

Children, Families and Skills Scrutiny Committee
Meeting to be held on Wednesday 31st January 2024

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Caring for the vulnerable;
Delivering better services;
Supporting economic growth;

Education Attainment 2023
(Appendix 'A' refers)

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Brief Summary

This report provides a summary of the attainment of children and young people in Lancashire in the 2023 Summer exam and assessment season.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Children, Families and Skills Scrutiny Committee acknowledge the update provided in the report and comment as appropriate.

Detail

2023 is the second year since 2019 where national assessments were taken in full by schools. Key Stage 2 results will be published for individual schools for the first time nationally since 2019. Key Stage 4 results for individual schools will also be published in full for the first time since 2019.

In 2021 and 2020 due to the impact of the Covid pandemic, Key Stage 4 results were ascertained through teacher assessments which saw a rise in grades overall. In 2022 the grade boundaries were lowered from 2019 to ensure that these children were not disadvantaged. However, in 2023 the grade boundaries were set to align with 2019 with no concessions for the time missed due to Covid, and therefore raised significantly this year in order to ensure a similar number of children achieved similar grades to that pre-pandemic. Only slight adjustments to the examinations were made to accommodate the effects of the pandemic, for example, some topics were revealed to students in advance of the exam and formulae were allowed to be taken into the exam rather than memorised.



In order to increase the performance across Lancashire we introduced the Schools Handbook this year. This means that every school whether they buy into the traded offer or not will receive regular advice/support and signposting from a schools' advisor. If a school has performed poorly in their measures, they are not an academy and there are no mitigating circumstances for this, then a school will be placed on the vulnerable list. The vulnerable schools are able to then access free support from the Monitoring and Intervention Team (MIT) which is funded through schools' forum. This will be a range of financial, HR, governance, SEND, advisory or consultant support depending on the needs of the school. Vulnerable schools and their progress are monitored by the School Improvement Group which meets monthly to discuss and ensure support is appropriate and successful. Academy performance does not sit with the local authority and is instead monitored by the Regional Director at the DfE.

Ofsted

More schools are Good or Outstanding in Lancashire this year than in previous years and significantly more than the national average. However, there is still some work to do with our secondary schools to improve their Ofsted ratings to be in line with national ratings although significant progress has been made this year.

	2021	2022	2023	National
Nurseries	99%	99%	99%	96%
Primary	92%	94%	93%	91%
Secondary	72%	74%	79%	82%

Reception and Early Years

Good Level of Development (GLD) assessments are completed at the end of Reception year and assess progress in early years.

Lancashire performed at 64% with the national average at 67%. This places Lancashire in the 78th percentile of other local authorities, four less than last year however we are matching the North West average which was also 64%.

Nurseries and reception teachers are reporting many more children with speech and language delays and poor social interaction skills which can be linked to the pandemic but also a rise in significant autism and neurodiverse conditions in early years.

However, for our children with SEND and EHCPs in EYFS these children have improved year on year moving from 13% achieving expected standard last year to 15% year. This moves the local authority from 91st percentile to 82nd in comparison to other local authorities for SEND.

Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Phonics are assessed at the end of Year 1 and then again at Year 2. This year 88% of Lancashire children achieved the expected standard with the national figure at



89%. This places Lancashire in the 63rd percentile in comparison to other local authorities. However, we again match the regional average of 88%.

KS1 assessments are performed at the end of Year 2 and assess progress in Year 1 and Year 2. These children will have missed a significant part of their nursery education and some of reception year due to schools being closed due to the pandemic.

Lancashire achieved at 55% for reading, writing and maths combined scores meeting the expected standard with national figures being 56%. This is a 5% increase from the year before and closes the gap with the national figures from last year. This places Lancashire in the 66th percentile nationally and again matching the North West average.

The Advisory Team and Consultancy Team have worked closely with schools focusing on Key Stage 1 and Phonics delivery and training, acknowledging that this was a cohort that had missed out on key early years work and therefore required further intervention.

Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

KS2 assessments in Reading, Writing and Maths are completed at the end of Year 6.

The combined Reading, Writing and Maths scores are 59% in Lancashire and 60% nationally in 2023. This is 2% higher than last year and puts us in the 64th percentile. We are matching the North West average.

Reading dropped nationally this year by 2% to 73% which can be explained by a difficult reading paper that nationally people have thought was inaccessible but also potentially schools have concentrated on increasing writing and maths at the detriment of reading as reading did so well last year. In Lancashire schools achieved 72% in reading.

In Writing significant improvements have been made with 71% achieving the expected standard meeting the national average. In Maths 74% of Lancashire children achieved the expected standard which is above the national average of 73%.

Again, due to poor results last years in these areas the advisory and consultancy teams have provided training and support for these areas which has been demonstrated in these increases. More schools are also accessing their local Maths hubs for support.

Locality Differences at Key Stage 2

All districts except for Preston had increased their Reading, Writing and Maths scores at expected standard compared to 2022. Preston has decreased by 1%, this is likely due to the numbers of children with English as an additional language and starting school mid-year due to the migration increase in Preston this year. Chorley,



Fylde and Hyndburn remained similar with a small increase, but Ribble Valley and South Ribble saw a 4% increase in their grades.

