



Director's Strategic Report 2016-2017



Annual Report to
Shareholders
Learn Sheffield AGM



This **Annual Report to Shareholders** is the second one produced by Learn Sheffield, coming at the end of the second year since incorporation on the 14th August 2015. This period has included the transition from an interim Board to a substantive Board. It provides an overview of performance in this reporting period in relation to board effectiveness, key developments, school improvement commission outcomes and financial outcomes.

It has been prepared by the Chair of the Board, Mike Allen, and the Chief Executive, Stephen Betts. It should be read in conjunction with the financial statement and other papers for the Annual General Meeting on Thursday 1st February 2018.

Further information about Learn Sheffield can be found at www.learnsheffield.co.uk.

Chair's Message

This is our second Annual Report to Shareholders and it is my great pleasure to be able to report the strong progress that Learn Sheffield has made in its second year.

Learn Sheffield remains extremely focussed on school improvement and, as we have outlined in our vision and priorities, determined to support Sheffield schools and colleges in ensuring that every child and young person has access to a great education, wherever they live and whatever their circumstances.

Sheffield has, as you can see later in this report, continued to make progress in both school and pupil outcomes. This progress has come through the dedication and commitment of colleagues from across the city and the excellent work that they are doing in partnership with their school communities. Learn Sheffield is proud to support this work and play a co-ordinating and supportive role in school improvement across the city.

On a personal level I would like to thank all of my colleagues on the Board, who have supported the further development of Learn Sheffield as it has moved from having an interim board to a substantive board. I would especially like to pay tribute to Darren Tidmarsh, my predecessor as Chair, who has made a very substantial contribution to the growth of Learn Sheffield. A new role has taken him away from being eligible for nomination from a member institution but we all very much hope to work with him again in the future.

I am delighted to be able to report that Learn Sheffield has had a successful year. We are on track to being the well-established organisation that we need to be in order to support the development of improved education in the city, and better life chances for our children and young people.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Allen'.

Mike Allen
Chair - Learn Sheffield Board

Chief Executive's Overview

Welcome to our Director's Strategic Report for 2016-17, which is our second annual report to shareholders. I hope that this document, alongside the audited accounts, provides a good basis on which to judge our performance in our second year of operation.

We are proud of our achievements and I would again like to take this opportunity to thank our team, which has grown a little this year, for their dedication to supporting schools and academies in their work with children, young people, their families and communities.

We continue to believe passionately that we can together bring about improvement through partnerships and this is central to our education strategy and everything that we do. It is vital that we celebrate our progress, whilst maintaining our ambition to deliver a step change in both performance and provision for our city. If we are able to succeed on that scale, then we know that we can have a dramatic impact on the long term outcomes for Sheffield's economy and ability to succeed in its wider objectives.

We are all working in changing and challenging time and our collective approach will continue to be a key factor in successfully adapting to the challenges that we face in the coming year and beyond. As we enter the third year of a three-year commission from Sheffield City Council, Learn Sheffield is now in the process of shaping our future approach to the funding of school improvement. We look forward to working with our members to strike the right balance so that our schools and academies can continue to contribute to a whole city strategic approach to education.

On a personal note, and on behalf of Learn Sheffield, I would like to thank you all for your continued support and engagement. We look forward to working with you all this year.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Stephen Betts'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Stephen Betts
Chief Executive

Board Effectiveness

The substantive Learn Sheffield Board was elected and confirmed at the AGM/EGM in December 2016. The Interim Board, which resigned on 6 December 2016, led the company through to the end of its first year, enabling it to take responsibility for the first accounting period and the recruitment of the substantive Chief Executive.

There have been some changes to the Board since December 2016, which are outlined below. The board has also created a Finance and Audit Committee, which reports to the full board on matters of finance and risk management.

