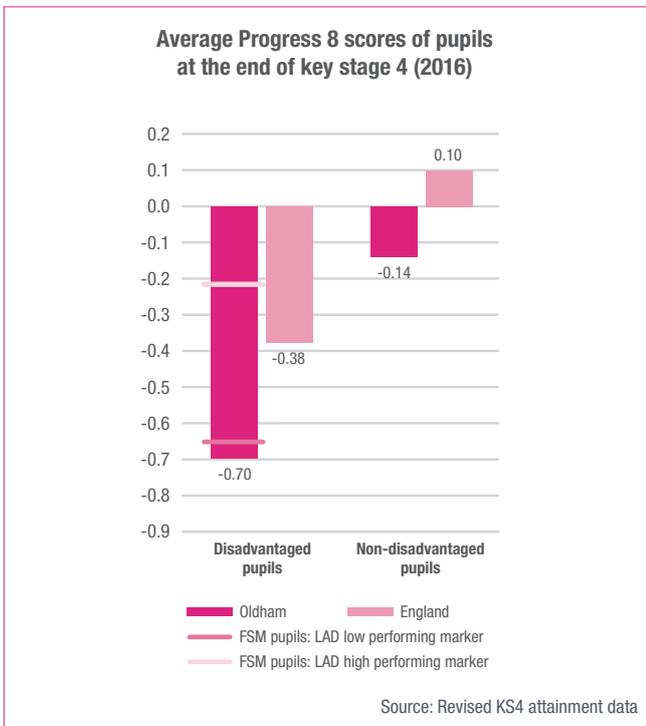
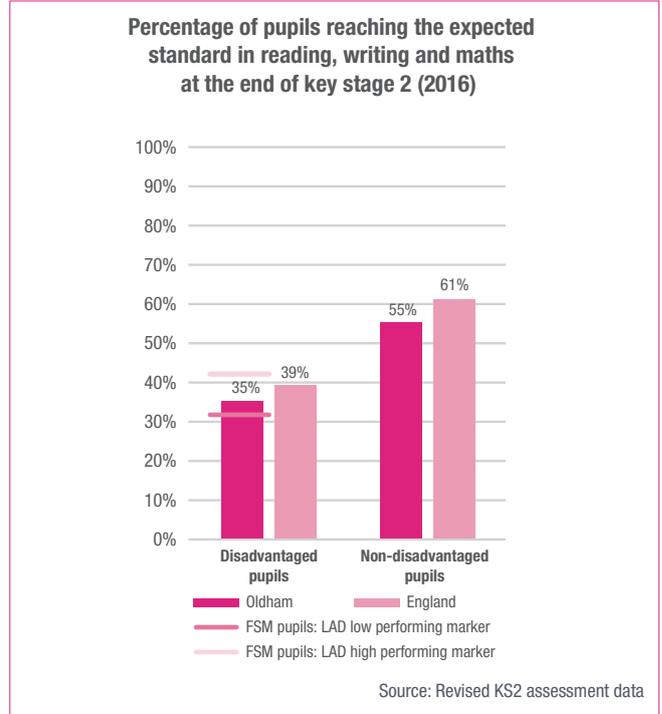
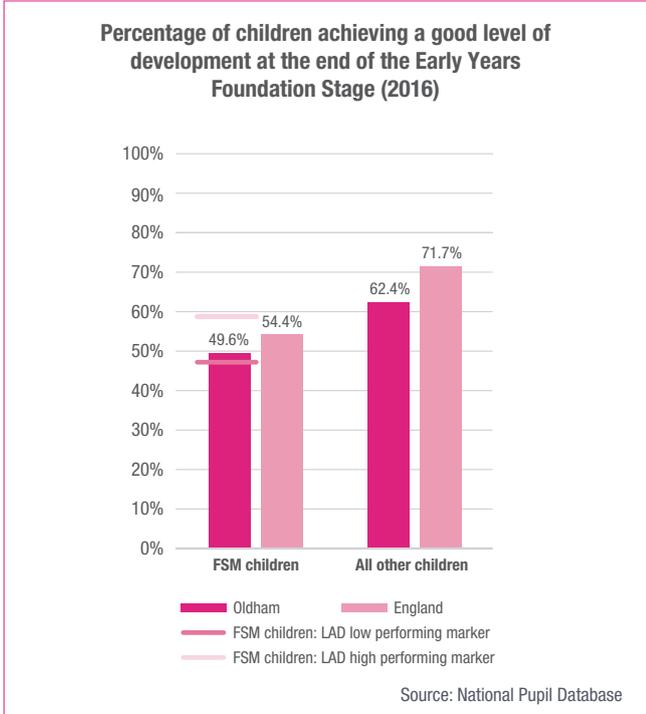
- The Index of Multiple Deprivation compares areas by using neighbourhood level data on economic, educational, health and social outcomes.
- Oldham was ranked 34th out of 326 areas in England, on the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation, 1st being the lowest (most deprived).
- Schools are improving overall but a quarter of state-funded secondary schools require improvement or are rated inadequate, and too many children and young people in Oldham fall behind. This trend can be seen from early years education and through primary and secondary schools, with disadvantaged pupils* often making the least progress.

English Indices of Deprivation, 2015 – rank of average score (1 – most deprived, 326 – least deprived)

	IMD	Income	Employment	Education	Health	Crime	Barriers to housing and services	Living Environment
Oldham	34	30	28	34	31	51	315	129

*<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-index>

2016 position



For this analysis, we have grouped local authority districts into six groups (sextiles). The markers on the graphs described as 'high performing' and 'low performing' relate to the top and bottom local authority district sextile.

Within this plan, the 'disadvantaged' group varies depending on the DfE data source. However, they all include the number of pupils who were eligible for free school meals at any point in the previous six years. For further details about the specific definition of 'disadvantage' for each DfE data source, see the 'Education statistics by local authority, district and pupil disadvantage' release found on the [DfE Statistics page](#).

BUILDING ON STRONG FOUNDATIONS



We are building on strong foundations

The scale of the challenge in Oldham is matched by the determination of its education leaders, teachers, employers and the council to making Oldham a better place to grow up, learn and work. While much more needs to be done to raise attainment, there are many excellent leaders, teachers and other

professionals, transforming the lives of children, families and young people across the borough. We know that building a stronger Oldham means recognising, celebrating and investing in the most effective individuals, organisations and partnerships, so that they can, in turn, help others to improve.

