Worcestershire Education and Skills Strategy

Apendix for Strategy

2019-24

worcestershire county council

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Objective 1 Highly motivated, well performing and ambitious education providers

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

Pupils are assessed against 17 early learning goals (ELGs) at the end of reception to determine whether they are developing at the expected standard. A pupil is deemed to have achieved a good level of development (GLD) if he or she has achieved at least the expected standard in 12 ELGs which fall under: communication, physical development, personal, social and emotional, literacy and maths.

Performance in Worcestershire 2018 has improved again with 71.2% of pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of reception. This represents an increase of almost 1.6% compared to 2017 but we remain slightly below the national level.

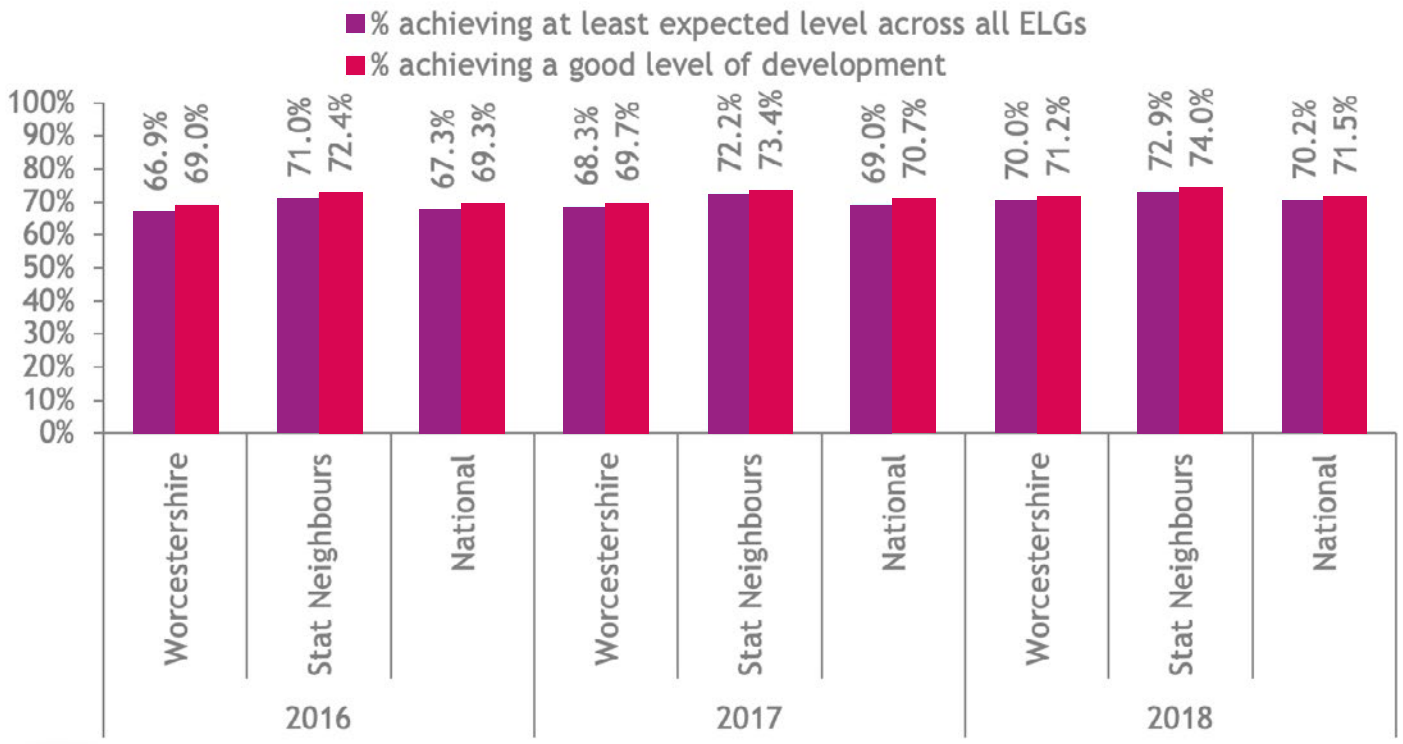

Figure 1 Percentage of Pupils achieving at least the Expected level across all ELGs & Good Level of Development in 2018.

- In 2018, 82.4% of all year 1 pupils in schools across the authority were working at the expected standard, an improvement of 1.6% from 2017.
- In 2018, 91.8% of year 2 pupils in Worcestershire had reached the expected standard during either year 1 or year 2, an improvement of 1.2% from 2017 and is close to the national average.

Key Stage 1

- The percentage of children in Worcestershire to have reached the expected standard in reading at the end of KS1 was 1.7% lower in 2018 than in 2017. Despite this, the proportion to have reached the expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths has increased by 0.9% since last year.
- Writing appears to be our strongest subject relative to the national average, with children 0.8% more likely to have reached the expected standard than their peers in other parts of the country.
- As in previous years, pupils in Worcestershire is less likely than those in our statistical neighbour authorities to have reached the expected standard.

Key Stage 2

- In 2018, 61.0% of children achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at the end of KS2, an increase of 4.0% compared to 2017 but remains below the national average.
- In 2018, there the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths, in both the 2 tier and 3 tier systems, has improved. There has been a 1.6% percentage point increase in 2 tier schools (from 61.9% in 2017 to 63.5% in 2018). 3 tier schools has seen an increase of 6.0% point increase from 2017 (54.3% to 60.3%) but still remains lower than in the county's mainstream primary schools.

Key Stage 4 (GCSE)

- The percentage of students gaining standard/strong passes in English and maths in Worcestershire fell in 2018, from 65.5% to 64.8% achieving a standard and from 44.1% to 42.5% achieving a strong pass.
- However, attainment 8 increased in the county from 46.42 to 46.52, suggesting pupils may have achieved slightly higher grades than last year in other qualifications. This indicates that their pupils are averaging between high level 4 and low level 5 across their 8 qualifications.

