

Delivering for Kent

Education and Young People's Services Vision and Priorities for Improvement

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DRAFT

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Education and Young People's Services

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 Vision is that every child and young person, from pre-birth to age 19, and their family, who needs early help services will receive them in a timely and responsive way, so that they are safeguarded, their educational, social and emotional needs are met and outcomes are good, and they are able to contribute positively to their communities and those around them now and in the future, including their active engagement in learning and employment.

Our strategic priorities for Education and Young People's Services are to ensure all children get the best start in the early years and all pupils can go to a good school and achieve their full potential; to shape education and skills provision around the needs of the Kent economy and ensure all young people move on to positive destinations, training and employment; and to improve services and outcomes for the most vulnerable children, young people and families in Kent. We aim to target early help services for the most vulnerable children, young people and families who require additional support, with an absolute focus on delivering better outcomes. Children, young people and families should be able to access the right services at the right time in the right place. We aim to place them at the heart of everything we do, working in a more integrated way and avoiding, where possible, single service interventions which may lack coordination or result in wasteful duplication.

Our strategic plans and targets are set out in more detail in the following key documents:

- The Early Years and Childcare Strategy
- The School Improvement Strategy
- The SEND Strategy
- The Education Commissioning Plan
- The 14-24 Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy
- The Early Help Prospectus and One Year Plan

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' social, 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 want to ensure that vulnerable children and families have their needs met early so that they do not experience the level of challenge and difficulty in their lives that requires statutory interventions. They should have the same opportunities as all other children and families to flourish, to stay safe and well and succeed in the education system.

We do this by focusing relentlessly on improving standards and the quality of education and learning so that excellence is promoted across the system. We aim to 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, and by promoting the highest quality early learning and childcare in the Foundation Stage. We work tirelessly to ensure every child can go to a good school where they can make good progress and every child can have fair access to school places. And we aim to 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.

Ensuring the most vulnerable learners experience success is one of our top priorities. Children in care, young offenders, excluded pupils, learners with special educational needs and disabilities, and children from families on low incomes all experience significant barriers to their achievement and attain less well than their peers. We want to close the attainment gaps that exist as a barrier to their future success.

We want to ensure that our available resources for early help and prevention do more and achieve more than we do now, to make a significant difference to the lives of children and families, to prevent the escalation of needs where we can and identify the likelihood of problems emerging in the first place. We want to reduce demand for statutory children's social care and to help 'step down' social care cases from Children in Need, Children with Protection Plans and Children in Care, where it is safe to do so.

We will achieve our ambitions by learning from and spreading the influence of the best, whether locally, nationally or internationally and through working in partnership across agencies, 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 to improve, 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 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 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 aim to reduce the numbers of children, young people and families requiring specialist interventions and experiencing poorer outcomes and social exclusion.

The Challenges for the Future

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 and commissioner 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.

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 help and preventative 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, and are included and helped to participate in education which is appropriate for their needs
- 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 with training to age 24
- Champion 21st 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
- Ensure all our Children's Centres make good provision for children and families and effectively reach and support the most needy families to achieve good outcomes
- Use the Troubled Families programme to develop a more sustainable model of family support that turns around the lives of more families experiencing challenging circumstances
- Deliver a youth offer and programmes of support for vulnerable adolescents that increase participation in positive activities and reduce offending, anti-social behaviour, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol mis-use and youth unemployment

New ways of working are critical for success in a more diverse educational and community landscape, with many different providers across the early years, schools and post 16 skills and employment sectors, together with partners in the health service and the police. 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 depends on the emergence of more integrated approaches, 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 forums and the Area Boards that have strong and purposeful working relationships in order to deliver the best opportunities and outcomes for their children and young people
- 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.
- The district based Local Inclusion Forum Teams and outreach work from Special schools to have more effective support for all schools in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- District based integrated teams and multi-agency working in Early Help and Prevention

Key Strategic Developments in 2013-14

In quickening the pace of improvement we have focused attention on transforming the way we work and the delivery of services. During 2013-14 we have:

- Introduced a refreshed Early Years and Childcare Strategy for 2014-2017
- As part of the Government's policy for free early education places for disadvantaged two year olds, expanded the 'Free for Two' scheme in Kent with more than 3,800 two year olds having accessed a free early education place.
- From September 2014, 5,491 places are available across the county, with an additional 605 expected to become available by late autumn, giving a potential total of 6,096. This is 93% of the target. Over the past year average take up of available places across the county was 79%. Work will continue to ensure the development of more places with existing and new providers and also to further promote and support take up by eligible children and families.
- Introduced a framework for early years and childcare providers to work in collaborations to drive a faster rate of improvement and narrowing of achievement gaps

- Further developed the devolved model for the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service working out of 12 lead Special Schools 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 support mainstream schools in implementing the SEN changes required by the Children and Families Act.
- Further developed the work of the Kent Association of Headteachers and its organisation into four new area boards, together with the system of school to school support and collaboration. The majority of Kent schools are now working in a partnership with other schools where there are 70 improvement hubs involving nearly 500 schools with clear partnership agreements sharply focused on improving school performance, leadership, the quality of teaching and standards of attainment. This work aligns the school improvement work by KCC, the work of teaching alliances and the support provided by KAH, and is supported by funding from the School Funding Forum.
- Developed planning and guidance materials for delivering the new National Curriculum programmes of study for English, maths and science, together with a county model for assessing pupils' progress and attainment.
- Implemented the re-organised Pupil Referral Unit and Alternative Curriculum arrangements in Kent, in partnership with schools, which have significantly improved outcomes for learners and reduced exclusions across the county.
- Reviewed the Health Needs PRUs and developed a clear plan for re-organised PRU provision, together with a new policy and service delivery structure to support young people with medical needs including mental health needs. The establishment of this new provision includes an outreach service for learners with physical health needs and six new satellite PRU learning bases across the county to support schools working with learners with mental health needs.
- Integrated services to develop a new Early Help and Preventative Service to provide more coordinated and effective support for vulnerable children and families, working closely with children's centres, early years settings, schools, youth hubs and other agencies including health and the police. The service is organised on a district basis to ensure there is good local access and speedy responses to identified needs.
- Developed and extended the reach of the new Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Service aimed at delivering more coordinated and targeted support and better outcomes for vulnerable adolescents, across the whole of Kent. This is part of Early Help and incorporates youth work, youth offending, work to support and reduce NEETS, and a range of services to support teenage parents and young people involved in drug and alcohol misuse.
- Refreshed the 14 to 24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy to ensure a clearer focus on employer engagement linking the curriculum to the world of work, collaborating

on the delivery of English and Maths post 16 and more effective partnership work in providing improved 14 to 19 curriculum pathways. 12 new District data packs have been produced with detailed information on labour market intelligence and student performance to inform curriculum planning.

- Further developed Kent's apprenticeship and youth employment programme so that youth unemployment has reduced and 750 apprentices are now on the Kent Employment Programme, 200 schools have appointed 245 apprentices and KCC employed 121 apprenticeships in the past year.
- Established a successful Kent Employer Partnership through a new Guild model which brings together the key employers from the Hospitality and Tourism sector, training providers and KCC to address the skills shortages in this industry. Guilds for Construction, Creative, Land Based, Engineering and Science and Logistics industries are currently in development.
- Launched the SEND Strategy in January 2014, to improve the outcomes for Kent's children and young people with SEN and those who are disabled (SEND). This is designed to deliver the requirements of the Children and Families Act, including the new arrangements for education, health and care plans, the development of the local offer, more SEN provision in Kent Special and mainstream schools, with less reliance on out of county placements and better outcomes and progress for pupils. It is supported by a workforce development plan to ensure teachers have the skills to support children, particularly those with autism, speech and language difficulties and behavioural needs. Kent's role as a SEND Pathfinder helped us to establish new ways of working in partnership with parents. We have also developed a new approach to allocating high needs funding to schools.
- Developed an increasing range of innovative and evidence based interventions by the Educational Psychology Service to support school staff to deliver better outcomes for children with special educational needs. In response to the Children and Families Act 2014 Educational Psychologists are now delivering their statutory advice in a new more inclusive way, following consultation with parent groups and other stakeholders. The service plays a key role in embedding the work of the Local Inclusion Forum teams, supporting the shift towards school to school support, creative problem solving and enabling local decision making for children and young people with special educational needs.
- Developed a more integrated approach to manage demand for home to school transport and reduce the financial pressure arising from SEN transport and out of county placements. This has begun to reduce travel costs. We introduced Personal Transport Budgets for families as an alternative to the existing service and over 100 families are participating in the scheme.
- Further developed our approach to District based working, restructuring our services and allocating resources and staff more clearly to district teams, so that service delivery can be more coordinated and early help and prevention for vulnerable children and young

people can be more accessible for schools and families. This work is on-going to ensure we have the right structures and district leadership for integrated working and more efficient service delivery.

- 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 2013-14 and where are we now?

We set very challenging and ambitious improvement targets and in 2013 -14 there were positive indications that we are achieving good progress.

