

South Derbyshire Partnership
Social Mobility Action Plan Note
26 September 2021

Introduction

Definitions of Social Mobility vary, the Social Mobility Commission states that, ‘Social Mobility is about ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to build a good life for themselves regardless of their family background. In a Socially Mobile society, every individual has a fair chance of reaching their potential ... But Britain’s Social Mobility problem is not just one of income or class background. It is increasingly one of geography’.

Social Mobility in South Derbyshire was highlighted in 2017 when the Social Mobility Commission ranked South Derbyshire 311th out of 324 local authorities in England (1 is best) (State of the Nation 2017: Social Mobility in Great Britain). The study combined a number of indicators, focused on education and employment prospects, together with life stages to identify where people from disadvantaged backgrounds are most, and least likely, to make social progress.

	Overall ranking	Early Years	Schools	Youth	Adulthood
Ages		0-5	5-16	16-18	18+
South Derbyshire	311 / 324	288	313	301	69

Social Mobility Commission, 2017

The Commission used those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) as its key indicator of disadvantage. The State of the Nation report highlighted that the greatest challenges were faced by those aged under 18 years in South Derbyshire. This has since been reiterated in more recent studies.

In stark contrast to the above State of the Nation report, South Derbyshire is ranked 3rd most Socially Mobile in England in The Long Shadow of Deprivation: Differences in Opportunity Across England (Social Mobility Commission, 2020). This study focused on adult earnings, exploring the differences in pay of the sons of the most and least disadvantaged families. Outside of London, South Derbyshire was found to have one of the smallest pay gaps at age 28 between the most and least deprived sons at age 16, by where they grew up. It also has one of the smallest educational attainment gaps at age 28 between the most and least deprived sons at age 16, by where they grew up.

The report found that Social Mobility is a postcode lottery, with large differences across areas in both the adult pay of disadvantaged adults, and the size of the pay gap for those from deprived families, relative to those from affluent families. Disadvantaged young adults in areas with high Social Mobility can earn twice as much as their counterparts in areas where it is low. In areas of high Social Mobility, educational achievement accounts for almost all of the earnings difference between individuals from deprived and affluent families.

The Social Mobility Commission has identified a range of important Social Mobility factors, including the following:

Equipping people with skills and capabilities:

- Hard skills (eg. literacy, numeracy);
- Non-cognitive skills (eg. resilience, motivation, confidence, aspirations) – believed to be increasingly important; and,
- Parental and community influences (eg. gaps in education attainment appear early in life).

Equal opportunities to get jobs, regardless of socio-economic background, gender or race:

- Admissions and recruitment biases (eg. race, gender);
- Understanding of opportunities (eg. career paths; access to information; moving to good school catchments); and,
- Networks and peer group norms (eg. family or social circle; finding work experience).

Notably, the Commission found no direct correlation between an area's affluence and its ability to sustain high levels of Social Mobility.

The South Derbyshire Partnership has undertaken research to explore Social Mobility issues in the area, led by a number of the partner organisations including Derbyshire County Council, South Derbyshire CVS, South Derbyshire District Council and the University of Derby. This included consultation with a much wider group of organisations from the public, private and voluntary/community sectors. The aim has been to establish the nature of the issue in South Derbyshire, current activity and the potential for additional interventions.

The emerging focus for South Derbyshire

- Issues affect younger age groups not adults; The area's rapid population growth may be a factor in this;
- A relatively small group of children and young people face a high level of disadvantage compared to others in the area; This is likely to include issues of school readiness;
- Focus is households with children eligible for Free School Meals due to low incomes; Issues of complex lifestyles amongst household members;
- Geographic concentration, with a focus on the Swadlincote urban core;
- Challenges in school performance – attendance, attainment and progression;
- Issues are more prevalent amongst boys than girls; and,
- COVID-19 may have exacerbated existing issues (eg. due to household debt, digital exclusion).

In 2018, 1,233 young people were eligible for Free School Meals in South Derbyshire, a rate of 10.5% (England average 14.1%). In the Electoral Divisions covering the Swadlincote urban core, rates are closer to or above the national average.