Strengths and opportunities

- Eighteen primary schools and three secondary schools rated outstanding by Ofsted, including one primary and one secondary special school.
- Outstanding Teaching Schools like Oldham Academy Limeside, developing and sharing expertise and providing support for improvement.
- In Oldham Sixth Form College, students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, make exceptional progress, an achievement recognised when the College won this year's Educate North Social Mobility Award.
- Oldham College provides a vital route to achieving basic and employability skills, for many of Oldham's young people and adults.
- Above average progression rates to higher education, for those aged nineteen and over.
- Access to expertise, resources and support through Greater Manchester Combined Authority on shared priorities including early education, fourteen to nineteen education and skills, and mental health and wellbeing.
- Large local and regional employers in key sectors of health and construction, and a growing local small business economy, including digital technology.

What have we done to develop the plan so far?

The Opportunity Area allows Oldham to draw on expertise and resources from across the country, but this is not a borough short on innovation or commitment. Across Oldham, children, young people and those who work with them are participating in and shaping new

initiatives to improve outcomes. Where these prove effective, we will look to support them to grow. Where they are untested, we will look to help evaluate them. We will share the learning from our work in Oldham more widely, so other areas can also benefit.

Work already underway

- A commitment by Oldham's schools to support each other in addressing school improvement priorities, through the newly formed Oldham Education Partnership, created in response to the findings of the Oldham Education and Skills Commission.
- Positive trials of the National Children's Bureau's Making it REAL programme (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) with full evaluation underway and expected to confirm (in autumn 2017) improvements in literacy, as well as improvements in parents' and carers' confidence and ability to support their children's learning.
- Improvements in maths teaching in primary, evidenced by significant progress made by pupils in maths, by age eleven, including disadvantaged pupils.
- A new mental health framework launched to help schools and colleges support young people to become more resilient, and overcome mental health and wellbeing issues.
- The Oldham Pledge: an improved offer of activities to help young people develop 'essential life skills' including civic participation, recreational and cultural pursuits and help to manage money better. The pledge is being piloted in six schools, and includes activities run by the Children's University and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.
- Targeted work with young people in the Alexandra, St James, and St Mary's wards, to encourage more pupils to progress to higher education, as part of the Greater Manchester National Collaborative Outreach Programme.

What have we done to develop the plan so far?

Our data tells part of Oldham's story, but we also know that young people's lives and relationships, and the workings of communities and schools, are too rich and complex to be accurately reflected in charts and graphs. In developing this plan, in identifying our priorities, and in looking for the leaders who can help us deliver change, we have met and listened to as many people as possible with experience of growing up and working in Oldham. We are grateful to all those who have helped to shape this plan, and look forward to continue working with them to deliver it.

- We have used data on outcomes for children and young people from the Department for Education, Ofsted, Public Health England, Oldham Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and others. We have compared those outcomes and the performance of nurseries, schools, colleges and other services supporting children and young people to the Greater Manchester, regional (North West) and national averages.
- We have looked at the specific challenges faced by children from the poorest families, pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), different ethnic groups and any differences at a ward level. We see recognising and responding to these differences as key to producing a plan that works for children and young people in Oldham.
- Supported by our partners in Oldham Council, we held two large stakeholder events, in October 2016 and February 2017 to help us develop our understanding of the problem and plan our response. We heard from a wide range of business leaders, community organisations and professionals working in health, care, education and employment on the issues facing Oldham's children and young people, what might work, and what we could learn from past and current programmes.
- We met and listened to school leaders at Oldham's 2017 headteacher conference, testing our analysis of the data, and taking their views on priorities for action. We also met the Chief Executives of the multi-academy trusts working in Oldham, and spoke to Ofsted's regional director for the North West.
- We have visited schools and colleges to share our findings and held drop in sessions to give people a chance to find out what we were doing, and give their views.
- Most importantly, we have listened to young people through running consultation events and taking account of the findings of recent reports and surveys, like the 2016 Make your Mark Survey, run through the youth council, and Oldham's own MH:2K* report on mental health.

*An Oldham project through which 14-25 year olds can influence decisions on local services.

Putting young people at the heart of our plan

In 2016, over 14,000 young people (just under 60% of Oldham’s youth population) responded to the UK Youth Parliament’s ‘Make Your Mark’ campaign, confirming what they felt was most needed in Oldham, to improve services and support for young people. Their priorities included: **‘a curriculum that prepares us for life’** and **‘better support for mental health’**.

For that reason our plan for the Opportunity Area in 2017 includes investment in both of these important areas.

We want our relationship with young people to go beyond surveys. Research shows the importance of giving young people a voice in decision making and a role in designing and delivering services. We will do this by:

<p>Listening to views</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with a range of youth organisations, including Oldham Children in Care Council, Barrier Breakers (disability youth voice group), and Mahdlo (a local youth centre), to raise awareness of new activities and support on offer, and make sure resources are properly targeted and effectively delivered, to make the biggest difference for young people.
<p>Representation</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our partnership board member and Assistant Chief Executive at Mahdlo, Raz Mohammed, is running consultation events with groups of young people, including those at risk of or already facing issues at home and school. This group will give their perspective on the delivery plan and lead projects to tackle some of the key issues we are uncovering.
<p>Action</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will involve young people in developing and evaluating projects and interventions. Oldham’s Youth Council already leads the way in this area, using its delegated budget to commission the online support and counselling service, Kooth. • We will offer young people the chance to join the partnership board as part of a ‘Take Over Day’ to help us think about and make decisions on the Opportunity Area’s priorities for 2018.
<p>Ambassadors</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people will be ambassadors for the programme. These ambassadors will be between 10 and 20 years old and will be passionate about improving social mobility in their community. They will be selected because they demonstrate a strong commitment and have inspirational stories to tell – stories which bring alive the programme’s aims. They will consult with and represent their peers, finding and telling success stories and delivering a communication strategy to engage the wider community.
<p>Research</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will commission new qualitative research to understand young people’s own views on the barriers to their success, and how to remove them. This will give us a starting point for measuring what we achieve in Oldham.

