

# Delivering Bold Steps for Kent

## Education, Learning and Skills Vision and Priorities for Improvement

Draft

2014 - 2017



## **Education, Learning and Skills Vision and Priorities for Improvement**

### **Vision:**

***Our vision is for Kent to be the most forward looking area in England for education and learning so that we are the best place for children and young people to grow up, learn, develop and achieve.***

***Kent should be a place where families thrive and all children learn and develop well from the earliest years so that they are ready to succeed at school, have excellent foundations for learning and are equipped well for achievement in life, no matter what their background.***

***In Kent we should have the same expectations for every child and young person to make good progress in their learning, to achieve well and to have the best opportunities for an independent economic and social life as they become young adults.***

***Every child and young person should go to a good or outstanding early years setting and school, have access to the best teaching, and benefit from schools and other providers working in partnership with each other to share the best practice as they continue to improve.***

Our strategic priorities in Kent Bold Steps for Education are to ensure all pupils meet their full potential, to shape education and skills provision around the needs of the Kent economy and improve services and outcomes for the most vulnerable young people in Kent.

### **Our Ambition**

Central to our ambition is the desire to create the conditions in which pupils experience the best learning and teaching, and where pupils' moral and intellectual development and confidence can flourish. We want every child in Kent to achieve well above expectations and not to be held back by their social background. We want every young person to benefit from a broad range of pathways to further learning and employment, for their own achievement and for the success of the Kent economy.

We will do this by focusing relentlessly on improving standards and the quality of education and learning so that excellence is promoted across the system. We will ensure children continue to get a good start in life, by working alongside all the agencies who work with very young children and their families, particularly health practitioners and those providing services through community based hubs, so that we promote the highest quality early learning and childcare in the Foundation Stage. We will work tirelessly to ensure every child can go to a good school where they make good progress and can have fair access to school places. And we will ensure every young person to age 18 is engaged in purposeful education and training, and they are well prepared for skilled employment and higher learning.

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Ensuring the most vulnerable learners experience success is our top priority. We want to close the attainment gaps that exists as a barrier to their future success.

We will achieve this by learning from and spreading the influence of the best, whether locally, nationally or internationally and through working in partnership across all types of school and phases of education and learning and with partners across the business sectors, local government, health, social care, the voluntary and community sectors, and especially with parents, carers, local communities and the children and young people themselves.

We will support the best early years settings, schools and their leaders to lead the system and drive improvement through collaboration across all schools, settings and education and training providers, supporting and challenging each other in how we achieve our goals, so that we are able to transform outcomes for all children and young people more rapidly. We will promote innovation and creativity in teaching and learning and the curriculum, so that Kent achieves a world class education system, greater social mobility and reverses the national trends of under performance for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups which hold back progress in our economy and our society.

We see learning as a lifelong process in which learners should always be able to progress successfully to the next stage of their lives, with the necessary foundations for success, to develop their skills, training and qualifications both in and out of work and in informal and formal learning situations. We will give particular priority to improving the skills and employability of 14 - 24 year olds, so that they make a good start to adult life and their potential is not lost to the Kent economy.

We will work with early years settings, schools, post 16 providers and partners to ensure that children, young people and families are able to access the right services at the right time in the right place. Through developing more effective early intervention and prevention services we shall reduce the numbers of children, young people and families requiring specialist interventions and experiencing poorer outcomes and greater social exclusion.

### **The Challenges for the Future:**

The world is changing fast, expectations are rising rapidly and a more diverse education system is developing quickly. The UK has to achieve a more educated and skilled workforce and cannot afford to lose the potential of so many young people who, if they are not educated and skilled well enough, will lead less productive and satisfying lives. The economic and social cost of educational failure is immense and too much provision that is less than good damages the life chances of children and young people. In this mix the role of the Local Authority is changing to be more ambitious, focused and strategic in bringing about educational transformation for Kent by being a strong and influential partner with schools and other stakeholders and providers.

It is our job to build and support effective partnerships and networks that will be more effective in delivering better services and improved outcomes and it is also our role to champion more innovative and creative practice and ways of working.

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In particular our priorities are to:

- Raise attainment, close achievement gaps, reduce exclusion, have more good and outstanding early years settings and schools, and ensure all young people are engaged in learning or training until age 18, with a good outcomes that leads to employment
- Further embed our new partnership relationships with all early years and childcare settings, schools and other providers, based on collaboration and shared effort, to build a more effective system of school to school support
- Continue to raise educational performance in line with agreed targets and support and challenge lower performing early years and childcare settings, schools and other providers to improve to good quality provision quickly
- Continue to support greater choice for parents and families in every area by commissioning a sufficient and diverse supply of places in strong schools and quality early years settings
- Deliver improved multi-agency support for children and families who have additional needs by developing our early intervention and prevention services and working in a more integrated way to achieve better outcomes.
- Increase our focus on and support for vulnerable pupils, so that achievement gaps close for pupils on free school meals, children in care and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- Work with schools to ensure every child has fair access to all schools and other provision
- Promote and support smooth and effective transition for every child and young person from any one educational stage and provision to another;
- Continue to develop the opportunities and pathways for all 14-19 year olds to participate and succeed so that they can access higher Levels of learning or employment to age 24
- Champion 21<sup>st</sup> century learning so that schools and other settings innovate more and achieve more by delivering a curriculum that develops pupils' skills and knowledge for the future.

New ways of working are key to success in a more diverse educational landscape, with many different providers across the early years, schools and post 16 skills and employment sectors. This landscape requires us to drive change through strategic influence, highly effective partnership arrangements and collaborative networks in which pooled effort and shared priorities can achieve better outcomes, increase capacity in the system and create more innovative solutions at a time of reducing Levels of resource. More successful delivery in Kent depend on the emergence of new vehicles for joint working and partnership. It continues to be a priority to ensure success by supporting:

- School leaders to lead the system through stronger school partnerships, the Kent Association of Headteachers, working at a local Level through District school forums that have strong and purposeful working relationships in order to deliver the best opportunities and outcomes for their children and young people

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- Schools to procure support services well, have real choice and be able to procure high quality services through EduKent
- Increased collaborative working in the early years and childcare sectors
- Locality based working and commissioning to pool and target resources to local needs in Districts
- Local 14-19 strategic partnerships to maximise effort and increase capacity to transform post 16 learning pathways and training opportunities so that they are truly excellent.

## **Key Strategic Developments in 2012-13**

In quickening the pace of improvement we have focused attention on transforming the way we work and the delivery of services. During 2012-13 we have:

- As part of the Government's policy for free early education places for disadvantaged two year olds, introduced the 'Free for Two' scheme in Kent with more than 1,200 two year olds having accessed a free early education place;
- Devolved the Specialist Teaching Service to a lead Special School in each District to improve support to mainstream schools for special educational needs through the Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFTs). This work is focused on increasing capacity to support learners with SEN and achieving better progress and outcomes for them. The partnership model is helping us to ensure mainstream schools are implementing core standards and partnerships support the development of best practice.
- Developed a system of school to school collaboration, so that there are now 60 improvement hubs involving nearly 500 schools with clear partnership agreements sharply focused on improving leadership, the quality of teaching and standards of attainment. This work is supported by funding from the School Funding Forum.
- Reviewed the Pupil Referral Units and in partnership with schools, developed eight new Alternative Provision delivery hubs to support young people at risk of disengaging from school. The establishment of this new provision alongside new ways of working with schools has significantly improved outcomes for learners and reduced exclusions across the county.
- Developed a new Integrated Adolescent Support Service aimed at delivering more coordinated and targeted support and better outcomes for vulnerable adolescents. This approach has been expanded across the whole of Kent in 2013.
- Implemented the 14 to 24 Strategy to ensure all young people at age16 have access to appropriate high quality learning, skills or employment with training pathways. 12 district data packs have been developed to ensure that the local offer meets young people's needs including all vulnerable learners.