- Results improved at almost every key stage of education from pre-school age to 19 years. The exception is the Key Stage 4 results following a change of indicators in 2014.
- In the **Early Years Foundation Stage**, 69% of children achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD). This is 5% increase compared to 2013 and is well ahead of the 60% national average.
- At **Key Stage 1** standards at Level 2B and Level 3 improved by an average of 3% compared with 2013 and are in line with or above the national averages for Reading, Writing and Mathematics. The FSM gaps continue to narrow in all areas at Key Stage 1.
- At **Key Stage 2** we continue to see improvement for pupils attainment at Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined. Kent achieved 79%, which is a 4% improvement compared to 2013, and this is in line with the national average. 283 Primary schools improved their results, compared to 200 in 2013. The free school meal achievement gap narrowed significantly to 17.8% from 25% in 2013.
- At **Key Stage 4**, for the first time for some years, there was a decline in the percentage of students achieving 5 or more A*-C GCSE grades including English and mathematics. There are now two indicators that need to be considered.

Indicator 1: First Results

This reflects the first time a student may have taken an exam in a subject, usually either English or mathematics or both. For example they may have taken English or mathematics or both in Year 10 and may have retaken their exams in Year 11. The first result counts in the first result indicator. Kent's first result is: 57.5% compared to the national average of 52.6%. On this new indicator for 2014 we remain above the national average by 4.9%.

Indicator 2: Best Results

The second indicator reflects the best result a student achieved irrespective of when they took the exam. Kent's best result is 60.3% compared to the national average of 58.2%, and 63% achieved in Kent in 2013. We remain above the national average by 1.9%.

- **Performance at post-16** improved on only one of three key indicators this year. The percentage of students achieving two or more A Level passes was 89.6%, compared to 90.6% in 2013, and the national average of 91.6%. The percentage of students achieving a pass, merit, or distinction in vocational qualifications fell slightly from 68.2% in 2013 to 67% in 2014. There was a slight improvement in the percentage of students achieving AAB grades at A' level from 8.7% in 2013 to 9.3% in 2014.
- We continue to make progress in increasing the number of good and outstanding schools in Kent. At the end of the last school year, July 2014, 75.5% of schools were good and outstanding compared to 70% at the same time in 2013 and 59% in the previous year. In 2010-2011 only 55% of schools were judged good or better. The national average is now 80%.
- This latest figure for Kent includes 72% of Primary schools, 82% of Secondary schools, 83% of Special schools and 91% of Pupil Referral Units. 91% of early years settings are good or outstanding. This compares with 70% of Primary schools, 79% of Secondary schools and 74% of Special Schools in July 2013. Nationally 71% of Secondary schools and 81% of Primary schools are now good or outstanding.
- Currently, 77% of pupils attend a good or outstanding school. This includes 71% of Primary pupils, 83% of Secondary pupils, 88% of pupils attending Special schools and 89% of pupils attending a PRU. This equates to 14,000 more children and young people receiving a better education compared with last year. In 2012, 62% of pupils in Kent attended a good or outstanding school and this increased to 70% in 2013.
- There has been a further reduction in **the number of permanent exclusions**, down to 88 in 2013-14 from 144 the previous year.
- **Persistent absence** rates have reduced from last year, to 4.4% from 4.9% for the same period in 2012-13.
- The number of **apprenticeships** has 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 an apprenticeship in the 19 to 25 age range increased on last year by 11%.
- The Kent Employment Programme has created an additional 381 **apprenticeships** starts during 2014 to date bringing the total to 765.
- The number of **apprenticeship** starts in schools has increased to 33% of schools, which means the schools have recruited at least one apprentice during the last year, which is an increase of 9% on last year.

- The **NEET figure for January 2014** was 5.9% which was slightly lower than January 2013 (6.1%).
- The current trend for **youth unemployment** is downward and the trajectory is below target. When the annual target was applied in November 2013 there were 6,070 18-24 year olds unemployed against a target of 7,200. Since then unemployment has continued to fall. In August 2014 youth unemployment in Kent was 3.3%, or 4,225 claimants. Significantly, for the first time, this figure is below the 2008 level. The National average for Youth Unemployment is 3.8%.
- The **employability skills** of 19 year olds have improved, especially in English and mathematics, so that level 2 attainment at age 19 is above the national average. The outcome in 2013 was 84.9% which is above the National Average at 83%, the statistical neighbour average at 84.8% and above target of 80%. This is a continuing upward trend and we await the latest data which will be published in January 2015.
- There has been a small improvement over the previous year from 11.8% to 11.1% of the Year 12 cohort failed to **raise their level of attainment** by age 19.
- Performance at **post-16** has improved for the APE score. Kent's Average Points Score per entry is up 3.9 to 214.6 compared to last year.
- The number of **assisted employment opportunities** for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities exceeded its target of 110 to 117.
- Good progress was made in improving performance in completing SEN statutory assessments. Nationally the number of Statements produced in 26 weeks during the past year was 82% compared to 92% in Kent.
- The completion of psychological statutory advice within the required time frames has improved to 99%.
- Delivered all the school expansions required for the school year beginning September 2014, thus achieving important steps in our aim to provide a good local school for every Kent pupil. We provided an additional 550 places, equivalent to 15.3 forms of entry in Primary schools and 3 forms of entry in Secondary schools, and 250 temporary Reception class places.
- We commissioned 288 additional places in maintained Special schools during the course of the year and 96 places have been commissioned in Specialist Resource Base Provisions in mainstream schools, which will come on line from 2015.
- We have continued to develop the traded offer of the Kent Educational Psychology Service through EduKent, with 46% of schools taking up the offer and with many schools deciding to enhance their previous year's package. This is in addition to the

core service provided to all schools which includes the positive contribution of Educational Psychologists at Local Inclusion Forum Team meetings.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

In 2014, performance improved by 6% compared to the previous year. 69% of children achieved a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with a range across districts of between 60% and 74%. Performance in Kent is 9% above the national average of 60%. This is a very strong performance which prepares children well for starting school and making good progress in Key Stage 1.

76% of girls and 61% of boys achieved a good level of development, compared to 72% and 55% last year, which means increased achievement for both and that the gender achievement gap has narrowed from 17% to 15%.

The achievement gap based on FSM data is 12%, a significant narrowing from the figure of 18% in 2013. The achievement gap for children achieving a GLD between the lowest attaining 20% of children and the mean is 27%. Whilst this shows a marginal widening of this gap from 25.2% in 2013, Kent's position is still strong in comparison to the national figure of 34%, in addition to which Kent is again top amongst its statistical neighbours.

The DfE is introducing Baseline Assessment with effect from September 2015, which will replace the measure of GLD at the end of the EYFS. Notwithstanding this, by 2018 we expect a minimum of 85% of children at the end of the EYFS to have achieved an equivalent GLD, which means they are ready for school. We have also set a new target for reducing the gap between all children achieving a GLD and those in receipt of free school meals to 8% by 2018.

Key Stage 1

In 2014, standards of attainment at Key Stage 1 improved by an average of 3% in all subjects. Performance is in line with or above the national averages. Approximately 250 schools improved their results compared to 2013.

Attainment in **Reading** at Key Stage 1 Level 2b and above improved compared to 2013 and this continues a five year upward trend. 82% of seven year olds achieved Level 2b or above in Reading in 2014. This is above the national average of 81% and is a 3% improvement compared to 2013.

At Level 3 and above in Reading there was also further improvement and a continuing upward trend. 32% of seven year olds achieved Level 3 or above compared with 30% in 2013. Kent is 1% above the national average of 31%.

Attainment in **Writing** at Key Stage 1, at Level 2b and above, improved by 3% and continues a five year upward trend. Attainment in writing at this Level is now at 70% compared to 67% in

2013. The difference between 82% of seven year olds achieving the national average for reading and only 70% achieving the writing benchmark remains a concern.

At Level 3 and above in Writing there has also been continuous improvement with 16% of pupils achieving this level compared to 15% in 2013., The national figure is 16%. Standards at Level 3 are in line with the national average.

Attainment in **Mathematics** at Level 2b and above, improved with 82% of pupils achieving this level compared to 79% in 2013. At Level 3 and above there was further improvement from 23% to 25%. Kent is above the national averages at both Level 2b (80%) and Level 3, (24%) in 2014 and this reflects a continuing upward trend.

Key Stage 2

There was good improvement in standards achieved at Key Stage 2. This is the second year of the new measure for attainment at Key Stage 2 in 2014, the combined Reading, Writing and mathematics at Level 4 and above score. 79% of pupils achieved this level of attainment compared to 74% in 2013, which is in line with the national average. At Level 5, attainment in Reading, Writing and mathematics combined improved to 25%, compared to 22% in 2013, which is a 3% increase. The national improvement was also 3%.

In 2014, 243 schools performed at or above the national average at Key Stage 2 and 283 schools improved their results compared to 2013. 35 schools achieved 95-100% for pupils attaining Level 4 and above, compared to 18 schools who achieved this in 2013.

Attainment in **Reading** at Level 4 and above increased by 3% in 2014, following a 1% decline in 2013. Attainment at Level 5 and above improved by 5%, following a decline of 3% in 2013. The national average also increased in 2014, by 3% at Level 4 and by 5% at Level 5. Rates of progress also improved, with 91% of pupils achieving the expected 2 Levels of progress in Reading between key stages 1 and 2, which is in with the national average.

Attainment in **Writing** at Levels 4 and 5 increased in 2014 by 3% at Level 4 and by 5% at Level 5. The national average improved by 2% at level 4 and by 3% at level 5. Rates of progress improved, with 93% of pupils achieving the two levels of expected progress in Writing. This is a 2% improvement on 2013 and is in line with the national average.