- A second co-opted Director has been recruited (in accordance with the Articles) and Anthony Hughes joined the Board in February 2017.
- Cllr Andy Bainbridge joined the Board in September 2017, to fill the seat nominated by Sheffield City Council.
- Two Directors, Darren Tidmarsh and Joel Wirth, resigned in October 2017 due to no longer being employed by member institutions.
- Mike Allen became the Chair of the Board following Darren's resignation.

The attendance, effectiveness and contribution at meetings of the directors are kept under review by the chair. Directors agree that the Board is effective in fulfilling its strategic duties and the reports and presentations provided by the executive are of good quality, enabling the Board to carry out its functions efficiently.

Attendance at Board meetings is good, with the overall attendance of Directors being 84% (sixty seven attendances of a possible eighty between December 2016 and December 2017). No individual Director has attended less than two thirds of the meetings they were eligible to attend.

More information about the Learn Sheffield Board can be found below.

Mike Allen (Chair of the Board – Co-opted Director)



Mike was appointed as one of the two non-executive Directors of the Board on 1 February 2017 having served previously on the interim Board since November 2015 as a co-opted Director. Mike has been a school Governor in Sheffield since 2000 and is currently Chair of the Governing Body at Pipworth and also Chairs the recently formed Sheffield South East Trust. He is a member of the Executive of the Sheffield Association of School Governing Boards; is a local leader of governance and serves on the Schools' Forum.

Cllr Andy Bainbridge (Sheffield City Council nominated)



Andy was appointed as the Director nominated by Sheffield City Council on the 18th September 2017. He has been the Councillor for East Ecclesfield since May 2016 and his current term of office runs until May 2020. In addition to being a member of the full Council, Andy also serves on the Licensing Committee, the Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Board and the Corporate Parenting Board. His interest in the Learn Sheffield role was partly informed by previously working in education across a number of different stages of education.

Stephen Betts (Chief Executive)



Stephen was appointed as the Interim Chief Executive of Learn Sheffield in late summer 2015, having previously chaired the working group that determined the approach that Sheffield would take to school improvement. Following a competitive recruitment process, he was appointed to the substantive Chief Executive role in May 2016. Before becoming involved with Learn Sheffield, Stephen was the Headteacher of Malin Bridge Primary School and had worked for 17 years in the primary sector. His previous schools were Ecclesfield Primary and Nook Lane Junior Schools.

Chris French (Secondary School sector nominated)



Chris has held the position of Executive Principal, Brigantia Learning Trust in North-East Sheffield (a 2-16+ local academy trust comprising three primary schools, two secondary schools and a FE College) since 2014. He is one of the two Secondary School Directors on the Board of Learn Sheffield, which he joined in December 2016. Before taking up his current position, Chris was the Headteacher of Hinde House School and had previously worked across the city. He is a member of Schools Forum and has a strong commitment to partnership working which drives sector-led improvement.

Christopher Holder (Primary School sector nominated)



Chris has twenty-six years teaching experience working in multicultural inner city schools in both London and Sheffield. He has been the Headteacher of Lowfield Primary School since 2012 and is one of the two Primary School Directors on the Board of Learn Sheffield, which he joined in December 2016. Chris is a National Leader of Education and has been deployed as both an Executive Headteacher and an Associate Headteacher to support other Sheffield schools. He currently represents his locality partnership on the Primary Improvement Board and is currently co-ordinating the Primary Leaders Partnership.

Antony Hughes (Co-opted Director)



Antony was appointed as one of the two co-opted non-executive Directors on the Board on 1 February 2017. He is currently the Chief Executive of The Harmony Trust, which is a multi-academy trust containing six schools, predominantly in Oldham. Antony was previously Commissioner for Children's Services and Director of the Inclusion and Learning Service at Sheffield City Council, in which roles he worked closely with Learn Sheffield. Antony worked for the Department for Education before coming to Sheffield.