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- Established five Learning and Employment zones in Shepway, Dover, Thanet, Swale and Gravesham to help coordinate the work of a range of agencies in supporting young people into employment. The work is supported by the Kent Employment Programme which has placed over 450 young into apprenticeships over the last 12 months.
- Developed our Strategy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities to improve the outcomes for Kent's children and young people with SEN and those who are disabled (SEND). This work will deliver the requirements of the Children and Families Bill, the new arrangements for education, health and care plans, the development of the local offer, more SEN provision in Kent Special and mainstream school, with less reliance on out of county placements and better outcomes and progress for pupils. Over 94% of respondents supported the proposals to provide better support for parents, improved early intervention and prevention, more integrated services and joint commissioning across education, health and social care to achieve better progress and outcomes for all children and young people with a disability or special educational needs
- Expanded the Pathfinder for SEND, helping us to deliver co-ordinated assessment and integrated education, health and care plans for children with special educational needs. We have reached a wider group of parents and we are using their views to determine the content and format of Kent's Local Offer. We have also piloted the use of personal budgets for families to use on transport and more than 75 families are now receiving a direct payment for the Personal Transport Budget.
- Developed our approach to District based working, allocating resources and staff more clearly to district teams so that service delivery can be more coordinated and early help and earlier intervention for vulnerable children can be more accessible for schools and families.
- Developed the organisation of the Kent Association of Headteachers which is now operating with four area boards overseeing school improvement collaborations and school to school support.
- Delivered all the school expansions required for the school year beginning September 2013, thus achieving important steps in our aim to provide a good local school for every Kent pupil. An additional 660 places (equivalent to 22 permanent forms of entry) in Primary schools, 120 additional places in Secondary schools (four forms of entry) and 362 temporary school places for Reception pupils were delivered this year. This equates to 41 classrooms plus infrastructure in 37 Primary schools for 2013-14.
- Bid for additional Capital funding from a new 'Targeted Basic Need' programme announced by the DfE to support the school expansion programme. 19 bids out of 26 were successful, attracting an additional £31m to build additional capacity in Primary and Special schools across Kent, including five brand new Primary Academies. The additional places funded by this programme will be available by September 2015.

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- Developed Edukent so that it is supported by more effective business planning, marketing and tailor made procurement of services for schools such as the extensive range of additional educational psychology services to schools on a traded basis in addition to core and statutory work.

## **Progress in 2012-13 and where are we now?**

We set very challenging and aspirational improvement targets and in 2012 -13 there were positive indications that we are achieving progress. In 2012-13 we achieved progress in the following areas:

- Results improved for Kent children at every key stage of education from pre-school age to 19 years.
- Under the new **Early Years Foundation Stage** framework 64% of Kent children achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD). This is 12% higher than the national average. Kent remains top against its statistical neighbours.
- At **Key Stage 1** we met or surpassed our targets for Level 2B and above in Reading, Writing and Maths in 2013. In Reading and Mathematics we have also achieved the 2014 targets. In reading, writing and mathematics, results are now in line or above the national average and the FSM and SEN achievement gaps are narrowing at a faster rate than nationally.
- At **Key Stage 2** we continue to see improvement on the new measure of Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined. Kent achieved a 2% improvement in results in 2013 but remains 2% below the national average. Performance is in line with most statistical neighbours.

At **Key Stage 4** there was good improvement in 5 or more A\*-C GCSE grades including English and Maths, from 61% in 2012 to 63% in 2013. Kent is ranked second in our statistical neighbours group, and performance is 4% above the national average of 59%.

- Outcomes for **children in care** (CIC) continued to improve at both Key Stages 2 and 4. In 2013, of the Kent CIC looked after for more than 12 months 43% .achieved Level 4 combined in Reading, Writing and Maths compared to 38% in 2012. At GCSE 15% achieved 5 A\* to C grades including English and Maths compared to 13% in 2012.
- Performance at **post-16** improved on some indicators this year. The percentage of students achieving two or more A Level passes increased to 96%, compared to 92% in 2012. The greatest improvement was in the number of students gaining three or more A and B grades which improved from 5% in 2012 to 8.5% in 2013, compared to 7.4% nationally.

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- The number of schools in Kent **judged good or outstanding** by Ofsted increased to 72% from 59% last year.
- During the last school year 74 schools **improved** from a previous satisfactory Ofsted judgement to good.
- **Ofsted** has judged 80% of Secondary schools in Kent and 74% of Special Schools as good or outstanding. 69% of Primary schools are now good or outstanding.
- The quality of Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision improved to 75% good or outstanding from 60% in 2012.
- A good number of satisfactory schools (62) **significantly improved** their Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 results in 2013, and are above the government's floor standard.
- There has been a further reduction in **the number of permanent exclusions**, down to 143 in 2013 from 209 the previous year.
- Persistent absence rates reduced from last year with the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent in Primary schools reducing from 3.8% in 2011 to 3.1% in 2012. Secondary school persistent absence also decreased from 9.2% in 2011 to 8.4% in 2012.
- The number of **apprenticeships** continued to increase, and Kent is outperforming the South East for the number of people starting apprenticeships by 3% overall. The number of young people taking up apprenticeship in the 19 to 25 age range increased on last year by 11%.
- NEET figures reduced to 5% compared to 6% the previous year.
- There was good progress in improving the number of **SEN** Assessments completed within the required timeframes. Performance has reached the 90% target Level for the year.
- The completion of psychological statutory advice completed with the required time frames has improved to 98%
- We **commissioned 3462** new Primary school places between September 2010 and September 2013 to meet the growing demand, and ensured every child who needed one had a school place.
- We opened **2** new primary schools and rebuilt **5** secondary schools, all at a total cost of **£82 million**.



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- We delivered new ways of working through the development and implementation of a high quality traded Educational Psychology service offer through EduKent additional to core service delivery. This was taken up by over 43% of Kent schools.

## The Early Years Foundation Stage

The main overall indicator for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage changed in 2013 and is now 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 Kent overall 64% of children achieved a GLD, with a range across districts of 55% – 69%. Performance in Kent is 12% above the national average of 52%. This is a very strong performance which prepares children well for starting school and making good progress in Key Stage 1.

By 2017 we expect a minimum of 80% of children at the end of EYFS to have achieved a Good Level of Development. We have also set a new target for reducing the gap between all children achieving a good Level of development at the end of the EYFS and those in receipt of free school meals to 14.5%. Whilst this is ambitious we believe we can narrow this still further and will therefore revise this target over the next two years.

## Key Stage 1

Standards at Key Stage 1 improved by an average of 4% and performance is now in line with or above the national average.

Attainment in **Reading** at Key Stage 1, Level 2b and above, overall improved compared to 2012 and this continues a four year upward trend. 79% of seven year olds achieved Level 2b or above in 2013, which is exactly in line with the national average of 79%.

At Level 3 and above in Reading there was also further improvement on last year and a continuing upward trend. 30% of seven year olds achieved a Level 3 or above compared with 27% in 2012. Kent is 1% ahead of the national average of 29%.

Attainment in **Writing** at Key Stage 1, at Level 2b and above, improved by 4% in 2013 and continues a four year upward trend. Attainment in writing at this Level is now at 67% compared to 62% in 2012. However Kent is 1% below the national average at Level 2b and the gap between standards in writing and reading is a concern.

At Level 3 and above in Writing we have also seen continuous improvement with 15% of pupils achieving this level in writing compared to 13% in 2012., though we have closed the gap with the national figure. Standards at Level 3 are in line with the national average.

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Attainment in **Mathematics** at Key Stage 1 at Level 2b and above, improved with 79% of pupils achieving this level compared to 77% in 2012. At Level 3 and above there was further improvement from 21% to 23% in 2013. Kent is in line or just above national averages at both Level 2b+ and Level 3 in 2013 and this reflects a continuing upward trend.