In **Mathematics**, there was a 2% improvement in 2014, at Level 4 and at Level 5. Nationally there was a 1% improvement at both Levels 4 and 5. Rates of progress improved, with 89% of pupils achieving the expected two levels of progress, an increase of 3% compared to 2013. This is in line with the national average.

The Floor Standard at Key Stage 2

In 2014 Primary schools are performing below the floor standards and therefore are underperforming if:

- fewer than 65% of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2) achieved level 4 or above in Reading, Writing and Maths combined and
- below the average percentage of pupils at the end of KS2 made expected progress in Reading (compared with the 2014 national median) and
- below the average percentage of pupils at the end of KS2 made expected progress in Writing (compared with the 2014 national median) and
- below the average percentage of pupils at the end of KS2 made expected progress in Maths (compared with the 2014 national median)

In 2013, there were 44 schools below the floor standard. In 2014 this number has reduced to only 22 schools, which represents good progress.

Statistical Neighbours (SN)

Kent's top statistical neighbours (Warwickshire and Lancashire jointly) achieved 80% Level 4 combined in 2014 compared to 79% in Kent. The difference between Kent and the highest performing statistical neighbour is now only 1%, 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 4th for performance at Level 4 and above, and 2nd for Level 5 performance. This is the best performance Kent has achieved since comparisons began.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 Kent's GCSE performance against the new indicator of First results at 5 or more A*-C grades including English and Mathematics is 57.5%. The national average for First results is 52.6%. Kent is therefore 4.9% above the national average. The second important figure is the best result that students achieved in their GCSE examinations. Kent's best result is 60.3% of students achieving 5 A* to C grades including English and Mathematics. The national average is 58.2%. Kent is therefore 1.9% above the national average. Kent is ranked third within our statistical neighbours group.

12 non selective school and 8 selective schools improved their GCSE performance in 2014, compared to 44 non selective schools and 14 selective schools in 2013. There were 40 schools where performance was in line with or above the national average, compared to 45 schools in 2013.

Expected rates of progress at Key Stage 4 (three levels of progress between key stages 2 and 4) improved this year in English to 74% from 73% in 2013. There has been a decline in Mathematics progress rates to 66.8% from 71.7% in 2013. Both these figures are above the national averages of 70.9% in English and 65.3% in Mathematics.

Performance in English at A* to C grades is 71.4%, which is 6.8% above the national average of 64.6%. In Maths performance at A*-C is 67.6%, which is also above the national average of 64.7%.

Kent's performance for 5 or more A*-G grades was almost 4% above the national average, at 93.3% compared to the national average of 89.4%. This is a good indication of the success of Kent schools' inclusive approach to securing educational success for the vast majority of pupils.

The floor standard for Secondary schools is 40% of pupils achieving five good GCSE grades with English and mathematics. In 2014, 24 Secondary schools performed below the floor compared to 9 schools in 2013. This is based on the First Entry results. Overall 20% of secondary schools improved their results and a further 16 schools maintained their GCSE performance in 2014 or declined by no more than 1%, based on First Entry results in 2014 compared to Best Results in 2013.

A Level and Post 16 Results

Performance at post-16 has shown limited improvement in 2014. The percentage of students achieving two or more A Level passes, A* to E declined from 90.6% in 2013 to 89.6% in 2014. This reflects a three year decline from 92% in 2012, which is disappointing. The percentage of students achieving three or more A* to E passes was 76%, compared to the national average of 77.8%, which is also disappointing.

Kent's Average Points Score per entry at A level is in line with the national average. Kent is 212.9 compared to the national result of 212.8.

The Average Points Score per student was 831 compared to a national average of 782 This result is both above the national average and an improvement compared to the previous year.

The Average Points Score per entry for vocational achievement was 228.2 which is in line with the national average of 228.9. This is a slight improvement compared to 2013.

The Average Points Score per student for vocational achievement was 666.1 compared to the national average of 688.6. This is an improvement compared to the 2013 score of 639.3, however nationally there has been greater improvement.

There was a small improvement in the number of students gaining three or more A and B grades which improved from 8.7% in 2013, to 9.3% in 2014, compared to the national average of 8.4%.

Gender Differences

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, girls continue to out-perform boys with 76% of girls and 61% 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 at Level 2b continues to show girls doing better than boys in all three areas. At Level 3+ girls still perform better than boys in reading and writing. In Maths boys still perform better than girls.

In **Reading** attainment at Level 2b and above for girls shows continuing improvement. 86% of girls achieved this level compared to 85% in 2013, which is 1% above the national average. Level 2b+ attainment for boys increased by 4% in 2014 to 78% from 74% in 2013. Nationally boys achieved 77% which is a 3% increase compared to 2013.

The performance of higher achieving girls improved in 2014 with 37% achieving Level 3 compared to 35% in 2013. This is 2% above the national average for 2014. The performance of higher achieving boys increased this year by 2% from 26% in 2013 to 28% in 2014. Nationally the increase was only 1% from 25% in 2013 to 26% in 2014.

In **Writing**, girls' attainment at Level 2b and above improved to 78% in 2014 (compared to 75% in 2013). Boys' attainment at Level 2b and above increased by 3% this year. Whilst this is encouraging there remains a need to focus on the gender gap at Key Stage 1 in writing. The national gap is 15% and the Kent gap is 16%.

Higher achieving girls' performance at Level 3 improved by 1% this year. This is now in line with the national average of 21%. Boys' performance at Level 3 in writing is now also in line with the national average. This is a strong performance in 2014. 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 2% in 2014, with 83% of pupils achieving this standard compared to 81% in 2013. Boys' performance improved by 2% in 2014, with 80% of boys attaining this level compared to 78% in 2013. Attainment for both boys and girls is showing a good four year upward trend in mathematics at Level 2b.

Performance for higher achieving girls improved in 2014 by 2%. The attainment of higher achieving boys is now 27% compared with 26% in 2013. This is in line with the national increase. The performance of higher achieving girls is now 23% compared to 21% in 2013. In 2014 Kent is 1% higher than the national average for both boys and girls.

At **Key Stage 2**, the attainment of girls at Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined continues to outperform that of boys. 82% of girls achieved the expected level compared to 75% of boys. Girls are performing in line with the national average whilst boys are 1% below the national average.

For girls attainment at Level 4 improved by 5%, which reflects a five year upward trend. Boys also improved their performance by 4% compared to 2013. The national gender gap for 2014 is 6%, which is a 1% reduction on 2013, compared to a 7% gender gap in Kent, which has not changed since 2013.

Attainment at Level 5 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined improved for both boys and girls in 2014. 28% of girls and 22% of boys achieved Level 5 or above, compared to 26% and 18% respectively in 2013. Boys' results are 2% higher than the national average and the girls' outcomes are 1% above average.

Key Stage 2 Reading for Boys and Girls

Attainment in Reading, at Level 4 and above, increased by 4% for boys and by 2% for girls. This reflects a similar national increase for boys and compares to a national increase of 3% for girls. Attainment at Level 5 and above increased by 7% for boys, compared to a national increase of 5%. The percentage for girls increased by 4% compared to 5% nationally.

Key Stage 2 Writing for Boys and Girls

Attainment at both levels 4 and 5 for boys and girls improved in 2014. At Level 4 and above, attainment for girls improved by 1%, compared to 2% nationally and attainment for boys improved by 3%, reflecting a similar national increase. Attainment at Level 5 improved by 5% for girls, compared to 3% nationally and for boys it improved by 4% compared to 3% nationally.

Key Stage 2 Mathematics for Boys and Girls

Standards of attainment at Level 4 increased by 3% for girls and 2% for boys in 2014, compared to 1% improvement nationally for both boys and girls. Level 5 attainment for girls improved by 1%, which is in line with the national increase. The percentage for boys increased by 3% compared to a national increase of 1%.

At **Key Stage 4**, the gender gap in attainment of five good GCSE grades including English and Maths remains at 9% the same as in 2013. 52% of boys and 61% of girls attained this level of achievement in 2014 compared to 50% of boys and 61% of girls nationally. 31 schools narrowed the gender attainment gap compared to 2013. This is from the total of 67 mixed gender secondary mainstream schools.

While we have seen some positive narrowing of the gender gaps the gender differences continue to be significant, 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, 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 embed and continue to increase the success we have seen in closing the FSM gap in 2014. We need a similar additional focus on Children in Care (CIC), and pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or with Statements of Special Educational Need (SSEN). These gaps continue to be mostly wider in Kent compared to national gaps and are not narrowing or are narrowing far too slowly.

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage**, there is good progress in narrowing the achievement gap to 12%, based on FSM data, compared to 18% in 2013. The achievement gap for children achieving a good level of development between the lowest attaining 20% of children and the mean is 27.1%, which is a slight increase in last year's figure of 25.2%. However, compared to the England gap figure of 33.9% this is very encouraging.

At **Key Stage 1** whilst there is still a significant gap between FSM pupils and their peers, the gaps in all three areas have narrowed in 2014. The gap in reading at Level 2b is 18.3% compared with 20.7% in 2013. In writing it is 22% compared with 24.3% in 2013 and in mathematics it is 16.9% compared with 18.8% in 2013. Since 2012 the gap in Reading has narrowed by almost 7%, in Writing by almost 6% and in Maths by 4.4%. While this is encouraging more progress is needed to narrow the achievement gaps at this critical stage in the early lives of less advantaged children.

