

## **School Performance 2016 – National Curriculum Test and Public Examination Results**

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### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. This report provides a summary of the Somerset Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Assessments, KS1 and KS2 Standard Assessment Tests (SATs), GCSE and A Level results for 2016. The report includes comparison to national data where available. It also reports on vulnerable groups against each Key Stage. This is not final validated data so caution needs to be given to the accuracy of all current results and some national comparative data is still unavailable for some indicators. Where possible comparison to statistical neighbours is also provided.

### **2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations**

- 2.1. The members of the Committee are asked to:

- (i) consider the improvement in many areas of school performance in 2016
- (ii) Recognise the areas that still require significant improvement and the priorities for action to ensure that improvement is achieved
- (iii) to read the report in connection with the strategic education vision for Somerset 'Achieving Excellence for All 2016-2020

<http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/council/board3d/2016%20May%2011%20Item%206%20Paper%20B%20%20Annex%201%20Education%20Strategic%20Vision.pdf>

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. This report contains a review of all available data to cover all the Key stages mentioned above. The commentary reflects a summary of the key points for each key stage and the priorities for action in 2016/2017.
- 3.2. Early Years Foundation Stage refers to children who at age five have completed their Reception year in primary, infant or first schools. Key Stage One refers to children who have completed Year 2 in primary, first or infant schools and are aged seven years old. Key Stage 2 refers to children who have completed Year 6 in primary, junior or middle schools and are aged 11 years old. Key Stage 4 refers to young people who have completed Year 11 and are aged 16. Key Stage 5 refers to young people who have completed Year 13 and who are aged 18.

Whilst this report covers the attainment in 2016 national results it is important to stress what is in place to support schools and settings with their improvement

programmes. Schools either as academies or as maintained schools have increasing autonomy and the Local Authority works in partnership with schools to maximise this autonomy and to increase school effectiveness. Following the development of the strategic vision 'Achieving Excellence for All' the Local Authority has put in place a number of key activities to support the areas for improvement that the following report describes. These include:

- The appointment of Somerset education Partners to support every school with their improvement priorities
- The establishment of a new funding regime that necessitates schools bidding for school improvement funding by working with groups of schools to address priorities
- The setting up of a new Somerset Education Partnership Board that holds schools, the LA and other partners to account for the impact on pupil outcomes of the available funding
- The design of a new vulnerable group approach to support schools with closing the gap between vulnerable groups and their peers
- A greater engagement with colleges and Early Years in the school improvement agenda
- Developed and implemented the Team Around the School programme which ensures that learners needs are met early allowing them to maximise their education experience
- Designed and implemented the new core standards for Special Education Needs which support schools in providing the appropriate level of resource and support for children with additional needs prior to a request for an education, health and care plan.

### **3.3. Early Years Foundation Stage**

The main overall indicator for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is the percentage of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) for which they need to achieve Expected or Exceeding in all prime Learning Goals (including Literacy and Mathematics). In Somerset 68.7% of children achieved GLD in 2016. This is 2 percentage points higher than in 2015 and continues a 5 year improvement trend. This is just in line with the national average of 69.3%. However, this is the first time for some years that the result dips just below the National Average (NA). Our top Statistical Neighbour (SN) is East Sussex at 75.7% with Devon next at 72.2%. We have set a target of 70% for 2017 but expect to exceed that ambition as the Early Years Foundation Stage will be a significant focus in 2017.

#### **Gender**

Girls continue to outperform boys on most indicators, including the GLD indicator. Girls achieved 75.3%, boys achieved 62.1%. Whilst the gender gap has widened very slightly 0.1%, we are still better than NA and SN in terms of the difference in performance between boys and girls. We are not complacent in this area and are focused to narrowing the gap further in 2017.

Literacy, including writing remains the weakest area with only a small improvement for girls of 0.6% and boys 0.3%. Speaking remains the weakest prime aspect although achievement was 87% for all children; girls 90.8% and boys 83.2%.

### **Free School Meals**

The achievement gap between those in receipt of Free School Meals and their peers is 19.3% for the GLD. This is a very slight increase on 2015.