## **Key Stage 2**

On the new measure for attainment at Key Stage 2 in 2013, the combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics Level 4 and above score, 74% of pupils achieved this level of attainment compared to 72% in 2012. The national average is 76%.

At Level 5+ attainment in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined improved to 22%, compared to 20% in 2012, which is a 2% improvement compared to a national improvement of 1%.

In 2012, 211 schools performed at or above the national average at Level 4 and above in the new measure of Reading, Writing and Maths combined. In 2013 this increased to 223 schools. 198 schools improved their performance compared to 2012 and 18 schools achieved 95-100% in the national Key Stage 2 tests this year.

Attainment in **Reading** at Level 4 and above declined by 2% in 2013, following a significant improvement of 4% in 2012 and at Level 5 and above it declined by 4% in 2013, following a significant improvement of 7% in 2012. National performance also declined in 2013, by 1% at Level 4 and by 3% at Level 5. 86% of pupils achieved the expected 2 Levels of progress in Reading between key stages 1 and 2, compared to a national figure of 88%.

Attainment in **Writing** at Levels 4 and 5 shows a significant increase in 2013 by almost 4%. Nationally at Levels 4 and 5, performance improved by 2%. 91% of pupils achieved the two levels of expected progress in Writing, which is exactly in line with the national performance.

In **Mathematics**, following a 4% improvement in 2012, attainment at Level 4 and above declined by 1% in 2013 and attainment at Level 5 and above improved by 1%. National performance declined by 1% at Level 4 but improved by 2% at Level 5. 86% of pupils achieved the expected two levels of progress in Maths against a national performance of 88%.

## **The Floor Standard at Key Stage 2**

The floor standard at Key Stage 2 is 60% of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. In 2012, 23 schools performed below the floor standard, a significant reduction from the 70 schools in 2011 and the 95 schools in 2010. However, in 2013 on the new measure of Level 4 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, 59 schools performed below the floor standard.

## **Statistical Neighbours (SN)**

Kent's top statistical neighbour achieved 77% Level 4 combined in 2013 compared to 74% in Kent. The difference between Kent and the highest performing LA is now 3%, thereby closing the gap and accelerating progress whilst other similar local authorities' performance has declined against the new Key Stage 2 measure. Compared to our 11 statistical neighbours we are 6<sup>th</sup> for Level 4+ performance and 2<sup>nd</sup> for Level 5 performance.

## **Key Stage 4**

Provisional results at Key Stage 4 show Kent's performance at 5 or more GCSE A\*-C grades including English and maths improved to 63%, compared to 61% in 2012. This is 4% above the national figure of 59%, which dropped this year. Kent is ranked second within our statistical neighbours group, where the average is 60%.

Expected rates of progress at Key Stage 4 (three levels of progress between key stages 2 and 4) also improved this year, by 5.3% in English to 74%, and by 2% in maths to 73%. Both these figures are above the national averages of 71% in English and 72% in maths.

Kent's 5+ A\*-G results were 2% above the national average, at 95.7% compared to the national average of 93.9%. This is a good indication of the success of Kent schools' inclusive approach to securing educational success for the vast majority of pupils. Performance in English A\* to C grades is 4.8% above the national average and in Maths performance is in line with the national average.

Nine secondary schools performed below the floor standard of 40% of pupils achieving five good GCSE grades with English and mathematics compared to 19 schools in 2012. Overall 75% of secondary schools improved or maintained their GCSE performance in 2013, including a small number of schools that declined by no more than 1%.

## **A Level**

Performance at post-16 has improved on some indicators this year but has dropped in the rest, although less than the national average. The percentage of students achieving two or more A Level passes increased to 96%, compared to 92% in 2012.

Kent's Average Points Score per entry is up 1.8 to 212.5, compared to the national static result of 212.7. The Average Points Score per student dropped 14.9 points to 722.4, compared to a national reduction of 23.9 to 709.1. The greatest improvement has been in the number of students gaining three or more A and B grades which improved from 5% in 2012 to 8.5% in 2013, compared to 7.4% nationally.

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## Gender Differences

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, girls continue to out-perform boys with 72% of girls and 56% of boys achieving a good level of development. This gap is wide and persists through each succeeding stage of education.

At **Key Stage 1**, the gender gap continues to show girls doing better than boys in all three areas. In Reading the gap is 10%, in Writing it is 16% and in Mathematics it is 3%.

In **Reading**, attainment at Level 2b and above for girls shows considerable improvement again compared to last year. 85% of girls achieved this level compared to 81% in 2012, which is 1% above the national average. Level 2b+ attainment for boys declined by 2% in 2013 from 76% in 2012 to 74% in 2013, after 4 years of continuous improvement. Despite this decline Kent remains in line with the boys' national average of 74%.

The attainment of higher achieving girls improved in 2013 with 35% achieving Level 3 compared to 32% in 2012. This is 1.6% above the national average for 2013. After an 8% improvement in 2012, the attainment of higher achieving boys declined this year by 4%. Despite this boys' attainment at Level 3 remains above the national average. However the gender difference is a concern and will be a continued focus for improvement in this academic year. Both girls and boys performance at Key Stage 1 remains above the national average.

In **Writing**, girls' attainment at Level 2b+ improved to 75% in 2013, which is in line with the national average. Boys' attainment at Level 2b+ declined by 7% this year, after a 15% improvement in 2012. This is a concern, although boys' attainment is also in line with the national average.

Higher achieving girls' performance at Level 3 improved by 3% this year after a decline in 2012. This is now in line with the national average of 20%. Boys' performance at Level 3 in writing improved by 1.4% compared to 2012 and is now above the national average by 0.6%. This is a strong performance in 2013. Both girls' and boys' performance in writing at Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average.

In **Mathematics**, girls' attainment at Level 2b improved by 3% in 2013, with 81% of pupils achieving this standard compared to 78% in 2012. Boys' performance improved by 4% in 2013, with 77% of pupils attaining this level compared to 73% in 2012. Attainment for both boys and girls is showing a good three year upward trend in mathematics at Level 2b.

Attainment for higher achieving girls and boys improved in 2013 by almost 2%. Attainment for higher achieving boys improved by over 7% in 2013, which is a very positive result. This is particularly impressive as nationally the figure only increased from 24% to 25%. Attainment for higher achieving girls improved in line with the national average.

At **Key Stage 2**, the attainment of girls at Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Maths combined continues to outperform that of boys. 77% of girls achieved the expected level compared to 70% of boys. This is 2% below the national average for both boys and girls.

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Attainment for girls improved by 1% and there is a four year upward trend. Boys also improved their performance by 1% compared to 2012 but the gap between the attainment outcomes for girls and boys is 7%, the same as in 2012. This mirrors exactly the national gender gap for 2013 and the trend nationally for this measure.

Attainment at Level 5 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined improved for both boys and girls in 2013. 26% of girls and 18% of boys achieved Level 5 or above. Boys' results are in line with the national average and the girls' outcomes are 1% above it. Attainment for girls improved by 3%, compared to 1% improvement nationally and boys' attainment improved by 1%, which is the same as the national improvement rate.

At **Key Stage 4**, the gender gap in attainment of five good GCSE grades including English and Maths widened to 9% compared to 8% in 2012. 58% of boys and 67% of girls attained this level of achievement in 2013 compared to 54% boys and 64% girls nationally in 2012.

Gender differences continue to be significant therefore, opening up markedly in the EYFS and continuing to be a key performance 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 in care and the NEET data and improving their progress and attainment is a key element in raising standards overall in Kent and in achieving full participation for all young people until age 18.

## Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups

All attainment gaps at any age are of great significance to the life chances of children as they move through their schooling. Children that fall behind in the earlier years of learning do not often enough catch up sufficiently with their peers. We are determined to narrow these gaps in the next three years.