The SEN gap has widened slightly in reading from 47.1% in 2013 to 48.1% in 2014. In writing the gap has narrowed slightly from 55.3% in 2013 to 54.5%. In Maths the gap remains largely the same with 44.3% in 2013 and 44.7% in 2014. These gaps remain largely the same as in 2013 and this is disappointing.

At **Key Stage 2** the attainment gap between FSM pupils and their peers has narrowed significantly in 2014. The gap in reading, writing and mathematics combined at Level 4 and above, is now 17.8% compared with 25% in 2013. At the same time, between 2012 and 2014, outcomes for pupils on free school meals improved by 7.4% in reading, writing and maths combined. In 2013 the national achievement gap was 19%. The figure for 2014 is not yet available. Overall 210 schools improved the FSM gap in 2014.

In reading the Level 4 attainment gap has now reduced to 11% from 19% in 2013. In writing it is 14.3% compared with 20% in 2013 and in mathematics it is 12.6% compared with 19% in 2013. This improvement is very welcome.

Gaps in rates of progress have continued to narrow between FSM and non FSM pupils. In 2014 these were 4.9% in reading compared to 7.2% in 2013, 4% in writing compared to 6.5%

in 2013 and 3.7% in mathematics compared to 8.6% in 2013. This is a significant improvement. In 2014, 210 Primary schools improved the FSM gap at Key Stage 2.

The SEN gap at Key Stage 2 continues to be significant and there was only marginal improvement in 2014. The gap for children with SEN in Reading, Writing and Maths at Level 4 was 47%, which is a small improvement on 50% in 2013. For pupils with a statement the gap in Reading, Writing and Maths was 77%, the same as in 2013. These remain unacceptably large gaps in attainment.

The **GCSE** attainment gap between pupils eligible for FSM and their peers for 5+ A*-C including English and Maths in 2014 is 33.3%. This represents a very small reduction of 1.2% compared to 2013. This has not improved significantly in the last few years and compares poorly with the national gap of 27%. The national gap reduced by only 0.4% in 2014. At the same time 58 schools improved the FSM gap compared to 38 schools in 2013.

In 2014, 26.5% of FSM pupils achieved 5 or more good GCSEs with English and mathematics, compared to 33% in 2013. This decline from the previous year reflects the change to the First entry indicator, but it is still very disappointing.

There remains a significant gap between FSM students and non FSM students in achieving three levels of progress by the end of Key Stage 4. In English 22.4% of FSM students achieved this rate of progress compared to 74% of all students. In Maths 29.8% of FSM students achieved this rate of progress compared to 66.8% of all students. This gap has widened slightly in English and improved by 3% in Maths compared to 2013. This is very disappointing and will continue to be a significant focus for improvement in 2015.

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, in 2013 the SEN achievement gap narrowed at Key Stage 4 by nearly 4% to 44.2% and has continued to narrow in 2014 to 39.8%. This will continue to be a priority for further improvement in 2015.

Children in Care

The 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage achievement gap for Kent Children in Care (CiC) is 46%, which has widened by 15% from 31% in 2013. This is very concerning. The 2014 gap for other local authority CiC is 35%, which has narrowed by 5% from 40% in 2013, which is encouraging. These gaps in achievement are, however, not acceptable.

In 2014, outcomes for children in care (CiC) at Key Stage 2 remain a concern. 42.4% of CiC who were looked after for more than 12 months achieved Level 4 or above in reading, writing and mathematics compared to 42% in 2013.

In Reading 66.7% of CiC achieved two levels of progress compared to 91% of all pupils and in Writing 72.7% achieved two levels of progress compared to 93.0% of all pupils. In Maths 68.4% achieved two levels of progress compared to 89% of all pupils. These outcomes are an improvement compared to 2013.

The CiC gap at Key Stage 2 has narrowed in 2014 from 37.2% in 2013 to 35.6% in 2014. This will continue to be a significant focus for improvement in 2014 – 2015.

At GCSE 8.2% of CIC achieved 5 or more A* to C grades including English and Maths compared to 15.2% in 2013. This is a cause for concern. The Key Stage 4 attainment gap is 49.3%. This gap widened from 47% in 2013. These are the widest achievement gaps of any pupil group, and are an important focus for improvement in 2015.

Summary of Progress

Overall, while standards continue to improve at each key stage, the exception being Key Stage 4 in 2014, and it is positive to see the FSM gap significantly narrowing at the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, slow progress is being made in improving progress and narrowing the gaps in attainment for pupils with special educational needs and Children in Care. For these two most vulnerable groups their achievement gaps continue to be the widest of any pupil group and continue to be a key priority for improvement in 2015.

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, focuses on what 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 pursuing 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 (24% of schools) that is not yet good, which is letting down children and communities some of whom are the most disadvantaged in Kent. On many indicators we perform better against national and against our statistical neighbours but there is more to do and we need a continued sense of urgency to build on the improved performance in 2014 and more intensive work on those areas where performance is below average. .

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 now in line with the national average and the achievement gaps for pupils eligible for the pupil premium at Key Stages 2 have narrowed significantly.

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 in 2013-14. This is a significant resource to make more of a difference to closing achievement gaps for less advantaged pupils. In 2014 we have seen a significant impact on FSM performance at Key Stage 2 and this is encouraging. 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 regular 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 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.

In April 2015 an Early Years Pupil Premium is being introduced. Further to the outcomes of a Government consultation, we will ensure that support is available for Kent's 700 early years providers to support effective implementation and maximise the impact of this additional resource.

Provision and Outcomes for 14 - 24 Year Olds

The 14 to 24 Strategy for Learning, Employment and Skills is designed to achieve a fundamental shift in the education system in Kent towards a more comprehensive vocational and technical offer for young people aged 14 to 24. The development of the Adult Skills strategy also builds on the four priorities for the 14 to 24 age range, with a clear focus on meeting the skills needs of the local economy and support for vulnerable adults. The review of the 14 to 24 strategy and the development of the Adult Skills Strategy will ensure there is a coordinated approach to enable young people and adults to access employment or higher levels of learning.

There is a need for more rapid developments in Kent whereby the work of schools, colleges, training providers and employers become better integrated and respond to the needs of young people, adults and the economy. Facilitating and supporting these developments is a key focus for the Skills and Employability Service.

To support this move towards more collaborative working between schools and colleges twelve new and updated district data packs have been published. They contain a wide range of performance data and now more information on labour market intelligence to support providers to develop post 16 programmes that meet the needs of the local economy. Schools and colleges continue to realign their curriculum offer in line with the recommendations set out in the data packs. The Kent FE Colleges are also working towards signing a data sharing protocol so the district data packs for 2015-16 will contain all the local learning institutions' data. Further work on the district data packs is underway to adapt the content to help parents make informed choices about the range of post 16 opportunities and how these pathways link to employment.

Progress has been made in expanding the local learning and skills opportunities available on Kentchoices4u for young people looking to re-engage in learning, who are NEET, and looking for apprenticeships or employment with training.

Apprenticeships and Improving Vocational and Technical Education

There is still a lack of clear progression pathways 14 to 19 for technical and vocational qualifications, especially at 17 for our most vulnerable learners. The mismatch between some of the courses available and the needs of local business, and the limited attention to English and Maths qualifications in some programmes; are still priorities for the 14 to 24 strategy.

A number of schools and colleges have embraced the freedoms and flexibilities with the post 16 programmes of study and new qualification reforms, which includes 6 new training providers offering flexible post 16 programmes from September 2014. Case studies have been shared on innovative and collaborative approaches to 14 to 19 provision and work continues with individual schools and colleges to develop robust 14 to 19 pathways, which lead to sustainable employment.

Kent continues to perform well in increasing apprenticeships, although numbers are currently down on last year for 16 to 18 year olds. Performance is better than our statistical neighbours.

The removal of some apprenticeship frameworks and a clamp down on poorly performing providers by the Skills Funding Agency has contributed to this shortfall in numbers. There has been a significant campaign by all Kent apprenticeship providers to increase the number of 16 to 18 year old apprentices and the latest trend in the data suggests that the final out turn will be above last year's figures.

The KCC Apprenticeship Programme has exceeded the target set for 2014 by appointing 121 apprentices against a target of 120. The cumulative target of 400 for 2014 has been met with a total of 424. Work continues to engage all KCC departments to develop apprenticeship opportunities and the programme has been widened to include work experience and traineeships. Three higher (level 4) apprenticeships were appointed this year for the first time.

Currently, 200 schools are employing apprentices with 252 starts this year. This work continues to engage more schools with a target to increase the number of higher and advanced apprenticeships.

The NEET Figures and Youth Unemployment

The NEET figure for January 2014 was 5.9%, which is slightly lower than last year's at 6.1%. These figures are higher than the national and south east and national averages. The NEET figure should always be used in conjunction with the Not Known figures. From 2013 to 2014 the Not Known figure increased from 2.5% to 5.0%, which is still well below the south east and national averages. During this time there has been a significant improvement of the tracking functions within KCC with better data collection, which involved working more closely with schools and colleges to help them understand their role in ensuring that young people have positive and appropriate destinations at ages 16, 17 and 18.