### **3.4. Priorities for Action**

- To further develop collaborative partnerships and provide the highest quality support and opportunities for all children and families leading to self-improving communities
- Ensure communication and information is relevant, clear and accessible to parents, carers and providers.
- Identify and recognise the number of transition points a child has in their first 5 years and develop timely, multi-agency strategies to support positive transitions and continuity across the 0-5 age range
- Improvement in the quality of Teaching and Learning across all settings and schools
- Secure high quality and resilient leadership and governance in every school and setting and strengthen workforce development through on-going self-improvement

### **3.5. Key Stage 1**

In 2016 a new assessment system was implemented for the first time in Key Stage 1. Instead of levels children are now assessed as reaching Expected Standard (ES) or Higher Standard (HS). This assessment is used for all indicators of performance either as a combined result or separately as Reading, Writing, or Mathematics.

The combined Reading, Writing, Mathematics (RWM) Expected Standard for Somerset was 61% against a national average of 60%. Those children gaining the HS were 8% against a national average of 9%. We are therefore in line with the national performance.

In terms of progress, assessment is now measured on a scale where 0 is average. Anything below 0 is slightly below or below average, and anything above is slightly above or above average. For RWM Expected Standard, Somerset was - 2 and for progress at the higher standard we were also - 2. We are therefore slightly below NA but not significantly. Ofsted describes this as in-line with National Average.

In Reading, Writing and Maths we were in line with National Average on all indicators with the exception of the HS for Maths where we were 2.5% below NA. Maths is a major focus for improvement in 2017.

### **Phonics**

In 2016 the phonics result for KS1 was 78.5% against a national performance of 81%. This is an improvement on 2015 but still requires greater focus in this academic year.

### **Vulnerable Group Difference**

The gap between Free School Meals children and their peers on the RWM combined indicator widened this year from 17% in 2015 to 22% in 2016. Gaps continue to widen between children with SEND and their peers. This is disappointing. We are focussed on all vulnerable groups in 2017 and remain determined to narrow the gaps through supporting and challenging our schools.

### **3.6. Priorities for Key Stage 1**

- Continue to improve the quality of provision in Key Stage 1 overall to ensure that the direction of improvement takes Somerset schools well above the national average.
- Establish a plan of support for Key Stage 1 schools where the expected level of achievement was not reached and where the gap between FSM and non- FSM is significant.
- Implement a bespoke programme of professional development for all Key Stage 1 classes requiring additional support to improve the quality of teaching.
- To improve the trend patterns of boys in all three areas at key Stage 1.
- To ensure that with the introduction of Assessment without levels that schools are confident in tracking the progress of all children.

## **4. Key Stage 2**

In 2016 a new assessment system was implemented for the first time in Key Stage 2. Instead of levels, children are now assessed as reaching Expected Standard (ES) or higher standard (HS). This assessment is used for all indicators of performance either as a combined result or separately for areas such as Reading, Writing or Maths.

The combined Reading, Writing, Maths Expected Standard for Somerset was 52% against a national average of 52%. Those children gaining the HS were 8% in Somerset against 8% nationally. In 2015 the NA was 80% and Somerset achieved 78.4%, so a difference of 1.6%. In 2016 the NA was 52% and Somerset achieved 52%. Therefore Somerset has reduced the gap from 1.6 to 0 in 2016. A very good achievement.

In terms of progress, again the new national average is 0. For Reading, Writing, Maths at Expected Standard for KS2, Somerset achieved - 3%. So below the national average. This is an important focus for improvement in 2017.

Reading and Writing are in line with the National Average, whilst Maths and Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation (SPAG) are slightly below.

### **Gender**

In Reading, Writing, Maths combined girls continue to do better than boys. 49.4% girls to 55% boys. The gender gap is therefore 5.6%. Nationally the gender gap is 7.5. Somerset continues to do well in narrowing this difference.

### **Vulnerable group difference**

The gap between Free School Meals children and their peers is 17.3%. This is slightly higher than 2015 and is wider than the national FSM gap of 14.5%. The gap between children requiring SEND support and those without SEND narrowed in 2016 by 7 percentage points. Whilst this is encouraging, the gap between the two groups remains unacceptably wide. The gap between Children Looked After and all pupils is 32%. This again is a positive narrowing of the gap from 45% in 2015.

### **4.1. Priorities for Key Stage 2**

- To continue to support and challenge all schools to secure further improvement.
- To continue to challenge all schools to set and achieve aspirational targets for all pupils.
- To further work with schools to ensure that all vulnerable groups are making accelerated progress.
- To further develop the school to school support network to ensure the sharing of best practice.