OUR PRIORITIES





Priority 1: Ensuring all children are school-ready by the age of five

Why this is an issue

In Oldham, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has increased year on year, and there are a minority of wards where attainment is above average, but overall Oldham was nearly nine percentage points below average in 2016.

As the research suggests, there are additional factors that further affect the chances of Oldham's children achieving a good level of development:

Growing up in poverty – fewer than half of children in Oldham eligible for free school meals achieved a good level of development.

Growing up in a disadvantaged area – Oldham Council's management information from 2017 suggests over 80% of five year olds living in Saddleworth North and

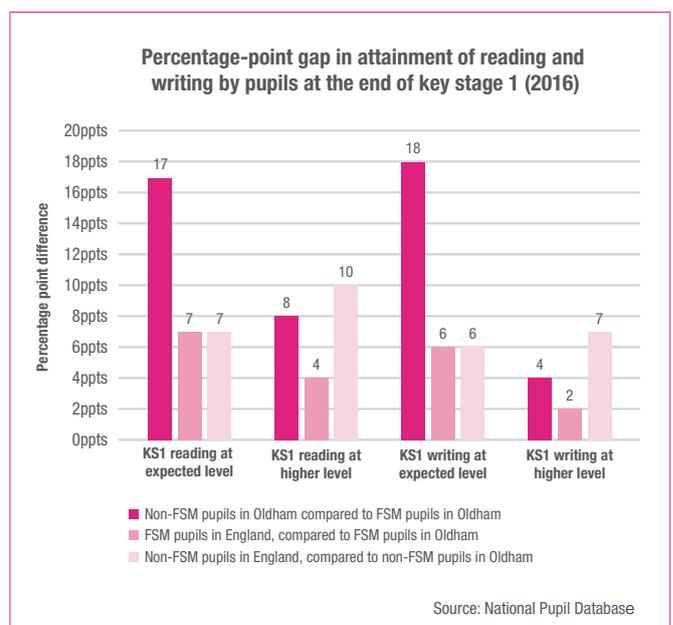
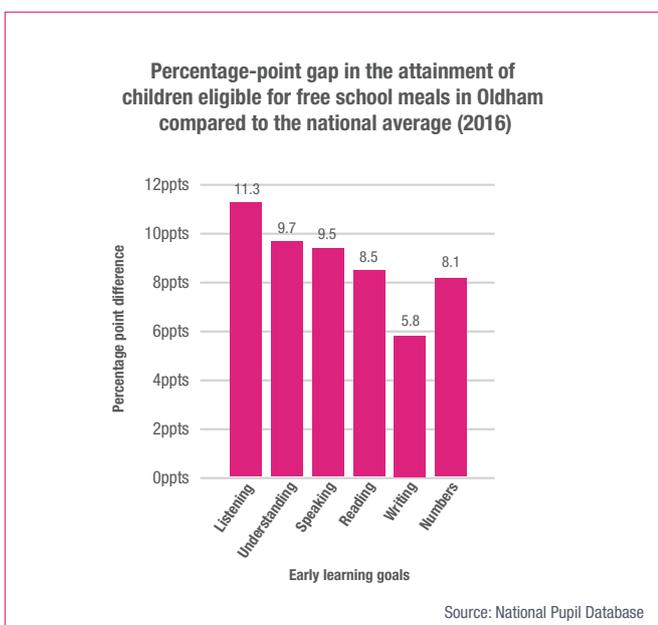
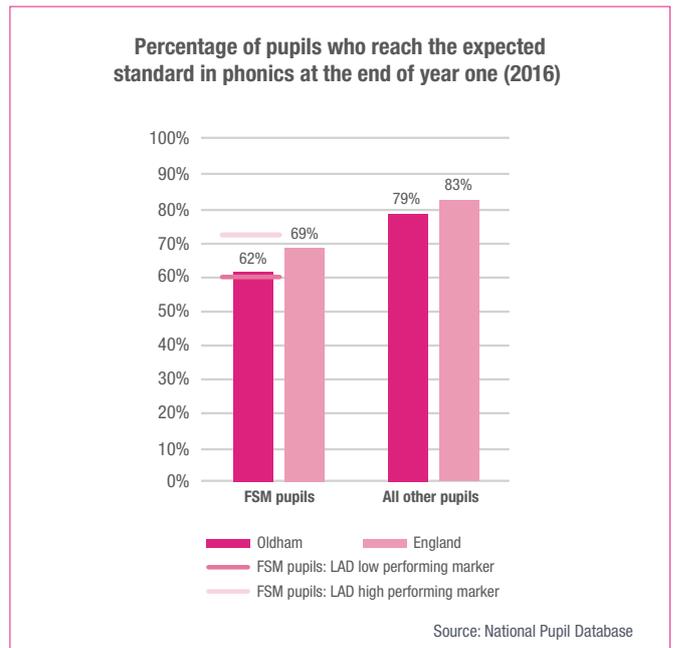
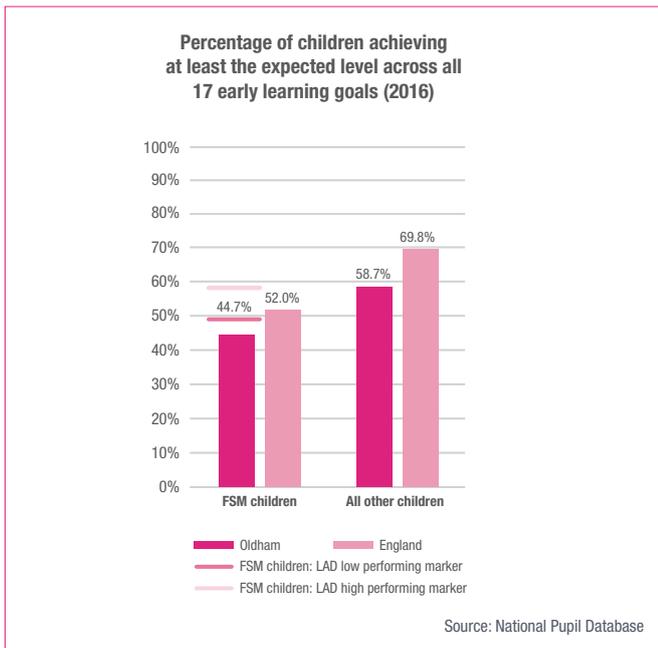
Saddleworth South achieved a good level of development, against fewer than 50% of the five year olds in St Mary's.