The profile of the NEET cohort in January 2014 shows that 1,641 young people were identified within a vulnerable group. Joint working between the Skills and Employability Service and KIASS (Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Service) has reduced the number of NEETs in some of these vulnerable groups. This was possible due to the increased use of reliable data sets to provide more targeted interventions. This work will continue to reduce NEETs to at least 4% by January 2015.

The Kent Employment Programme is well on course to meet the target of 1000 apprenticeships by March 2015. This programme works directly with 17 to 24 year olds who have been NEET or unemployed for three months or more. The current number of young people placed on the programme is 769 and 98% of those who completed their apprenticeship have maintained full time employment.

Since last year unemployment for 18 to 24 year olds has continued to fall. In August 2014 unemployment for this age group was 3.35% or 4225 claimants, compared to 5.3% in 2013. Significantly, for the first time this is below the 2008 figure. There has also been significant decrease in the five youth unemployment zones, with Dover at 4.8%, Gravesham at 4.3%, Shepway at 5.1%, Swale at 5.2% and Thanet at 7.8%. The comparable figures for 2013 are Dover (6.8%), Gravesham (6.6%), Shepway (6.3%), Swale (8%) and Thanet at (11.8%). These figures remain above the national average of 3.8%.

The activities developed within the Youth Employment and Learning Action zones have placed 80 young people into fulltime employment. The findings from the first year will be used to develop a Social Impact Bond to reduce youth unemployment below 2%, which would be the lowest in the country. If successful the bond would bring in 10 million pounds of targeted funding to support young people aged 18 to 24 into apprenticeships or full time employment.

Targeted Support for Vulnerable Learners

The Skills and Employability Service has been working with 52 vulnerable young people supporting them into education, training and apprenticeships. This number exceeds the target of 30 for this year. To date seven of these young people are now employed in apprenticeship placements. The post 16 programme for BESD (behavioural, emotional and social difficulties) learners has been successful in reducing NEETs for this vulnerable group. The service has supported 173 young people from BESD Special Schools over the past years with 70% of these learners remaining in education or taking up apprenticeships.

New supported employment pathways are being developed by the Kent Supported Employment Team, This new programme has begun at Grange Park and Ifield Special Schools and is working with 10 learners to support them into employment.

Kent Supported Employment programme has been working with 409 young people over the last year with an increasing number of these referrals being in the 16 to 18 age range. This younger age group now exceeds that of the over 25s which is in line with priorities to support employment pathways at the point of transition from school to work. New targets which reflect this change in age profile will be set for this programme.

Ofsted Inspection Outcomes

Kent schools made good progress in the last school year in improving inspection outcomes and in increasing the number of good and outstanding schools. At the end of the 2013-14 school year, 75% of schools were good or outstanding. This includes 16% of schools judged to be outstanding and 59% judged to be good, compared to 20% outstanding and 60% good schools nationally. In 2013, 68% of Kent schools were good or outstanding, compared to 59% in 2012 and 55% in 2011.

However, despite the increase in the percentage of good and outstanding schools to 75% by July 2014, Kent continues to perform below the national average (80%) for the number of good or outstanding schools. Our priority for 2015 onwards is to close the gap with the national picture, and exceed it so that by 2018 at least 90% of schools in Kent will be good and outstanding.

In July 2014, 82% of Secondary schools, 72% of Primary schools, 83% of Special schools and 91% of PRUs in Kent were judged to be good or outstanding.

During the last school year, of the 165 Kent schools inspected only 61%, (99 schools), were judged to be good or outstanding, compared to 69% nationally for the same period. There is clearly still some way to go to achieve the improvement rate that we need to see in Kent.

Of the 128 Primary schools inspected over the year only 54% (66) achieved a good or outstanding outcome. Only 28 schools moved from 'requires improvement' to good, compared to 63 schools in 2013. This needs to improve. 26 Secondary schools were inspected last year and 81% (21 schools) were judged good or better. Likewise, of the 12 Special schools inspected last year 75% (9 schools) got a good or outstanding judgement. This is very positive.

In 2013, 70% of pupils in Kent attended a good or outstanding school. This figure has now increased to 77%, which equates to approximately 14,000 more children and young people receiving a better education.

In 2013, 66% of Primary school pupils (70,291) attended a good or outstanding school. This figure in 2014 has now increased to 71%, (75,617 pupils) which equates to 5326 more pupils receiving a better Primary education.

In 2013, 74% of Secondary school pupils (70,627) attended a good or outstanding school. This figure has now increased to 82%, (78,262 pupils) which equates to 7635 more pupils receiving a better Secondary education.

In 2013, 77.6% of Special School pupils attended a good or outstanding school, this figure has now increased to 88% in 2014 which equates 504 more pupils receiving a better Special school education.

There has been a dramatic improvement in the numbers attending a good or outstanding Pupil Referral Unit from 30% of pupils in 2012, to 76% in 2013 to 89% in 2014. The quality of PRUs has improved from 75% good or outstanding to 91% in 2014.

At the end of the last school year there were 108 (19.8%) 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 26 schools judged to be inadequate by Ofsted. In the past year 5 schools successfully came out of category and 15 schools were newly judged to be in an Ofsted category of concern. Our aim is to ensure no Kent school goes into an Ofsted category of concern by 2015 and this figure reduces to no more than 12 schools.

Early years private, voluntary and independent sector Ofsted outcomes have improved exceptionally this year, with 91% of providers in Kent now judged good or outstanding, an improvement of 4% compared to 2013.

Many 'satisfactory' or 'requires improvement' schools are well led and making good progress, and a good number of these schools significantly improved their performance in 2014, 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 90% of Primary and Secondary schools and 100% of Special schools to be judged good or outstanding by Ofsted by 2018. By 2015 we expect at least 82% 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 local authority takes its school improvement responsibilities very seriously and we use all 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 the next two years, and that we continue to work together in partnership to ensure no good and outstanding schools decline.

Inspection Outcomes for Kent Children's Centres

72% of Children Centres in Kent are judged as good or outstanding compared to a national average of 69%. This includes 11% which are outstanding, 61% good, 24% requiring improvement and 4% inadequate. The target set within the Early Help and Preventative Services One Year Plan is to improve the KCC performance to at least 75% by 2015.

Exclusions

We continue to see a significant reduction in permanent exclusions, which is very positive. The total number of permanently excluded pupils in Kent has reduced again in the past year from 144 in 2012-13 to 88 in 2013-14.

There has been a year on year decrease in permanent exclusions in both Primary and Secondary schools since 2011 when there were 252 permanent exclusions. The 2014 target figure for secondary permanent exclusions was exceeded but the primary permanent exclusion figure was 26 falling short of the target of 24.

Primary permanent exclusions have reduced by 30.6% while the reduction at Secondary has been 42.5%. This means that Primary permanent exclusions accounted for almost 30% of all Kent's permanent exclusions in 2013-14.

Thanet has the highest Primary school permanent exclusions accounting for 46% of all exclusions for primary age pupils. Six districts have zero Primary school exclusions. Maidstone has the highest number of Secondary permanent exclusions with zero exclusions in Tunbridge Wells and Ashford. 52% of all permanent exclusions were for persistent disruptive behaviour.

There has also been a welcome reduction of fixed term exclusions in Secondary schools. The figures have reduced from 8939 in 2012-13 to 8912 in 2013-14. However, Primary school fixed

term exclusions have increased from 1429 in 2012-13 to 1604 in the past year. The number of days lost to education makes a significant difference to pupils' progress and attainment so any reduction is encouraging and helpful.

The re-organised PRU arrangements have made a clear contribution to the reduction in Secondary permanent exclusions. This has been achieved through a review of the local offer, an improved curriculum and a commitment on the part of schools to find positive alternatives to exclusion and clearer pathways to post 16 training and learning. This is a very significant achievement for Kent.

Attendance

The latest data on attendance is not for a whole school year. It shows that persistent absence in reduced to 4.4% compared to 4.9% in 2012-13. This equates to 727 fewer pupils in Kent being persistently absent, which is encouraging. Persistent absence is a key indicator with a high correlation to permanent exclusion, low attainment, elective home education and the risk of becoming NEET and unemployed in the longer term.

In this period the percentage of persistent absence in Primary schools was 2.9%, which is in line with the national average and an improvement on 3.1% the previous year. In effect this reduced the number of persistently absent pupils by 491 pupils.

In the same period, the percentage of persistent absence in Secondary schools was 6.4%, which is above the national average of 5.8%, and an improvement on 6.7% the previous year. In effect this reduced the number of persistently absent pupils by 236 pupils. Canterbury, Swale and Thanet continue to have the highest numbers of pupils who are persistently absent.

We continue to develop the offer to schools to improve attendance, which is now provided through the Early Help and Preventative Service. Kent continues to reduce persistent absence year on year broadly in line with national trends but this reduction needs to accelerate to narrow the gap with national figures in Secondary schools.

The DfE is currently consulting with schools and local authorities to change the definition of persistent absence to 10% from the current 15%. It is suggested this could be implemented as early as January 2015 to allow schools to embed good practice ahead of the academic year commencing September 2015.

