



Pupils from low income families are more likely to be identified as having SEND, but at the same time, are less likely to receive support or effective interventions that might help to address their needs. Poverty is associated with different types of SEND to varying degrees, for example, physical difficulties and behavioural difficulties are particularly strongly associated with low socio-economic status. (One research study suggests that more than half of the pupils identified with these needs were living in poverty at 9 months.)

As figure 4 indicates, causality between these two factors flows in both directions, as SEND can play a role in causing or aggravating poverty, hence the critical imperative to meet the needs of these pupils. While there are some links between SEND and poverty that fall outside of the remit of education systems, there is much to be done within them that can make a marked difference to these young people's lives.

**The report focuses on ten key areas**, many of which are relevant to our context in Bracknell Forest:

- **Identification of SEND** is inconsistent, leading to over and under identification. Children are identified on the basis of their educational difficulties, but these can sometimes arise from other factors such as behaviour towards teachers or structural factors such as the home learning environment.
- In many areas of the county, parents find **navigating the system** difficult when attempting to find and access support for their children, despite recent policy changes aimed at improving this.
- **Changes to funding** have caused confusion for practitioners and parents.
- Not all pupils are able to access **high-quality early years provision**, which has a particularly positive effect for pupils with SEND and those living in poverty.
- Doubly disadvantaged pupils are less able to attend **high-quality state schools** than others. Some converter academies are less likely to admit children with SEND, which has exacerbated this issue.
- There is a need to **maintain and increase the quality of provision for children with SEND in school**, as examples of schools who offer high quality provision and support are isolated.
- **Parental engagement**. Settings must improve the way they communicate with parents so that they are better able to shape their children's support, and are able to help them with their learning at home.
- Double disadvantaged pupils are more likely than their peers to be isolated at school or excluded from mainstream settings, and become '**pushed-out**' learners. Greater support is needed within schools, particularly around **key transition points**.
- **Special schools** face particular challenges in recruitment and accountability.
- There is some evidence that ethnicity plays a part in the likelihood of being identified as SEND, particularly for at-risk groups of children such as those from **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** communities.

## The Bracknell Forest Context

To give an indication of the context in Bracknell Forest, the data below relates to last year's Year 6 cohort, which included 71 'double disadvantaged' pupils. This equates to 5.5% of the whole cohort, or almost two pupils per class of 30 (1.65 pupils).

### 2017 Year 6 cohort – contextual information compared to South East and National

	% of whole cohort who are disadvantaged	% of whole cohort who have SEND	% of whole cohort who are 'doubly disadvantaged'	% of disadvantaged pupils who have SEND
Bracknell Forest	21%	16%	5.5%	27%
South East	24%	16%	6.9%	29%
National	28%	15%	7.3%	25%

This data relates to a relatively small sample, and a greater analysis is required. However, it is evident that a slightly higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils have SEND compared to national. The low proportion of doubly disadvantaged pupils is likely to be due to our relatively low numbers of disadvantaged pupils.

Out of these 71 Year 6 pupils in 2017, only 34% attended a school that was judged to be good or better at its last inspection, whereas the figure for all pupils in Bracknell Forest (in all year groups) is 67%.

### Outcomes for double disadvantaged pupils in Bracknell Forest

#### KS2 2017

Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard at the end of Year 6:

	% Combined	% Reading	% Writing	% Maths
BFC Double disadvantaged (National)	11 (14)	35 (28)	20 (25)	27 (30)
BFC SEND	15	35	24	37
BFC Disadvantaged	38	55	55	54
BFC Non-disadvantaged	62	75	77	75

Outcomes for double disadvantaged pupils are above national for reading, but below national in writing and mathematics.

KS4 2017

	Progress 8 Score	Attainment 8 Score	% 9-5 in English and maths
BFC Double disadvantaged* (National)	-1 (-1.1)	21 (20)	7 (6)
BFC SEND	-0.54	27	9
BFC Disadvantaged	-0.5	36	22
BFC Non-disadvantaged	0	49	48

Outcomes for double disadvantaged pupils in Bracknell are very slightly above the same group nationally, but as in other parts of the country, the gap between these pupils and their peers is very wide against all measures.

\*Based on 44 pupils.