As we accelerate the rate of progress overall, we need to work even harder to close the gaps in performance that exist for Free School Meals (FSM) pupils, Children in Care (CIC), and pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or with Statements of Special Educational Need (SSEN). These gaps are mostly wider in Kent compared to national figures and are not narrowing. For example, actual outcomes for pupils on free school meals have improved over the past three years, but gaps are not narrowing as standards overall rise for other pupils.

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage**, there is good progress in narrowing the achievement gap to 19%, based on FSM data, compared to 24% in 2012. This is the third best result nationally on this measure. The achievement gap for children achieving a good level of development between the lowest attaining 20% of children and the mean is 25%, which is very similar to last year's figure of 24%, compared to the England figure of 37%. This is extremely encouraging.

At **Key Stage 1** there is still a significant gap between FSM pupils and their peers. The gap in reading at Level 2b+ is 21%, in writing it is 24% and in mathematics it is 19%. At the same

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time, between 2011 and 2013, outcomes for pupils on free school meals have improved by about 10% in reading, writing and maths but more progress is needed to narrow the achievement gaps at this critical stage in the early lives of less advantaged children.

The special education needs (SEN) gap continues to be significant. In reading the gap for children who are on School Action or Action Plus is 47% and for children with a statement it is 72%. In writing, for children on School Action or Action Plus, the gap is 55% and for children with a statement it is 71%. In mathematics the gap for children on School Action and Action Plus is 44% and for children with a statement it is 70%. These gaps in attainment are unacceptably wide.

At **Key Stage 2** there is still a significant attainment gap between FSM pupils and their peers. The gap in reading, writing and mathematics combined at Level 4 and above, remains at 22.5% and has not improved in 2013. The national achievement gap is 17%. At the same time, between 2011 and 2013, outcomes for pupils on free school meals improved by about 8% in reading, writing and maths combined.

In reading the attainment gap is 15.1%, in writing it is 18% and in mathematics it is 16%. Gaps in rates of progress are narrower between FSM and non FSM pupils, and in 2013 these were 7.2% in reading, 6.5% in writing and 8.6% in mathematics. While 177 Primary schools improved the FSM gap in 2013, the lack of progress overall on this key issue is a serious concern and very disappointing.

The special educational needs (SEN) gap continues to be significant although there was some improvement in 2013. For pupils with a statement the attainment gap at Level 4 Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined is now 64% having narrowed from 65.4% in 2012. For pupils on Action Plus the attainment gap is now 35.7% having narrowed from 38.2% in 2012. For pupils on School Action the gap is now 28.8% having narrowed from 32.2% in 2012.

The **GCSE** attainment gap between pupils eligible for FSM and their peers for 5+ A\*-C including English and maths improved slightly by 0.5% to 32.4%. This has not improved in the last three years and is still significantly greater than the national figure of 26% in 2012. The national FSM gap at Key Stage 4 is reducing at a faster rate compared to Kent, which is very disappointing.

At the same time, between 2011 and 2013, outcomes for pupils on free school meals achieving five good GCSEs including English and maths have improved by about 9%.

In 2013, 37% of FSM pupils achieved 5 or more good GCSEs with English and mathematics. There remains a significant gap between FSM students and non FSM students in both three levels of progress in English of 22.7% and Maths at 26.7%. This gap has narrowed by 2.1% and 1.4% respectively since 2012. Whilst this is positive the gap needs to narrow at a much faster rate in future years.

Once again pupils with SEN statements achieve less well in Kent, where gaps are wider compared to the GCSE achievements of other similar pupils nationally. However, although

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very wide, in 2013 the SEN achievement gap narrowed at Key Stage 4 by nearly 4% to 43.5%. This will continue to be a priority for further improvement in 2014.

## **Children in Care**

In 2013, outcomes for children in care (CIC) continued to improve at both Key Stages 2 and 4. In 2013, 43% of CIC who were looked after for more than 12 months achieved Level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 compared to 38% who achieved Level 4 in 2012.

61% of CiC pupils achieved 2 Levels of Progress in Key Stage 2 Reading compared to 86.3% for all pupils. 68% achieved 2 Levels of Progress in Writing compared to 91.0% for all pupils and 56% achieved 2 Levels of Progress in Maths compared to 85.9% for all pupils.

At GCSE 15% of CIC achieved 5 or more A\* to C grades including English and Maths compared to 13% in 2012.

26% of CiC pupils achieved 3 Levels of Progress in Key Stage 4 English compared to 74% for all pupils and 20% achieved 3 Levels of Progress Maths compared to 72.9% for all pupils

This means the CIC Key Stage 2 gap narrowed by 5% down to 37% from 42% last year, which is very welcome. The CIC Key Stage 4 attainment gap narrowed by 2%, down to 47% from 49% in 2012. However these are the widest achievement gaps of any pupil group, and are an important focus for improvement in 2014.

## **Summary**

Overall, while standards continue to improve at each key stage, slow progress is being made in improving progress and narrowing the gaps in attainment for pupils on free school meals and those with special educational needs. In spite of improvements in the outcomes for Children in Care, their achievement gaps continue to be the widest of any pupil group and are a key priority for improvement in 2014.

It is very disappointing that, in spite of additional resources through the pupil premium (£26 million in Kent in 2012-13) the attainment gaps for pupils on free school meals have shown no improvement. The gaps are markedly wider in Kent than nationally, which means more disadvantaged learners are doing less well and therefore continue to have more educational disadvantage than elsewhere in the country. This is unacceptable.

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, focuses on what

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more should be done to improve social mobility through the education system and other government policy areas. And 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 one of our top priorities in Kent and we are developing a number of projects to continue to address it during this school year.

Overall, there are positive trends in the right direction on raising standards of attainment. However, we need to continue to be very ambitious because there is much to do to bring about the necessary improvement. Kent has a mixed economy of provision in the early years, schools and the skills and training sector, serving diverse communities with many challenges. This ranges from outstanding and good provision to a significant amount of provision (30% of schools) that is not yet good, which is letting down children and communities some of whom are the most disadvantaged in Kent. We do not compare well with the national picture or with statistical neighbours in some key areas of our performance and this must improve more quickly.

We perform in line with or above the national average in the EYFS and for standards at Key Stage 1 and at GCSE. The Key Stage 2 results are still below the national average and the achievement gaps for pupils eligible for the pupil premium at Key Stages 2 and 4 are still wider than the national gaps and are not reducing, which is a serious concern. Kent is in the bottom quartile nationally for standards at Key Stage 2 and for the attainment levels of pupils eligible for free school meals at Key Stages 2 and 4. Disadvantaged 19 year olds in Kent also do less well than the national average. Children in care achieve below the national average for this group at Key Stage 2 and the achievement gaps for them are wider in Kent.

The wide variations between schools highlight aspects of good practice that need to be more widely disseminated as part of the developing collaborations between schools. In many schools there is impressive narrowing of the gaps for different groups of pupils and very effective strategies, supported by the pupil premium, to accelerate the progress of these pupils. We will build on this good practice.

### **Pupil Premium**

In Kent there has been a significant increase in the amount of funding in schools budgets for pupil premium from £26 million in 2012-13 to £40 million this school year. This is a significant resource to make more of a difference to closing achievement gaps for less advantaged pupils. The schools where there is greatest impact in narrowing achievement gaps use the additional funding provided by the pupil premium, and other school resources, to ensure that all groups of pupils are taught to a good standard and the lowest attaining groups of pupils, especially those on free school meals, receive the best teaching in small groups to accelerate their progress.

