

School Standards Report to Ambitious Scrutiny 7th March 2016



The Education and Adoption Bill proposes a significant change to the role of the Local Authority (LA) in relation to school standards and pupil achievement. The Bill effectively removes the responsibility from the LA to monitor, challenge, support and intervene in schools in terms of school improvement and attainment. This whole area of work passes to the Regional Schools Commissioner who currently undertakes this function in relation to academies (including Free and Studio Schools and University Technical Colleges). The LA role as champion for all children and young people remains as does the duty to promote the best outcomes for school leavers, safeguard children and young people (including Prevent and extremism), place, shape and provide for Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND).

This report is structured by Key stage and contains a short summary of headlines of school performance across the city.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

(Teacher assessment of five year olds published at the end of Reception Year).

- 1.1 The percentage of 5 year olds reaching a 'good level of development (GLD – having the essential skills, knowledge and understanding to be ready for starting the National Curriculum increased by 5% on last year.
- 1.2 Plymouth's results are 3% below the national average. Last year Plymouth's results were 2% below the national average. This growth in the gap in attainment is because the percentage of children reaching a good level of development increased by a greater degree across the country as a whole.
- 1.3 The percentage of girls reaching a 'good level of development' is 71%. This is 16% higher than the figure for boys.
- 1.4 Children eligible for free school meals (FSM) attain less well than those who do not qualify for free school meals. In 2015 the difference was 18% in terms of the percentage achieving a 'good level of development'. This is in line with the national figure but represents a 2% rise on the figure for Plymouth in 2014.
- 1.5 The percentage of Early Years settings judged to be good or better by Ofsted has increased to 98% in 2015. National figures are not yet available but the figure for Plymouth is likely to exceed the national figure.

Key Stage 1

(Year 1 Phonics Reading Test and Teacher Assessment of 7 year olds, reported at the end of the infant stage).

- 2.1 The Year 1 Phonics Test measures the ability of 6 year olds to decode text using phonic knowledge. In 2015 the percentage of pupils reaching the necessary standard increased by 3% compared to the pass rate for 2014. This figure of 77% is in line with the national result.
- 2.2 The percentage of girls reaching the required standard was 82% and for boys it was 73%. Both results represent an improvement on the position in 2014 and are broadly in line with the national picture.

2.3 Almost all other KSI results covering reading, writing and maths improved when compared to 2014. Most results are below the corresponding national results but the gaps in the majority of cases are closing. In the majority of areas girls outperform boys.

2.4 Pupils eligible for FSM attained less well than Non – FSM pupils in all areas of reading, writing and maths. The gaps in attainment between the two groups both grew and narrowed when compared to figures for 2014. In reading the gaps fell, in writing and maths they grew. The gaps are comparable to those witnessed nationally.

Key Stage 2

(Statutory mainly marked assessments of 11 year olds mainly reported at the end of the junior phase)

3.1 The results for L4+ threshold (expected standard) for reading, writing and maths combined, increased by 3% on the figure for 2014 and now stands at 77% This is 3% below the national figure for 2015 but the gap has narrowed by 2% compared to 2014.

3.1 With regards to individual subjects, there was no improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading compared to 2014. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching the required standard increased by 3%, in maths it increased by 3% and in spelling, punctuation and grammar it increased by 6%. In all subjects the results are below the national averages but in many cases the results for the city show the gaps narrowing when compared to the national picture.

3.2 With the exception of maths, girls' results were higher than boys. Such a situation generally mirrors the national picture.

3.3 The percentage of pupils making the two levels of progress in reading, writing and maths increased in 2015 compared to 2014 (expected rate of progress). Again, whilst some of the results are below the national averages the gaps are closing.

3.4. Pupils eligible for FSM attain less well than non- FSM pupils. This is true for all subject areas and mirrors the national picture. However, the gaps in attainment are narrowing in most cases when results are compared to that of 2014. The gaps in attainment for Plymouth are general smaller than those for the country as a whole.

Key Stage 4.

(Statutory external tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 11 – 15/16 Year olds)

4.1. The percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSE passes grades A*-C including English and maths was 52% in 2015. This represents a fall of 1% on the figure for 2014. The figure for 2015 is below the national average. Part of this decline can be explained by the last minute change in exam boundary grades especially with regards to the D/C grade boarder.

4.2. The percentage of pupils achieving A*-C grades in the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) subjects was 21%. This represents a 3% fall on 2014 (The Ebacc subjects are English, maths, science, a foreign language and either geography or history. The figure for 2015 is below the national average.

4.3. The percentage of pupils making the expected rates of progress in English fell by 3% compared to 2014. For maths the result for this year represented a 3% increase on the result for 2014. Both figures are below the national averages.

4.4. Pupils eligible for FSM attain less well than non- FSM pupils. In terms of the percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSE grades A*-C including English and maths, this attainment gap closed by 5% when compared to 2014. The attainment gap is below that for the country as a whole.

Key Stage 5.

5.1. The average points score per student was 719.3 in 2015. This is the accumulation of all the points from L3 qualifications ('A' Levels, BTECs etc). This is an increase on the figure for 2014 and is above the national average.

5.2. The average points score per entry of qualification is 213.1. This represents an increase on the figure for 2014, but is below the national average.

5.3. The percentage of students achieving 3 A levels, grades A*-E, is 68.8%. This is below the national average but the gap has narrowed compared to 2014.

Below floor standards and schools in danger of being classified as 'coasting'.

The floor standards are the minimum standards set by the government for schools. Should a school fall below the floor standard there is an expectation that a rigorous plan for improvement is formulated and implemented as soon as is possible.

The criteria for judging a primary school to be below the floor standards is where fewer than 65% of pupils achieve L4 or above in reading, writing and maths and results are below the median percentage of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and maths. For secondary schools, a school is judged to be below the floor standards if fewer than 40% of pupils achieve 5 A*-C GCSE grades including English and maths and the school has a below median score for the percentage of pupils making expected progress.

'Coasting schools' are those schools which have, year on year failed to push every pupil to reach their full potential. The government considers a school's performance over three years to decide who is performing below a reasonable level of attainment and progress.

The criteria for a coasting primary school is where less than 85% of pupils achieve L4+ in reading writing and maths and results are below the median percentage of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and maths. For secondary schools it is where fewer than 60% of pupils achieve 5A*-C including English and maths and the school has a below median score for the percentage of pupils making expected progress.

6.1. There are three primary schools below the floor standards and three schools are in danger of being classified as 'coasting'.

6.2 In the secondary sector there are four schools below the floor standard and four schools in danger of being classified as 'coasting'

Ofsted.

The most up to date figures show:

7.1 Across all our schools, 12.6% are judged as outstanding, 66.3% as good, 15.7% as requiring improvement and 1% as inadequate.

7.2 Of primary schools, 12% are judged to be outstanding, 65.3% as good, 17.3% as requiring improvement and 5.3% as inadequate.

7.3 Of secondary schools, 15% are judged as outstanding, 70% as good, 10% as requiring improvement and 5% as inadequate.

27th January, 2016