

**Children and Young People's  
Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee**

**28 February 2019**



**Education Attainment and Standards 2018**

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**Report of Margaret Whellans, Corporate Director Children and  
Young People's Services**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The purpose of this annual report is to provide a full summary of educational outcomes in County Durham, 2018, and related updates on the focus and provision of education services.

**Executive summary**

- 2 Educational outcomes for Durham pupils continue to be positive with a small number of exceptions.
  - a. Early Years key outcomes for all children remain above national averages, but disadvantaged children are performing less well this year than their peers, despite a marked closing of the gender gap.
  - b. At Key Stage 1, Durham's children perform well against the key national indicators of 'at least expected standards' (EXS+) in Reading, Writing and mathematics, but at 'Greater Depth' they are marginally behind the national average in Reading.
  - c. At Key Stage 2, the national averages in all key indicators are convincingly exceeded (age-related expectations: AS+), although not the High Scores (HD) average in mathematics, where work remains to be done by schools and those supporting them.
  - d. At Key Stage 4, work to improve the performance of maintained secondary schools (and academies) is having a distinct impact, with the maintained schools 'Attainment 8' score in 2018 in line with state funded schools in England and above national for all schools in England. Other positive indicators do not disguise the fact that further improvement is necessary, as described in the

main report, and work is in hand between schools and the local authority to secure this.

- e. Key Stage 5 results continue to be above national averages for state funded schools, with an increased number of students achieving the higher grades in both academic and applied general qualifications.

## Recommendations

- 3 That Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny is requested to note the information contained in the report.

## Background

- 4 Improving educational outcomes for children and young people in Durham is a key priority of the County Council, and support to schools and settings in order that this is achieved remains a prime focus of the support and improvement team within the Education department.
- 5 The results from tests and examinations at the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4/5 for 2018 provide the key outcome measures for early years, primary and secondary education respectively, and these compared with regional and national outcomes provide an indication of the performance of schools and settings.

## Early Years outcomes

- 6 Early Years outcomes are measured by the percentage of children reaching a good level of development (GLD) according to national Early Years Profile criteria. At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are assessed by the percentage reaching a good level of development in relation to the Early Learning Goals. Assessments are made against pre-set levels, with internal and external moderation.
- 7 Early Years Foundation Stage outcomes are as follows:

Early Years % GLD								
	2015		2016		2017		2018	
	Durham LA	National						
All	64	66	69	69	72	70.7	72.8	71.5
Boys	56	59	62.3	62.1	65.0	64.0	66.6	65
Girls	72	74	76.2	76.8	79.6	77.7	79.4	78.4

- 8 As the table above indicates, Durham's outcomes continue to improve and remain above national; Durham's year-on-year improvement has been constant since 2014. With high levels of deprivation in parts of the County and the fact that Early Years outcomes were historically significantly below national outcomes prior to 2014, these outcomes are significantly positive and reflect the hard work of all Early Years settings, effectively supported by the local authority Early Years team.
- 9 The attainment gender gap has been narrowed this year and now stands at 12.8%, much improved on 2017 (14.5%). In comparison against national figures Durham is now lower than the national average by 0.7%, which is a significant achievement.
- 10 However, the gap between disadvantaged children and all children, nationally and in Durham, has widened again. A gap of 19.5ppt, which was 2.3ppt wider than the national average in 2017, has increased to 21.9ppt which is now 4.0ppt wider than the national gap in 2018. This is a priority for the Early Years improvement team and targeted work is being undertaken with schools and settings in order to close the vulnerable groups' attainment gap as soon as possible.
- 11 Other Early Years outcomes that are worth noting include the improved training offer for Early Years leads/managers that has been available for the previous year, resulting in stronger leadership outcomes recorded in Ofsted inspections, including in the private and voluntary sector.
- 12 The free Early Years entitlement for two-year olds has reached 89% (compared with the national average figure of 73%).

### Key Stage 1 outcomes

- 13 In all key measures at Key Stage 1, Durham's outcomes are ahead of national, as the table below indicates:

	National	Durham
<b>Phonics</b>	82.5%	<b>84.1%</b>
<b>KS1 Expected standards (EXS+)</b>		
Reading	75.5%	<b>76.5%</b>
Writing	69.9%	<b>72.7%</b>
Maths	76.1%	<b>77.9%</b>

- 14 In terms of 'GD', which indicates pupils working at greater depth within expected standards, Durham children at KS1 ranked higher than

national averages in Writing, and Maths, but were marginally below in Reading. This is a priority area for support within the local authority.

