

PUPIL PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS 2013

Purpose of Report

1. This report provides an overview of pupil performance at the end of each key stage and compares Wiltshire's attainment with national, south west and statistical neighbours. Where available the report provides a comparison of the Wiltshire figures against the range of other Local Authorities using the LA quartile (25%) position – with 'A' being the top 25% and 'D' being the lowest 25%.

Background

2. In recent years reports have been submitted to this committee highlighting pupil performance outcomes in Wiltshire schools. The outcomes are based on national performance measures at the end of each Key Stage. Information about Wiltshire's performance in relation to its comparators is also included. Information regarding the performance of vulnerable groups at KS4 is not available at time of writing and a supplementary paper will be supplied subsequent to the publication of this information on the 23 January 2014.
3. The information relating to the overall performance (across all qualifications and levels) of Wiltshire students at age 19 is also not yet available for 2013 and therefore within this paper we are only able to present the performance Post 16 for those undertaking Level 3 General Certificate Education (GCE) qualifications at Advanced Level.

Overview of Performance

There continues to be a rise in performance in all key stages and national tests in Wiltshire giving some of the best results in almost all areas. Schools demonstrate increasing levels of effectiveness as seen by the increasing proportion of good and outstanding inspection outcomes and as a result, performance as seen in pupil outcomes has improved.

With a rise in performance nationally, the South West and in statistical neighbours (10 other similar local authorities), on many indicators, Wiltshire has generally kept pace with comparator improvements. In the case of groups vulnerable to underachievement, there are some more rapid improvements than nationally at KS2, but these still leave some indicators in the lowest quartile of performance.

With an ever changing education landscape and reduction in LA resources it is the challenge to ensure that support for pupils vulnerable to underachievement remains at the highest priority and that rapidly improving achievements are reflected in the performance of all pupils.

Performance Overview at each Phase and Key Stage

Key Headline - Summary of performance in the primary phase

There have been performance improvements in the primary phase with Wiltshire keeping pace with national improvements. Attainment at the end of Foundation Stage KS1 and KS2 places Wiltshire's figures in line with the national position. Although there are some successes in improved attainment for groups vulnerable to underachievement, attainment of these groups generally lags behind that of their peers and continues to be a high priority for improvement.

Foundation Stage (age 5)

- New assessment processes were carried out in academic year 2012/13 and so a comparison with previous years is not possible. Overall outcomes for children achieving a good level of development in the Foundation Stage profile at 52% were in line with national figures.
- The gap between the lowest attainers and the rest was low in 2013 and in the top quartile of LA results

Phonics Screening Check (age 6)

- There was an 11% improvement in the outcomes of pupils achieving expected levels in phonics decoding although there were similar improvement elsewhere. The outcome, although much improved, places the LA in the lowest quartile nationally.
- Again although considerable improvements in the percentage of pupils eligible for FSM achieving the expected level in phonics, the improvement was in line with national and local improvements and the outcomes were in the bottom quartile.

KS1 performance (age 7)

- Best ever results were seen in reading, writing and maths at KS1 with each subject showing a rise of at least 2%. Results in each of these subjects places Wiltshire in the B quartile, especially pleasing is with regards to maths which is now 2% above the national figure.

KS2 performance (age 11)

- Changes to assessment and reporting at KS2 have meant that only 2012 outcomes comparisons are available. Levels in reading, writing and maths are reported separately and English is no longer reported. The overall figure of the percentage of pupils achieving a level 4 and above in reading, writing and maths is now the benchmark figure.
- For this indicator Wiltshire achieved the best ever results for L4+ reading, writing and maths with 76% of pupils achieving this benchmark, representing a 3% rise from 2012. This improvement exceeded national and local improvements although only placed Wiltshire in the C quartile.
- For the 'expected progress' (2 levels from KS1 outcomes) Wiltshire achieved or maintained the highest ever outcomes.
- Although the reading outcomes did not improve, national and local comparators declined by 2% from 2012 and so Wiltshire 'bucked the trend' by maintaining the 90% of pupils making expected progress.

- Writing expected progress improved by 2% in line with national and local trends
- Maths expected progress improved by 3% putting the outcomes in line with national and above local comparators.