Gender – Girls outperform boys in all wards, with the Council's 2017 management information suggesting girls outperformed boys by more than 40 percentage points in Shaw, and by more than 30 percentage points in Royton South.

Language and cultural background – Oldham has a diverse population, with increasing numbers of international new arrivals and families where English may not be the first language spoken at home. Between 2015 and 2016 the gap in development widened, with 68% of children with English as a first language achieving a good level of development, compared to only 48% of pupils with English as an additional language.

Priority 1: Ensuring all children are school-ready by the age of five

2016 position



What we will do

When we met school leaders at Oldham's 2017 Headteacher conference, they strongly encouraged us to prioritise early intervention through the Opportunity Area. Headteachers talked about the challenge teachers face in introducing formal learning to children who have not reached a 'good level of development' through early years education.

As this plan highlights, there is a pattern of low achievement in literacy and English in Oldham, from early education through to the end of secondary school. Research shows that better literacy, communication and numeracy leads to better results across a wider range of subjects in school, and that the quality of the early home learning environment has a significant impact on outcomes for children.

'Making it REAL' (Raising Attainment in Early Literacy) is a programme developed by the National Children's Bureau to improve children's early literacy skills by teaching parents and carers strategies to support children's learning at home. It is designed for families with children aged two to five years old. 'Making it REAL' is based on the REAL programme assessed as effective by the Early Intervention Foundation*. Oldham has already been involved in a number of trials of the Making it REAL programme.

With a pressing need to improve literacy and communication, and the foundations already laid, our first priority for this year will be to scale up 'Making it REAL'. This will

include training and resources to allow staff in nursery settings to help parents and carers improve their children's literacy skills. Staff will carry out home visits, providing parents with literacy resources and running activities and events, such as library visits.

To ensure that the benefits of the programme reach the most vulnerable children and their parents or carers, many of whom cannot or choose not to attend nursery settings, we will invest in additional funding to deliver the programme through Oldham's Children Centre based 'Right Start Service'. We will expect this extension of the programme to benefit younger children (zero to two) years old, children with special educational needs, and those growing up in families where English is not the first language, or where the family has recently arrived in the country.

From 2018, the 'Making it REAL' programme will be extended to include early mathematics elements. While primary schools have recorded above average progress in maths, children are currently entering primary school with under-developed 'number' skills. Primary schools are helping children make good progress in maths, but from this lower starting point, they have not yet been able to raise overall attainment far enough. Investing in 'Making it REAL' for early mathematics will help schools raise attainment at age eleven by ensuring that children are ready to start formal maths learning at age five.

*The Early Intervention Foundation is an independent charity and What Works Centre which champions and supports the use of effective early intervention for children with signals of risk. www.eif.org.uk/

Our activities for 2017/18 will include:

- Roll out 'Making it REAL' in at least 30 nursery settings and Children's Centres (through 'Right Start') across the eight wards in Oldham where the percentage of children achieving a 'good level of development' by age five is lowest, or where the data showed the biggest gap in development between girls and boys. Early data on 2017 assessments, provided from Oldham Council's management information suggest that the wards likely to be targeted will be: Coldhurst; St Mary's; Alexandra; Medlock Vale; Chadderton Central; Chadderton North; Royton South; and Shaw.
- The Communications Trust, a specialist in effective techniques to improve children's speech, language and communication, will work with local nursery settings, schools, and the local authority, to help develop the 'whole-area' strategy for improving these key skills for all children.
- ICAN, the children's communication charity, has also offered to support Oldham in improving children's language skills. The focus of ICAN's work will be agreed over the autumn term, but could include helping schools to develop or find the best training for teachers, in improving language skills.
- We know that achieving the significant improvements in children's development that we need will require further investment in early education, and a mix of approaches. 'Making it REAL' is our first investment because it is proven and ready to deliver. Over the autumn term, we will work rapidly to identify complementary programmes that can be brought online quickly, taking advice from those working with children in Oldham, our Research School, and our national partners, like The Communications Trust and ICAN, on the most effective interventions.
- We also recognise the need to celebrate the work being done in Oldham, and give those working with children in Oldham and across the country a chance to discuss and exchange ideas and good practice. We will run an early education conference in Oldham, in 2018, with a focus on literacy and parental/carers' involvement in education.

Our targets for 2020/21 are:

- 'Making it REAL' will be running across the 8 target wards, with the percentage of children achieving a good level of development by age five having increased more in these wards, than elsewhere, and a faster rate of improvement for boys, in Alexandra, Coldhurst, Medlock Vale, Royton South, and Shaw.
- Through 'Making it REAL' and our future investment in early education, we want to see 70% of children in Oldham achieving a good level of development by 2021, with the greatest improvements amongst disadvantaged children.





Priority 2: Raising attainment for all, and raising it fastest for disadvantaged pupils

Why this is an issue

On average, pupils in Oldham make less progress in English and maths through primary and secondary schools, and do not do as well in their exams at the end of their primary and secondary education, as pupils across Greater Manchester, and nationally.

Across nearly all measures of attainment and progress, disadvantaged pupils are less likely to succeed in Oldham.

Primary schools are starting to close the gap in maths, where Oldham's children now make better than average progress between the ages of seven and eleven, but their grades are still below average at the end of their primary education.