Angela Lant (Primary School sector nominated)



Angela is one of the two Primary School Directors on the Board of Learn Sheffield. She has worked in Primary education for the past 26 years, in a variety of contexts, and has been leading schools for the past 16 years. Angela has a strong track record of school improvement and is currently part of the Executive Team at Tapton School Academy Trust. In her role as Director of Primaries, she leads a team of five Sheffield primary schools. Angela also represents her locality partnership on the Primary Improvement Board.

Judith Smith (Special School sector nominated)



Judith was appointed as the Special School Director on the Board of Learn Sheffield in December 2016. She has taught for 30 years and been a Headteacher for the past 10 years. Judith is the Executive Head of Talbot Specialist School and also leads the Fusion Teaching School Alliance. As a National Leader of Education, she has worked as an executive leader within the special school sector but has also worked extensively system wide. Judith is a strong advocate of cross sector improvement partnerships.

Current vacancies exist for Directors nominated by the Secondary and Further Education sectors.

Financial Performance

Learn Sheffield re-appointed Hart Shaw as company auditors for the financial year 2016-17 and they will present the second set of audited accounts at the Annual General Meeting.

A presentation at the AGM will identify the key elements of financial performance, from Learn Sheffield's second year of operation.

Significant Developments in 2016/17

Learn Sheffield's second year has, of course, built on the progress made in 2015/16. The developments identified below summarise some of the key work that has been undertaken in relation to the School Improvement Strategy and the Sheffield Priorities.



The delivery and development of the **School Improvement Strategy** continues to be the core business of Learn Sheffield. 2016/17 was the first year of implementing the new approach to school improvement, which was co-designed with each school sector. All Sheffield schools have participated in this process, which was repeated for the second time in the autumn term of 2017. This strategy will be reviewed in 2018 to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose and aligns with the new approach to funding school improvement from September 2018.

The further development of the **Sheffield Priorities** was a key piece of work for Learn Sheffield in 2016/17. A Sheffield Priorities Day was held in October 2016 and this was followed by the launch of an updated Sheffield Priorities document in May 2017, which captured the progress that had been made and outlined the next steps for each of the priorities. The priorities continue to reflect our collective vision for education in our city.



The **Sheffield Priorities Development Programme** was launched in the summer of 2017, and followed up by a further update in September 2017. This document was designed to be a guide which supported school engagement with the strategies that have been developed to address the Sheffield Priorities. The Development Programme sought to ensure that everyone in the city had access to key opportunities and also contained an overview of the various partnerships that are driving educational improvement in the city.

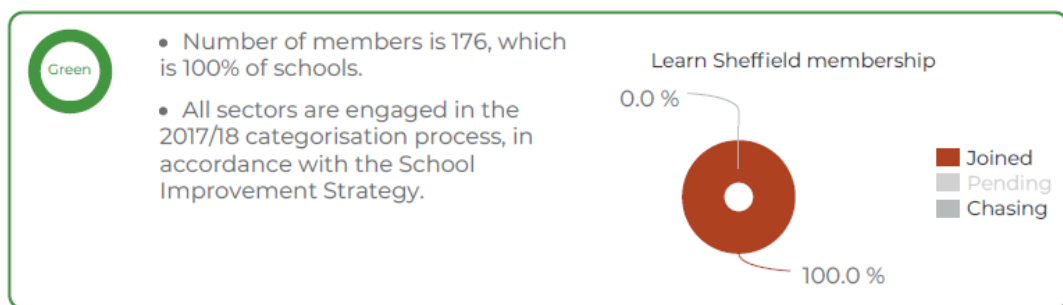
School Improvement Performance

The reporting areas below are based, as they were in the first year, on the objectives identified by Sheffield City Council in the commission to deliver statutory duties in relation to school improvement. The article on Sheffield's performance which follows, entitled 'Punching Above Our Weight', was written for publication in the local press in the autumn of 2017.