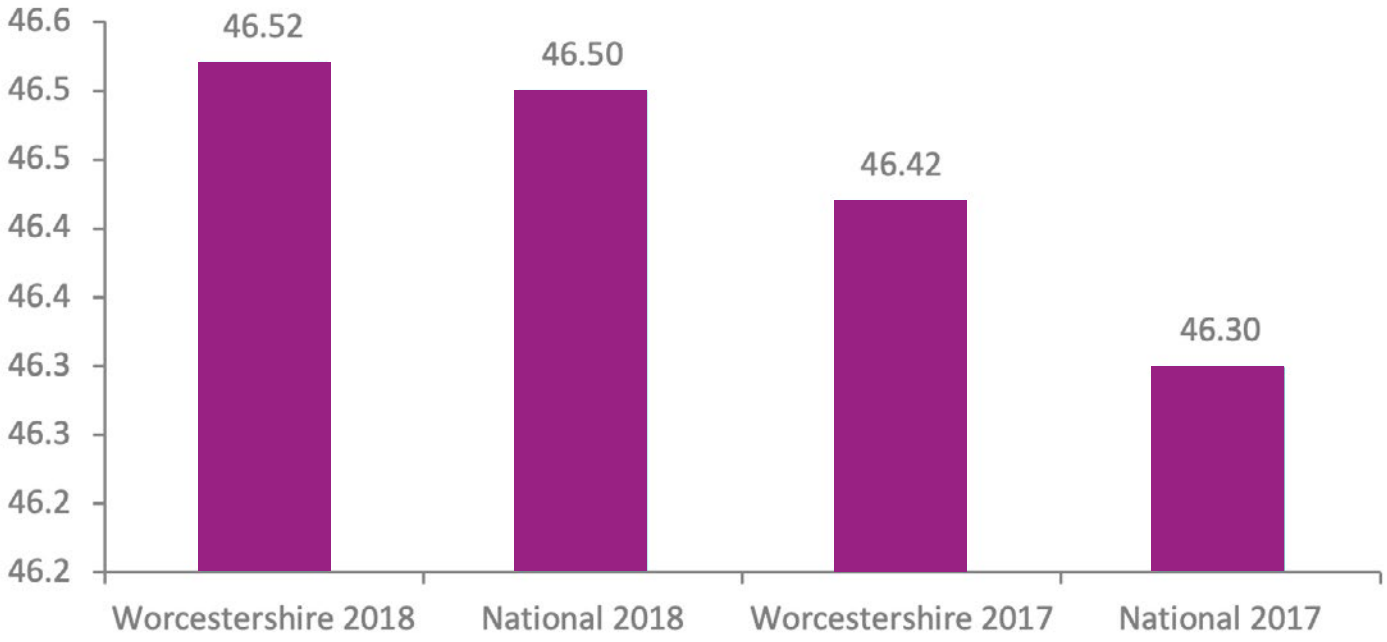

Figure 2 Average Attainment 8 Scores

Key Stage 5

- Approximately 1200 students sat A-levels within Worcestershire in 2018. The average A-level grade in Worcestershire was between a B and a C. This represents a slight improvement from 2017 when the average grade was a C.

Differences in Attainment: BAME students and disadvantaged students

Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students:

In 2018 8% of students in Worcestershire at the end of Key Stage 2 were identified as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), which is significantly less than the national average of 27%. At the end of Key Stage 2, the expected level of development in reading, writing and maths were quite similar, with 62% of BME students reaching expectations, compared to 61% for non-BME students1. These figures compare unfavourably to national levels, with 68& of BME students and 65% of non-BME achieving expected levels of development in reading writing and maths.

1 Pupils who are white or whose ethnicity is unknown

In Key Stage 4, the proportion of the total cohort with BME status is 8%, compared to 23% nationally. At the end of Key Stage 4, the attainment 8 score for BME students in Worcestershire was 47.5, compared to 46.4 for non-BME students in Worcestershire. The national figures for BME students are 48.5 and 46.0 for non-BME students.

In Worcestershire, both groups of students made above average progress between the end of KS2 and the end of KS4. Non BME students in the county performed slightly better than others nationally with similar prior attainment whilst Worcestershire's BME students averaged almost two fifths of a grade higher than those with similar starting points.

Nationally, BME students made above average progress throughout their time in secondary school whilst those who were white or of unknown ethnic origin averaged approximately one tenth of a grade lower than other with similar KS2 performance.

This means that in Worcestershire, we are performing below the national average for BME and non-BME students at Key Stage 2. However, at Key Stage 4 we are performing above average for non-BME students but performing below the average for BME students.

Disadvantaged pupils: differences in attainment:

- in 2018 31% of pupils at the end of KS2 (year 6) nationally were classed as disadvantaged (i.e. they had been in care or eligible for free school meals at some point). In the case of Worcestershire this was 25%, meaning the level of disadvantage among year 6 pupils was lower in the county than it was nationally;
- 51% of disadvantaged and 70% of non-disadvantaged pupils in England achieved the expected standard in all 3 subjects (reading, writing and maths) at the end of KS2. This equates to 64% overall;
- the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in Worcestershire was 27% (68% minus 41%) compared to the gap of 19% nationally;
- 27% of pupils at the end of KS4 (year 11) nationally were classed as disadvantaged. In the case of Worcestershire this was 21%, meaning the level of disadvantage among year 11 pupils was lower in the county than nationally;
- the overall attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils in Worcestershire was 34.2, averaging between grades 3 and 4. This compares to an average of 49.7 (approximately grade 5) for non-disadvantaged pupils in the county;
- nationally, attainment 8 among disadvantaged pupils was 36.7 compared to 50.1 among their non-disadvantaged peers. In Worcestershire, disadvantaged pupils averaged over a grade and a half less than others on the county;
- disadvantaged pupils in Worcestershire achieved, on average, almost half a grade lower than other with the same prior attainment. The county's non-disadvantaged pupils achieved, on average, a fifth of a grade higher than others with similar performance at the end of KS2; and
- at both KS2 and KS4 levels, Worcestershire has a lower level of pupils from a deprived background and their progress is below the national average.