Overall absence from school decreased marginally in the past year to 4.6% from 5.2% in the previous year. Absence in Primary schools increased from 4.3% to 4.6%, while absence in Secondary schools reduced by 0.2% to 6.0%. Figures released by the DfE which combine Autumn 2013 and Spring 2014 data suggest a reduction in Kent's persistent absence to 4.4%. Currently, primary school overall absence is recorded at 3.9% and persistent absence 2.9% with secondary schools recording 5.4% overall absence and 6.4% persistent absence.

Commissioning Education Provision

The Education Commissioning Plan 2014-19, published in November 2014, sets out our plans for increasing education provision in Kent. We aim to secure good quality school places in every community so that every young person can have the best chance in life. Commissioning and implementing the planned number of new school places overall for September 2014 has been successful. Delivery of a small number of projects has been adjusted in response to changing contexts during the year including new provision in light of increased inward migration, additional works to mitigate the impact upon the highways to enable planning consent to be obtained and adjustments to allow for improvements in school standards.

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. In Kent the annual birth rate increased by 25% between 2002 and 2012. In 2013 this trend appears to have changed with a 6.6% fall in the number of births. However, we will continue to see a significant increase in pupil numbers in our schools, and consequently a need for new provision as the larger cohorts work through the system.

The number of Reception age pupils in Kent schools has increased from 14,812 in 2007-08 to 17,273 in 2013-14. This is an increase of 16.6%. The number of Reception age pupils is forecast to increase to around 18,300 over the next five years, although in 2016-17 this is expected to peak at about 18,800 pupils.

The number of Primary pupils in Kent schools is forecast to rise from 109,219 in 2009-10 to around 129,000 in 2018-19. This is an expected increase of 22% from 2009-10 and 13% on current roll numbers.

The number of Year 7 pupils in Kent Secondary schools has fallen for four consecutive years from 16,605 in 2008-09 to a low point of 15,244 in 2012-13. There has been an increase to 15,405 pupils for 2013-14. Year 7 pupil numbers are forecast to rise to almost 20,000 through the period to 2023-24, an increase of 28% on current roll numbers.

The number of Secondary age pupils (Year 7-11) in Kent schools has been declining over the previous six years from 82,736 in 2007-08 to 78,222 in 2013-14 and is expected to continue to fall slightly to just below 78,000 in 2014-15. Thereafter it is forecast to rise to over 94,000 through the period to 2023-24, an increase of 21% on current roll numbers.

The accuracy of our forecasting methodology has remained close to within 1% of accuracy, although the increase in inward migration into Kent during 2013-14 was greater than in previous years and higher than forecast. This has created greater pressure on spare capacity in some areas.

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 5.3% but varies from 1.4% in Thanet to 11.7% in Tunbridge Wells. The current surplus capacity for all Primary year groups (Reception to Year 6) is 5.2% and varies across the County from 2.3% in Gravesham to 9.8% in Dover.

The current surplus capacity for Year 7 is 13.2% across Kent but by 2023 there will be 13.7% deficit capacity if we do not expand provision. The current surplus capacity for all Secondary year groups (Years 7-11) is 9.9% across Kent, but by 2023 there will be a deficit of 8.6% in Secondary schools across the County if no new provision is made.

Progress in 2013-14

In 2013-14 the local authority delivered all the school expansions required for the school year beginning September 2014, thus achieving important steps in our aim to provide a good local school for every Kent pupil. We provided an additional 550 Reception class places, equivalent to 15.3 forms of entry in Primary schools and 3 forms of entry in Year 7 Secondary schools, and 250 temporary Reception class places. This involved 36 school expansion projects to ensure there was additional accommodation to receive the additional numbers of pupils starting school in September 2014.

In order to meet future demand and strive to maintain at least 5% surplus school places, we propose to add 6,438 Primary school places in 2015-16, and another 4,624 places in 2017-18, together with 60 Secondary school places in 2015-16, 1,950 places in 2016-17 and 1,050 places in 2017-18.

Commissioning SEN Provision

During 2013-14, in line with the SEND Strategy, 288 additional places were provided in Kent's Special schools. There are plans to further increase the number of places available for autism (ASD), behavioural, emotional and social needs (BESN) and speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) by 99 places.

In line with the SEND Strategy good progress was made in the past year to identify schools where we will also expand the range of specialist resource base provisions in mainstream schools, for additional ASD and BESN places, together with new specialist places in each of the five new Primary Academies planned to open in September 2015.

Early Help and Prevention

Since April 2014 all Early Help and Preventative Services have been brought together through the establishment of a new Division within the Education and Young People's Directorate.

An Early Help and Preventative Services Prospectus was published in May 2014, setting out the strategy for Early Help. The Prospectus provides the rationale for change in order to achieve better outcomes, shares a vision for the future and details where we are in terms of refocusing and integrating services and provision into District based teams, informed by a better assessment of needs.

The Early Help One Year Plan 2014-2015 sets out the key service changes, identifying the development of new processes and systems. It also identifies service priorities and targets, together with the key outcomes to be achieved.

Vision and Approach to Early Help

The task of Early Help and Preventative Services is to deliver effective early help and prevention and achieve better outcomes for vulnerable children and families, together with reduced demand for social care services. The benefits are improved life chances for children and young people and lower costs to the public purse by reducing the demand for high cost specialist social care.

Children, young people and families will be able to access the right services at the right time in the right place. We will place them at the heart of everything we do, working in a more integrated way and avoiding, where possible, single service interventions which may lack coordination or result in wasteful duplication.

Our vision is that every child and young person, from pre-birth to age 19, and their family, who needs early help services will receive them in a timely and responsive way, so that they are safeguarded, their educational, social and emotional needs are met and outcomes are good, and they are able to contribute positively to their communities and those around them now and in the future, including their active engagement in learning and employment.

The intention is to make a significant difference through early help, to prevent the escalation of needs where we can, and identify the likelihood of problems emerging in the first place. The Early Help Service must make a significant difference by helping to 'step down' social care cases from Children in Need, Children with Protection Plans and Children in Care, in a way in which it is safe to do so.

Range of Preventative Services

From April 2014, the Early Help and Preventative Services have been organised to provide targeted support to vulnerable children, young people and families through two service delivery vehicles, Kent Integrated Family Support Service (KIFSS) and Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Service (KIASS). These services incorporate:

- Children's Centres
- Troubled Families Programme
- Early Intervention and Family Support Workers
- CAF Co-ordinators
- Attendance and Inclusion
- Support for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Youth Work
- Youth Offending
- Connexions Targeted Support for NEET young people
- Services for Young People's Substance Misuse

- Teenage pregnancy and sexual health

There is also more joined up work with CAMHS, School Nursing and Health Visiting, together with a more co-ordinated approach to commissioning children's health provision.

Our approach is based on the following key elements:

- Provide a single service response so that families, children and young people do not need to move around the system and in and out of different services.
- Strengthen earlier intervention through universal settings and to deliver our early help services in families and in and around schools and other universal settings.
- Co-ordinate our services with NHS services, so that we get a more integrated approach with health visitors, school nurses, CAMHS and substance misuse and sexual health workers who all have a role in providing early help.
- Use the strengths of families to help themselves and ensure continuity of support for them until they feel things have improved.

Key Outcomes We Are Looking For

Having clear outcomes in mind helps us to do the right things and enables us to measure the impact of our preventative interventions over time. They also provide us with performance data to drive improvements.

Early Help and Preventative Services focus on the following key outcomes:

- Reduced need for statutory social care and more effective support for children and young people on the edge of care so that there are reduced numbers of children in care, child protection cases and children in need
- Increased numbers of children and young people who are stepped down safely from social care and who are not re-referred
- Increased use of the Kent Family Support Framework (KFSF is a new process introduced in September 2014, replacing the CAF, for assessing and providing early help support for vulnerable children, young people and their families) and more successful outcomes as a result of KFSF interventions
- Reductions in days lost to education through exclusion and absence, and in the number of permanent exclusions and rates of persistent absence from school
- Reduction in youth crime, re-offending and anti-social behaviour
- Reduced NEETs and improved participation in learning and training to age 18
- Improved readiness for school by vulnerable children at age 5
- Improved participation in 14-19 vocational pathways including increased take up of employment with training, apprenticeships and traineeships by vulnerable groups
- Reductions in substance misuse and teenage pregnancy
- Increased breast feeding and reductions in smoking by pregnant women and mothers

- Improved resilience and well-being for children and young people with reduced mental and behavioural problems and less demand for CAMHS services.

To assure ourselves of progress in achieving improvement in relation to the priorities we have developed a set of targets and outcome measures to show the impact the new preventative services are having. These are set out in full in the Early Help One Year Plan. A range of the headline targets also appear in the Performance and Targets appendix to this document.

Key to achieving the targets will be the development of a strong working relationship with schools and Specialist Children's Care (SCS), to ensure earlier and more appropriate help is provided to reduce the need for statutory children's social care interventions. Step-up, step-down procedures are now in place to reduce demand upon SCS, and provide earlier help for children, young people and their families which delivers better outcomes at lower cost.

Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Service

In 2013-14 the Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Service was rolled out the county following a pilot in four districts. It has worked 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, youth offending and education, who provide a more coordinated and joined 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.

Children's Centres

From 1st April 2014 there are 78 designated Children's Centres in Kent and of these, 61 centres operate full time (at least 37 hours a week) and 17 Centres operate part time (18 hours a week). In addition there are 7 Children's Centre buildings (called Outreach Centres) which are linked to a designated Children's Centre and continue to deliver some services on a part time basis.