Far too few pupils achieve high scores in their reading and writing tests at the end of key stage 2, and as the Sutton Trust's

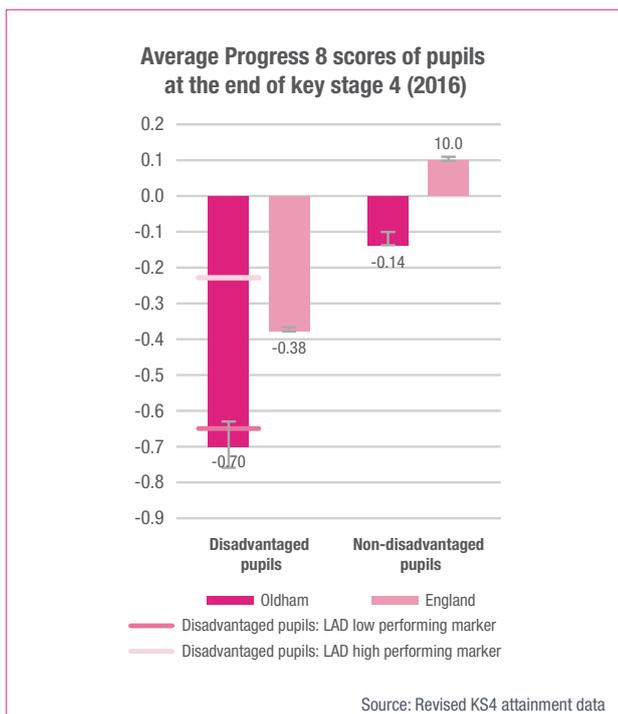
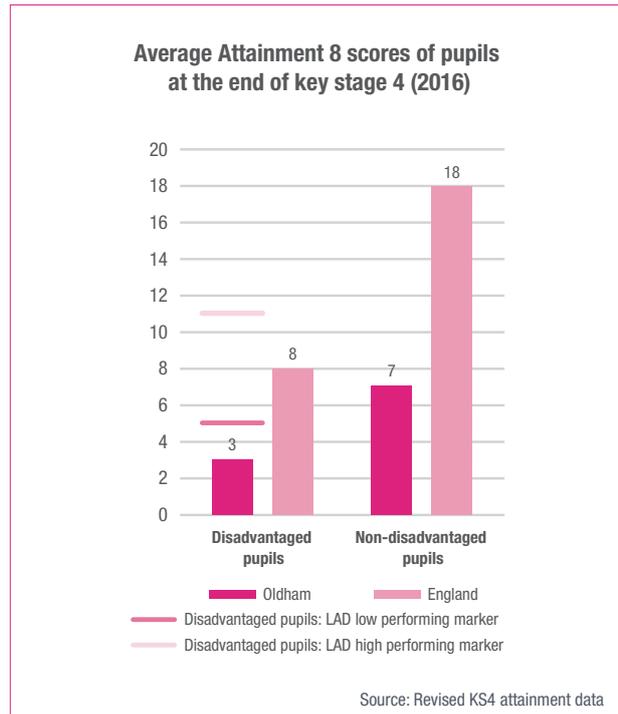
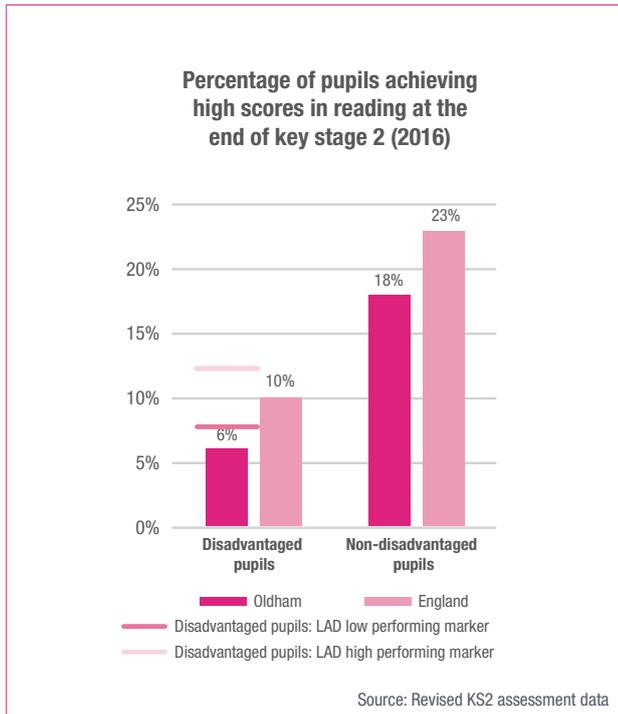
'Missing Talent' report shows, secondary schools in Oldham have a poor record of supporting high performing primary school pupils to maintain that level through secondary school.

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils entered for the EBacc in 2016 was significantly lower in Oldham than nationally.

In all but two secondary schools, disadvantaged pupils did not make as much progress in their learning as expected, based on their attainment at the end of primary school. The two schools bucking the trends were Hathershaw College and Oldham Academy North, which also had the highest proportions of disadvantaged pupils.

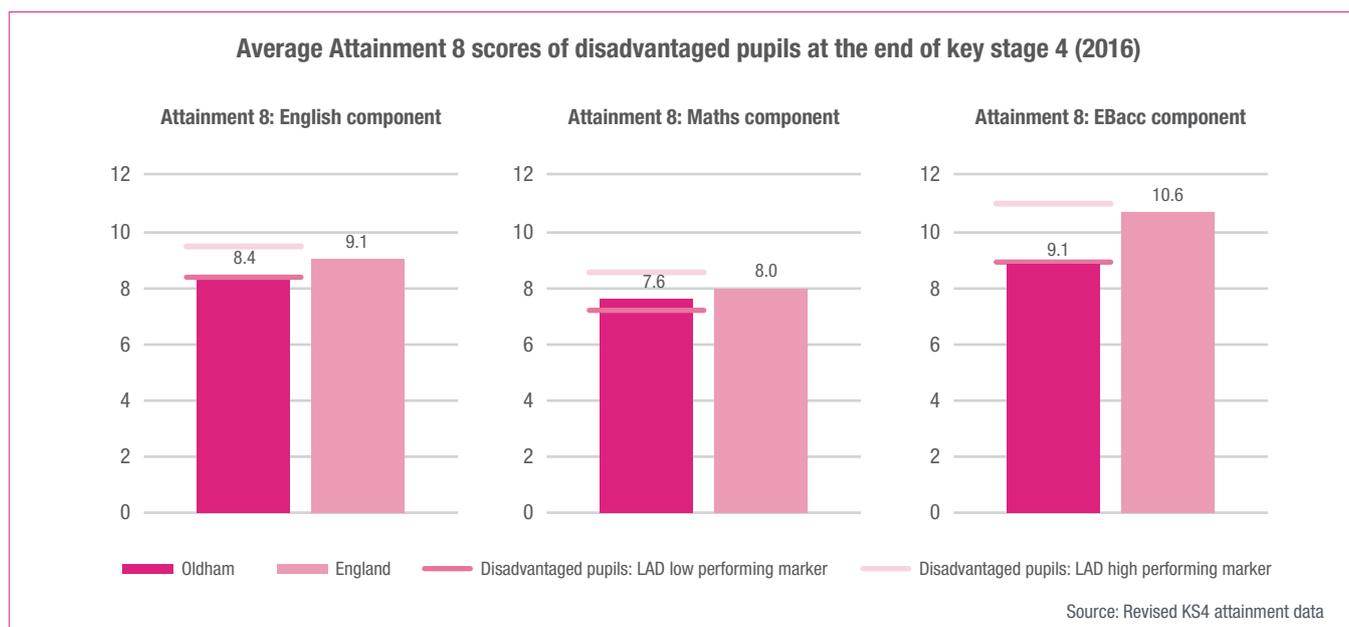
Priority 2: Raising attainment for all, and raising it fastest for disadvantaged pupils