Three areas for action

Social Mobility is inherently multi-faceted. There are many issues that if addressed could positively contribute to greater Social Mobility. There are other aspects that are performing well and where that performance needs to be maintained (eg. access to a range of employment opportunities). Partner organisations are already undertaking activities that should contribute to raising Social Mobility, but the impact may not be seen in the short term.

This Action Plan needs to specifically target the disadvantaged groups/areas and focus on the gaps in activity and areas of underperformance. Three key interventions are proposed that would be mutually supportive/reinforcing:

EDUCATION

Improving the educational achievements of the disadvantaged group

ASPIRATION

Raising the aspirations of the disadvantaged group

ADVOCATION

Maximising the uptake of the support available to the disadvantaged group households

Do you agree with this description of Social Mobility in South Derbyshire? Does it reflect your understanding of the issues? Do you agree with the suggested focus for activity?

EDUCATION

Issue

The study *Lost Learning: Why We Need to Level up Education* (Onward and New Schools Network, 2021) explored regional disparities and found that families in some areas have little chance of securing access to a Good or Outstanding school. South Derbyshire was identified as the worst performing area where pupils have a 1 in 3 chance of attending an underperforming primary school and a 100% chance of attending an underperforming secondary school. Taking a three-year average of 1998-2000 and 2017-2019, the county of Derbyshire dropped 74 places from 40th to 124th in GCSE attainment.

South Derbyshire	Bottom 20 local authorities by share of pupils attending underperforming primary schools	Bottom 20 local authorities for share of pupils attending underperforming secondary schools
Rank of local authorities	7 th Lowest	1 st Lowest
Share of pupils	32%	100%

Ofsted Inspection Data 2019, Onward analysis

Research by the Social Mobility Commission highlights the following:

- The early years of a child’s life have a lasting impact; And have the greatest impact on their development.
- Parenting and home support matter more than external opportunities at this stage.
- Deprived areas do not consistently underperform on the Early Years indicators.
- Key factors include: High quality pre-school settings; Effective promotion and use of early education; Integration of health and education services; Uptake of the free early education offer for 2-year-olds; and, Availability of good parenting programmes.
- Educational attainment is linked to social disadvantage and place; The attainment gap between disadvantaged and better off pupils, which starts in the early years, widens during a child’s schooling.
- Key factors include: Attending a good/outstanding secondary school; High quality teaching; Secondary school teacher turnover; Pupil-teacher ratios; Increasing importance of developing soft skills such as teamwork; Links to other schools and to employers; and, Levels of pupil funding/investment in facilities.

Measure

The Department for Education measures school readiness by the proportion of children eligible for Free School Meals achieving a ‘good level of development’ at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (from birth to five years). In 2016/17 this proportion was 71.9% for South Derbyshire,

compared with 70.7% for England. Rates are below the national average for some of the Electoral Divisions covering the Swadlincote urban core.

Childcare and Early Education Performance; Note date of inspection.

Pre-school/Day Nursery/Out-of-School Care/Nursery School/School with Nursery	Overall Effectiveness
Little Stars, Swadlincote	Good (2007)
Bramblewood Day Nursery, Swadlincote	Requires Improvement (2021)
Chuckle Bunnies Day Nursery, Swadlincote	Good (2018)
Church Gresley Playgroup T/A Church Gresley Pre-School	Good (2017)
Our Monkey Club CIC, Swadlincote	N/A
The Honey Pots Day Nursery, Swadlincote	Good (2018)
One and All After School Club, Swadlincote	Good (2018)
Midway Preschool	Good (2016)
Little Cherubs School Club, Church Gresley	N/A
Little Cherubs, Swadlincote	Good (2018)
Woodville Community Pre-School	Good (2017)
Woodville Day Nursery and Pre-School	Outstanding (2017)
Whacky Kids Club, Woodville	Met (2020)
Little Butterflies Woodville Pre-School	Good (2017)
Woodville Schools Federation Holiday Provision	N/A
Boomerangs – The Newhall Day Nursery	Good (2017)
Little Lambs Childcare at Cadley Hill	Good (2019)
Tiny Blessings Day Nursery	N/A
Little Angels Pre-School Ltd, Swadlincote	Good (2017)

N/A – new registration

Ofsted

Primary School Performance (Data is for 2018/19 unless stated); Note date of inspection.

