

## Cabinet Report

16<sup>th</sup> April 2014



## Educational Attainment/Standards Report 2013

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### Report of Corporate Management Team

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### Purpose of the Report

1. This report recognises the continued hard work of Durham primary and secondary schools, evidenced by the impressive educational outcomes that they have once again achieved. It sets out the results from tests and examinations at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4/5 for 2013 which, when compared with national averages, provide the key outcome measures for primary and secondary education respectively.
2. Additionally, the report summarises how the Education Development Service (EDS) provides support and intervention, including intensive support for schools in most need, to ensure the best educational outcomes for children and young people in Durham.

### Key Stage 2 - Background

3. At the end of the primary stage of education there are formal assessments of pupils' attainment in mathematics and English, through externally set and marked tests for all 11 year-olds. Writing is judged by teacher assessments, moderated by the local authority. Assessments are made against pre-set levels, with level 4 being the "expected level" for this age group and level 5 being the highest achievable through the tests.

### Key Stage 2 - Outcomes

4. The table below sets out the percentage of pupils in Durham and nationally that achieved levels 3+, 4+ and 5+ in English (reading), English (writing), mathematics, and the three combined at the expected level for this age group, in 2013.

Attainment levels across the local authority continue to be higher than national levels and the strong trend of improvement continues year on year, with Level 5+ mathematics in particular improving sharply on 2012. Writing at Level 5+ is highlighted as a priority for Durham schools, and a working group has been established to support work in this area which reports back via headteacher briefings.

The proportion of pupils making at least expected progress (2+ levels of progress) has been maintained in 2013. In English (reading/writing) the figure for 2+ levels of progress stands at 91%; in mathematics, 90%. In both cases this is above the national averages for 2013 (90% and 88% respectively).

KEYSTAGE 2						
	Level 3+		Level 4+		Level 5+	
	Durham LA	National	Durham LA	National	Durham LA	National
Reading	95	94	88	86	44	44
Writing (teacher assessment)	95	96	84	83	27	30
Mathematics	96	96	87	85	43	41
Reading/Writing/Mathematics			78	75		

In almost all cases, schools are supported in their efforts to achieve these very high educational standards by the direct challenge of Educational Development Partners (EDPs) provided by EDS. EDPs work closely with headteachers and senior leadership teams to interpret school data accurately and to set appropriately demanding attainment targets for all pupils. Comprehensive data analysis enables EDPs to establish consistent baselines so that support is well-identified and the challenge to improve is always accurately gauged.

Additionally, EDS personnel provide subject specific support and intervention, as required, including supporting schools with monitoring, evaluation, work scrutiny and moderation of standards. EDS also provides termly networks in English and mathematics, along with many other subjects, and regular headteacher updates and briefings.

Where schools are identified through EDS monitoring as requiring improvement (or in danger of falling into an Ofsted category of concern), action to improve standards in these schools is immediate. The focus of action will be predominantly on securing provision and outcomes for pupils. Support is intensive and sustained until internal capacity in the school has been assured and attainment improved.

It is as a result of this fast and efficient intervention when necessary, plus consistent, accurate challenge at all times, that standards in most County Durham primary schools remain impressively above national averages and above results achieved in local authorities which are statistically comparable to Durham.

## Key Stage 4 - Background

- Assessment at Key Stage 4, which represents the end of compulsory schooling, continues to be through externally set and marked GCSE and GCSE equivalent examinations across a wide range of subjects and courses. These are graded from A\*-G with national benchmarks of achievement. Annual results from examinations at each of Key Stages 4 and 5 (sixth form) are analysed in order to identify trends across the Local Authority and to inform discussions with specific schools regarding challenge and support.

The table below shows 2013 outcomes. There is a continuing rising trend in all measures, 5+ A\*-C (including English and maths), 5+ A\*-C and 5+ A\*-G.

In summary, in 2013 Durham was once again above the national average in all the recognised national benchmarks. The year-on-year rate of improvement in GCSE outcomes has been significantly greater than the national rate of improvement since 2007.

KEY STAGE 4	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Durham LA	National						
5+ A*-C (Eng/maths)	55.8	53.5	60.0	59.0	62.5	59.4	63	58.6
5+ A*-C (or equiv)							91.3	81.1
5+ A*-G							96.6	90
Ave. Points Score*							516.7	455.3

\* calculated from grades achieved per student

- In terms of students making expected progress, 72% did so in English (against national percentage of 69%), and 68% did so in mathematics (national average 70%). There is an improving trend in maths in Durham, but focused work is being undertaken to improve rates of expected progress in maths.

In addition to maths, areas for improvement at KS4 are

- increasing attainment at A\*/A,
- reducing the attainment gap between pupils receiving the pupil premium (FSM pupils) and others,
- reducing the LA gap in expected progress in English and maths between FSM and non-FSM pupils.

In general, these areas for improvement reflect national and local priorities.

However, Durham remains 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the 12 regional local authorities for the key measure, 5+ A\* - C (E/M). Nationally Durham LA is in the top third of all local authorities against this measure, and we rank 6<sup>th</sup> of all

LAs for the percentage of pupils getting 5+ A\*- C. This is as a result of consistent, accurate support and challenge from EDPs, subject specialist inspectors and other EDS personnel. Through meticulous data analysis, schools at a critical subject level are enabled to identify priorities and make continued improvement to the benefit of all students in County Durham.

## KS5 results

6. Outcomes at Key Stage 5 continue to compare very well with national averages. The percentage of students receiving two or more A-levels at the highest grades improved significantly on the previous year. In all recognised national benchmarks where the data has been made available, Durham is ahead of the national averages.

	2+ A*-B		2+A*-E		APS	
	Durham	National	Durham	National	Durham	National
2013	<b>49.8</b>	Not Available	<b>98.7</b>	Not Available	<b>805.4</b>	709.1

## Conclusion

7. Durham continues to compare very favourably with the national picture in terms of test and examination outcomes for children and young people.

The local authority has a confident and firmly established knowledge of attainment and progress measures, with understanding of all key areas for improvement. It is as a direct result of the thorough and detailed involvement of EDS personnel in the process of support and challenge to schools, that standards remain high and continue to improve across the vast majority of Durham schools. The vital local knowledge shared by the Service is recognised by the Senior HMI, and is invaluable as the local authority anticipates and takes action to limit the consequences of less than good Ofsted inspections.

## Recommendation

8. Cabinet is recommended to note the content of this report.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance - None**

**Staffing - None**

**Risk – Potential reputational issues if results dip in the future**

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - NA**

**Accommodation - None**

**Crime and Disorder - None**

**Human Rights - None**

**Consultation – Any changes to school monitoring systems will be subject to consultation with schools.**

**Procurement – None**

**Disability Issues - None**

**Legal Implications - None**