Kent's Children's Centres are managed as 17 groups across the 12 districts. One Centre in each group is classified as the hub. The Centres are now an integral part of the newly integrated 0-11 early help teams which include practitioners in Children's Centres as well as staff previously based in Early Intervention teams and in the Attendance and Inclusion service, together with Troubled Families workers.

The age range for support has been extended to 11 in recognition of the need to reflect the breadth of ages within a family and to ensure greater consistency with one worker becoming the key support to a family.

Currently 72% of Children Centres in Kent are judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted compared to a national rate of 67%. The target set within the Early Help and Preventative services One Year Plan is to raise the KCC performance to at least 75% by 2015 and 80% by 2016.

Children's Centres have a significant role to play in helping to ensure a range of improved health outcomes for children and their families. Targets have been agreed that aim to increase the percentage of children being breastfed at six to eight weeks and sustained over time as well as reducing the number of babies born to mothers who still smoke at the latter stages of pregnancy. It is also critical that Children's Centres promote healthy living and lifestyles in order to address the concerning rise in the number of children who are obese or overweight.

Weight issues amongst Reception age children have been consistently less prevalent than the national average and improved at a faster rate in the last few years which indicates the success of current strategies and interventions. However weight issues for 11 year olds remain a concern.

With regards to breastfeeding data, the rates between Children's Centres within hubs and between hubs and districts, varies widely, with only a few above the national average. Thus improvement to Kent's breastfeeding rates remains a high priority at all levels. Actions to improve the rates are featured in KCC's and NHS strategies, as well as CCG and Children's Centres action plans and service delivery plans.

There has been significant improvement in reducing teenage conceptions over 3 years. Children Centres offer a variety of services that support this area of work using well evidenced and successful prevention programmes well as offering support to teenage parents.

There has also been steady improvement in the take up of child immunisations. The national target is 95% and Kent reached and out-performs this overall this year with the majority of children's centre hubs exceeding the expected rates.

Youth Offending

The ambition of Kent's Youth Justice Plan is to reduce re-offending and help young offenders focus on achieving positive outcomes. The key indicators by which we measure our performance are:

- First time entrants to the criminal justice system
- Reducing custodial sentences
- Reducing re-offending
- Reducing the number of remands to youth detention

- Increasing the number of young offenders accessing full time education

In 2013-14 performance was strong in four areas – particularly in continuing the downward trend of first time entrants – 709 compared with 1121 in 2011-12. The number of remands to youth detention accommodation was 40 compared to 68 in 2011-12. The engagement of statutory school age young offenders in full time education also significantly improved to 82.8% compared to 72.4% in 2012-13. In 2013-14 100% of all young people aged 16 and 17 years leaving custody moved into suitable accommodation for their needs, which compares very favourably with 86.8% in 2011-12.

In the remaining areas the performance for the number of custodial sentences in 2013-14 was the same as in 2012-13 at 4.3% of all court disposals, against a target of 3.5%. The target of 90% for suitable accommodation of 16 and 17 year olds on community based interventions was narrowly missed in 2013-14 achieving 88.8%. However this represents a significant improvement when compared with 2011-12 at 81.4%.

Kent's Youth Justice Plan for 2014-2015 sets out the Youth Offending Service's priorities and key service developments to further improve outcomes for this vulnerable young cohort, with the intention of reducing the number who enter the youth justice system. Priorities include:

- working with criminal justice partners to continue the downward trend in reducing first time entrants by the use of restorative interventions
- determining with colleagues, as an integral part of Early Help and Preventative Services, how the risk factors most commonly associated with the offending behaviour of children and young people can be most effectively addressed by preventative
- working with a "live cohort" of young offenders to understand the characteristics of their re-offending. The findings will determine future interventions, increasing their effectiveness and reducing re-offending
- Increasing the engagement of young offenders in education, training and employment by working in a more joined-up way with schools, Pupil Referral Units, alternative curriculum providers, training providers and Further Education Colleges
- implementing robust procedures in relation to children missing from home, care and education, using the Kent Family Support Framework, working closely with the Kent Safeguarding Children's Board

Prevent

The Education and Young People's Directorate will respond to the growing threat of radicalisation and violent extremism by being fully engaged with the Prevent programme, ensuring schools are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and the use of the Channel referral process for assessing and managing risk. We also have an important part to play in

raising awareness and in working with vulnerable groups who may be at risk of radicalisation and or violent extremism.

Troubled Families Programme

The Kent Troubled Families Programme has been successful in enabling families with multiple problems in turning their lives around. In the last year 1,707 families (66.7%) in the target group have been 'turned around' out of a total cohort of 2560 families. This means adults have been helped to access work or training, and offending and anti-social behaviour has reduced and children's attendance at school has improved, with fewer exclusions. For example, offending amongst 10-17 year olds in troubled families has decreased by 26% and levels of anti-social behaviour amongst troubled families has reduced by 32%.

Positive engagement with education has improved. 78.5% of school age children in troubled families are now regularly attending school and are not being excluded. This is an increase of 2% from 2013.

In enabling families into employment, 209 families have now had at least one member return to work. Kent is the 3rd best performing local authority for these improved outcomes for families. Due to its successful outcomes the Kent Troubled Families Programme has been selected as an early starter for the expanded Troubled Families Programme from January 2015.

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 2018.

In 2014 - 15 we will:

- Improve good outcomes in the Early years Foundation Stage to 73%
- Increase by a further 3% the standards achieved at Key Stage 1
- Increase Key Stage 2 attainment to 83% of pupils attaining level 4 or above combined in reading, writing and mathematics
- Increase five good GCSEs with English and maths to 62%
- Reduce the pupil premium gap at Key Stage 2 to 14% and the GCSE gap to 29%
- Increase the percentage of good and better schools to at least 80%
- Reduce the number of schools in an Ofsted category to no more than 12
- Increase the percentage of good and better early years settings to 93%
- Increase the percentage of good and better Children's Centres to 75%
- Reduce NEETS to 4% or below
- Reduce permanent exclusions to no more than 50
- Embed and integrate Early Help and Prevention services so that there is at least a 10% reduction in the numbers of children in need and those with a child protection plan, and at least 80% supported through an early help programme achieve a good outcome.
- Continue to deliver the targets in the 14-24 Skills and Employment Strategy, including priorities to develop the vocational offer so that there is further improvement in the number of young people taking up and successfully completing apprenticeships and a further reduction in youth unemployment.
- Deliver the SEND changes required by the Children and Families Act and the priorities in the SEND Strategy to increase provision and pupil outcomes in Kent, so that there is reduction in out of county places and their cost, and a reduction in SEN transport costs

- Make a significant improvement to outcomes for Children in Care and markedly reduce the number of CiC who are NEET and in the youth justice system.
- Deliver 7 new Primary schools, 29 new forms of entry in Primary and Secondary schools, 195 temporary Reception class places, 90 temporary Primary school places in years 1-5 and 60 temporary Secondary school places in Year 7.
- Ensure schools are well supported to deliver the new National Curriculum and assessment arrangements, as well as new GCSE and vocational qualifications, and new school performance measures from 2015-16.
- Deliver the new Health Needs Service and improve outcomes for pupils with mental health needs.
- Continue to support and develop more effective school to school support through the Kent Association of Headteachers, and a refreshed leadership strategy, so that there are fewer schools requiring improvement.
- Develop phase 2 of the Troubled families programme and ensure it is well integrated into the models of family support provided through Early Help.
- Ensure the Community Learning and Skills service becomes a successful local authority trading company, delivering improved outcomes for adults and young people, especially the more vulnerable.
- Continue to develop and expand Edukent as a successful trading organisation delivering good value support services to schools at competitive cost.
- Promote more innovative and creative ways to deliver learning for the 21st 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 through programmes such as the Future Leaders programme.
- Deliver the School Improvement Strategy to ensure all schools requiring improvement become good and outstanding schools within the next 18 months 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 with a specific focus on the pupil premium, SEN and Children in Care.

- Work with outstanding and good schools to increase their capacity to sponsor and improve schools requiring improvement, through academy, federation, trust, executive headship or other structural arrangements.
- Continue to implement the Early Years and Childcare Strategy to ensure there are sufficient high quality free places for two year olds, yet 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 years settings and schools.
- Continue to improve District based working so that more decision making and coordination of 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 2015, there is improved parental choice and planned improvements for September 2016 are on target.
- Reduce the rising cost of SEN Transport and make more efficient use of DSG funding by reducing the increasing costs 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 2016.
- Successfully implement a new system of high needs funding for pupils with special educational needs, which proves to be more effective at earlier intervention to improve pupil outcomes.

To ensure all pupils meet their full potential, working in close partnership with schools and settings, we aim to achieve the following by 2018:

- Foundation Stage outcomes for 5 year olds will continue to improve so that the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development will improve from 69% in 2014 to 73% in 2015 and 85% in 2018.
- The FSM achievement gap in the EYFS will close from 12% in 2014 to 11% in 2015 and 8% by 2018.
- We aim to ensure 83% of eligible two year olds will be taking up a free nursery place by 2015 and this should rise to 96% by 2018.
- Key Stage 1 attainment will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and improve in Reading to 85% in 2015 and 92% by 2018; in Writing to 77% in 2015 and 87% by 2018; and in Maths to 85% in 2015 to 92% by 2018.