Objective 2: A curriculum approach which inspires

Changes to the Ofsted framework

Our ambition to deliver a curriculum approach that inspires, is mirrored in the direction Ofsted has taken under the leadership of Amanda Spielman.

Under the new framework:

- Ofsted inspections can take place from 5 days after the first day pupils attend that term;
- the 'short inspection' period is to be extended to 2 days; and
- Ofsted can now arrive within 2.5 hours of a morning phone call.

Quality assessment – the three I's:

- intent: emphasis on the curriculum and the aspirations schools have for children and young people. Ofsted will judge schools according to suitable coverage, content, and the structure and order of a curriculum and to what extent it is being effectively implemented;
- implementation: emphasis on teaching practice and how leadership supports this. Ofsted will judge schools' implementation of the curriculum through evidence provided, observation and interviews with students and staff, inspection of student's work and reviewing school plans; and
- impact: emphasis on learners developing detailed curriculum-wide knowledge and skills and how these are reflected in successful outcomes, such as progressing onto destinations which reflect their interests, aspirations and the intention of their course of study. A combination of first-hand evidence and national performance data will be used in assessing schools.

Behaviour and Attitudes:

- Ofsted inspections will be paying attention to positive attitudes, and committed and resilient learners who take pride in their achievements;
- there will be added focus on bullying and discrimination; and
- a combination of discussions with pupils and interviews with staff, the utilisation of information from student and staff surveys, and observations, will be used by inspectors in making their assessment.

Personal Development:

- there is a new focus on character development, mental and physical health and British values. In addition, there is an emphasis on the significance of learners discovering their own interests and talents in becoming self-motivated learners; and
- inspectors will be judging schools by considering the development of learner's character, the quality of debates and discussions in classes, how learners understand how equality and diversity are valued and promoted, how British values are promoted, and the quality and popularity of extra-curricular activities.

Objective 3: More education places in good or outstanding provision

According to ONS trend-based projections, the numbers of people in the county aged 0-17 is projected to increase by 3.1% in the next five years, and by 3.6% in the next ten years. The total population is projected to increase more uniformly, by 2.5% and 4.6 % over the same time periods.

As of September 2019, there are 227 mainstream schools in the County (Local Authority and Academy schools combined). 115 operate as a 2-tier system (Mainstream Primary and Secondary) and 111 as a 3-tier system (First, Middle and High). In addition to the Mainstream schools, there are 9 Special Schools, 4 Pupil Referral Units and 2 Alternative Provision settings and 1 Nursery School. Overall, 59% of pupils are taught in an academy, compared to 41% taught in a maintained school.

For the Early Years sector there are 408 settings providing funded places for children age 2, 3 and 4 plus 60 Maintained Nurseries attached to Mainstream and Special Schools. (Source: Early Years Census 2019 and January 2019 School Census).

According to the October School Census, 2018, there were 80,215 attending school in Worcestershire, of which 78,381 are in mainstream schools, 1,491 in special school, 104 in Pupil Referral Units, 138 in Alternative Provision, and 101 in Nursery school. 64% of pupils in a Worcestershire school were living in the catchment area and 4.8% of pupils are from out of county.

In terms of education quality, 85.6% of pupils are in a Good or Outstanding school overall. Of this figure, 85.3% of children and young people attending good our outstanding mainstream provision. For pupils in Alternative Provision or attending for Special Schools, 100% had places with good or outstanding providers. Finally, for Pupil Referral Units, 64.4% of children and young people are in good or outstanding provision.

Early Years

Education provision for early years children is delivered in partnership with health and social services and commissioned partners. Worcestershire Country Council has responsibility for the sufficiency of places and work in collaboration with partners to deliver support for young children.

There are Approximately 15,000 families living in Worcestershire with children aged between 2 and 4. Meeting the needs of these families, are 1331 providers in Worcestershire that offer childcare for 2,3- and 4-year olds, 430 of which offer funded early years education places to 2-year olds, and 550 offer funded early education places to three- and four-year olds.

In the 2017/18 school year:

- 95% of providers offering funded hours are good or outstanding, or are new providers awaiting inspection;
- around 90% of families in Worcestershire use some form of formal childcare. 38% had additional support from friends or family. 4% of respondents relied solely on friends and family for their childcare needs, with a remaining 6% of families who aren't using any childcare;
- use of formal childcare highest among families with three (97%) and four (95%) year olds;
- 94%2 of parents in Worcestershire with children aged two, three or four used formal or informal childcare in summer term 2018, compared to the national average of 89% for three- and four-year olds;
- more than 80% of parents using childcare did so to return to work;
- a common influence for mothers when returning to work is finding a job which enables them to combine work and childcare[3];
- 96% of respondents lived in households where at least one parent was working, studying or training;

2 **http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/10406/appendix_1_parental_survey_summer_2018_results.pdf**

3 **Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents in England, 2017**

- almost 80% of respondents indicated both themselves and their partner worked, or that they worked and were solely responsible for their child or children;
- work patterns may result in barriers to accessing childcare, particularly in cases where both parents are working;
- in over half of working families, at least one parent worked unpredictable, flexible, unsociable, seasonal, or shift work, increasing the likelihood of experiencing barriers to accessing childcare;
- since 2010-11 there has been a rise in the proportion of families across England using formal childcare (from 63% to 66%[4]); and
- in 2018, 65% of 2 year olds benefitted from funded early education (72% national average).

School places

Children entering reception classes in Worcestershire primary schools rose by 5% in the period 2013-17, peaking in 2016 at 8%. At this point there were an additional 487 reception pupils or 16.2 FE (forms of entry based on 30 pupils per form of entry) compared with October 2013. As outlined in WCC's School Organisation Plan 2019-2024[5], numbers entering reception are forecast to decline by -7.4%. This equals 473 fewer reception pupils (15.7 FE) across the County compared with October 2017.