2016 position



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What we will do

Oldham's Education Partnership was created in response to the 2015 Education and Skills Commission, to help all schools in the borough become good or outstanding, and as part of a 'self-improving' school system. Oldham's pupils deserve nothing less. **Our plan will give Oldham's school leaders and teachers the tools to make this happen.**

Achieving and maintaining good and outstanding school status will require **strong leadership** as well as investment in the next generation of Oldham's headteachers and leaders. From September 2017, we will provide through the Department's new Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund:

- Fully funded access to National Professional Qualifications in middle leadership, senior leadership, headship and executive leadership to leaders and aspiring leaders in Oldham. In the first year alone there will be funding for up to 150 school leaders to undertake this training.
- A two-year training and support programme from TeachFirst, for senior leadership teams, to help schools learn from the best approaches to assessment, using data and in developing future leaders.
- Twelve months of coaching, training and support for leaders in primary schools.
- And we will promote and help schools access support from 'Inspiring Governance', the new service helping to connect volunteers with schools who need skilled governors or trustees, to strengthen their leadership teams.

All pupils, but especially those at risk of disengaging from education, or who have fallen behind, need **great teachers** who

refuse to accept 'average' as the best Oldham's children and young people can achieve. The best teachers give pupils the knowledge and inspiration to achieve their full potential, and set them on the path to higher learning and employment. We will help to make 'the Oldham teacher' a title that pupils, parents and carers, and the education sector look to as an example of excellence, through:

- A 'whole-school' phonics training and development package, from Ruth Miskin Training, to be delivered over two years, in schools where children require the most support in language development.
- A two-year package of support to improve the quality of teaching, and inspire pupils to get involved in science, technology, engineering and maths, from 'STEM Learning' and the Institute of Physics, targeted on schools currently rated as requiring improvement or inadequate.
- We will also ask STEM Learning and the Institute of Physics to work with partners including the Regional Science Centre, the regional Maths Hubs, and the Radclyffe School, to lead on an improvement strategy for STEM, including proposals for targeting their collective resources to achieve the biggest impact on quality and attainment. We expect this to include a drive to improve teaching and learning in maths, across years seven to nine, which will ensure the progress made in primary is not lost, as well as the use of 'mastery' approaches to mathematics.
- We will provide access to programmes and qualifications from the Institute for Teaching, supporting school leaders to develop expert teaching practice across their schools from 2018.

What we will do

As the Oldham Education and Skills Commission recognised, a self-improving system ‘requires all partners to take collective responsibility for improvement’. Local school partnerships need to gain school leaders’ agreement on the priorities for improvement – and these **priorities must be set solely according to the needs of children and young people in the borough**. They must also help schools and system leaders focus their efforts on these priorities, set clear and ambitious goals for improvement and hold people to account for achieving them. We have confidence that Oldham’s schools can build this kind of partnership.

To help them, we are working with school leaders to agree recommendations, on how Oldham can:

- Sharpen its priorities for school improvement, taking account of the different challenges faced by children and young people in different wards and communities and at each stage of their education;
- Improve the effectiveness of current arrangements for school-to-school support; and
- Identify those school leaders and teachers who, with support and development, can join Oldham’s growing cadre of system leaders, to drive improvement across the borough.

Our decisions on targeting our offer of training and support will be guided by this consultation, as well our own and the local authority’s assessments of capacity across Oldham’s academies and maintained schools.

While we expect to target much of our school improvement offer, we recognise the benefits of offering training to a wider group of teachers and leaders, from across Oldham, not least in bringing together professionals working with different groups of pupils, to share ideas and information.

We will ask our new Research School to work with school leaders and teachers over the autumn term, to agree a list of priority areas for training and development of interest to larger numbers of schools in Oldham, and not covered by our targeted offer. We will use Opportunity Area funding to fill those gaps, allowing schools to access training recommended by the Research School, as proven to be effective in raising standards. This could include, for example, training in work with high attaining pupils, the effective use of teaching assistants, or in supporting pupils requiring additional support, such as those with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities), families where English is an Additional Language, boys from Pakistani families, International New Arrivals, or white working class pupils.

Finally, as a partnership board, we will work hard to help schools make the links between the different parts of our offer, for example ensuring that in helping to develop school leaders we reinforce the role of high quality careers advice in helping pupils make good subject choices and set stretching learning goals. In turn, this will ensure that headteachers, teachers and pupils benefit from the Careers and Enterprise Company, and its network of employers.

Our activities for 2017/18 will include:

- Targeting our investments to develop a stronger school system.
- Agreeing the allocation of funded National Professional Qualifications and training through the Teaching Leadership and Innovation Fund.
- The Research School will identify training and development priorities, with delivery of training to begin within the academic year.
- Ensuring Oldham's priorities and approach are understood by Teaching Schools, multi-academy trusts and other system leaders considering bidding to support our schools through the next round of the Strategic School Improvement Fund. We expect raising attainment in English and maths to feature as priorities. We will also look to encourage and support strong applications by Oldham schools to achieve Teaching School status, particularly schools with a strong track record in working with disadvantaged children.
- We will encourage take up of the offer to participate in the London Leadership Strategy's programme of personal development for SEND advocates.

Our targets for 2020/21 are:

As the evidence on social mobility shows, the places where pupils live and learn can create a barrier to achievement, and that barrier is often raised higher by the effects of growing up in poverty. The data suggests that both these factors are limiting children and young people's chances of success in Oldham. As a Board, we are clear that our targets for Oldham need to address both these factors.

