

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

6 March 2024



**Schools Ofsted Update and
Educational Attainment**

**Report of John Pearce, Corporate Director of Children and Young
People's Services**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of with an update of recent Ofsted inspections of County Durham's maintained schools and educational outcomes in County Durham in 2023.

Executive summary

- 2 The Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee has previously received information relating to the educational achievements of children and young people in County Durham and performance of its schools in relation to Ofsted inspections.
- 3 Included in the committee's work programme is an update on the performance of the county's schools and a summary of educational outcomes.

Recommendations

- 4 That Members of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the information contained in the report and presentation and comment accordingly.

Background

- 5 The Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed in its work programme, to annually include an update that would provide members with information on Ofsted inspections of County

Durham's maintained schools and academies. This was also to include an overview of the educational attainment outcomes achieved by children and young people in the county.

6 In accordance with that decision arrangements have been made for the Head of Education and Skills to attend a meeting of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 March 2024 to provide a presentation that will focus on the following areas:

- Ofsted Inspections of current academic year
- Ofsted inspection position currently for all schools
- Ofsted Inspection Outcomes for different School Categories
- Summary Outcome data for children in Durham Schools by Key Stage (Not comparable to previous Years)

Summary school Inspection Outcomes

7 The following three tables show the Ofsted inspection outcomes for Durham compared to national and regional outcomes as at 31 January 2024.

Nursery and Primary	Durham (All 222 - schools)	National	Regional
Outstanding	12%	14%	15%
Good	78%	77%	78%
Requires Improvement	9%	7%	6%
Inadequate	1%	2%	1%

Secondary	Durham (All 29 - schools)	National	Regional
Outstanding	17%	15%	13%
Good	53%	68%	65%
Requires Improvement	23%	13%	17%
Inadequate	7%	4%	5%

Special	Durham (All 9 - schools)	National	Regional
Outstanding	11%	35%	29%
Good	78%	55%	60%
Requires Improvement	11%	6%	8%
Inadequate	0%	4%	3%

- 8 The following table shows the published school inspection outcomes taken place since September 2023.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
Outstanding	2	0	0
Good	23	2	1
Requires Improvement	5	0	1
Inadequate	0	0	0

Summary school Outcomes Data

Key Stage 2

- 9 The headline results in Durham have moved closer in line with national. The gaps to national have narrowed in reading. The gap at Higher standard in Maths continues to be larger than the gap at Expected standard.

	Expected		Higher/Greater Depth	
	Durham	National	Durham	National
Reading	73.3	73.0	28.0	29.2
Maths	72.0	73.0	21.0	24.0
Writing	71.0	71.0	14.0	13.0
RWM	59.0	60.0	8.0	8.0

Key Stage 4

- 10 Durham results are below national on all measures. They are in-line with regional rates for percentages attaining grades 4 and 5 but above the regional result for average A8 and progress 8 scores.

	Durham	NE	National
Average A8	45.2	44.4	46.2
4+ in EBacc English component	70.6	72.3	74.5
4+ in EBacc Maths component	66.9	67.3	69.9
E&M 4+	61.2	62.2	64.8
5+ in EBacc English component	55.6	57.8	60.4
5+ in EBacc Maths component	46.6	47.0	50.6
E&M 5+	40.9	41.7	45.0
Progress 8	-0.19	-0.27	-0.03

Key Stage 5

- 11 A-level results – state-funded schools only

	Durham		National	
APS	35.6	B-	34.1	C+
APS per best 3	36.6	B-	34.7	C+
AAB+ in 2+ facilitating subjects	18.0	/	15.8	/

- 12 Durham's Average points score remained above national in all measures.

Applied General

	Durham		National	
APS per entry	34.7	Dist	29.5	Merit+

- 13 Again, applied national outcomes are significantly above national.

Tech Level

	Durham		National	
APS per entry	28.7	Merit+	28.5	Merit+

- 14 Having been below national in 2021, Durham's pupils' were in line with their peers on this measure in 2022 and 2023.

Conclusion

- 15 Children and young people have over the previous 3 years, suffered disruption to their education on a scale not seen before and therefore it is important that members are aware of the children and young people's achievements and how our schools are performing.
- 16 League tables and examination processes and grading boundaries, only returned to some kind of normality in 2023 and are not comparable with previous years.

Background papers/links

- [All schools and colleges in County Durham - Compare school and college performance data in England - GOV.UK \(compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk\)](https://performance.service.gov.uk/all-schools-and-colleges-in-county-durham)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The actions described in this report are intended to comply with the Council's duty to exercise its education functions with a view to promoting high standards and the fulfilment of each pupil's learning potential in accordance with S 13 A of the Education Act 1996.

Schools deemed to be inadequate by Ofsted are now given an Academy Order by the DfE meaning that they will be directed to join a strong Multi-Academy Trust.

From September 2022, Schools who have not achieved a 'Good' or better grade for overall effectiveness in the last two inspections, may also be directed in this way.

Finance

Schools achieving a less than 'Good' inspection outcome, often experience a change in first choice applications which can affect their pupil related income factors. Similarly, DCC will provide additional leadership support for maintained schools in this category. This is supported through de-delegation agreed at schools Forum. This fund has reduced as more schools choose to academise. The maintained monitoring, Improvement and brokering grant has been removed by the DfE removing 800k, annually of DCC funding for school improvement work.

Consultation

School Improvement delegated funds are requested annually, consultation through Schools forum in the Autumn Term

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Any change in the quality of educational provision in an area has the potential to adversely impact on protected characteristics, both in terms of pupils, their families, local communities, and employees working in the schools. The direct impact of negative Ofsted inspections could involve pupils being required to attend different schools or not being able to access a local school and being required to travel further.

Human Rights

Not applicable

Climate Change

School outcomes with Ofsted have a direct correlation on first choice applications for school places. The vulnerability of some schools may have financial viability considerations which would adversely affect the ability of many children, to walk to their local school.

Crime and Disorder

None

Staffing

Schools identified as 'Requiring Improvement' or 'Inadequate', can struggle to attract applicants for key positions, particularly around shortage subjects or leadership positions. The financial implications of falling rolls could lead to staffing adjustment and restructuring to address deficit budgets.

Accommodation

Transfer of maintained schools to become academies may have implications in terms of accommodation where school premises are used by the community under arrangements set up with a maintained school.

Risk

A key risk is that, because of actions taken by the County Council (including the failure to make timely interventions), pupils and students do not receive an adequate education. There is an additional risk of reputational damage if the Council does not appear to be able resolve the problem of schools operating with significant and sometimes increasing budgetary difficulties and allows some schools to continue to set deficit budgets whilst requiring other schools to balance their budgets.

The s.151 officer must sign-off the budget for schools with a deficit budget plan and needs to be able to justify doing so in terms of each school having a robust plan to recover from its deficit. The scheme of delegation allows for deficit budgets, but only for three years, and no more than 20% of the school's budget share, up to a maximum of £750,000. There is a risk of legal challenge from the Department for Education if this statutory function is neglected. There is a risk of external auditors calling into question the actions of the s.151 officer if no credible plans are agreed to resolve the issues described in this report.

Procurement

Not applicable