Numbers entering Year 7 also rose in the last five years by 11.6%. County forecasts indicate entry into primary school peaked in September 2016. Known births indicate this number will decline up to 2021 but demand will be increased by housing growth and demographic movement. High admissions currently in the first and primary school systems are due to enter middle schools in 2021 and high schools in 2023 and 2025 respectively. During the lifetime of this strategy, numbers are forecast to continue to increase and will peak in 2023 with an additional 11.9%. This means an additional 702 pupils at Year 7 or 23.4 FE across the County.

Alongside this demographic growth, large scale housing developments are expected up to 2030 and beyond. This will put increased pressure on places across all phases and will be carefully monitored. Forecasts for reception children in Worcestershire, including current housing trajectories, see numbers decline 2.8% by 2021. Year 7 numbers, including housing, rise by almost 20% with an additional 1,154 Year 7 (38.5 FE) students across the County.

This will result in the need for the creation of additional capacity in existing schools and the creation of new schools in Worcestershire which will be monitored by the team and reported annually to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills.

Place planning is complicated in Worcestershire by the presence of both two tier and three tier education systems.

The number of primary age children in Worcestershire significantly changed in recent years

2017/18 primary numbers peaked in most areas.

There has been expansion in Primary and First Schools in recent years, with further expansions forthcoming to ensure sufficient Key Stage 1 and 2 places.

Urban areas have experienced the most growth, with Worcester City, Bromsgrove, Evesham, Kidderminster and Redditch, under increased pressure.

- 2013-17: 5% rise in reception starters, down from 2016 peak of 8%. Forecast to fall 7.4% over 2019-2024 (473 fewer students), notwithstanding prospective housing developments.
- 116,050 children and young people under 18 live in Worcestershire – roughly 20% of the total population.
- 3,866 school places have been created since 2009/10 and 2016/17.

4 Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents in England, 2017

5**http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/10780/worcestershire_county_council_school_organisation_plan_2019.pdf**

- proportion of applicants who received an offer of one of their top three preferences for September 2017 entry: England 97.2%, Worcestershire. 97.6%:
  - 1st choice: 91.6%;
  - 2nd choice: 4.9%;
  - 3rd choice: 1%; and
- proportion of new places created in good and outstanding schools: England, 91% Worcestershire, 85%.

Post 16

Worcestershire's ambition is to ensure all learners receive outstanding teaching, learning and skills in high quality, safe learning spaces. Worcestershire promotes the interests of young people working with local communities to stimulate and support a diversity of 16-19 provision that meets local needs. We aim to provide access and support to ensure participation in good quality education or training of young people, including securing provision for young people aged 16-19 (or 25 for those with learning difficulties/disabilities) to meet the economic need of the area.

- In Worcestershire there are 31 mainstream publically funded secondary schools offering secondary education provision. 78% are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted. Of these 31 secondary schools, 25 deliver Post 16 sixth form provision. In addition to school sixth form provision, the county is supported with 6 colleges, including a sixth form college.
- Secondary school pupil numbers have steadily increased in the past 4 years in line with anticipated higher numbers feeding through from Primary and middle school provision. This trend is set to continue for the foreseeable future peeking in 2026.
- It is anticipated that further growth from planned housing developments will impact on pupil numbers.
- Growth in secondary pupil numbers is expected to impact sixth form requirements. Sixth form stay-on rates have fluctuated between 38.28% and 44.94% across the county over the past 5 years giving an average stay on rate of 41.52%. Transfer rates are significantly higher at some of the more popular sixth forms, rising to 106%. Over the next 9 years the number of pupils in Year 11 is forecast to increase by 15% from 5,552 to 6,427. It is anticipated that there will be a similar percentage level of increase in Post 16 provision.
- Current forecasts indicate that there is sufficient capacity within the system to accommodate forecast increases in sixth form pupil numbers from demographic growth.

What do we predict?

- Large housing developments over the next 10 years are expected to significantly increase numbers of families with school age and post 16 children in urban areas. Smaller developments have potential to increase village demand by large percentages.
- Further large housing developments expected to 2030 and beyond, raising pressure on places across all phases. There are an increasing number of families moving into urban areas, supported by housing growth.
- All districts, with the exception of Redditch, are forecast to increase in population size, which will increase demand for school places across all ranges and types of provision.
- 2019: secondary school demand will increase due to peak years at primary school beginning to transition.
- Secondary school numbers to peak in 2023-2025 period.
- Year 7 numbers (including housing developments) are forecast to rise by 19.5% (1154 additional pupils) by 2023.
- Additional provision at primary and secondary level will be required to respond to housing developments.
- Housing development is set to yield a further 382 pupils in sixth form provision across Worcestershire with further impact on college and sixth form college provision.
- A significant challenge for the Council moving forwards is managing the impact of changes in school age ranges.

- Forecast pupil numbers 2019/20 Primary Schools: 45,913 (16% increase since 2010) Secondary Schools: 30,622 (4% increase since 2010).
- Capacity at May 2017: Primary - 47,416 Secondary – 37,565.
- 815 new places planned for delivery by 2019/20.
- 470 additional places estimated to meet demand in 2019/20.
- We predict to have 5.8% of places spare in 2019/20.

SEND provision

Predicting the number of new SEND places across Worcestershire is a challenge due to demographic growth, new house building, parental preference and historic trends when placing children and young people. In order to anticipate sufficiency for SEND places, a review of numbers of children with SEND in Worcestershire and pupils in specialist education provision was made as at January 2018.

