



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Young People's Scrutiny Committee
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<u>Item</u>
7
<u>Public</u>

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SCHOOL PERFORMANCE 2014

1. Summary

This report provides an overview of the performance of primary and secondary schools in Shropshire in 2014. It summarises the headline outcomes for pupils at each stage of education, as measured by the National Curriculum assessment arrangements and GCSE examinations. It also summarises the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of schools.

2. Recommendations

That members accept the position as set out in the report.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

Not applicable.

4. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

5. Background

- 5.1 Outcomes for pupils in Shropshire over time have been above the national average. They have also been in line with, or more usually above, the average across the group of local authorities judged to be closest in terms of comparisons (the statistical neighbour group of 11 local authorities). Outcomes for pupils broadly reflect this pattern for 2014. In contrast, the outcomes of Ofsted inspections on Shropshire schools have not been as positive, especially in relation to judgements made on primary schools. These have improved significantly over the last two years, and are now in line with expectations.
- 5.2 When children are five they are assessed by their teachers against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). In 2014 the proportion of pupils in Shropshire achieving expected outcomes in all seven areas of learning and in all 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) was ahead of national expectation. This placed Shropshire in the top quartile nationally and in comparison with the statistical neighbour group (where it was 1st for six ELGs and 2nd or 3rd in all but one of the remaining 11). There were improvements in outcomes in all areas and ELGs compared with 2013 and these improvements were ahead of the national improvement in 13 ELGs and in line in the other four. 64% of pupils achieved Good Levels of Development (GLD), compared to 60% nationally. This was a 12% increase on 2013 and moved the LA from 59th to 30th in the national ranking (based on 152 LAs).
- 5.3 When children are seven they are assessed against key stage 1 expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Level 2 or above is the expectation, with level 2B+ being a good level of attainment and level 3 a very good level of attainment. Shropshire's data shows an overall improvement in outcomes in all subjects at all levels over the last three years. Results in reading, writing and mathematics were ahead of national averages at level 2+, 2B+ and level 3 in 2014 and placed the LA first or second in the statistical neighbour group for all of these indicators.
- 5.4 When children are 11 they are assessed against key stage 2 expectations. Prior to 2013 these assessments focussed on an assessment for English overall, and an assessment for mathematics. In 2013 this changed and children were assessed separately for reading and writing, with an additional test being introduced for Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS). Level 4 or above is the expectation, with level 4B+ being a good level of attainment, level 5+ being very good and level 6 being the highest level possible. Results across all subjects for 2014 again place Shropshire in the top three within the statistical neighbour group at level 4+ and show a marked improvement at the higher level 5+ compared with 2013. There has also been a significant improvement in the new GPS assessment, with Shropshire moving up from mid-table to 2nd in the statistical neighbour rankings for both level 4+ and level 5+.

- 5.5 At key stage 2 the progress children have made from key stage 1 is also measured, with children expected to make at least 2 levels progress. If they make 3 levels progress they are making better than expected progress. In Shropshire the proportion of children making expected progress was in-line with national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with the progress made by children in LAs within the statistical neighbour group Shropshire is third in all three key indicators. These outcomes show an improvement in rates of progress when compared with 2013. In 2014 the proportion of pupils in Shropshire making better than expected progress rose in all 3 core subjects. In reading the increase was 6%, compared to a national increase of 5%; in writing the increase was 3%, which was in-line with the national increase; in mathematics the increase was 6% compared to a national increase of 4%. However, there still remains a small gap between Shropshire outcomes and national outcomes in writing and mathematics using this measure. Statistical neighbour and regional data is not yet available for this indicator.
- 5.6 The DfE sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2 (known as the 'floor standard'), and only schools with a cohort size of over 10 children are judged against this measure. In 2014 six primary schools fell below this minimum level, compared with four in 2012 and eight in 2013. Given the size of Shropshire's cohorts this data fluctuates year-on-year and only one of the six schools below the minimum standard in 2014 was also below in 2013.
- 5.7 At age 16 (the end of key stage 4) pupils are assessed at GCSE, or equivalent qualifications. The analysis of the 2014 results is more complex than the previous year because of the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education in September 2013 that only pupils' first results would count in school performance measures, rather than their best results which had been measured in 2013 and previous years. Most Shropshire schools continued to follow an early entry policy for a proportion of students, allowing them to re-sit if they did not achieve their expected result. Therefore for 17 of the 21 mainstream secondary schools first results identify outcomes for pupils based on their initial examination outcomes and different final or best results identify accurately how well pupils achieved at the end of key stage 4. Analysis of final results ensures reliable comparison with 2013 outcomes and is consistent with current Ofsted practice.
- 5.8 Unvalidated 2014 final examination results indicate that the proportion of Shropshire's pupils who gained 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and mathematics in 2014 has remained the same as for 2013 (59%). This is just above the national average for 2014. There is no comparative data for final results with other similar authorities. Unvalidated first results for Shropshire are in line with the national average (56%) and in line with the average for other similar local authorities.