## 5. **Key Stage 4**

In 2016 the assessment arrangements for KS4 have changed. This means that for the majority of indicators it is not possible to look at trends. It is therefore important to consider Somerset's performance against the national and regional attainment and achievement.

In terms of the 5 A\* to C English and Math Somerset achieved 62% which was exactly in line with the National Average.

KS4 progress which measures the value that secondary schools add from the KS2 data, showed a progress score of + 0.03. This is significantly above the National Average of 0. This was the strongest performance across the whole of the South West. In terms of the percentage of A\* to C English and Maths, we were absolutely in line with national average at + 0%.

Higher performing groups included first language not English, Black Caribbean, Other Asian, Black and African and Female. It is important to note that with the exception of females, these groups are very small in Somerset and are not statistically significant.

Lower performing groups include those pupils with an Education, Health and care Plan, Free School Meals (FSM), SEN support and FSM in the last 6 years plus those that joined in Year 10 or 11.

Gender difference shows a 0.5 bias to girls but this is a relatively positive situation between the two genders. The progress difference is more significant with a – 0.11 for boys to + 0.17 for girls.

Pupil Premium attainment at 4.0 is significantly below the all pupil attainment of 5.0. Again progress is significantly below the all pupil achievement. - 0.36 for FSM in the last 6 years compared to + 0.13 for all pupils. This difference applies to all FSM indicators and must be a focus for improvement in 2017.

SEN pupils either in receipt of SEN support or with an ECP do not attain as well as their peers. This is equally true for progress indicators. Whilst attainment may be lower as a result of pupils' individual needs it is not acceptable that the progress they make from their starting point is significantly weaker than their peers.

Ofsted now describes gaps as “diminishing difference”. We are focused on ensuring that the differences between vulnerable groups and their peers does indeed diminish and rapidly.

## **5.1 Priorities for Key Stage 4**

- To support more good schools to achieve an outstanding grading
- To improve the proportion of students attaining 5 or more GCSE A\*/A grades
- To even out the variation in performance amongst providers with lower performance amongst some larger providers.
- Closing the gaps for our most vulnerable groups remains an on-going focus

## **5.2 A Level**

In 2016 there were 4073 students completing their Key Stage 5 education. 1011 were in schools with sixth forms and the remainder at the four colleges.

The average point score (APS) per entry for those attending Somerset schools was 31.58. This was slightly above the National Average (NA) of 31.52. For Somerset overall when combining the colleges and schools results the APS entry was slightly below the NA at 29.31.

For those taking A levels in schools 17.1% achieved AAB or better which is above the NA of 16.7%. For Somerset overall including the colleges the result was 13%.

In vocational terms the APS per entry for Applied General Students in schools was 40.82 above the NA of 34.70. The entry for technical level student was 30.7 slightly below the NA of 30.83. The combined school and college data shows that Somerset was above the NA for both general and technical students per entry.

The overall grade at A level was a C- which was exactly in line with the NA. The average grade for a student's best 3 A levels was a C+ and again we were exactly in line with the NA. The proportion of students attaining 3 A\* to A grades was 11% which was again in line with NA.

## **5.3 Priorities for Key Stage 5**

- Promote the raising of standards in sixth forms and colleges.
- Improve teaching and learning, student progress tracking and intervention.
- Support improvement in the quality of provision offered by different school sixth forms in order to support their work in ensuring a suitable range of post 16 options are made available to young people in Somerset.

## **5.4 Children in Care – The Virtual School**

The Virtual School (VS) is a national construct designed to improve the educational outcomes of Children who are Looked After (CLA). The VS is led by a Virtual Head teacher and has a staffing complement of advisory teachers and education support workers. The Virtual Head works closely with Children's social care to ensure education is a pivotal aspect in reviewing children and young people's placements, any potential moves as well as transitions in schooling terms.

The results for the VS can be difficult to interpret as many factors such as small

cohorts in age groups, time spent in care, special educational needs as well as significant trauma all impact on the ability of children to be able to learn appropriately and to achieve in the same way and time frame as their peers.

However the potential complexity of these children and young people applies to all CLA nationwide and therefore it is important that we look to compare Somerset's performance against the national indicators.

### **Key Stage 1 ( 14 children)**

43% of 7 year old CLA achieved the expected standard in Reading, 29% in writing and 36% in Mathematics. In the combined 29% achieved the expected standard. It is important to note that 64% (9 children) had some form of SEND. 57% (3 children) had SEN support with 7% (1 child) having a statement of SEN.