- The number of children and young people with an EHCP has increased; this has been at a greater level than demographic growth which has resulted in a marginal increase in the SEND to mainstream ratio. This may be indicative of the changes brought about by the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and changes in assessment however, with current and significant housing growth forecast across Worcestershire, if the current levels of referrals remain there is likely to be significant pressure on existing SEND infrastructure. SEND forecasts indicate a requirement for additional provision based on previous year and current in-year trends.
- Conversion rates from the previous SEND system of Statements to EHCPs have coincided with an increase in the number of pupils since 2015.
- Referral to Early Years Pre-School Forum has increased by 55% in the past 10 years placing increased pressure on existing provision without any significant capital expenditure.
- As at January 2018 there were 235 Out of County placements. This represents 14.7% of the current number of pupils in SEND provision.
- Indications from current level of placements in SEND schools forecast a requirement for an additional 142 pupil places by 2022. This demand will partially be met by capital schemes in progress or scheduled for completion by September 2019.
- By 2022 housing growth across the county is predicted to provide an additional 14,302 homes requiring an additional 105 SEND pupil places across Special Schools and Alternative Provision.

Number on roll

The Worcestershire figures for children and young people with SEND, as a percentage of the population, are consistent with both regional and national figures. At primary level, 14% of the school population has SEND. This is in comparison with 14.1% regionally and 13.5% nationally. At secondary level, 13% of the school population has SEND; this is in comparison with 13.3% regionally and 12.4% nationally.

Since 2009, there has been an increase of 1,639 pupils in Primary and 1,034 pupils in Secondary, with a noticeable increase between 2014 and 2015 at both primary and secondary stages of education and again between 2015 and 2016 in the primary stage of education, the likely cause is due to the SEN Reforms; pupils who were formally School Action were transferred to SEN Support and provided with a primary type of need.

Early Years SEND

The 2015 SEND Code of Practice puts emphasis on the importance of early identification of SEND. In Worcestershire, the pre-school forum is a body of professionals that meet to ensure there is a mechanism for early identification of pre-school children that may require early intervention and support.

- The number of Early Years SEND referrals has increased by 55% over the past 10 years. Currently the greatest level of referrals is in South Worcestershire followed by North Worcestershire and Wyre Forest.

SEND Schools

The largest primary need in all Worcestershire Special Schools is Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD), with 327 children identified, followed by Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) with 209, and Autistic Syndrome Disorder (ASD) with 174. This is consistent with the previous year's findings.

The largest primary need in Worcestershire Special Schools (Primary age range) is also SLD with 155, followed by Other Difficulty/Disability (OTH) with 116 and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) with 93.

The largest primary need in Worcestershire Special Schools (Secondary age range) is SLD (172) followed by MLD (168) and SEMH (111).

Of the 9 SEND Schools in Worcestershire, Chadsgrove School (age range 2 – 19) is designated as a Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD) School, Kingfisher School (age range 7 -16) and Riversides School (age range 7 - 16) are designated as SEMH schools, all other schools are generic SEND Schools.

The largest numbers of pupils broken down by district live in Worcester City followed closely by Wyre Forest and Wychavon and then Redditch, with lower numbers living in Bromsgrove and Malvern. Malvern is the only district without a generic special school base; 126 pupils from Malvern attend one of the 9 Special Schools.

Pupils on roll in a mainstream school identified with additional needs

In addition to those pupils residing within Worcestershire, there are also pupils attending Worcestershire schools who live outside of Worcestershire. 4.08 % of pupils aged 4+ – 19+ on roll at Worcestershire SEND Schools live outside of Worcestershire. The home county of pupils living outside of Worcestershire includes but is not limited to Birmingham, Dudley, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Sandwell, Shropshire, Solihull, Staffordshire and Warwickshire. Less than 1% comes from other authorities.

Objective 4: Building skills for our future workforce

Schools in Worcestershire face difficult challenges in terms of the relatively low amount of funding received per pupil, compared to many other local authority areas. This has impacted school's capacity to fund Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and work experience support. Moreover, most businesses in the county are 'micro-businesses' employing fewer than 9 staff and can struggle to allocate enough resources to develop links with local education providers.

Worcestershire has specific workforce challenges going forward:

- declining working age population;
- low level of Employment growth;
- slower economic growth in the county compared to nationally;
- skills deficits between business needs and workforce capabilities;
- limited but growing recruitment opportunities;
- limited opportunities for young people through apprenticeships and graduate-level vacancies;
- businesses confidence levels in recruiting new entrants straight from education into workforce; AND
- a need to focus on succession planning within business.

Introduction of T Levels qualification

T Levels are new 2-year courses commencing in the academic year 2020-2021, which will follow GCSEs and be equivalent to 3 A Levels. T Levels will combine classroom theory, practical learning and a minimum of 45 days' industry placement, enabling students gain practical work experience in the workplace.

T Levels are intended to become the main choice for post 16 learners, alongside:

- apprenticeships for students who wish to learn a specific occupation 'on the job'; AND
- a levels for students who wish to continue academic education.

Results from our 2018 Business Viewpoint Survey.

The Worcestershire County Council commissions the Worcester Business Viewpoint Survey to determine the business needs for the county. The following is based on the findings of 2018's survey, which have informed strategic planning:

Skills Gaps

- 71% of businesses did not report any skills gaps in their organisation (76% in 2016);
- 29% reported a skills gap, of which IT skills (40%), job specific skills (26%) and technical skills (20%), were the most common;
- IT rated the main skill deficit (40%), with retail being the main sector with IT skills gaps;
- micro sized businesses (64%) had the fewest skills gaps;
- Malvern Hills (58%) sector identified with the most skills gaps;
- the education sector reported no skills gaps;
- 8 out of 10 businesses do not anticipate skills gaps as an issue when recruiting;
- 81% of businesses did not experience skills gaps when recruiting applicants straight from education;
- almost 9 out of 10 businesses don't employ an apprentice. 23% of businesses did not recruit an apprentice because of issues of apprenticeship suitability for their business, while 22% of businesses stated they did not recruit an apprentice because they were not aware of a suitable apprenticeship framework; and

- 'financial' (31%) and 'support with administration duties' (29%) were stated as the main areas of help that would encourage businesses to consider taking on an apprentice.