So we need to raise attainment faster for all pupils, because Oldham underperforms against national and regional averages, and if we are to level up opportunity for all, we must achieve the greatest improvements for pupils from low income families.

We have reflected these goals in our school improvement targets for 2021. **The challenge we set for Oldham's schools and the promise we make to Oldham's children and families, is simply that results must**

improve faster for all pupils in Oldham, and even faster for the most disadvantaged.



Target one: Over the lifetime of our plan, the percentage of children achieving the expected standards in phonics in year one will have increased:

- more for disadvantaged children in Oldham, than for disadvantaged children nationally,
- more for non-disadvantaged children in Oldham, than for non-disadvantaged children nationally
- and in Oldham, the increase for disadvantaged children will be greater than that recorded for non-disadvantaged children.

Target two: Over the lifetime of our plan, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels in reading, writing and attainment at the end of key stage 2 will have increased:

- more for disadvantaged children in Oldham, than for disadvantaged children nationally;
- more for non-disadvantaged children in Oldham, than for non-disadvantaged children nationally;
- and in Oldham, the increase for disadvantaged children will be greater than that recorded for non-disadvantaged children.

Target three: Over the lifetime of our plan, the average 'attainment 8' scores recorded by pupils at the end of their secondary education will have increased:

- more for disadvantaged children in Oldham, than for disadvantaged children nationally;
- more for non-disadvantaged children in Oldham, than for non-disadvantaged children nationally;
- and in Oldham, the increase for disadvantaged children will be greater than that recorded for non-disadvantaged children.





Priority 3: All children and young people to be ready for life, learning and work

Why this is an issue

Our first priority in this plan focuses on children's development in core areas like literacy and language, so they are ready for formal learning in school; our second on the quality of teaching in core subjects, like English, maths and science, once pupils arrive in the classroom. These are vital areas for investment, but they will not reach far enough. In shaping this plan, we have spoken to young people, headteachers and college leaders, health and support workers and employers. The same concerns have been put forward: we need to understand young people's lives better, be aware of the factors that limit their resilience, and provide the support they need to be ready to learn, achieve and progress into rewarding employment.

Of the factors that hold back young people, the concern they raised most often was the increasing impact of poor mental health and wellbeing on learning. School and college leaders agreed, and wanted to see us focus on the high rate of sub-clinical mental health issues. This included those that do not meet the threshold for clinical intervention, but still cause significant behavioural issues in and out of school, affect attendance and ultimately, stop pupils aspiring to or achieving the grades of which they are capable. For schools and colleges working with International New Arrivals or other vulnerable groups, there can be particular issues in

helping pupils integrate, particularly if they have been subject to trauma. The data – for Oldham and in general – suggests there is a link between mental health issues and performance in the classroom. We owe it to pupils and teachers to develop a better understanding of the scale of the impact on learning.

Many schools already pay for school-based counselling services or resilience programmes, but demand for the professionals running these services often outstrips supply, and teachers can feel they lack the professional knowledge to provide effective support. In choosing the best programmes, schools have to choose from a wide range of options, with evidence of effectiveness often hard to find.

Having struggled with mental health issues in school, one young person in Oldham told the MH:2K* project:

“Teachers don't know what to do; school teachers are untrained and giving different advice to professionals; teachers panic and are too stressed in extreme situations [and] don't have the confidence”.

We also know that many young people in Oldham can struggle to find good careers. Youth unemployment in Oldham is higher than the national average, and young people in Oldham are far less likely to enter the workplace at eighteen (via apprenticeships

*An Oldham project through which 14-25 year olds can influence decisions on local services.

or other employment). Anecdotally, we have heard that vocational provision is not adequately preparing young people for well paid work. The poorest children in Oldham are much less likely to go to a top third university than other children in Oldham, or when compared to other disadvantaged young people around the country.

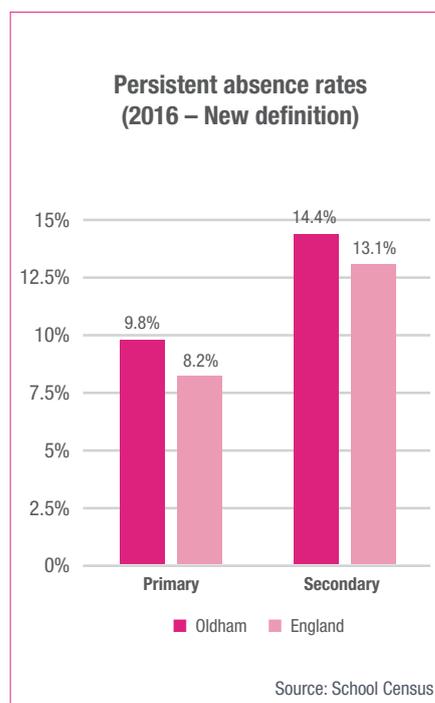
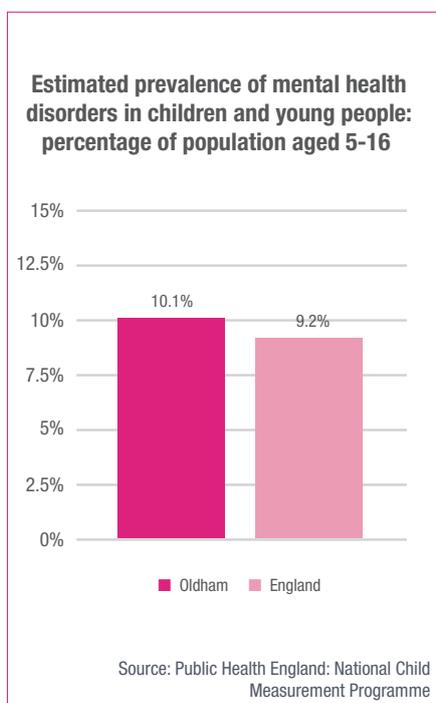
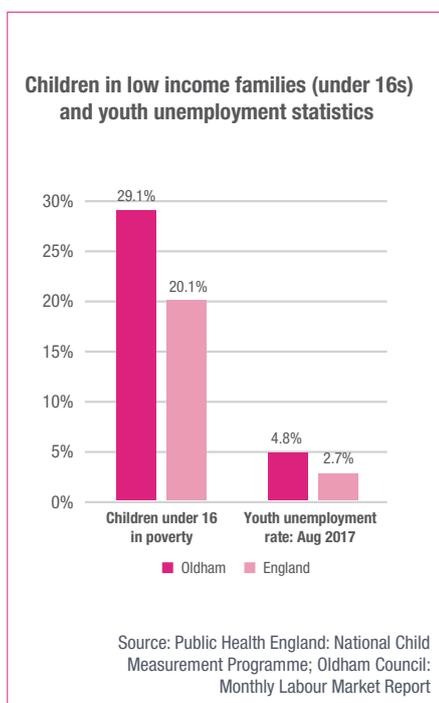
When we spoke to employers, and professionals working with young people out of school, they all talked about resilience and the benefits of a broad and inspiring curriculum, in keeping young people engaged and opening pathways to a wider range of careers. They made clear the need for young people to develop ‘soft skills’, like communication, self-discipline