1. Partnership Working

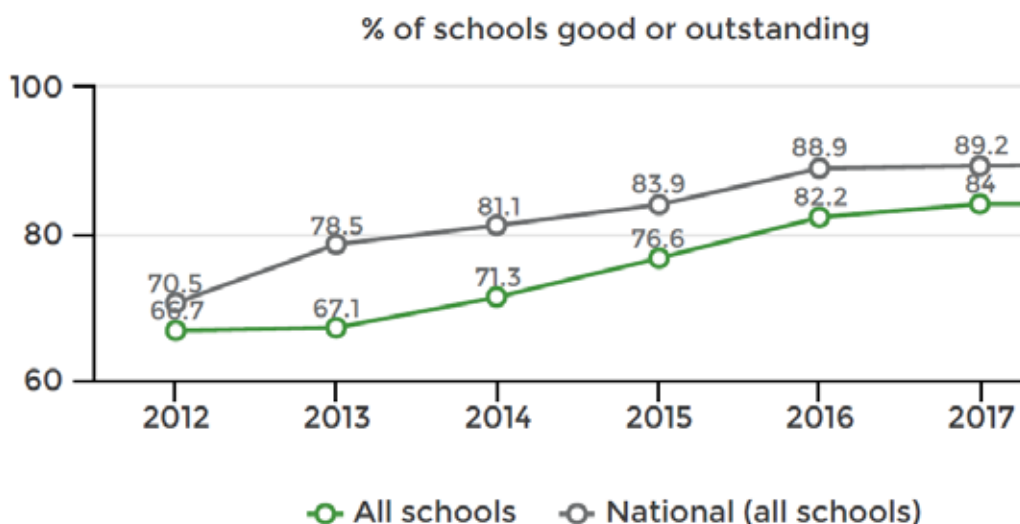
Learn Sheffield has continued to build on the strong partnerships across and between sectors, which impact positively on the outcomes for children and schools, and which supported the formation of Learn Sheffield.

We are delighted to again report that all Sheffield schools and colleges have engaged with Learn Sheffield this year, including participation in the categorisation process, and confirm that all the schools and colleges of the city have chosen to become members of Learn Sheffield. This area is RAG rated 'green' by Learn Sheffield.



2. School Outcomes

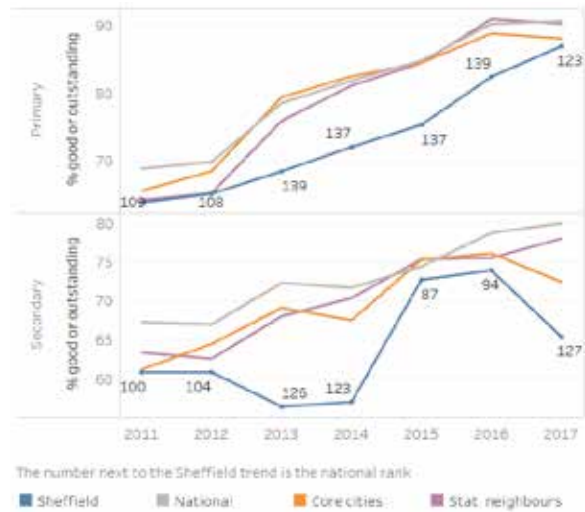
The profile of Sheffield school outcomes had again progressed to reach the highest level it has been, with 84% good or better, by the end of the 2016/17 school year. This figure led to the closest gap (5.2 percentage points) to the national figure since 2012.



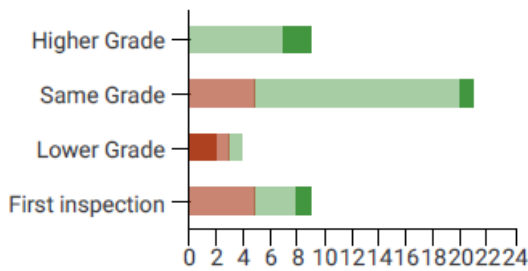
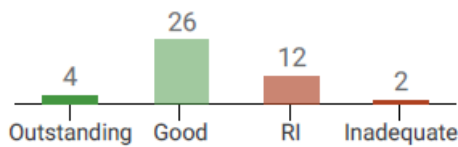
This improvement does, however, need to be seen in the context of Sheffield's LA ranking for these measures, which we will use to provide a performance benchmark in relation to pupil outcomes in section three.