Skills deficits experienced when recruiting directly from education

- 81% of businesses do not experience any skills deficits when recruiting directly from education.
- Of businesses experiencing skills deficits, the top three skills lacking from entrants were: job specific skills at 48%, technical skills at 38%, and, other skills at 34%.
- Manufacturing (59%) and construction (58%) anticipate the most significant skills gaps when recruiting directly from education.
- 42% of medium sized businesses believe they would not have a skills gap when recruiting directly from education in 2019.
- 17% of medium sized businesses believe there would be skills deficits when recruiting directly from education.

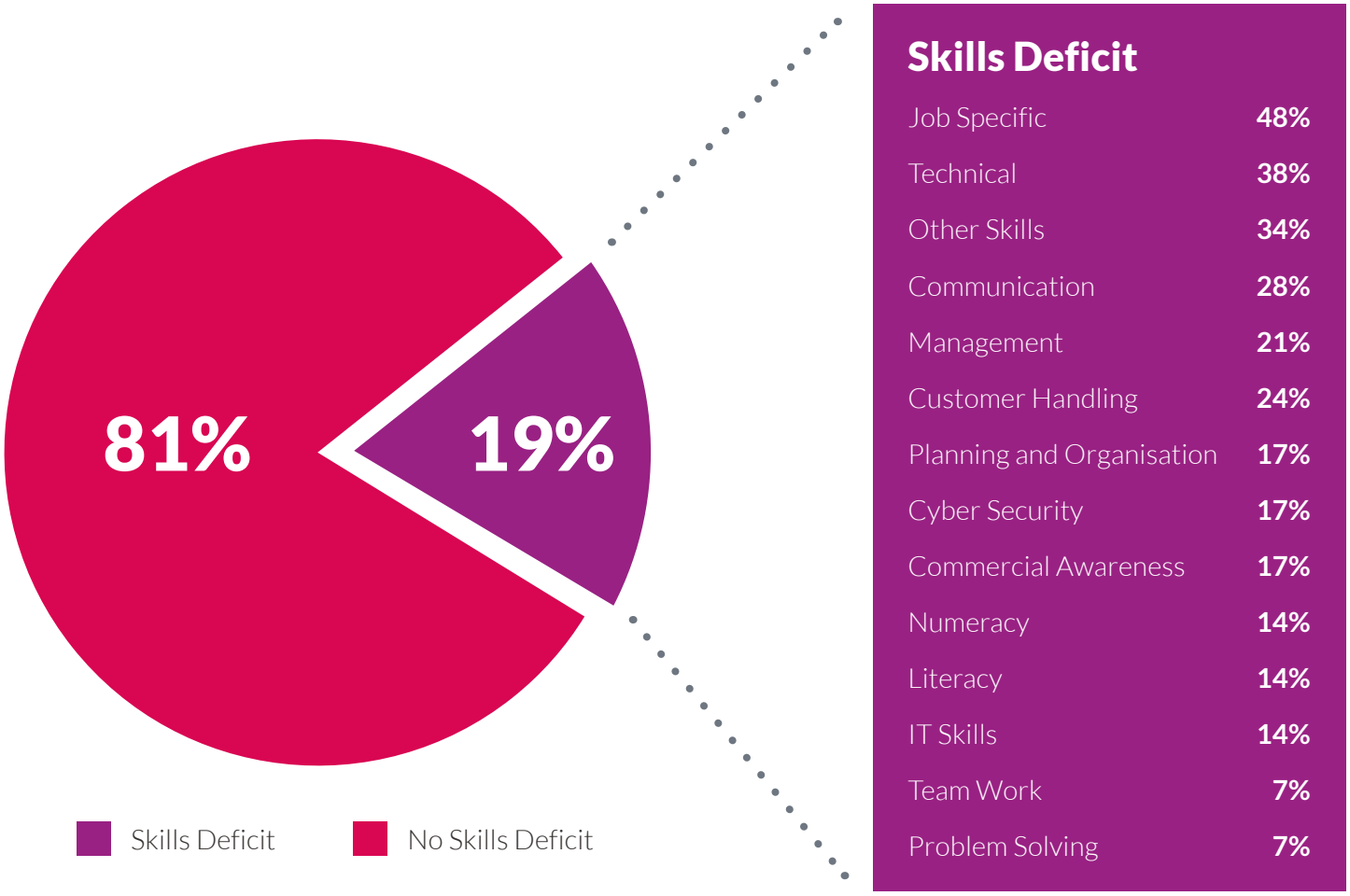

Figure 11: Skills deficits experienced when recruiting direct from education

Skills deficits anticipated when recruiting

- 71% of businesses in 2018 believed they have a skills deficit (76% in 2016).
- IT rated the main skill deficit (40%), with retail being the main sector with IT skills gaps.
- Micro sized businesses (64%) had the fewest skills gaps, (however, a significant change from 79% in 2016) Malvern Hills (58%) was the area with the most skills gaps.
- 8 out of 10 businesses do not anticipate skills gaps as an issue when recruiting (82% in 2016).
- Job specific skills remain a primary issue, as in 2015 and 2016. Cyber security has seen a rise from 8% in 2016 to 13% in 2018. Bromsgrove (56%) is the district with the least amount of confidence of recruiting applicants with no skills gaps.
- 81% of businesses did not experience skills gaps when recruiting applicants straight from education.
- Almost 9 out of 10 businesses don't employ an apprentice. 23% of businesses did not recruit an apprentice because of issues of apprenticeship suitability for their business, while 22% of businesses stated they did not recruit an apprentice because they were not aware of a suitable apprenticeship framework.
- 'Financial' (31%) and 'support with administration duties' (29%) were stated as the main areas of help that would encourage businesses to consider taking on an apprentice.
- 64% of Micro businesses reported fewest skills gaps (down from 76% in 2016).
- IT skills (1 in 3) identified as main skills deficit for small businesses (in 2016 the highest skills deficit was job specific skills – 14%).
- 14% of businesses in Bromsgrove reported a lack of IT skills (same figure as 2016).
- 79% of Wyre Forest businesses reported no skills deficits.
- Malvern Hills (58%) reported highest skills shortages, closely followed by Bromsgrove (52%).