Priority is given to detailed monitoring of every pupil's progress and other effective strategies including targeted small group and individual tuition to improve progress in literacy and mathematics, with a strong emphasis on the systematic development of phonics as part of a well developed approach to teaching reading and writing. More generally schools are accelerating progress by investing more time in the range and quality of assessment and



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feedback to pupils on their performance, provided routinely by teachers, and supporting this by teaching pupils the learning skills they need to monitor, evaluate and assess their progress against improvement goals which they understand and sometimes set for themselves. In addition schools are investing in more use of peer mentoring and tutoring, enabling pupils to teach their peers in well coordinated and structured ways using high quality resources, including digital packages which motivate and structure the learning pathway. The fundamental issue in any school is to ensure all groups of pupils receive consistently good teaching and where pupils are taught by teaching assistants to ensure that provision is also high quality, helps pupils to catch up and is monitored carefully by teachers and senior leaders. There is abundant evidence nationally, and in local schools, to show that significant narrowing of the achievement gaps is possible and we aim to achieve greater impact on this key priority in the near future. A key expectation is that schools plan for and achieve three Levels of progress for pupil premium pupils during Key Stage 2, and four Level of progress between Key Stages 2 and 4.

### **Provision and Outcomes for 14 - 24 Year Olds**

The 14 to 24 Strategy aims to achieve a fundamental shift in the education system in Kent. During 2013 the development of 12 districts data packs has highlighted a number of key actions for all learning providers in each district to consider, in particular the improvements needed to the quality and breadth of the post 16 curriculum offer. The data also asks questions about the local pathways, their compatibility with the local economy and the support young people receive, particularly vulnerable young people. Local groupings of learning providers have been meeting to address these challenges across the county to identify collaborative solutions to the challenges, so that gaps in provision are addressed and every young person can be on the right pathway.

A number of schools and colleges have realigned their post 16 offer based on the information from the district data packs. This is already influencing practice. For example in some schools there have been clear changes to the post 16 curriculum to develop knowledge and skills more closely matching the economic needs of the area. The data pack, and the subsequent work to re-model the curriculum, has been well received and an OFSTED post 16 survey highlighted this best practice recently.

There has been good planning for and implementation of the post 16 study programmes to offer more creative and flexible curriculum opportunities for young people. An example is the 2.1.2 programme, which includes an English and Maths achievement programme leading to GCSE Level 2, a substantial vocational qualification and work experience. A number of schools are offering these innovative programmes to students that have not achieved Level 2 including English and Maths by the end of Year 11. A key feature of this programme is the engagement of local employers to support the development of employability skills and to provide weekly work placements.

A GCSE Level 2 qualification in English and Maths is necessary preparation for progression to Level 3 study and to skilled employment with training. Nationally, there is a low conversion rate at post 16 to Level 2 from any point at Level 1. Work is underway with schools to improve

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Level 2 qualifications for post 16 year olds and develop alternative courses to GCSE repeats. This is a key aspect of achieving the improved participation rates and outcomes set out in the 14-24 Strategy.

A particular challenge is to improve the standards and skills achieved by young people aged 19 from low income backgrounds at Levels 2 and 3. These outcomes are below the national average, the achievement gap for Level 2 is 32% in Kent compared to 25% nationally between outcomes for the most vulnerable 19 year olds and other students, and it is not closing quickly enough. To address this gap we have established 12 Skills and Employability Hubs, one in each district to support the development of high quality vocational and technical pathways for all learners to maximise their potential. The Local Authority is working with the University of Glasgow to draw on research to make these hubs successful providers for young people in making a difference in closing the achievement gap and getting better outcomes for disadvantaged young people.

Without these qualifications vulnerable groups have significantly reduced access to apprenticeships, thereby reducing their employability. The establishment of 5 Learning and Employment Zones in the 5 areas with the highest number of unemployed 18 to 25 year olds is also beginning to make a significant contribution to the life chances of this group.

We have continued to make significant progress to ensure all Year 11 and Year 12 learners have a September guarantee of a learning destination. At the beginning of November 2013 93.5% of Year 11 students had received offers, and 86.7% of Year 12 students had received offers of places. The Local Authority has a duty to track vulnerable learners and ensure they have appropriate support to engage them in learning or training to age 18. This in turn contributes to the reduction in the NEET figures.

### **The NEET Figures**

The NEET figure in Kent continues to fall, with 5.1% of 16 to 18 year olds at the end of the last academic year not in education employment or training. This is a positive reduction compared to 6.3% in 2012. The number of young people who are not known has shown the most significant decline to 1.9%, which out performs all other SE local authority areas. It is an impressive result especially as we move to the implementation of the Raising of the Participation Age, which is one of our key priorities. Much of this work is being delivered to support all young people aged 16 to 19 (or to age 25 with a learning difficulty or disability) to access appropriate learning pathways or employment with training. The collaborative NEET to EET groups that have been established in all the districts, focus on individual learner pathways and are having a significant impact, for example, in Maidstone this approach has supported over 200 learners back into positive learning pathways.

A significant number of NEET young people continue to be those with a learning difficulty or disability. There are significant gaps in post 16 provision as there is insufficient vocational provision for these young people. This is being addressed through the data packs and discussions with schools, colleges and work based learning providers. Special Schools are working more closely with the FE Colleges to ensure the current Year 12 students are

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supported and can have access to an assisted apprenticeship programme, with additional mentoring and support. Specific programmes are being developed to support other vulnerable learners and excluded young people to access an appropriate post 16 offer.

## **Apprenticeships**

The work on Apprenticeships continues to expand and offers good skilled employment opportunities for young people in Kent. We are nationally recognised for the developments in this area of work. There are currently 303 apprenticeship starts within KCC, which is an increase of 120 over the last year. Over 145 schools have also taken on their own apprentices which exceeds our target of 25% of all schools for this year.

The Skills and Employability Service has also placed over 430 unemployed 17 to 24 year olds into an apprenticeship scheme over the last 12 months with over 100 pledges from employers to take on apprentices in the pipeline. This work has made a major contribution to reducing the number of unemployed 18 to 24 year olds by 1300 from this time last year. It will continue to be a priority for the service over the next year. The major achievement of this programme has been effective employer engagement with over 800 businesses providing high quality employment opportunities for Kent young people, putting them on appropriate pathways for employment with training.

## **Youth Unemployment**

Unemployment among young people continues to be a concern, and tackling this is one of our top priorities. While the number of 18-24 year olds in Kent who are unemployed has declined to 5.3%, the figures for Thanet (11.8%) and Swale (8.0%) Shepway (6.3%) Gravesham (6.6%) and Dover (6.8%) remain well above both the Kent and national averages. This continues to require a more targeted and intensive response as part of our improvement strategy through the work of the Learning and Employment Action Zones and partnership working with employers and the District Councils. A key challenge is to ensure all young people achieve the levels of literacy, numeracy and IT competence required to stay in education and training and move successfully into higher levels of learning or employment.

The Learning, Skills and Employment Partnership Board is overseeing the work of the 14-24 Strategy in bringing about the necessary improvements. It monitors progress against the key performance measures set out in the strategy and brings together a range of learning providers and employers to influence the next phase of developments. Future work streams will develop a strategy to improve Maths and English at Level 2 for all 16 to 18 year olds, develop high quality vocational options in line with local economic needs, improve pathways for LLDD learners with learning difficulties, reduce the high dropout rate from schools and colleges at age 17 and increase the number of higher and advanced apprenticeships.

## **Ofsted Inspection Outcomes**

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Kent schools made good progress in the last school year in improving inspection outcomes and in increasing the number of good and outstanding schools. Ofsted has recently published its latest national statistics for all inspections carried out in the last school year. Nationally 78% of schools are now good and outstanding and there has been a 9% increase in the percentage of schools nationally with these Levels of performance. In Kent the improvement rate has been 11%.

72% of Kent schools are now good or outstanding. This includes 80% of Secondary schools, 69% of Primary schools and 75% of Special Schools. There has been a significant increase in the number of good and outstanding schools, compared to 59% in the previous year and significantly better than 2010-2011 where only 55% of schools were judged good or better.