South Derbyshire Primary School	Ofsted rating	% pupils meeting expected standard in reading, writing and maths	% pupils meeting expected standard in reading, writing and maths (disadvantaged pupils)	Progress score in reading (disadvantaged pupils)	Progress score in writing (disadvantaged pupils)	Progress score in maths (disadvantaged pupils)	Average score in reading (disadvantaged pupils)	Average score in maths (disadvantaged pupils)	Absence	Persistent absence
Belmont	Good (2017)	49%	55%	-1.2	1.8	-1.8	100	101	4.7%	9.9%
Eureka	Good (2018)	53%	22%	-3.6	-2.5	-4.9	98	97	4.3%	9.4%
Woodville CofE	Requires Improvement (2019)	50%	30%	-2.6	-3.9	-3.1	98	99	3.8%	8%
Springfield	Not available	46%	41%	-2.6	-0.3	-1.3	98	100	4.2%	10.2%
St Edwards Catholic	Good (2019)	79%	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	3.4%	4.7%
Elmsleigh	Requires Improvement (2019)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.3%	18.6%
Church Gresley	Good (2017)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.2%	6.5%
Pennine Way	Good (2019)	65%	44%	-2.8	-4	-2.2	102	103	3.6%	5.5%
St George's CofE	Good (2019)	70%	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	3.4%	3.4%
Hartshorne CofE	Good (2018)	94%	100%	9	2.9	3.3	112	107	4.8%	12.2%
Fairmeadows	Good (2019)	77%	56%	-5.4	-3.1	-1	101	106	3.7%	8.2%
Newhall Infant	Good (2018)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3.9%	6%
Newhall Junior	Requires Improvement (2018)	59%	56%	-1.5	0	-2.6	102	102	3.9%	9.8%
Stanton	Good (2017)	65%	67%	-2.3	-1	-3.5	102	101	4.7%	6.9%
England		65%	71%	0.3	0.3	0.4	105	106	4%	8.2%

Ofsted, 2018/19 data unless stated

N/K = Data suppressed if less than 5 pupils

N/A = School undergoing change eg. becoming Academy and past data not available

Secondary School Performance (Data is for 2018/19 unless stated); Note date of inspection.

South Derbyshire Secondary School	Ofsted rating	Progress 8 - Progress description (KS2-4 across 8 subjects)	Progress 8 - School disadvantaged pupils progress score	Percentage achieving Grade 4 or above in English and Maths (~GCSE C or above)	Attainment 8 score (Eight qualifications including English and Maths)	Attainment 8 disadvantaged pupils (Eligible for FSM)	Absence	Persistent absence	In education or employed for 2 terms after KS4 (2017 school leavers) - disadvantaged pupils	Average Level 3 result (eg A level)
Burton and SD College	Good (2017)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/K	N/K	N/A	27.71
Granville Academy	Requires Improvement (2015)	-0.16 (Average)	-0.45	67%	43.0	35.2	6.8%	18.5%	90%	N/A
The Pingle Academy	Requires Improvement (2015)	0.11 (Average)	-0.33	65%	43.1	31.4	6%	14.9%	92%	28.86
William Allitt School	Requires Improvement (2018)	-0.58 (Well below average)	-0.97	58%	40.2	29.8	5.7%	12.3%	87%	N/A
England state funded schools average			0.13	65%	46.7	50.3	5.5%	13.7%	96%	30.16

Ofsted, 2018/19 unless stated

Action

Aim: Schools in the area to have raised attainment to exceed the England average, especially for disadvantaged pupils.

Target: Key age groups for intervention – pre-school and early years of secondary school

Do you agree with this assessment of the educational issues in South Derbyshire? What age groups do you think should be the target for intervention? Is this support already being provided or are additional actions needed to raise educational attainment?