Apprenticeships

- 87% of businesses in Worcestershire do not currently employ an apprenticeship.
- Large sized businesses (100%), followed by small sized businesses (38%) stated that they employed an apprentice. 7% of micro businesses said they employed an apprentice.
- Wychavon businesses (18%) employed the most apprentices. Malvern Hills (6%) employed the fewest number of apprentices.
- 23% of businesses did not believe an apprentice would be suitable for their business and didn't need one.
- 22% of businesses were not aware of a suitable apprenticeship framework for their type of business and lacked the knowledge in who to speak with.
- 3 out of 10 businesses suggested financial help (e.g. grants) and support with administration duties would encourage them to take on an apprentice.

What do we predict?

- 21% of businesses expect increases in workforce size, (up from 17% in 2016).
- Micro sized businesses (13%) stated their workforce size would remain the same.
- 2 in 3 medium sized businesses anticipate their workforce size increasing.
- Businesses located in Malvern Hills and Redditch (both 30%) felt their workforce size would increase.
- 21% expect their workforce to increase (17% in 2016).
- Ffinancial & insurance (100%) and Agriculture, forestry & fishing (87%) were unlikely to alter the size of their workforce.

- Manufacturing (47%) and Health (42%) were the most likely to increase their workforce size.
- Small (46%) and medium (66%) sized businesses are most likely to increase workforce size, but micro sized businesses are less likely (13%).
- 30% of businesses surveyed in both Malvern Hills and Redditch expect to increase their workforce size, but only 10% in Wyre Forest expect to do so.
- The Education sector states no current skills deficits.
- Wholesale and Accommodation & Food services had least confidence when recruiting: 50% of businesses from both sectors, anticipated skills deficits when recruiting.
- 76% of micro-businesses do not anticipate a skills deficit when recruiting (down from 86% in 2016).
- 5 of 6 medium sized businesses anticipate a skills gap when recruiting.
- Job-specific skills are the most anticipated skill gap at 9%, particularly effecting micro businesses in recruitment.
- 86% of Wyre Forest businesses anticipate no skills deficits when recruiting (87% in 2016). Bromsgrove (56%) has the least confidence in recruitment, (down from 76% in 2016).
- 93% of businesses in Wyre Forest do not anticipate any skills gaps when recruiting directly from education.
- 63% of Businesses in Bromsgrove do not anticipate skills gaps when recruiting directly from education – lowest in county and down from 76% in 2016. Job specific skills is the most common anticipated skills gap.

Objective 5: Improved capacity, skills and knowledge surrounding our vulnerable learners

Vulnerable learners

There is a significant national focus on the differences in attainment of vulnerable learners compared to other learners. Vulnerable learners include:

- children Missing Education;
- children Looked After by the Local Authority;
- previous Looked After Children;
- receiving support/intervention from Social Care Services (CIN & CP);
- in receipt of Free School Meals;
- not receiving their full educational entitlement because of specific medical conditions;
- recognised as having Special Educational Needs or Disabilities;
- children of Service Personnel;
- young carers;
- receiving intervention from the Youth Offending Team; and
- children of Ethnic Minority Groups.

- The number of looked after children in Worcestershire has increased slightly year on year, from 688 in 2015, to 793 in 2018. Of the 793 in 2018, 278 became looked after during that year.
- The number of children with a Child Protection Plan in 2018 in Worcestershire was 424, which is lower than in 2016 and 2017, where it was 473 and 517 respectively.
- The number of Children Missing Education (CME) investigations year on year are increasing, particularly since 2016/17:
  - there was a total of 583 new CME referrals in 2017/18. Of the total 684 referrals known to the LA, 204 were identified as CME; and
  - between September 2018 and April 2019, a total of 1154 CME cases have been referred to the LA and 843 cases have been closed. 311 remain open with 268 under enquiry and 43 children registered as missing education.
- In 2018, a significant number (43.8%) of children in need in Worcestershire have been classified as in need for two years or more. This is considerably higher than the national average (30.6%) and West Midlands' average (33.2%).
  - of the total figure for children in need, 46.9% ceased to be classified as in need within three months, which is higher than the national average (45.5%); and
  - of those children in need, almost a quarter (23.6%) were in possession of an EHCP/SEN statement in 2017, and 48.4% were eligible for Free School Meals.
- 10.8% of primary pupils and 9% of secondary pupils were claiming free school meals in 2018.
- 9% of primary school pupils and 6.4% of secondary school pupils in Worcestershire possessed a first language other than English, which is lower than the national average of 21.2% for primary schools and 16.6% for secondary schools in 2018.

- 81% of care leavers found suitable accommodation in 2018, which is up from 72% 2017 but below national average of 84%:
  - in 2018, 42% of care leavers were NEET, down by 3% on 2017, but above the national average of 39%;
  - 4% of care leavers in Worcestershire entered higher education in 2018, which is below the national average of 6%; and
  - in 2018, 48% of care leavers in Worcestershire were in employment, education or training.

SEND

Early Years

- Between 2015 and 2018 there were approximately 10% of three- and four-year olds accessing funded childcare who had a special educational need or disability.
- Parents and carers with children aged 2-4 with a special educational need or disability were more likely to rely on formal childcare.
- For parents of children with SEND, finding a provider able to meet their child's needs is essential. Almost two thirds of parents consider this of primary importance and almost 95% consider this one of their top three considerations when choosing a provider.
- 1 in 5 children with SEND accessed funded childcare at a specialist provider. 70% of these children also accessed funded childcare in a mainstream setting.
- Most children with a special educational need or disability are accessing funded childcare solely within a mainstream setting.
- Almost a half of respondents whose child has a special educational need felt there was a barrier in accessing childcare that adequately met the needs of their child.
- However, over 40% indicated that they would not change their current childcare – the highest of any demographic. This suggests families of SEND children that found suitable childcare are happy with the quality, but there are challenges for families finding appropriate childcare.