KS2 Vulnerable Group performance

- A lower proportion of pupils eligible for FSMs continue to achieve the L4 benchmarks than their peers. Although there was a 3% improvement in 2013 (slightly higher than comparators) overall achievement is in the lowest quartile. This continues to be one of the highest priorities for improvement.
- For pupils of different ethnic backgrounds, pupils from Mixed race and Chinese background have achieved well, whilst those from Black and Asian backgrounds have achievements in the lowest quartiles.
- The proportion of Children in Care achieving reading and writing at level 4+ is above all national and local comparators, particularly above Statistical Neighbour comparators. The percentage of Children in Care reaching level 4+ in maths is below the national comparative figure and just in the bottom quartile.
- There have been improvements in the percentage of SEN pupils achieving benchmark level 4+ from 2012 although these do not bring the LA figures in line with national and all local comparators. For pupils with SEN and with a statement achievement is in the bottom quartile.
- Provisional figures show that 72% of pupils from service families achieve the benchmark level 4s in Wiltshire, 4% below peers. National figures show 78% of pupils from service families achieve this level.

Key Headline - Summary of performance in the Secondary phase

Despite some changes to the inclusion of certain qualifications into published data, GCSE results show a general trend of improvement. There is a greater proportion of students making expected progress in English and maths in their secondary education. Improvements in attainment are counter to nationally falling trends. At KS5 performance is in the top quartile at 'A' level and although there have been declines in the proportion of students achieving top grades, in Wiltshire the falls have been in line with, or less than the national.

KS4 Performance (age 16)

- The principal means of assessing student attainment at the end of Key stage 4 is by the General Certificate Secondary Education (GCSE) examination. The performance measure includes a range of other qualifications for which an equivalence point score has been assigned. These other qualifications include BTECs and Diplomas and other vocationally based qualifications. The higher grades of A*-C (where 5 GCSEs are achieved) are equated to a 'Level 2 qualification' and are often referred to as 'good' GCSEs.
- The Secretary of State for Education has produced a list of qualifications that are eligible to be included in figures both reported at school and LA level. One school taught an English qualification that is not included on the list from

the DfE and thus ineligible for inclusion with the figures. This has not adversely affected the outcomes for individual pupils in the school as they are able to use these outcomes as the basis for further study and employment. The following information is based on the reported figures and therefore does not contain these results.

- Despite the results not including one school, the 5+A*-C (inc English and Maths) results have continued to rise by over 1%. This is above all local and national comparator figures. There was a slight decline nationally on this indicator from 2012.
- However the percentage of pupils attaining 5+A*-C (not necessarily including English and maths), although rising slightly, is below the national figure placing the LA results in the lowest quartile.
- The percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate rose again after a slight decline in 2012 although improvement were much greater nationally and locally leaving Wiltshire below all comparators.
- Expected progress measures between KS2 and 4 continues to improve by about 3% putting Wiltshire in line with comparators in English and above comparators in maths.

KS4 Vulnerable Group performance (to follow)

KS5 Performance (age 18)

- A very positive picture of performance at A level. Although point score performance is not as high as in the past, the outcomes are in the top quartile showing maintenance at a high level.
- The percentage of students gaining high grades at A level is also in the top quartile.

Performance by type of school

KS2

- On headline indicators both academies and voluntary aided schools have the highest levels of attainment and high levels of progress.
- Foundation schools do least well with lower attainment and progress measures.

KS4 (to follow)

Ofsted Inspection Outcomes

- In his recent Annual Report, the Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills reported that in Wiltshire at 31/08/13, 83% of pupils in primary schools and 81% of pupils in secondary schools attend good and outstanding provision. This ranks Wiltshire primary schools at 43 and secondary schools at 51 out of 171 Local Authorities.
- However it was also reported in the South West Regional Report in which Wiltshire is one of 15 LAs that despite improvements in the proportion of good and outstanding inspection outcomes, schools in the SW "*do not serve pupils eligible for free school meals well enough*".

Main Considerations for the Council

Impact of activity

- Continued development of LASER (Local Authority School Effectiveness Review) risk assessment and management processes in order to mitigate and minimise risks of schools not providing a good education for their pupils. Development of further strategies for supporting schools by partnerships and brokerage to ensure that timely and effective support is a priority.
- Wiltshire's assessment and moderation processes for EYFS have been judged to be in the highest category by the Standards and Testing Agency and Wiltshire has been recognised as a good practice local authority for moderation. Transition networks across the county's children's centres have continued to facilitate a more purposeful curriculum transition between reception and pre-schools.
- School improvement initiatives such as Wiltshire Improving School Programme (WISP) and TQ2012 have offered frameworks for improvement for many primary schools and WISP has been recognised by HMI and Ofsted as making significant contributions to improvements in schools of concern and those vulnerable. TQ2012 supported targeted interventions and the development of school improvement strategies to impact on pupil progress. Successors to this continue early intervention and capacity building work in schools.
- Other support and intervention activities include The Unseen Children Conference in November 2013, The Transforming Teaching Programme, work with Achievement for All Charity supporting improved outcomes for pupils with SEN, and cluster support to recruit, train and deploy learning mentors who work with vulnerable pupils.