In Kent 16% of schools are outstanding and 56% are good, compared to 20% outstanding and 58% good nationally. However, despite the increase in the percentage of good and outstanding schools to 72%, Kent continues to be among the lowest performing local authorities for the number of good and outstanding schools. Our priority for 2013 onwards is to close the gap with the national picture, and exceed it.

At the end of the last school year there were 141 (24%) mainstream schools requiring improvement, excluding Pupil Referral Units. This represents a significant improvement compared to September 2012 when there were 211 (37%) Primary and Secondary schools requiring improvement.

At the end of the last school year there were 20 schools in an Ofsted category of concern, which was the same number as in September 2012. While 11 schools successfully came out of category in the past year, another 15 schools were judged to be inadequate by Ofsted. Our aim is to ensure no Kent school goes into an Ofsted category of concern.

Many 'satisfactory' or 'requires improvement' schools are well led and making good progress, and a good number of these schools significantly improved their results in 2013, so that we can be more confident of a future good inspection outcome. We expect this positive trend to continue and to gather pace towards our ambitious target of at least 85% of Primary and Secondary schools and 100% of Special schools to be judged good or outstanding by Ofsted by 2017. By 2014 we expect 74% of schools to be good or outstanding. Over time, this is deliberately ambitious in order to challenge ourselves to do much better very soon.

All schools currently rated as inadequate and as 'requires improvement' are working closely with the School Improvement Team to ensure they achieve a rapid rate of improvement.

The Ofsted Annual Report is rightly critical of some local authorities for not taking their school improvement responsibilities seriously enough and for not using the available powers of intervention and support to accelerate improvement, address decline and prevent school failure. We are determined to do everything we can, within the framework of government policy and through our own local initiative, to bring about dramatic improvement in the quality of schools in Kent to ensure every school requiring improvement becomes a good school within

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the next two years, and that we continue to work together in partnership to ensure no good and outstanding schools decline.

## **Exclusions**

During the school year 2011-12, permanent exclusions in Kent reduced by 16%, to 192 from 252 in 2011. During the last school year, 2012-13, the number of permanent exclusions reduced further to 144, exceeding our target and increasing the life chances of a significant number of young people.

Of these, 36 exclusions were Primary, 106 Secondary and 2 were pupils excluded from Special schools. At Primary level one district accounted for 14 of the permanent exclusions with another district having zero permanent exclusions. At Secondary level the highest excluding district permanently excluded 27 pupils with another having zero permanent exclusions. This variation reflects the quality of practice in different parts of the county.. The new target for 2017 is to reduce the number of permanent exclusions to no more than 30 overall.

Fixed- term exclusions have also reduced from 12, 836 in 2011-12 to 10,733 in 2012-13. The strategy to reduce exclusions continues to include the development of the Pupil Referral Units and Alternative provision, and to improve more inclusive and collaborative work between schools in each District. It also includes better monitoring of fixed-term exclusions, and more targeted earlier intervention to support pupils at risk of exclusion. Some of this is provided by the new PRU models and the new Integrated Adolescent Support Service, with Inclusion Officers working as core members of the integrated teams

Improvements in education provision following the PRU review are well underway with the establishment of newly constituted Management Committees in all provisions. There is a strong consensus for increased local management of PRU provision, and each committee is now made up of representative Headteachers in each local area. The aim to reduce exclusions continues with localities reviewing their practices. A number of areas have committed to a zero exclusion position and already there are positive indications of improved outcomes for young people at age16, with fewer becoming NEET.

An increasing number of Primary school exclusions, some of very young children, is a cause for concern. The In Year Fair Access Protocol has been developed in each area to enable schools to cooperate in managing pupil moves from school to school, where appropriate, and work is underway to develop nurture groups in Primary schools to support pupils with more challenging behaviour.

## **Attendance**

Absence data released by the DfE in October 2013 shows Kent has reduced the number of pupils who are persistently absent by 30.6% over the past two years. This equates to approximately 4000 more children in Kent attending school more regularly.

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However, in comparing 2012-13 with the same period in 2011-12, overall absence in both Primary and Secondary schools has increased by 0.2% and 0.1% respectively. Persistent Absence has reduced in Secondary schools by 0.4% but it has remained constant at 3.5% in Primary schools.

The Attendance Service has reviewed the core offer to schools and is focusing more effort on the early identification and intervention in cases where pupil absence trends are least positive. Further targeted work with individual pupils and families is planned in conjunction with KIAS and the Troubled Families Programme. A focus on poor attendance at school will also be a key strand of work in the development of more integrated 0-11 Services for vulnerable children and families.

### **Commissioning Education Provision**

We aim to secure good quality school places in every community so that every young person can have the best chance in life. In the 2012-13 school year we achieved our aim of creating an extra 22 forms of entry in Primary Schools and 4 forms of entry in Secondary Schools, plus 362 temporary places for meeting short term pressures for Reception aged pupils.

However, looking to the future we continue to see a significant increase in pupil numbers requiring substantial expansion of school places in the next several years.

The yearly number of births in Kent has increased by almost 25% in the period between 2002 and 2012 and the number of Primary age pupils in Kent schools is expected to rise significantly from 111,147 in 2013 to 129,240 in 2021.

The number of Reception age pupils in Kent schools has increased from 14,498 in 2006-07 to 16,982 in 2012-13. This is an increase of over 17%. The number of Reception age pupils is forecast to increase to almost 17,700 over the next five years.

The number of Year 7 pupils in Kent Secondary schools has fallen for four consecutive years from 16,605 in 2008-09 to 15,244 in 2012-13 and is expected to fall by a further 200 places in 2013-14. Thereafter, Year 7 pupil numbers are forecast to rise to 17,848 through the period to 2022, which is an increase of 17% on current numbers.

The number of Year 7-11 pupils in Kent Secondary schools has been declining over the previous six years from 82,368 in 2006-7 to 79,244 in 2012-13 and is expected to continue falling to around 70,000 in 2015-16. Thereafter it is forecast to rise to 85,833 through the period to 2022, an increase of 8.3% on current numbers.

The Education Commissioning Plan 2013-2018, published in October 2013, sets out how we will carry out our responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient places of high quality, in the right places for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and be the champion of children and their families in securing good

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quality education. The purpose of the Commissioning Plan is to set out in detail how we will meet the future need for education provision in Kent. It aims to enable parents and education providers to put forward proposals as to how these needs might best be met. We keep the Commissioning Plan under constant review and will publish a revised Plan in autumn 2014.

We aim to maintain at least 5% to 7% surplus capacity in school places and ensure we deliver additional school places in line with demand and parental preferences. The current surplus capacity for Reception year groups across Kent is 4.6% but varies from 1.4% in Thanet to 9.5% in Dover. The current surplus capacity for all Primary year groups (Reception – Year 6) is 7.3% and varies across the County from 4.1% in Ashford to 13.8% in Dover. The current surplus capacity for Year 7 is 11.9% across Kent but by 2022-23 there will be 4% deficit capacity. The current surplus capacity for all Secondary year groups (Years 7-11) is 8.8% across Kent, but by 2022 there will only be 0.5% surplus capacity in Secondary schools across the County if no new provision is made. .

As part of the Commissioning Plan new provision will be developed as follows:

- By 2014 – 2015 school year, 15.3 permanent forms of entry and 250 temporary Year Reception places in Primary Schools and 3 permanent forms of entry and 25 temporary Year 7 places in Secondary Schools.
- By 2015 – 2016 school year, 25.6 permanent forms of entry and 195 temporary Year reception places in Primary Schools and 9 permanent forms of entry in Secondary Schools
- By 2016 – 2017 school year, 22 permanent forms of entry and 90 temporary reception year places in Primary Schools and 9 Permanent forms of entry in Secondary Schools

The Commissioning Plan also sets out our intention to create at least 275 additional school places for pupils with autism (ASD) or behavioural, emotional and social needs (BESN) by increasing the number of Kent Special School places from 3491 to over 3700. There are ten Special schools in a building programme to expand the number of places available and create learning environments which are fit for purpose. In line with the SEND Strategy we will also expand the range of specialist resourced provision in mainstream schools by expanding or creating new SEN resourced provision places for ASD and BESN pupils in mainstream schools and in each of the five new Primary Academies planned to open in September 2015.