Sheffield is ranked 123 nationally for the proportion of primary schools judged to be good/better by Ofsted and 127 nationally in relation to secondary schools.

These rankings are in the bottom quartile of LAs nationally, which is a position that Sheffield no longer frequently inhabits in relation to pupil outcomes.



Summary of 16/17 inspections (44 total: 34 primary, 6 secondary, 3 special, 1 PRU)



Legend: Outstanding (dark green), Good (light green), RI (red), Inadequate (dark red)

The proportion of inspection outcomes which resulted in good/better judgements, increased slightly in 2016/17, having been 66% in 2015/16.

Of those inspections with a previous outcome to compare with, 88% of schools remained the same or improved.

That said, there were two inadequate Ofsted judgements in 2016/17 and a proportion of RI schools who did not progress sufficiently to be judged Good in Inspection.

For these reasons, although it was a successful year for the city, school outcomes is RAG rated 'amber' by Learn Sheffield.

Amber

- The percentage of good/better Sheffield schools ended 2016/17 at 84% which is the highest figure that Sheffield has seen and the closest gap (5.2 percentage points) to the national figure since 2012.
- The proportion of good/better schools had increased overall (all sectors) by 7% in the past two years, reducing the gap to the national figure by 2.1 percentage points.
- 70% of inspections in 2016/17 resulted in a good or outstanding outcome compared to 66% of inspections in 2015/16. In the first half term of 2017/18 the figure is 71%.
- The RAG rating remains 'Amber' as two schools received inadequate judgements in 2016/17 and too many schools retained requires improvement judgements.

3. Pupil Outcomes

Sheffield's relative performance, when compared to national outcomes, and ranked against all Local Authorities, Core Cities and Statistical Neighbours can be seen in the table below, which includes the twenty headline measures across the education system from Early Years through to A-level.

Sheffield Data Summary 2017 (2016 in brackets)

Measure	Outcome		Ranking			Trend (↑→↓)
	Sheffield	National	LA (of 152) <i>Note – Child Poverty Ranking is 112</i>	Core Cities (of 8)	Stat Neighb (of 11)	
FS GLD	70 (69)	71 (69)	94	2	3	↑
FS Gap	29.8 (31.6)	31.7 (31.4)	55	2	2	↓
Y1 Phonics	77 (77)	81 (81)	140	7	10	→
KS1 Reading	74 (71)	76 (74)	92	1	3	↑
KS1 Writing	68 (65)	68 (65)	77	2	3	↑
KS1 Maths	76 (71)	75 (73)	61	1	3	↑
KS2 RWM Combined	60 (52)	61 (53)	92	3	4	↑
KS2 Reading Attainment	69 (62)	72 (66)	114	3	5	↑
KS2 Reading Progress	0.05 (-0.2)	0 (0)	75	6	3	↑
KS2 Writing Attainment	77 (74)	76 (74)	65	2	2	↑
KS2 Writing Progress	0.89 (0.6)	0 (0)	32	2	1	↑
KS2 Maths Attainment	74 (69)	75 (70)	90	4	3	↑
KS2 Maths Progress	0.33 (0.2)	0 (0)	64	4	2	↑
KS2 GPS	74 (70)	77 (73)	125	8	8	↑
KS4 Progress 8	0.01 (0.01)	-0.03 (-0.03)	56	2	3	→
KS4 Attainment 8	44.3 (48.3)	44.2 (48.5)	110	3	6	NA
KS4 C+/4+ Eng & Maths	59 (59)	59 (59)	114	3	7	→
KS4 EBacc (Standard Pass)	21 (22)	22 (23)	92	5	6	↓
KS5 %AAB/better	20 (20)	22 (22)	38	1	3	→
KS5 – avge points per entry	31.2 (31)	32.1 (31.4)	94	3	6	→

The outcomes demonstrate that Sheffield is broadly in line with national, albeit with some clear focus areas. Half of the headline measures are now at or above national.