Priorities for raising achievement in 2014 and beyond

Raising overall standards

- All LA maintained schools are provided with a School Improvement Adviser (SIA) to monitor school performance and challenge school leaders. This ensures that School Effectiveness has current and dynamic information regarding school performance and risk. The development and maintenance of this function is essential.
- In light of the raised expectations of the new national curriculum, additional support has been offered to schools in a number of subjects including mathematics, English and computing.

Close the gap between pupils vulnerable to underachievement and others

- Continual focus and awareness raising of underachievement of any pupils and especially those groups known to be most vulnerable.
- Development of high impact and cost effective strategies to raise achievements for vulnerable pupils. Discussions have commenced with HMI and the National College for Teaching and Leadership to develop a high

impact programme with targeted primary and secondary schools to work on improvement based enquiry.

Safeguarding Considerations

4. Safeguarding refers to preventing children, young people and vulnerable adults from being harmed or abused and for providing support to those who have been harmed or who are at risk of significant harm. Although this report does not include reference to issues regarding child protection, the broadest definition of safeguarding does take into account that safeguarding processes should optimise the life chances of individuals. Academic outcomes have a significant impact in life chances for children and young people and for those groups vulnerable to underachievement, this is an essential consideration.

Public Health Implications

5. There are no specific public health implications in relation to this report.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

6. There is no specific environmental impact in relation to this report.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

7. All groups of learners have the right to make good progress in learning and achieve high standards. The data suggests that, there are a number of groups for which achievement is not as high as for other groups. This equalities issue remains a high priority.

Risk Assessment

- 8 The new school inspection framework (September 2013) has increased the focus on pupil progress, especially for vulnerable groups and where gaps are evident. To support this, a range of strategies and targeted activities are planned to support and engage schools to secure these improvements.
- 9 The Inspection of Local Authority arrangements for supporting School Improvement, published for the first time in May 2013, makes the expectations for the impact on improvements on school and other provider standards clear. The external evaluation of how well a LA carried out its statutory duties in relation to promoting high standards and support for schools of concern is clearly outlined in the Ofsted documentation and triggered by a decline in the numbers of good and outstanding schools, falling standards or other matters of concern within a LA. With a reduction in resourcing for school improvement, School Effectiveness is working to ensure that standards do not fall and is seeking new and innovative ways to engage school leaders in improvement and to close gaps.

- 10 The raising of Department for Education floor standards (minimum standards schools should achieve at the end of KS2 and KS4) are set to rise year on year and from 2015 will focus on high proportions of pupils being 'secondary ready' at KS2 and ready for further participation at KS4. Through work with school leaders and a continued focus on teaching and learning awareness has been raised. Support through teaching schools, traded courses and direct support for schools of concern and in difficulty continues.
11. Academy conversions increase the risk of the Local Authority's ability to sustain the ongoing improvements in these schools as information regarding schools risks may be less timely, dynamic and detailed. Proactive identification, brokering support and monitoring improvements for these schools may be more difficult as a result. School Effectiveness colleagues continue to liaise with Academy sponsors to ensure provision is good or better in those schools.
12. With the Military Civilian Integration (MCI) process underway and a large number of children and young people to be based in Wiltshire, Children's Services provision for this group becomes a high priority over the next few years. As a result education providers need to be able to successfully support pupils and their families. Provision for these pupils should be at least good and school leaders will need support to be prepared to mitigate the issues surrounding mobility. There is close collaboration between the LA and MoD to help support the planning of extra provision to meet the needs of service families as they move to Wiltshire. School Effectiveness continues to liaise with service school organisations, Academy sponsors, dsdHeadteachers of schools with high proportion of service family children, and with University partners to deliver Troops to Teachers.
13. With a reduction in the LA school effectiveness workforce, direct support for schools has been prioritised to schools of concern and schools in difficulty and/or decline. This is being mitigated by sustaining the School Improvement Adviser programme, targeted early intervention, brokering and traded activities in relation to teaching and learning. Innovative solutions to sustain ongoing improvements are being sought, for example working with teaching schools, brokering support from national leaders of education and partnership work with HMI.

Financial Implications

14. Past changes to funding, including reductions, have been managed to minimise direct impact on the strategies to raise attainment and close performance gaps in order to sustain the focus on improving pupil outcomes. With a reduction in service capacity to develop and sustain county wide strategies and targeted improvements, it is possible that this focus cannot be sustained with the result of an increased risk on standards and gaps.

Legal Implications

- 15 There are no legal implications in relation to this paper.

Conclusions

16. Children's Select Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

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Background Papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None