### **Key Stage 2 ( 25 children)**

32% of 11 year old CLA achieved the expected standard in Reading, 44% in Writing, 40% in Maths. In the combined 20% achieved the expected standard against 53% of their peers. It is important to note that 64% (16 children) had some form of SEND. 40% (10 children) had SEN support and 24% (6 children) had a statement of SEN.

### **Key Stage 4 ( 45 students)**

13% (6 children) of CLA achieved their 5+ A\* to C including English and Maths against 62% of their peers. 20% ( 9 children) achieved their 5+ A\* to C. This is broadly in line with 2015 although the cohort is 40% larger in 2016.

68% of this cohort had some form of SEND. 50% of the cohort attended an independent school, a special school or a Pupil referral Unit. In 2015 this figure was 29%.

Of those children who attended a mainstream setting, 28% (5 children) achieved 5+ A\* to C including English and Maths. 44% (8 children) achieved 5+ A\* to C and 89% (16 children) achieved 5 + A\* to G. These are good results for CLA in mainstream education.

### **Priorities for the Virtual School**

- A Virtual School post 16 College Link advisor is now in place, but this is a part time support worker role which will need developing.
- There is still work to be done to enhance and embed the VS and education within CSC and other services but there has been significant change in the last 6 months
- Activities specifically aimed at KS2 and KS4 to improve outcomes
- More involvement with young people outside of personal education plan meetings
- Enhanced training on attachment and trauma for schools
- Development of the Children Missing Education Panel as a forum for scrutinising children on part time / no provision
- Recording of information in one secure place (Capita) for all CLA in and out of county and in all types of provision

- Virtual School to be involved in all decisions around educational plans and school moves

## 5.5 Conclusion

While there has been some improvement in many areas of Somerset schools in 2016 there is still wide variability in performance. Our new Education Strategic Vision has set our ambition at a faster improvement rate per year through to 2020. The monitoring of our improvement is increasingly complex given the changes to the assessment arrangements in 2016. Primary assessment will remain the same in 2017 but once again Key Stage 4 will change meaning we will not have the ability to compare 2016 with 2017 except against national performance data.

The improvements in the EYFS represent good progress over the last five years. Key Stage 1 and 2 remain in line with the national position on almost every indicator. Our ambition is to be significantly above all national indicators and we are therefore building on a very solid base, This was reflected in the recent annual conversation with Ofsted on Somerset's performance.

However, gaps between our most vulnerable groups and their peers remain our most urgent priority. Schools are very aware of this and our focus to support school improvement through the Somerset Education Partner programme will enable more focused and specific support for those schools struggling with closing the gaps.

Gender differences continue to be significant, opening up markedly in the EYFS and continuing to be a key issue at all key stages so that by GCSE just over half of boys achieve a good outcome. Boys are over-represented in figures for SEN, exclusion from school, children looked after and the NEET data. Improving their progress and attainment is a key element in raising standards overall in Somerset and in achieving full participation for all young people.

Slow progress is being made in improving progress and narrowing the gaps in attainment for pupils with special educational needs. In spite of some improvement in the outcomes for Children Looked After their achievement gaps continue to be a concern and a key priority for improvement in 2016-17.

It remains very disappointing that, in spite of additional resources through the pupil premium of approximately £17 million per year in Somerset, the attainment gaps for pupils on free school meals have shown little improvement overall. This is a major priority for 2016-17.

Educational attainment gaps result in low social mobility. Children's life chances should not be determined so young and with so little chance of catching up for those who are less advantaged. Recent national and international reports have highlighted this key issue for the economy and for individual life chances. The OECD Skills Outlook Report 2013 highlighted the low literacy and numeracy skills of 16-24 year olds in the UK compared to other countries. The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission Annual Report, October 2013, focused on what more should be done to improve social mobility through the education system and other government policy areas. A recent report from Save the



Children, 'Too Young to Fail' provides a powerful analysis of achievement gaps and what we can do to improve. This is our top priority in Somerset as we move forward with our Education Strategic vision. With West Somerset identified as one of the six priority areas for social mobility by the department for Education, we are actively engaged in a three year programme of improvement. We will ensure that learning from this work is replicated in areas of need across Somerset as a whole.

**Note:** For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author.