- 5.9 Although the GCSE data for 2014 is still provisional, the initial indication for first results is that the proportion of pupils who made expected progress in English is just below the national average (69% compared to 71%), and the proportion who made expected progress in mathematics is broadly in line with the national average (64% compared to 65%). This data gives Shropshire a low ranking (10th and 9th respectively) in the statistical neighbour group. Comparative data for first results that identifies the percentages of pupils who made more than expected progress in English and in mathematics has yet to be released.
- 5.10 Provisional data for final results also indicates that the proportion of pupils who made expected progress in English is just below the national average (71% compared to 73%) and the proportion who made more than expected progress is 5% below the national average of 34%. In mathematics final results indicate that the proportion of pupils who made expected progress in is in line with the national average (68%) and the proportion who made more than expected progress is also just below the national average (29% compared to 31%). In science final results indicate that the proportion of pupils who made expected progress remains above the national average (56% compared to 53%) and the proportion who made more than expected progress is broadly in line with the national average (26% compared to 27%). No national or statistical neighbour comparisons are available for final results.
- 5.11 This data confirms that improving outcomes at key stage 4, particularly in relation to rates of progress in English, continues to be a priority.
- 5.12 The DfE continues to set minimum expectations for attainment at the end of key stage 4. In 2013 one secondary school had fallen below this standard and in 2014 this school's headline figure improved by 15% based on final results. 2014 data confirms that, on the comparable measure of final results, no Shropshire school is below the DfE floor standard. One school dips 4% below when only first results are used.
- 5.13 Improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils has been a priority for Shropshire because over time the gap between the attainment of pupils entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) and their peers in Shropshire has been wider than the national gap, especially at key stage 4. This gap narrowed from 12% greater than national average in 2012 to 3% greater than national average in 2013. In 2014 the gap continued to narrow to 1% greater (broadly in line with) the national gap when pupils' first results are counted and it is exactly in line with the national gap when final results are taken into account. There continues to be a sharp focus on closing the gaps in performance, including through effective use of the pupil premium funding.

- 5.14 School Improvement Advisers (SIAs) review school performance routinely, including through an annual risk assessment. Twice a year the Education Improvement Service undertakes a School Performance Monitoring (SPM) process which identifies schools in need of a low, medium or high level of challenge and support. Following this process letters are sent to headteachers and to the Chair of governing bodies which summarise the LA's judgment. This process means that the LA is able to take pre-emptive action and target schools that are vulnerable, to ensure improvement. Ofsted inspections report that the LA knows its schools well and matches the level of challenge and support proportionately to need.
- 5.15 In the past, and in contrast with the broadly good levels of achievement and evidence of successful intervention in schools, the number of schools in Shropshire judged by Ofsted to be inadequate has been high. In September 2013 two secondary schools and five primary schools were judged to be in special measures. However, by November 2014 this had dropped to one secondary school and three primary schools. LA maintained schools judged to be inadequate receive significant amounts of targeted support from the local authority, which also brokers the support of a headteacher from a good or outstanding school. They also receive regular monitoring visits by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), where a judgement is made about LA support to the school. In all cases LA support has been judged to be at least appropriate, and is more often judged to be good and to have contributed to the rapid improvement of the school
- 5.16 The DfE policy for schools judged to require special measures is that they become sponsored academies, with a current emphasis on strong local partnerships to secure improvement. Shropshire currently has two secondary and three primary sponsored academies, with a further primary school due to become a sponsored academy in January 2015. These outcomes are the result of significant work by LA Officers to engage stakeholders, including governors. In two cases an Interim Executive Board has replaced the governing body of the school.
- 5.17 Wider Ofsted judgements have also been in contrast to the broadly good outcomes for pupils. Shropshire began 2012/13 with a lower than national proportion of schools judged to be good or outstanding, and a lower proportion of children attending good and outstanding schools, especially in the primary sector.
- 5.18 Schools judged to require improvement also have additional targeted support, including through a central meeting programme for headteachers and chairs of governors led by the Education Improvement team. This programme has regularly included sessions led by a member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI). It is this HMI team who conduct monitoring visits to schools judged to be in special measures or to require improvement.

- 5.19 The impact of this additional targeted support, and of the successful work of headteachers, staff and governors in schools, is evident in significantly improved Ofsted outcomes for Shropshire. Data updated to 25 November 2014 confirms 79% of primary schools in Shropshire are now judged good or outstanding (compared to 55% in August 2012) and 81% of pupils attend good or outstanding schools (compared to 59% in August 2012).
- 5.20 The most recent national data (March 2014) suggests that 80% primary schools are judged good or outstanding and 79% of pupils attend good and outstanding schools. Updated national data will be reported in the HMCI Annual Report due to be published early December and may show further national improvement. However, Shropshire can evidence significant improvement with the 24% improvement in the percentage of good and outstanding schools and the 22% improvement in the percentage of children attending good and outstanding schools between September 2012 and November 2014.
- 5.21 There are fewer secondary schools in Shropshire and there have therefore been fewer inspections. Outcomes up to November 2014 confirm that 67% of secondary schools are judged good and outstanding (compared with a national figure in March of 71%); however, the percentage of pupils in good and outstanding secondary schools (74%) is in line with the most recent national figure (of 73%). The secondary schools in Shropshire judged to require improvement, and therefore subject to HMI monitoring visits, are receiving positive feedback on their progress from HMI.

6. Additional Information

None

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)
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Ann Hartley

Local Member

All Members

Appendices