### **Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Service**

A key development in the past year is the Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Service, which now operates across the county. It is designed to work closely with schools to provide better support to vulnerable young people so that they can access the right service in the right place at the right time. It is an integrated multi-agency service which brings together practitioners from health, social care, youth work and education who provide a more coordinated and joined

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up response to the needs of vulnerable adolescents who are at greatest risk of harm and exclusion, disengagement from education and physical and mental difficulties. Managers at district and county Level work to develop new ways to support these young people and improve their outcomes.

As a result more young people are accessing early help services and are being referred for early intervention, before problems and needs escalate. Young people are able to access a range of support to address substance misuse, youth offending, teenage parenting, sexual health, jobs and careers advice, employability provision, positive relationship group work, mentoring and positive activities. New online resources are also providing more support, information and advice.

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is used as the basic assessment tool, and there has been an increase in the number of CAFS which are now available to support adolescents. As a consequence there is more common understanding of early intervention processes, improved casework practice and case management, and more personalised approaches to addressing the needs of young people.

This work is intended to make a significant contribution to reducing exclusions, NEETS, youth offending and re-offending, anti-social behaviour, the need for statutory social care child protection arrangements and care proceedings and the educational and well being outcomes for the most vulnerable adolescent in Kent. We have seen evidence of progress in some of these areas, but the service will not be rolled out in a fully integrated way until April 2014.

### **Our Future Targets and Priorities:**

As there is much to do, our planned outcomes are ambitious and challenging. We are determined to pursue them relentlessly and we believe we have the ways to achieve them. As part of our ongoing discussions and partnership with Headteachers, governors and other stakeholders there is a good level of shared ambition to achieve the following improvements in the period leading up to 2017.

#### **In 2014 - 15 we will:**

- Promote more innovative and creative ways to deliver learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including support for the delivery of the new National Curriculum and new vocational, GCSE and A Level curriculum pathways.
- Champion school leadership which is most effective in improving teaching and learning and accelerating pupil progress, and provide leadership development opportunities which increase capacity in Kent to improve and transform the education system.



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- Deliver the School Improvement Strategy to ensure all schools requiring improvement become good and outstanding schools within two years and there are no Kent schools providing an inadequate quality of education.
- Work with schools and early years settings to deliver a more focused approach to narrowing achievement gaps and achieve better outcomes for all vulnerable groups.
- Develop the system of school to school support by embedding school collaborations further to achieve a faster rate of improvement in the quality of schools and the outcomes for pupils, including reducing achievement gaps.
- Work with outstanding and good schools to increase their capacity to sponsor and improve schools requiring improvement, through academy or other structural arrangements.
- Implement the Early Years and Childcare Strategy to ensure there are more good early years settings achieving positives outcomes, more children are well developed to start school and there is better integration of the work of children's centres, early year settings and schools.
- Further integrate early help services for all vulnerable children and young people in Kent, by developing a new 0-11 service and implementing the KIASS model throughout the county, to achieve more coordinated support and better outcomes for vulnerable children and adolescents.
- Take forward the effective delivery of new Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Curriculum provision to reduce exclusions further, and improve the quality of learning and outcomes for pupils at risk of disengagement from education and training.
- Implement the key aspects of the 14-24 strategy by improving collaborative working between learning providers in all districts to ensure more young people are on the right pathway to stay in education or training to age 17 and 18 with better outcomes, and we see an increase in youth employment and apprenticeships and there is a better vocational offer linked to local economic trends.
- Deliver the SEND Strategy to achieve improved progress and outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities in Special and mainstream schools. In particular we will increase the number of places for pupils with ASD and behavioural and emotional needs, improve early intervention and prevention through the local LIFTS so that there is a reduction in statutory referrals, and by 2014 we will deliver more integrated services and joint commissioning across education, health and social care as required by the Children and Families Bill.
- Continue to improve District based working and support the development of the Kent Association of Headteachers, so that more decision making and coordination of

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services for children and young people happens locally through school collaborations and better integrated working between education, health and social care.

- Deliver the Education Commissioning Plan so that the needed growth in good quality school places is delivered on time for September 2014, there is improved parental choice and planned improvements for September 2015 are on target.
- Develop Edukent further to procure better services for schools to improve outcomes, at competitive cost and expand the trading of services to more schools in and beyond Kent.
- Make more efficient use of DSG funding by reducing the rising costs of SEN transport and the number of SEN pupils placed out of county, as well as working with schools at risk of deficit budgets to ensure there are clear improvements by 2015.

**To ensure all pupils meet their full potential, we aim to achieve the following by 2017**

- Foundation Stage outcomes for 5 year olds will continue to improve so that the percentage of children achieving the good Level of development will move from 64% in 2013 to 68% in 2014 and 80% in 2017.
- The FSM achievement gap in the EYFS will close from the 2013 baseline of 19% to 17% in 2014 to 14% in 2017
- 95% of two year olds eligible for a free place will be in provision that is good or outstanding by 2017
- Key Stage 1 attainment will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and improve in Reading from, 79% in 2013 to 82% in 2014 to 90% by 2017, in Writing from 67% in 2013 to 72% in 2014 to 85% by 2017 and in Maths from 79% in 2013 to 82% in 2014 to 90% by 2017
- Key Stage 2 attainment will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours, above the national average and improve from 74% in 2013 to 76% in 2014 to 85% by 2017 of pupils attaining Level 4 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined and 90% pupils achieving 2 Levels of progress.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils making 2 levels of progress will improve in Reading from 86% in 2013 to 88% in 2014 and to 94% by 2017. In Writing progress rates will improve from 91% in 2013 to 93% in 2014 and 96% by 2017. In Mathematics progress rates will improve from 86% in 2013 to 90% in 2014 to 94% by 2017.

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- Key Stage 4 attainment will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and improve to at least 72% of pupils attaining 5 good GCSEs including English and mathematics from 63% in 2013 to 66% in 2014 and to 72% by 2017.
- The achievement gaps at key stages 2 and 4 for FSM will continue to reduce from the 2013 baseline, and be less than the national gap figures for pupils from low income backgrounds,. In Key Stage 2 in 2013 the gap for FSM is currently 22.5%. In 2014 this will reduce to 21% and 15% by 2017. In Key Stage 4 the FSM gap is 32.4% and will reduce to 30% in 2014 and 24% by 2017.
- The achievement gaps for children in care in 2013 are 32% at Key Stage 2 and 46% at Key Stage 4. In 2014 these gaps will reduce to 30% and 44% respectively and by 2017 we expect these to be 24% and 39% respectively.
- The achievement gaps for SEN in 2013 are 50% at Key Stage 2 and 43% at Key Stage 4. In 2014 these will be 46% and 42.5% respectively and by 2017 these will reduce to 41% and 37% respectively.
- We will reduce the number of KCC schools in an Ofsted category of concern year by year, so that by 2017 no schools will be in this category. At the start of September 2013 there were 20 schools judged inadequate. In 2014 there will be no more than 14 schools in this category.
- There will be an increase in the number of good schools, with at least 85% of Primary and Secondary schools judged as good or outstanding by 2017. All Special schools will be good or outstanding. In September 2013 we have 72% of schools deemed good or outstanding. In 2014 we expect to see this increase to 75%.
- By 2017, at least 96% of Secondary schools will be performing above the floor standard and all Primary schools will be performing above the current 60% (65% in 2014) Level 4 floor standard. There are currently 86% of Primary schools and 83% of Secondary schools above the floor standard. In 2014 we expect this to be 90% and 85% respectively.
- By 2017, in nearly all schools (95%) teaching will be consistently good. Currently 72% of teaching is good or better in all schools. This will be 75% in 2014.
- By 2014, 95% of SEN statutory assessments will be completed within a reduced timescale of 20 weeks (from 26 weeks) and pupils with statements will be making good progress and achieve above average outcomes when compared with national benchmarks.
- By 2017, we will reduce the number of Kent's children who are placed in independent and non maintained Special school placements to 272 and we will develop a strong partnership with providers based in the independent and non-maintained sector where

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this can help to drive down the overall cost of placements and transport. By 2014 this number will reduce to 353.