ASPIRATION

Issue

Research undertaken by the Social Mobility Commission has highlighted that:

- The years following school are critical for Social Mobility – this is when young people make key choices about their life; Those who struggle to make the transition from school to work often face lifelong difficulties.
- Rural isolation limits access to Further/Higher Education and a range of inspiration and support activities from employers, universities and charities; And restricts choice for low-income youngsters who wish to live at home while studying.
- Key factors include: Availability of good careers support – disadvantaged pupils have lesser access to informal networks and work experience; Access to higher level apprenticeships and larger employers, and so entry level jobs; Labour market preparation at school; and, Pursuing higher qualifications which typically lead to greater job security and Social Mobility.
- Higher barriers face youngsters in older industrial towns, especially deprived mining and manufacturing communities, leading to narrower aspirations.

The South Derbyshire Partnership worked with the University of Derby to undertake an attitudinal survey in 2019. Year 7 pupils (Aged 11-12) at The Pingle Academy completed a questionnaire to elicit their views. The findings included the following:

- a slightly higher number of girls than boys felt they were motivated to attend and work hard at school, and that GCSEs were important to their future;
- a higher proportion of boys than girls felt that their parents thought it was important they performed well in their GCSEs;
- whilst the vast majority were keen to get a job, results were less strong with respect to the type of job;
- a significant proportion were uncertain who they could talk to about careers and jobs;
- a significantly higher proportion of girls than boys were keen to continue into sixth form, college and university; A greater proportion of boys placed more importance on earning money; and,
- family members and celebrities were the main influences.

Children and young people can benefit from access to opportunities that could help them grow in confidence, expand their understanding of the wider world, and develop both their career aspirations and understanding of how to realise them. A lack of “social capital” can have a number of consequences, including disengagement from education, low confidence and social alienation, and may be reflected in higher than average unauthorised absence rates among children. This can be addressed by, for example, providing students with diverse and engaging extra curricular activities and greater engagement with employers.

Every young person needs high quality career guidance to make informed decisions about their future. Good career guidance is a necessity for Social Mobility: those young people without significant social capital or home support to draw upon have the most to gain from high quality career guidance. The ‘Gatsby Benchmarks’ serve as a framework for improvement in careers provision and have been adopted as part of the Government’s careers strategy and statutory guidance for schools and colleges. In addition, the Careers and Enterprise Company now supports the implementation of the Benchmarks in schools and colleges with a national network of support, resources and targeted funding.

Measure

There are eight Benchmarks of good career guidance, against which the progress of secondary schools is assessed. Activities during the pandemic have been significantly restricted.

	Gatsby Benchmark	Progress towards Benchmarks at November 2020 for South Derbyshire (five schools)
1.	A stable careers programme	20%
2.	Learning from career and labour market information	40%
3.	Addressing the needs of each pupil	0%
4.	Linking curriculum learning to careers	20%
5.	Encounters with employers and employees	40%
6.	Experience of workplaces	40%
7.	Encounters with Further and Higher Education	40%
8.	Personal guidance	80%

Data from D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership

In 2016/17, the proportion of obese children at Year 6 (Ages 10 – 11) was 18.6% for South Derbyshire, compared with 19.1% for England. Figures for some of the Electoral Divisions covering the Swadlincote urban core are above the national average whilst others are below.

Action

Aim: Career provision in the area is performing at a level above the national average, with a particular focus on disadvantaged pupils.

Do you agree with this assessment of the aspirational issues in South Derbyshire? What age groups do you think should be the target for intervention? Is this support already being provided or are additional actions needed to raise aspirations?

ADVOCATION

Issue

In 2021 South Derbyshire CVS undertook an ethnographic study on behalf of the South Derbyshire Partnership, engaging with the parents of children on Free School Meals in the DE11 postcode area. Ethnography is a practice that recognises that where we live and who we live with shapes us and that much of what contributes to the challenges of individual people can only be observed and explained through stories of lived experience - rather than measured or quantified. It is about having detailed conversations with people in the contexts of their lives, in ways that value their unique perspectives and experiences to help us to better understand problems and solutions faced by them and others in their communities.

Families were approached through South Derbyshire CVS contacts, secondary schools and requests from local service providers/agencies. In total nine adults responsible for 29 children who were/would be eligible for Free School Meals actively participated. The key findings of the study are outlined below.

Participants have high aspirations for their children:

- this included 'doing better than me' in work and education, being healthy and happy;
- participants wanted to help make things better and fairer for their children; Access, trust and mutuality can be learnt about through the framework and process;
- there are some features of Social Mobility specific to boys/men; This may take some significant resource and culture change for schools and related organisations to reduce the disparity; and,
- employment practice is one element of the solution and may provide inter-generational change.