and the ability to work with others, as well as developing a deep knowledge of core subjects; and to have opportunities to take part in cultural activities, sport, and volunteering.

We want every young person to be inspired during their time at school and college, and to leave school ready for employment and life as adults.

Our first priority for investment this year will be in resilience and emotional wellbeing – in school and out of school – and in developing essential life skills and opportunities for cultural, sporting and other activities to build and support young people’s physical and mental health.

2016 position



What we will do

We want Oldham's schools and colleges to provide the best mental health support for pupils in the country, supported by accurate data on the impact and prevalence of mental health problems in education.

Last year Oldham's schools, colleges and their partners took an important step toward improving support for pupils and teachers, appointing a specialist mental health advisor to work with schools, and committing to an Oldham-wide whole school and college approach to dealing with mental health. We believe the Oldham approach has the potential to be effective, so we are committing to help them deliver it.

Our priorities for this year are to:

- Boost the capacity of those supporting schools, such as mental health school advisors and school health advisors, to:
 - Complete mental health impact and needs assessments and baseline data for Oldham schools by end 2018. These will include pupil surveys to monitor changes in mental wellbeing issues, and track improvements, as well as capturing data on learning hours lost to mental health issues.
 - Support schools to develop mental health plans, and work to embed the whole school and college mental health framework by the end of 2018, to ensure a legacy of effective practice. This will include supporting schools and colleges to use the mental health self-assessment tool.
- Offer needs based support to schools and colleges between 2017 and 2019 to allow them to source additional mental

health support to meet immediate needs. For example, counselling for students.

- Train at least one staff member in every school to deliver robust, classroom based programmes to promote resilience and mental health, so that these programmes can be delivered in schools from 2018 onwards.
- Celebrate, evaluate and support home-grown initiatives: Oldham benefits from a number of locally developed support programmes, including the 'positive minds' programme run by Positive Steps, peer mentoring in Saddleworth school, and the Kooth online counselling offer, which is commissioned directly by the Youth Council. These and others look promising but the evidence base is not yet in place to make the case for scaling them up. We will evaluate the most promising Oldham initiatives, drawing on the expertise of our Research School to help design and run our evaluations.

Throughout, we will be guided by schools – consulting headteachers on this approach through the autumn term forums for primary and secondary headteachers – and by young people, in particular through the MH:2K project.

To help young people develop the rounded set of skills they need in their life and career, we will make a significant investment in the Oldham Pledge, promoting and providing opportunities for young people to undertake a range of activities to develop resilience, determination, teamwork and employability skills. We will support schools to offer

activities to build the wider life skills of their young people and support their ability to learn and excel in education. We will work with schools, colleges and local providers of extra-curricular activities to ensure that we target those most in need and focus our resources where they will make the biggest difference.

To ensure that education in Oldham provides genuine pathways into good careers, we will help Oldham to assess the readiness of its education and skills system to promote and deliver inspiring and high quality technical education, to meet the needs of local employers and young people. We will look at options to invest in these important areas, working with schools, colleges and independent learning providers, and with Greater Manchester

Combined Authority to put in place a robust and attractive offer. This could include, for example, trialling new technical and general qualifications in schools and colleges. We will also explore how we can strengthen and support the education offer to those entering and within the workplace.

We will also work with the National Collaborative Outreach Programme, Greater Manchester Higher and other Higher Education outreach to ensure that we are reaching the children in Oldham with the potential to progress to university; and that outreach work also promotes pathways to highly skilled highly paid employment, including through apprenticeships.

Our activities for 2017/18 will include:

- All schools in Oldham will be offered mental health first aid training.
- We will offer every Oldham school training to allow them to deliver robust, classroom based programmes to promote resilience and mental health.
- We will establish a baseline to enable us to measure the impact of mental health on learning and understand how our interventions help us to make progress.
- Put in place our investment in the 'Oldham Pledge', allowing thousands of young people to undertake additional activities to build their skills, resilience and employability.
- We will continue to support the uptake and roll out of the Careers and Enterprise Company's offer to schools and young people, to ensure they are informed about their options and empowered to make effective choices.
- We will begin work with Oldham and Greater Manchester to assess readiness and plan for an improved offer of technical education.

Our targets for 2020/21 are:

- All schools will be supported to have a robust mental health plan and named mental health lead.
- We will see an improvement in mental health and resilience, and a reduction in learning hours lost to mental health problems, in comparison to the baselines established in 2018.
- All schools will have had staff members trained to deliver evidence-based classroom based programmes to improve resilience and mental health.
- At least 25% of schools in Oldham will have provided additional mental health support for students, with at least three additional full time equivalent mental health support staff.
- At least three mental health initiatives developed by Oldham schools will have been supported and evaluated, and, if they are effective, scaled up to reach more pupils.
- All schools in Oldham will be supported to offer the Oldham Pledge through additional extra-curricular activities to build young people's resilience and employability.
- Every eleven to eighteen year old in Oldham to benefit from at least four high-quality encounters with the world of work, with more than 90,000 high quality encounters delivered to over 19,000 young people in Oldham over the life of this plan.
- We will have invested in building a robust and attractive offer of technical education, subject to the findings of our work later this year. This could include, for example, new technical and general qualifications pre and post-16.





A stylized map of Oldham, England, outlined in white. A white rectangular box with the word "Oldham" in black text is positioned over the map.

Oldham

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