Primary Schools:

- In January 2019, there were a total of 6,548 primary school pupils recorded as SEND[6].
- Worcestershire has slightly more primary pupils with SEND (15.3%) than regionally (14.4%) and nationally (14.2%), however, on average there are less pupils with SEN statements / EHC plans (1%) than in the West Midlands (1.3%) and nationally (1.6%).
- Worcestershire has higher Speech, Language and Communication needs (45.5%) than regionally (West Midlands 29.2%) and nationally (30.6%).
- There is a lower percentage of pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties (17.7%) compared to the West Midlands region (30.8%) and nationally (20.9%).
- There are lower ASD needs at 4.3%, compared to the region (6.6%) and nationally (7.9%).

Secondary Schools

- As of January 2019, there are a total of 4,435 secondary school pupils recorded as possessing SEND[7].
- There are 4,101 (11.5%) young people receiving some level of support.
- Worcestershire has slightly higher SLC needs (14%) than regionally (10.2%) and nationally (11.5%).
- There is a lower recorded level of Moderate Learning Difficulty (22.4%) than regionally (31.6%) but is consistent with the national rate (22%).

6 **https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/814246/SEN_2019_Local_Authority_tables.xlsx**
7 **https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/814246/SEN_2019_Local_Authority_tables.xlsx**

Special Schools

- There are higher SLC needs in special schools in Worcestershire (12%) than regionally (8.1%) and nationally (7.3%).
- Worcestershire has lower recorded levels for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues (9.4%) compared to the West Midlands regional (12%) and national (12.8%) averages.
- There are lower needs for children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in special schools (11.4%) than regionally (25.2%) and nationally (29.8%).
- Worcestershire has a significantly higher proportion of pupils with a visual impairment (4.5%) compared to both regional (0.7%) and national (1.3%) averages.
- There is a significantly higher proportion of pupils with a difficulty / disability classified as 'Other' in Worcestershire (10.3%) than both regional (2.8%) and national (1.7%) averages.

Post-16

- In 2017, 91.4% of 16-17-year olds with SEND were in education or training, which is slightly above the regional (88.6%) and national (88.53%) averages.
- In January 2019, of a total of 3,502 recorded pupils with EHC plans, 241 were aged 20-25 and 966 were aged 16-19.
- In 2018, 39% of 19-year olds with SEND but without a SEN statement / EHCP had a achieved a level 2 qualification and of 19-year olds with a statement / EHCP, 15% successfully achieved a level 2 qualification. This compares to 80% of 19-year olds without SEND who achieved a level 2 qualification.
- In 2018, 32.3% of 19-year olds with SEND without a SEN statement / EHCP achieved a level 3 qualification and of 19-year olds with a SEN statement / EHCP, 12.6% achieved a level 2 qualification. This compares to 65.4% of 19-year olds without SEND who achieved a level 3 qualification.

Objective 6. Improved Social Mobility for all Children and Young People

A significant issue for Worcestershire relates to social mobility and deprivation – particularly in Early Years. There is a correlation between deprivation and special educational needs, with children and young people from deprived backgrounds more likely to require additional support. Key to many of the measures are Free School Meal pupils. For example, the proportion of these in Wychavon schools was just over 9% in 2016/17 compared with 11% in Worcestershire. West Midlands' Local Authorities vary from 8.3% (Herefordshire) to 25.3% (Birmingham).

Key social mobility indicators[8]

- Mid-Worcestershire received an overall ranking of 522 (out of 533 constituencies). It ranked 513 for early years, 447 for school age pupils, 502 for youth and 248 adult social mobility.
- West Worcestershire received an overall ranking of 304. It ranked 270 for Early years, 317 for school age, 323 for youth, and 277 for adult social mobility.
- Worcester city received an overall Ranking of 363. It ranked 338 for early years, 327 for school age pupils, 453 for youth, and 173 for adult social mobility.
- Wyre Forest received an overall Ranking of 414. It ranked 286 for early years, 478 for school age pupils, 302 for youth, and 368 for adult social mobility.
- Worcester, Wychavon and Wyre Forest have all been identified as social mobility cold spots as part of the bottom 20% of LAs nationally.
- Bromsgrove is the best-performing district in the West Midlands, ranked 48 of 324 on the overall Social Mobility Index.
- Wychavon is the lowest performing local authority in the West Midlands and is ranked 310 of 324 on the overall Social Mobility Index.

8 The following figures have been taken from the House of Commons October 2018 Briefing Paper: Social Mobility Index by Constituency, England, available from **http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8400/CBP-8400.pdf,** and the Social Mobility Commission's State of the Nation 2017: Social Mobility in Great Britain, available from: **https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662744/State_of_the_Nation_2017_-_Social_Mobility_in_Great_Britain.pdf**

Objective 7. Training and the education workforce

- According to a recent survey of businesses we carried out in 2018, the education sector reported no current skills deficits. The following data is taken from the School Workforce Census, June 2019[9].
- There is a total of 3594 qualified teachers in the county.
- There are 4 full-time vacant posts in Worcestershire, with the percentage of schools in the region reporting a vacancy amounting to 1.7%.
- The percentage of schools in the region reporting either a vacancy or a temporarily filled post is 5.8%.
- The number of full-time temporarily filled Posts - 11.
- Percentage of schools in the region reporting either a vacancy or a temporarily filled post - 5.8%.
- Teachers with Qualified Teacher Status - 97.7%.
- Unqualified Teachers on a QTS Route as a Proportion of the Total Number of Unqualified Teachers - 25.4%.
- Total number of Teachers (Headcount) - 5128.
- Total number of classroom teachers (Headcount) - 4382.
- Total number of teaching assistants (Headcount) - 4583.
- Percentage of all teaching Staff who work part-time - 26.3%.
- Pupil/teacher ratio – 17.3.

9 **https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018**