### **The current approach within Learning and Achievement**

As acknowledged in the Joseph Rowntree report, this is a complex and problematic issue for which there is not one simple 'silver bullet'. The current actions in place to meet the needs of this group of pupils sit across different services within Children, Young People and Learning, and are driven forward through the **Learning Improvement Strategy: 'Unlocking opportunities for all children.'**

All six of the key themes include a focus targeted at transforming outcomes for this vulnerable group:

- Being able to '**access inspirational leadership**' is fundamental in ensuring equality for all pupils, and is a critical theme in ensuring the best outcomes for these pupils. (See detail relating to the Learning Improvement and SEND Strategies below.)
- '**Get the best start in life**' focuses on the importance of targeting the most vulnerable children and families with intensive support, and prioritises early identification of SEND. It recognises the critical role of high quality early years provision for these pupils.
- '**Access a high quality school place**' focuses on the importance of vulnerable pupils having access to the provision that best meets their individual needs, including alternative provision with focussed pathways for those who require non mainstream education, and are at risk of becoming 'pushed-out' learners.
- '**A bespoke curriculum for our children**' prioritises the importance of a curriculum that meets the needs of its learners, and provides effective transition in to you people's next stage of education, employment or training.
- '**Thrive in learning and not 'be left behind'**' aims at ensuring that circumstances of birth or upbringing do not impact on the educational achievement of our children, and that all groups of pupils, including those with SEND are achieving above their peers nationally.

- **'Be proud to succeed'** targets the growth of a talent base of strong leaders, and of collaborative working, and prioritises the importance of the effective use of data to support future planning, including for alternative provision.

The introduction of the Learning Improvement Strategy, as part of ongoing transformation across Children Young People and Learning has led to increased joint working across teams (including social care) and greater cohesion and effective communication to ensure that these themes are effectively delivered.

### **Specific work streams within the Learning Improvement Strategy, including the SEND Strategy/Action Plan**

- Following the national trend, a disproportionately low percentage of double disadvantaged pupils currently attend a school judged to be good or better by Ofsted. As stated in the strategy, *double disadvantaged pupils need access to inspirational leadership* in their schools. This approach will ensure *high quality school places for all*, in order to unlock opportunities for the most vulnerable groups. Effective quality first provision in the classroom allows these pupils to catch up with their peers and flourish. For this reason, increased accountability within the **School Improvement Strategy**, providing support and challenge to school leaders, is key to improving outcomes for these pupils. Unacceptably low standards for disadvantaged pupils is a key trigger for LA intervention.
- The **Disadvantaged Pupils Service Plan** identifies 14 priority schools with high numbers of double disadvantaged pupils. These schools receive additional support and challenge for the leadership of the Pupil Premium and associated school strategies, including Pupil Premium Reviews and audits.
- All school leaders are provided with guidance relating to effective provision for disadvantaged learners and how to achieve it, via Pupil Premium Network Meetings and an annual Pupil Premium Conference. The network enables school leaders to share best practice and access the most current research about what works. Governors are also provided with training relating to disadvantaged and SEND pupils.
- Significant work has been undertaken within the LA to strengthen the leadership of the SEND team. The SEND task group meets on a weekly basis to ensure that the SEND Strategy is delivered. The group works with HT representatives to ensure that the needs of vulnerable pupils are met through the high needs block.
- Support for SENCOs (Special Needs Co-ordinators) led by the Standards and Effectiveness Team aims to improve the capacity of these key leaders in Bracknell Forest schools via the SENCO Forum, SEND Hubs, and through the use of the four newly appointed Leading SENCOs. The focus of their work is to ensure that SENCOs understand their roles, and are effective in ensuring pupils' needs are met in the classroom. The LA have provided funding to support the training and development needs of the Leading SENCOs to work in targeted schools.
- One of the three key work streams identified via the SEND Strategy's Strategic group will be looking at preparation for adulthood. This group will be investigating the effectiveness of key transition points from 2 yrs to adulthood in order to identify gaps and key areas for development.
- The work of the second key work stream is to investigate a standard for inclusion, and roll this out in Bracknell Forest, as well as develop an Inclusion Charter for the Local Authority.

**Possible lines of enquiry for the member-led task and finish group:**

1. Is transition from all early years settings such as nurseries and PVI's effective as children move in to Reception?
2. Is transition at all other key points effective?
  - Between key stages, schools, school years, Post 16, and in to adulthood?
  - Is the right information being shared at the right time to inform and secure provision in a timely fashion?
3. Are leaders at all levels in Bracknell Forest schools prioritising the needs of double disadvantaged pupils?
4. Do SENCOs in schools have the capacity (in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills, but also *time*) to ensure that the provision for double disadvantaged pupils in the classroom is meeting their needs?
5. Are the needs of double disadvantaged pupils at risk of exclusion being met?
6. (Related to all of the above) Are all schools in Bracknell Forest sufficiently inclusive?
7. Are all possible actions being taken in school to ensure high levels of attendance for double disadvantaged pupils?
8. Is the best use being made of the most recent and evidence based additional therapeutic services to meet the specific needs of SEND pupils?
9. As part of the SEND Action Plan, a new staff member has been appointed to manage data. It is essential that improvement work is driven by data and is tightly evidence based. Is the use of data relating to SEND and disadvantaged pupils robust, fit for purpose, and used effectively to improve provision and outcomes?