The Local Authority rankings also demonstrate that the city is now out-performing the level of deprivation, when compared to other areas. 75% of the measures are above the deprivation index ranking of 102 and 80% are better than the city's child poverty ranking of 114.

When Sheffield is compared with all areas it is in the top half of LAs for 40% of the headline measures, whilst only in the bottom quartile for two measures (10%).

Comparison with other core cities also demonstrates strong performance, with 80% of the headline measure placing Sheffield in the top half of core cities. 60% of the core city rankings are in the top two, whilst only two (10%) are in the bottom two.

Whilst we celebrate the sustained improvement in pupil outcomes we, of course, aspire to more for the children and young people of the city. For this reason pupil outcomes is RAG rated 'amber' by Learn Sheffield with a recognition that a 'green' outcome would require consistently better than national performance across the education landscape.



- Improved relative performance, and ranking amongst core cities, across most headline measures has been maintained in 2017.
- The RAG rating remains Amber as we determined that it should not be Green until all key measures at least matched national, with some exceeding.
- There are areas where further improvement is required: KS1 Phonics, KS2 spelling punctuation and grammar and reading across the primary phase.

4. Outcomes for Vulnerable Pupils

Learn Sheffield continues to RAG rate outcomes for vulnerable pupils as 'amber' because, whilst there are improvements in some areas, these are not consistent and several measures continue to be disappointing.

Attainment gaps for BME (black minority ethnic) and EAL (English additional language) pupils are continuing to close across a number of headline measures. BME and EAL pupils make better progress than white British pupils in both the primary and secondary phases.

Gaps are not closing fast enough for disadvantaged pupils, who make less progress in both the primary and secondary phases. Attainment and progress of white British disadvantaged pupils is a particular concern, as it is nationally. Gaps for pupils with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) are also not closing rapidly enough and SEND pupils continue to make less progress than their peers.

The aggregation of additional needs is also a focus, considering pupils who have more than one characteristic which makes them potentially vulnerable to weaker progress or attainment. An example of this would be white British disadvantaged boys, who are typically achieving less well across the country and in Sheffield.



- Absence rates increased in secondary and special in 2016/17 and remained the same in primary. Sheffield absence rates remain above the national average.
- Overall rates of fixed term exclusion fell slightly in secondary but increased in primary and special (although exclusion rates in special schools remain well below the national average).
- There was an increase in fixed term exclusions for White British pupils but exclusion rates for BME pupils reduced.
- The overall number of permanent exclusions reduced in both primary and secondary in 2016/17 compared to 2015/16. The proportion of permanently excluded pupils who were BME also reduced.
- Despite a reduction in permanent exclusions the exclusion rate in Sheffield remains well above the national average.

Sheffield Performance 'Punching Above Our Weight'

There is much to be proud of again in the 2017 educational performance of Sheffield. Performance across the system, from Early Years through to A-level, has Sheffield broadly in line with national outcomes and performing well when compared to both our context and to similar places across the country. This position has been arrived at through a steady improvement over recent years and leaves Sheffield in a very different place in the rankings than it used to be, when the city regularly featured in the bottom quarter of local authority areas – not anymore!

There are twenty key measures, which span from early years to post-16 stages of education, and our analysis is based on how Sheffield performs in these when compared to national outcomes and similar places. Sheffield is equal to or above the national average in half of these measures, which is why we describe the performance of the city as being broadly in line with national outcomes.

Sheffield is at or above national in 50% of the twenty headline education measures.

Sheffield is in the top half of LAs in 35% of measures, is above city ranking for child poverty for 80% and only in the bottom quarter for 10%.