- Key Stage 2 attainment at Level 4 will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours, above the national average and improve from to 83% in 2015 and to 92% by 2018.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils making 2 levels of progress in Reading will improve to 93% in 2015 and to 99% by 2018. Progress rates in writing will improve to 95% in 2015 and to 99% by 2018. Progress rates in mathematics will improve to 91% in 2015 and to 96% by 2018.
- Key Stage 4 attainment will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and improve to at least 62% in 2015 and to 72% by 2018 for pupils attaining 5 good GCSEs including English and mathematics.
- The FSM achievement gaps at Key Stages 2 and 4 will continue to reduce from the 2014 baseline, and be less than the national gap figures for pupils from low income backgrounds. In Key Stage 2 the gap for FSM will reduce to 14% by 2015 and to 8% by 2018. In Key Stage 4 the FSM gap will reduce to 29% in 2015 and 23% by 2018.
- The achievement gaps for Children in Care at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 will reduce to 32% and 42.5% respectively in 2015 and by 2018 we expect these to be 25% and 37% respectively. This would represent good progress.
- The achievement gaps for SEN at Key Stage 2 and GCSE will improve to 45% and 41% respectively by 2015 and by 2018 these will reduce to 37% and 35% respectively.
- We will reduce the number of KCC schools in an Ofsted category of concern year by year, so that by 2018 no schools will be in this category. At the start of September 2014 there were 26 schools judged inadequate. In 2015 we aim to ensure there will be no more than 12 schools in this category.
- There will be an increase in the number of good schools, with at least 90% of all schools judged as good or outstanding by 2018. In September 2014 we have 75% of schools deemed good or outstanding. In 2015 we expect to see this increase to at least 80%.
- By 2018, at least 95% of Secondary schools will be performing above the floor standard and all Primary schools will be above the floor standard. There are currently 95% of Primary schools and 75.5% of Secondary schools above the floor standard. In 2015 we expect this to be 96% and 80% respectively.
- By 2018, teaching will be consistently good in 90% of schools. Currently teaching is good or better in 76% of schools. We expect this to be at least 80% in 2015.
- By 2018, 95% of Education, Health and Care plan (EHC) assessments will be completed within a reduced timescale of 20 weeks (from 26 weeks) and pupils with plans will be making good progress and achieve above average outcomes when compared with national benchmarks. This figure will be at least 95% by 2015.

- By 2015, we will reduce the number of Kent's children who are placed in independent and non maintained Special school placements to 460, from 599 in 2014. We set out our intention to provide more specialist provision in local schools to reduce the number of children who require placement out county to 395 by September 2016, 272 by 2017 and to 260 by 2018.
- We will provide least 275 additional places for pupils with autism (ASD) or behavioural, emotional and social needs (BESN) by 2015 and increase Special school places from 3491 to over 3700 by 2016.
- By 2014, every child and young person will be on the roll of a school, academy or pupil referral unit.
- We will continue to help more parents access a preferred school place for their child by increasing the number of online admission applications to 95% by 2015 and increase the number of parents who get their first preference Secondary school to above 84% and first preference Primary school to above 85%. First and second preferences combined for primary and secondary sectors will improve to 94%.
- We will aim to increase our surplus capacity in school places to at least 5% 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 2019.
- As part of the Commissioning Plan, by September 2015, we will expand school places by 29.3 permanent forms of entry; 195 temporary Reception places and 90 temporary places in Year 1-5 in Primary Schools and 60 temporary Year 7 places in Secondary Schools. We will also deliver 7 new Primary schools.
- By 2018 the Kent Educational Psychology Service will have service level agreements with 60% of Kent schools, in addition to the delivery of its core services.

To improve outcomes for 16-19 year olds and shape education and skills around the needs of the Kent economy we will work with our partners to achieve the following by 2018:

- By 2015, we aim to ensure there will be no more than 4% of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET and 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% by 2018.
- 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.

By 2015 we expect this to be 86% and 92% of the cohort will achieve a Level 2 qualification by 2018.

- By 2018, we expect 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 3%. By 2015 we aim to reduce this to no more than 7% of the cohort.
- We aim to improve the outcomes at Level 3 for 19 year olds to 58% by 2015 and to at least 70% by 2018.
- The Level 3 achievement gap for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds is a priority for improvement. We aim to ensure this will be above the national average and the gap between this group and other students will have reduced to 23% by 2015 and to 16% by 2018.
- The uptake of Level 2 and 3 vocational training in skills shortage areas will increase to 25,100 young people by 2015 and 26,175 by 2018.
- The KCC Apprenticeship scheme will continue to recruit at least 100 apprentices each year, totalling 800 successful apprenticeships delivered by KCC by 2018. By 2015 the numbers will increase to 500.
- By 2015 we aim to ensure the number of apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds increases to 3224, and for success rates for completion to be at least 76%. By 2018 we expect the number to increase to around 4000 and success rates to be in excess of 80%.
- By 2018 we aim to ensure at least 70% of schools will have provided one or more apprenticeships which have been taken up successfully by young people. By 2015, we expect at least 45% 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 2018 youth unemployment will be no more than 2%, from 4.6% in August 2014. By 2015 we expect this to be no more than 3.0%.
- By 2018, the number of assisted employment opportunities for vulnerable learners with learning difficulties and disabilities will increase to 150 and by 2015 at least 120 young people will be supported in this way.
- Post 16 attainment in English and mathematics will improve so that by 2018 we aim to ensure at least 60% of 16 year olds that do not attain Level 2 in Year 11 will achieve the qualification by age 17. By 2015 we expect this will be 42%.
- By 2018, we aim to ensure the number of young people to achieve a Level 2 qualification in English by age 19 will improve to 40%. We expect this to be at least 25% by 2015.

- By 2018, we aim to ensure the number of young people to achieve a Level 2 qualification in maths by age 19 will improve to 40%. We expect this to be at least 20% by 2015.
- We expect to see steady improvement in A Level performance in Kent above the national average on all measures by 2016. We aim to ensure performance at 2 and 3 passes will be above the national average by 2015.
- Performance in vocational qualifications post 16 should also improve more rapidly and the gap between Kent's results and the national average should narrow progressively each year between now and 2018. In 2015 we expect the average point score per student to be at least 670. This is still some way off the national average of 688.
- 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.
- By 2015, 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, with a local district employability and skills offer on Kent Choices 4U.

Through Early Help and Preventative Services we aim to ensure we achieve the following by 2015 and beyond:

- We will reduce re-offending by young people to below 30% by summer 2015 and ensure at least 82% engage in full time education. We will also ensure at least 80% of young offenders aged 16 and 17 engage in learning or employment with training.
- We will reduce referrals to children's social care by 15% to no more than 16,779 by summer 2015
- We will increase the number of cases stepped down from social care to early help by 30% from 1145 in 2014 to at least 1490 by summer 2015
- We will increase the number of early help assessed and supported cases to achieve a positive outcome from 66% in 2014 to 83% by summer 2015
- We will reduce the percentage of NEETs for vulnerable groups to 2.5% by 2015
- We will improve the attendance of children and young people by supporting the reduction of persistent absence to 1.5% in Primary and 5.0% in Secondary schools by 2015 and to 1.2% in Primary and 4.3% in Secondary schools by 2018.

- By 2015, 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 2014 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 implementation of new models for PRUs and Alternative Curriculum provision there will be fewer than 20 pupils permanently excluded from school by 2018. By 2015 permanent exclusions will have reduced to no more than 50.
- By 2015, all young people attending a PRU will have achieved qualifications at age 16 including English and mathematics, and will have a positive learning or training destination at ages 16 and 17.
- By 2015, all Children Missing Education will be identified, tracked and monitored, and at least 70% of all new children referred who are found will be offered suitable education provision within 30 days.
- We will increase the percentage of parents from target groups completing a parenting programme to 60% by 2015
- We will increase the number of families in phase one of the Troubled Families Programme to have positive outcomes to 75% by 2015.

Getting There

In order to bring about these 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, and more insightful analysis and intelligence gathering 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.
- Supporting early years collaborations to deliver a faster rate of improvement
- Supporting families' enhanced involvement in their children's learning, especially in the earliest years
- 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.
- Working in close cooperation with the Kent Association of Headteachers, teaching school alliances, teacher training institutions and Kent KLEs, 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.
- Providing a range of quality information and advice for pupils and their parents so that they can make more informed choices. Our services will continue to improve the way we listen and engage with children, young people and their families so that they are influencing and shaping services and provision. We shall ensure the Local Offer on Kent.gov fully complies with statutory duty.
- Integrating and targeting our services for vulnerable children, young people and families more effectively, through Early Help and Prevention, to ensure we improve resilience, reduce levels of need and achieve better outcomes

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, in the quality of Kent schools, early years providers and post 16 learning and skills providers, and in our early help services 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 School Improvement Strategy, the 14-24 Strategy, the Early Years and Childcare Strategy, the SEND Strategy, the Education Commissioning Plan, the Prospectus and One Year Plan for Early Help and the business plan for EduKent. To achieve our goals and the better outcomes set out in this document we rely on developing and working in more successful partnership with schools and settings, colleges and training providers, employers, social care, health and the police.

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