<b>GD</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Durham</b>
Reading	25.6%	<b>25.2%</b>
Writing	15.9%	<b>16.5%</b>
Maths	21.8%	<b>22.0%</b>

15 Key Stage 1 outcomes have been a priority for the local authority in recent years. 2016 was the first year when KS1 outcomes exceeded national averages and, while this improvement was sustained in 2017, this remains an area of performance in the County where ongoing attention is required and scrutiny invited. Targeted support to schools where outcomes were below expectations continues, particularly with regard to Reading.

### **Key Stage 2:**

16 At the end of the primary stage of education (age 11) formal national assessments of pupils' attainment in mathematics and English take place through externally set and marked tests. Writing is judged by teacher assessments, moderated by the local authority against set national criteria. Assessments are made against "those meeting at least age-related expectations" (AS+) for this age group.

17 The table below sets out the percentage of pupils in Durham and nationally achieving KS2 AS+ in English (reading), English (writing), mathematics, grammar/punctuation/spelling (GPS) and RWM combined in 2018.

<b>KS2 (AS+)</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Durham</b>
Reading (test)	75%	<b>77.3%</b>
Writing (teacher assessment)	78%	<b>80.3%</b>
Mathematics (test)	76%	<b>78.4%</b>
G/P/S	78%	<b>79.5%</b>
RWM combined	64%	<b>67.3%</b>

18 The table below sets out the percentage of pupils in Durham and nationally achieving KS2 High Scores (HS) in English (reading), English (writing), mathematics, grammar/punctuation/spelling (GPS) and RWM combined in 2018.

<b>KS2 (HS)</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Durham</b>
Reading (test)	28.1%	<b>28.8%</b>
Writing (teacher assessment)	19.9%	<b>22.3%</b>
Mathematics (test)	23.6%	<b>23.2%</b>
G/P/S	34.4%	34.4%
RWM combined	9.9%	<b>10.4%</b>

19 Attainment levels across the local authority continue to be very strong against national levels and the significant trend of improvement in Durham continues year on year. Where levels are below national averages (eg: High Score maths), the gap is marginal; however, the local authority Education support team is not complacent about this and targeted improvement work continues.

20 Another countywide priority at KS1 and KS2 is to reduce attainment gaps between local authority disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally.

21 At KS1 'Greater Depth (GD) gaps have diminished, reflecting the overall increase in proportions of pupils reaching the higher standard in Durham schools. This will at least in part be a reflection of work undertaken between local authority support teams and schools aimed at raising aspirations for the most able pupils.

22 At KS2, gaps reduced between disadvantaged pupils in Durham and other pupils nationally. The gap between the proportion of Durham pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined (RWM) reduced by 0.84% in comparison to non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

23 Outcomes for Free School Meal pupils (FSM) indicate that Durham's schools support our disadvantaged pupils well. The table below shows data for pupils who have been in receipt of FSM at any point during the previous 6 years (known as FSM ever-6 or FSME6).

24 Whilst gaps with others nationally are reducing and comparisons with similar pupils nationally are positive, further steps to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Durham will continue to be taken in future work planned between the school improvement team and schools.

<b>KS2 (FSME6)</b>	<b>National 2018</b>	<b>Durham 2018</b>

Reading	69.9%	<b>70.2%</b>
Writing	68.1%	<b>68.9%</b>
Mathematics	68.6%	<b>71.2%</b>
RWM combined	59.7%	<b>61.3%</b>

## Key Stage 4:

25 Assessment at Key Stage 4 continues to be through externally set and marked GCSE and GCSE equivalent examinations across a wide range of subjects and courses. Outcomes are graded by a numerical system involving points scores which has been applied comprehensively since 2017 (partially in 2016).

26 The DfE continues to advise that Progress 8, which is a relative measure, should not be compared year-on-year because the same score in different years could result from markedly different situations. As Progress 8 is cohort-driven, it does not serve as an effectiveness measure over time for schools or local authorities.

27 Work to improve the performance of maintained secondary schools and academies within the new accountability framework is having a distinct impact. Our maintained school Attainment 8 score in 2018 was 46.2 (46.9 for our academies). This figure is in line with state funded schools in England and above national for all schools in England.

28 Outcomes for the Local Authority in key headline KS4 measures show significant improvement in 2018. The proportion of pupils achieving levels 4-9 in English and maths moved from 57.5% in 2017 to 61.5% in 2018. Similarly at levels 5-9 they improved from 34.5 % in 2017 to 38.5% in 2018.

29 Our maintained school progress (-0.11) has improved and is higher than the comparison of maintained secondary schools in the north east (-0.18). Our Academy progress (-0.16) is in line other comparative academies in the north east (-0.17).