When compared to all local authority areas, Sheffield is no longer amongst the weaker performers. Sixteen measures (80%) see Sheffield ranked higher than its Child Poverty ranking (which is 112 out of the 152 places). There are only two measures in the bottom quarter, whilst we have seven measures (35%) which are in the top half of Local Authorities. The average ranking across the measures is 87th, which is twenty-five places higher than the Child Poverty Ranking and only ten places below the middle. Quite a difference from the days when most rankings were below the deprivation rankings and down at the bottom of the list.

Performance in comparison with the other seven core cities is also strong, with Sheffield ranked in the top three in fourteen measures (70%). This includes three measures where the City is the highest ranked Core City and a further five where it is ranked second. This contrasts with only two measure where Sheffield is in the bottom two core cities.

When Sheffield is compared to its statistical neighbours (a list of eleven places that the government identifies as being similar to us) we are in the top five for thirteen measures (65%). On this list Sheffield is in the top three rankings for nine measures (45%) but only ranked in the bottom three in one measure.

Sheffield is in the top three core cities for 70% of measures and only in the bottom three for 15%. Amongst statistical neighbours Sheffield is in the top three for 45% and only in the bottom three for 5% of measures.

Whilst we should congratulate our education community on the outcomes of their hard work, we should also remain focussed on the areas for improvement. In many ways, our improved position makes it easier to see those areas that we need to improve in the future, as they now stand out more clearly.

We are doing well with our youngest children, with Sheffield first or second amongst the core cities for every measure in early years (Foundation Stage) and key stage one (Year 2). The weakest outcome in our data however is the Year 1 phonics test, where we are 4% points below the national average and ranked 140, and so this remains a focus for us.

**60% of Sheffield children achieved 'expected (national) standard' in reading, writing and maths at the end of KS2 (Y6) ...
1% point below national and ranked 3rd of core cities.**

70% of Sheffield Foundation Stage children achieved a 'good level of development' ... 1% point below national and ranked 2nd of core cities.

Outcomes at the end of the primary phases in Key Stage 2 (Year 6) have continued to improve, with progress measures in all subjects above national average but attainment tending to be just below national. The second weakest measure for Sheffield is the Y6 SATs test in Grammar Punctuation and Spelling, which is the other outcome that places Sheffield in the bottom quarter of LAs (ranked 129).

Whilst we are discussing our priorities, we are also focussed on reading across the primary school age range. Sheffield is much improved in these measures (ranked first and third amongst core cities) but we still recognise that it is the weakest of our core subjects in key stages one and two (likely to be 2% points below national in both).

In the secondary phase Sheffield can again be proud of the progress that pupils make. The Local Authority ranking for the KS4 (GCSE) Progress 8 measure is 56, which is in the top half of LAs nationally. We are second amongst the core cities for this headline measure, which was above the national average for the second consecutive year.

Sheffield's 'Progress 8' score was +0.01 ... this is above national and ranked 2nd of core cities.

The KS4 (GCSE) Attainment 8 outcome was also above national for the first time and Sheffield was in the top three core cities for four out of the five measures in Key Stage 4 (GCSE) and Key Stage 5 (A-level).

Our area for improvement in secondary comes when we look at the progress of specific pupil groups. Sheffield, in common with most places, is not seeing gaps closing fast enough for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities). Attainment and progress of white British disadvantaged pupils is a particular concern for us across the education system, as it is nationally.

So, in conclusion, much to be proud of and some clear areas to improve. I read in the local press that Sheffield is 'punching above its weight' in education and this seems to be a fair conclusion with regards to the 2017 performance data. Well done to all of our children and young people, their families, teachers, school leaders and everyone else who supports their learning.

Stephen Betts (November 2017)

How can I find out more about Learn Sheffield?

Please contact us to find out more. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Learn
Sheffield

Learn Sheffield is a not for profit company limited by guarantee, of which 80% is owned by schools and colleges and 20% by Sheffield City Council.