SEND Differences at Key Stage 2

Children with SEND performed better in 2023 than in 2022. The national figure for children with SEND is 20%, 3% higher than Lancashire's 17% but this is 4% higher than last year. This places the local authority in the 82nd percentile in comparison to other local authorities rather than the 89th in 2022.

Disadvantage Differences at Key Stage 2

40.6% of disadvantaged children (those on pupil premium funding and low family incomes) achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths. This is a 3% increase but still 3% below national average. However, in comparison to other local authorities we have moved from 72nd percentile to 65th this year. There are some specific training projects planned to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students through the work of the education partnership officers, advisors, inclusion summits and Lancashire Professional Development Service, our consultancy and training arm.

Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

KS4 data (GCSEs and other Level 2 qualifications) has altered this year due to the raising of the grade boundaries to align with 2019 exam series. This has meant a drop nationally and locally.

The attainment 8 score is reflective of the average score taken across nine subjects. Therefore, this demonstrates how high the scores have been in each school.

The Attainment 8 score for secondary aged children has decreased in Lancashire from 47.6 to 44.9%. This means more children are achieving lower grades in Lancashire in 2023 than in 2022. The national average has dropped from 48.9% to 46.3%. This places the local authority in the 65th percentile in comparison to 64th last year. However regionally we matched the regional average and were slightly above it.

The Progress 8 score demonstrates how much progress has been made since Key Stage 2 for each student and creates an average for what they should have achieved based on their Key Stage 2 scores. For example, a zero score would suggest that the child achieved their expected grades based on their key stage 2 scores in primary school. A plus score would suggest they have improved on this and a minus score that they have not achieved their expected scores when averaged out across nine subjects.

The Progress 8 score has also decreased in Lancashire to -0.17 from -0.13 the year before. This is higher than the regional average of -0.20 but still significantly lower than the national average of -0.03. This would suggest there is work to do to ensure that children are receiving a curriculum suitable to their future pathways and abilities. This places Lancashire on the 65th percentile compared to last year's 62nd.



Locality Differences at Key Stage 4

All districts saw a decrease in figures in line with the national changes in grade boundaries. The districts with the largest changes were 4 points in attainment 8 differences in Wyre and Lancaster. With the smallest changes occurring in Rossendale and the Ribble Valley. Burnley remains the lowest scoring district with 38.62 attainment scores alongside Pendle at 38.59. The highest scores are Rossendale, Chorley and the Ribble Valley with 49.04, 49.14 and 50.97. Last year Lancaster, Chorley and the Ribble Valley were the highest scoring districts.

SEND Differences at Key Stage 4

Children with SEND or an EHCP performed 1% less this year at Key Stage 4 than last year which is less than the change nationally for all students in line with the changes to grade boundaries. The average attainment 8 score for children with SEND was 26.4% in 2023 and 27.5% in 2022 (as above, this is still a bigger change nationally than in Lancashire). This places Lancashire on the 69th percentile which matches last year's place.

Children with SEND support or an EHCP achieved -0.70 progress 8 score in comparison to last year's -0.78. This is a significant improvement. This places Lancashire on the 61st percentile compared to last year's 69th percentile.

Disadvantaged Differences at Key Stage 4

The average attainment 8 score for disadvantaged children was 32.4%. Last year this was 34.9%. However, with the shift in grade boundaries likely to impact the disadvantaged cohort of children more it has meant that the local authority has risen to 70th percentile from 80th percentile last year. Meaning that on average children in Lancashire who are disadvantaged performed better in comparison to others last year.

The average progress 8 score for disadvantaged children was -0.77. Last year it was -0.71. However, we have risen from 70th percentile to 69th but there is still a long way to meet the national score of -0.57.

Children in our Care

The Virtual School annual report was submitted to Children's Scrutiny in November 2023.

Appendices

Appendix 'A' is attached to this report. For clarification it is summarised below and referenced at relevant points within this report.

Appendix 'A'	Attainment Data – this contains the data comparing year on year attainment that is referred to in the report.
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Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

- There is still a gap in attainment in primary schools between 2019 achievement and 2022. This is a national issue. This could lead to lower Key Stage 4 attainment if the children don't fill these gaps in learning.
- Reading scores have dropped, as they have nationally, but writing and maths has increased significantly.
- Attainment in the Early Years and Phonics although improved, is still below national averages and therefore more support needs to be placed in these areas.
- Due to lower attainment at primary school, for example poorer speech and language/social interaction skills for example, this can lead to greater frustration/anxiety and more behavioural issues in children. This could lead to a rise in suspensions and exclusions.
- Children with SEND needs have improved their outcomes in 2023 but are still behind their national counterparts.

Risk management

The Education Strategy and the SEND Improvement plan focus on these particular issues and will continue to report to Scrutiny quarterly on their progress.

Ofsted also have termly discussions with the Education Improvement Team where they scrutinise performance of the local authority and our actions in addressing these risks.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