30 In respect of Alternative Provision (the education provision made for those children who are not able to follow an educational pathway in a regular maintained school or academy), the attainment 8 scores of this growing group of children is below average and affects the overall performance across all pupils in County Durham. Significant

proportions of disadvantaged pupils with enrolments within alternative provision and special schools have had an impact upon attempts to diminish attainment gaps with other pupils nationally.

- 31 The Education Development Service is currently engaged with secondary head teachers in developing strategies that can jointly be used to raise standards of achievement within our alternative provision schools including the support for Durham's Pupil Referral Unit, The Woodlands. This includes targeted support for contracted institutions but also a review of the inclusion and provision options which will encourage further academic success for this cohort.
- 32 In terms of the gender gap, girls in County Durham are slightly behind their national peers on the average attainment 8 outcome, with a score of 47.9 compared to the national result of 49.3. Boys in County Durham schools average 42.2 compared to 43.8 for all boys nationally. There continues to be large variations in Attainment 8 scores for different groups of pupils with white British boys underperforming nationally.
- 33 Disadvantaged pupils who attend County Durham schools achieve close to the national average for similar pupils nationally, scoring 35 on average. The national result for this group of pupils is 36.7 and has fallen whilst increasing for other pupils. However, the Department for Education (DfE) prefers disadvantaged pupils to be compared with non-disadvantaged children nationally and this shows a gap of 14.3 (non-disadvantaged children nationally average 50.1). Durham's non-disadvantaged pupils achieved average 49.3.
- 34 Entry rates to the EBacc continue to fall locally but have remained static nationally. Only 33.8% of Durham pupils entered qualifications in all the relevant EBacc subjects, down from 35% in 2017 and 42% in 2016. The national average in 2018 was 38.4%. The largest fall in terms of entry for qualifications by Durham pupils in 2018 was in Languages; this is similar to the national picture.
- 35 In relation to EBacc, the DfE's preferred key measure of attainment at KS4 is the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ in English and Maths along with C+ in other subjects. By this definition of EBacc, the local authority's result is 13.2%, and the national is 16.7%. At 4+ in English and Maths and EBacc, the local authority outcomes are 20.9% compared with the national of 24.1%.

36 Members of CYP Overview and Scrutiny are asked to note that the DFE continues to advise caution in comparing 2017 and 2018 data due to the significant changes in GCSE courses in the majority of subjects during that time which make year-on-year comparisons unreliable.

## **Key Stage 5 results**

37 AS levels, A levels and vocational qualifications have gone through major reforms in the last few years and, as expected, there is variability in results this year.

38 The content of new A level and AS level courses have been changed, and courses are no longer divided into modules or contain coursework except where it is required to assess specific skills.

39 Applied General Qualifications have also undergone significant change and there is now a much higher proportion of examination assessment, which has impacted on some candidates. The significant drop in APS (average points score) for this qualification, both nationally and in Durham, can be at least partially explained by this (see table below, paragraph 43).

40 Achievement at AS level no longer contributes to an A Level qualification in most subjects.

41 Nationally the proportion of A\* and A grades at A-level increased by 0.1% in 2018. The overall A\*-E pass rate fell for the second time in four years, by 0.3%.

42 Despite this, the results for County Durham students have remained broadly in line with those of previous years. Our academic and applied general attainment continues to be above national figures for state funded schools with an increased number of students achieving the higher grades in both types of course. A-levels remain the dominant qualification taken in school sixth forms.

43 Progress at A level is average or above average in 13 out of 15 schools, and average, above average or well above average for Applied General qualifications in the 12 schools where these qualifications are taken by students. The highest progress at A-level is at Framwellgate School, Durham Johnston School and Durham Sixth Form Centre. In Applied General Qualifications highest progress is at St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive (& Byron College), Peterlee. The two schools with

below average progress at A-level for the last two years are Teesdale School and Wolsingham School. A-level progress and Applied General Qualifications progress at the UTC South Durham was well below average.

44 Although the full national attainment and progress statistics are not yet validated, the overall picture remains positive and is broadly in line with last year.

<b>Key Stage 5</b>	<b>2017 Durham</b>	<b>2017 National</b>	<b>2018 Durham</b>	<b>2018 National</b>
APS per A Level entry	31.92	31.13	32.96	32.12
APS per Applied General entry	39.55	35.69	30.92	28.43
AAB or higher in 2 Facilitating subjects	17.1%	14.3%	15%	13.7%

## Background papers

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Not applicable report for information only.

### **Finance**

Not applicable

### **Consultation**

Not applicable

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Not applicable

### **Human Rights**

Not applicable

### **Crime and Disorder**

Not applicable

### **Staffing**

Not applicable

### **Accommodation**

Not applicable

### **Risk**

Not applicable

### **Procurement**

Not applicable