Participants experience multiple barriers to Social Mobility:

- this includes being victims of serious violent crime or, domestic abuse and/or childhood trauma;
- there is also bereavement, chronic illness/pain and disability, and for some being a relative of a substance abuser; This reduces social capital and precipitates relocation, anxiety or stress and damaged self-confidence;
- access to good services is a barrier: Access physically and meeting referral criteria, and/or meriting support; Access to good and basic information about university and college is important.
- schools are a trusted support agency and signpost to other services;
- participants have not/are not obtaining the services they merit receiving;

- disadvantage in families as a result of their parents' lives has penalties that are financial, as well as emotional;
- disadvantage financially is also a result of unpaid caring responsibilities and the benefit cap impacts some; and,
- participants are connected out of county; The geographical boundaries of services and councils are not the boundaries that participants recognise.

More access to employment, and encounters with employers are needed to broaden the horizons of children and to broaden the options of boys:

- 'soft services' like youth work may begin this; and,
- aspirations for siblings are differentiated; There is a perceived difference for boys that merits a focus because of the potential bind of predecessors.

Stakeholders should work to tackle this together:

- there are new ways that could be developed, including partnerships among schools and the operation of stakeholders in their own workplaces; and,
- consideration specifically could be made for the support for families after trauma such as domestic abuse and the resulting experience of mental ill health or lack of self-confidence.

In assessing Social Mobility, disadvantaged pupils are identified by their status as coming from low-income households (based on Free School Meal eligibility). However, in many cases the ethnographic research revealed that the challenges the households faced were not due to economic circumstances alone. This aligns with evidence that South Derbyshire has a relatively strong economy. Despite job opportunities being available, parents in the household often faced multiple barriers to improving their economic circumstances. It is often a much more complex picture that also includes issues relating to, for example, physical/mental health, crime, bereavement and caring responsibilities - and frequently several of these issues combined. In many cases, unless these issues are addressed it will be difficult to raise the Social Mobility of the children in the household.

The situation is exacerbated by some of these households not accessing the range of support services available from the public and voluntary/community sector. This may be due to a lack of awareness or confidence, believing that others are more needy or deserving, eligibility or accessibility challenges. There may also be a fear of discussing the issues they face with public bodies.

For some households, there may be a need for a family 'advocate' to engage with them on a one-to-one basis. The role of an advocate is to offer independent support to those who feel they are not being heard and to ensure they are taken seriously and that their rights are respected. It is also to assist people to access and understand appropriate information and services. An advocate can ensure a person has the tools to make an informed decision; It is not about making the decision for the person. An advocate amplifies the views of the person they are supporting, and should empower the person to advocate for themselves wherever possible. An advocate is not an advice worker but will support the person to gather, understand and process the information and advice they are given by others.

The research undertaken by the CVS highlighted the need to offer the opportunity to communicate about aspirations and reflect back what is said, both with pupils and especially male family leads. Also, to offer and find space to listen to parents and their emotional journey of children leaving home to study/train. The report recommendations include: To assume nothing about what a parent already knows; To give definitions of words and use appropriate language that will aid understanding and may be just as important as approachability; To offer multiple methods to engage; To offer several reasons for a telephone conversation with people you want to engage; To note that many parents begin interacting with school or university ready to be belittled; and, To take feedback seriously from this group - participants were unlikely to be critical unless asked specifically - their threshold for needing help is high.

Measure

In 2018, 1,233 young people were eligible for Free School Meals in South Derbyshire, a rate of 10.5% (England average 14.1%). In the Electoral Divisions covering the Swadlincote urban core, rates are closer to or above the national average. Further, to consider the proportion of these disadvantaged households that are engaged with appropriate support services.

Action

Aim: Households with disadvantaged pupils have access to the support that they need.

Do you agree with this assessment of the issues affecting disadvantaged households with school-age children in South Derbyshire? What do you think should be the focus for intervention? Is this support already being provided or are additional actions needed?

Please email your completed form to the South Derbyshire Partnership at: economic.development@southderbyshire.gov.uk