- By 2014, every child and young person will be on the roll of a school, academy or pupil referral unit.
- We will improve the attendance of children and young people by supporting the reduction of persistent absence to 2% in Primary and 5.5% in Secondary schools by 2014 and to 1.3% in Primary and 4.5% in Secondary schools by 2017.
- By 2014, no children and young people in care will be excluded from school, fewer than 10% will be persistently absent and their attainment will improve year on year from the 2013 baseline and be above the national average. The achievement gaps at key stages 2 and 4 will be less than the national gaps.
- With the delivery of new models for PRUs and Alternative Curriculum provision for pupils aged 14-19, there will be fewer than 40 pupils permanently excluded from school by 2017. By 2014 permanent exclusions will have reduced to 120.
- By 2017, all young people attending a PRU will have a positive learning or training destination at ages 16 and 17.
- We will help parents to access a preferred school place for their child by increasing online admission applications to 95% by 2014 and increase the number of parents who get their first preference secondary school to above 85% and first preference primary school to above 87%. First and second preferences combined will improve to 95%.
- By 2014, Children Missing Education will be identified, tracked and monitored, and 90% of all new children referred who are found will be offered suitable education provision within 30 days.
- We will maintain between 5% and 7% surplus capacity in school places and ensure we deliver additional school places in line with demand and parental preferences, each year as set out in the Education Commissioning Plan to 2016.

**To shape education and skills around the needs of the Kent economy we will achieve the following by 2017:**

- By 2015, there will be full participation in education and work based training for all 16-18 year olds following year on year reductions in the NEET figures to no more than 1%.
- The employability skills of 19 year olds will have improved, especially in English and mathematics, so that Level 2 attainment at age 19 is well above the national average.

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By 2014 this will be 83% and by 2017 90% of the cohort will achieve a Level 2 qualification.

- By 2017, there will be fewer young people who achieve no improvement in qualifications between the ages of 16 and 19, so that this number reduces to less than 5%. By 2014 this will reduce to 9% of the cohort.
- The outcomes at Level 3 for 19 year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds will be above the national average and the achievement gap between this group and other students will have reduced by 10% from the 2012 baseline to 27% by 2014 and to 18% by 2017.
- We will have established a successful pre-apprenticeship and Level 1 programme for 17 year olds who are unable to achieve a Level 2 apprenticeship by 2015.
- The uptake of Level 2 and 3 vocational training in skills shortage areas will increase by 10% from the 2012 baseline to 24,350 young people by 2014 and 26,175 by 2017.
- The KCC Apprenticeship scheme will continue to recruit at least 88 apprentices each year, totalling 700 successful apprenticeships delivered by KCC by 2017. By 2014 the numbers will increase to 400.
- By 2017 at least 60% of schools will have provided one or more apprenticeships which have been taken up successfully by young people. By 2014, at least 40% of schools will have taken on apprentices.
- There will be a significant impact on unemployment among 18-24 year olds so that current levels reduce by 4000 to below 2008 Levels by 2017. By 2014 youth unemployment will be no more than 5.5%.
- By 2017, the number of assisted employment opportunities for vulnerable learners with learning difficulties and disabilities will increase to 120 and by 2014 at least 110 young people will be supported in this way.
- Post 16 attainment in English and mathematics will improve so that at least 55% of 16 year olds that do not attain Level 2 in Year 11 will achieve the qualification by age 17. By 2014 this will be 35% and 55% of the cohort will achieve this Level of qualification by 2017.
- By 2017, the number of young people, especially those from low income backgrounds, aged 16 with skills below Level 2, to achieve a Level 2 qualification by age 17 and progress to Level 3 by age 18 will increase by 20% from the 2012 baseline.
- We expect to see Advanced Level performance in Kent above the national average on all measures by 2016.

Updated as at 21 November 2013

- All young people aged 16 to 19 will be tracked by the LA working in partnership with schools and colleges so that their participation can be monitored, as required by statutory duty and participation rates improve year on year. .
- Youth Employment and Learning Zones in Thanet, Swale, Shepway, Gravesham and Dover will be fully in operation by 2014 and will reduce unemployment for 16 to 24 to below the national average in all areas by 2017.
- By 2014, each district in Kent will have effective partnership working for 14-19 year olds, involving KCC, schools, colleges, work based learning providers, employers and other agencies.

## Getting There

In order to bring about these rapid improvements we will put most of our effort into delivering and embedding well thought out strategies which deliver systematic and sharply focused work by:

- Being a better commissioner of services, especially in relation to services that support vulnerable children and young people and in relation to expanding educational provision in early years, schools, 14-19 and for SEND pupils, so that we meet demand with good and more cost effective provision.
- Developing District based working so that there is more coordinated and integrated work between schools, early years settings, education services, health, social care and other partners.
- Providing high quality performance data at school, district and county Levels to sharply focus improvement and identify and learn from rapidly improving trends.
- Focusing on improvement and innovation in teaching and learning and expanding the use of the 'Every Lesson Counts' programme so that satisfactory teaching improves to good very quickly.
- Recognising the best early years providers, schools, teachers and school leaders and using them effectively across the system to develop and disseminate best practice.
- Encouraging and promoting more effective school partnerships and collaboration, and partnership working with academy sponsors, employers, health commissioners and providers and other key stakeholders, to build capacity for system wide improvements in Kent.

Updated as at 21 November 2013

- Working in close cooperation with the National College, teaching school alliances, teacher training institutions and Kent NLEs and LLEs to support school improvement in a coordinated way across the county.
- Supporting governors to carry out their role effectively, be more informed about best practice, use data constructively to plan for improvements in their schools and keep the performance of the school under review, taking prompt action where necessary
- Ensuring that education, health and social care work closely with parents and carers and together with the voluntary sector to bring about the necessary improvements in the quality of provision for vulnerable children and young people, from the early years of childhood to early adulthood.
- Developing ways to give children and young people a greater say in the services that affect them and making better use of their views in designing and implementing new ways of working.

A key means of getting there is to promote a more self improving school to school support system and system leadership and maximise the use of existing good capacity in Kent. System leaders build partnerships of support that focus effort and energy in the same direction to ensure improvement is sustained and the pace of change increases. In world class systems 'poor to fair' schools become good schools quickly and performance gains are significant in a short time because the influence of the best performing schools is effectively spread around the system.

A more effective and longer term sustainable strategy for school improvement and developments in teaching quality and leadership capacity requires these kinds of collaboration within and between schools, and it is a key role for the local authority to support and facilitate this way of working.

These ambitious improvements in children and young people's educational outcomes and employability, and in the quality of Kent schools, early years providers and post 16 learning and skills providers, are supported by detailed service plans with year on year milestones and performance measures. A detailed performance framework is attached as an appendix to this document.

More detailed delivery plans have been set out in the 14-24 Strategy, the Early Years and School Improvement Strategies, the SEND Strategy, the Education Commissioning Plan, the business plan for Edukent, and the project plans for KIASS and Integrated 0-11 Services.

**Patrick Leeson**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Education, Learning and Skills**