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To: Education Cabinet Committee – 16 December 2013

Subject: School Performance 2014 - National Curriculum Test and Public Examination Results

Classification: Unrestricted
Electoral Division: County Wide

Summary: This report provides a summary of the Kent Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Assessments, KS1 and KS2 Standard Assessment Test results (SATs), and GCSE and A Level results for 2014. The report includes comparison to National Data where available. It also reports on the performance of vulnerable groups in each Key Stage. The data in this report is not final validated data so needs to be considered as provisional until final national data is published in the new year. Some national comparative data is still unavailable for some indicators.

Recommendations:

The members of the Committee are asked to note:

- (i) the significant improvement in many areas of school performance in 2014
- (ii) to note the areas that still require improvement and the priorities for action to ensure that improvement is achieved in 2015.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The full report contains a review of all available data to cover all the key stages above. The following commentary reflects a summary of the key points for each key stage and the priorities for action in 2014-2015.

2. Early Years Foundation Stage

- 2.1. The main overall indicator for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) changed in 2013 and is now the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) for which they need to achieve Expected or Exceeding in all Prime Learning Goals (including Literacy and Mathematics). In Kent overall in 2014, 69% of children achieved a GLD, a 5% increase on 64% achieved in 2013. There is a range of performance across districts of 60% to 74%. The national average for GLD is 60%, with Kent being 27th nationally and top amongst its statistical neighbours. This is once again a very strong performance.
- 2.2. Girls continue to out-perform boys with 76% of girls and 61% of boys achieving a GLD, and narrowing this gender gap of 15%, which is a small narrowing of 1% from 2013, continues to be a priority.

- 2.3. The achievement gap based on FSM data is 12%, a significant narrowing from the figure of 18.7% 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.
- 2.4. 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 EYFS to have achieved a 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.
- 2.5. **Priorities for Improvement**
- Continue to support the improvement of the quality of provision in all settings, including providing targeted and bespoke interventions to support further gap narrowing.
 - Continue to support the EYFS in schools, particularly where expected levels of achievement were not reached and extending this support to Key Stage One to ensure pupils catch up quickly.
 - Continue to implement a universal programme of professional development support for all EYFS classes, with a bespoke support model for those schools requiring support to improve the quality of teaching within EYFS.
 - Work with schools to ensure they track those children entering Year 1 from Reception who are likely to require additional support to make better progress.

3. Key Stage 1

- 3.1. At **Key Stage 1** our targets for Level 2B+ and above in Reading and Mathematics in 2014 were achieved. In Writing the target was not achieved though we remain in line with the national average. In reading, writing and mathematics, results are in line or above the national average. The FSM gaps continue to narrow in all areas at Key Stage 1. The SEN achievement gap narrowed slightly for writing but widened marginally in Reading and Mathematics.
- 3.2. Attainment in **Reading** at Key Stage 1 Level 2b and above improved by 3% 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%.
- 3.3. At Level 3 and above in Reading there was also further improvement on last year and a continuing upward trend. 32% of seven year olds achieved a Level 3 or above compared with 30% in 2013. Kent is 1% ahead of the national average of 31%.
- 3.4. **Writing** attainment at Key Stage 1, at Level 2b and above, improved by 3% in 2014 and continues a five year upward trend. Attainment in writing at this Level is now at 70% compared to 67% in 2013. Kent is now in line with the national average. However, the difference between 82% of seven year olds

achieving the national average for reading and only 70% achieving the writing benchmark remains a concern and this will be a focus of support to schools in 2015. This gap has to close to ensure good overall levels of attainment in Key Stage 2.

- 3.5. At Level 3 and above in Writing we have also seen continuous improvement with 16% of pupils achieving this level compared to 15% in 2013. The national average is 16%. Standards at Level 3 are therefore in line with the national average.
- 3.6. Attainment in **Mathematics** at Key Stage 1 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% in 2014. Kent is above the national averages at both Level 2b+ (80%) and Level 3, (24%) in 2014 and this reflects a continuing upward trend.

4 Gender Gaps at Key Stage 1

- 4.1. 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 but girls and boys are performing equally well in writing. In Maths boys still perform better than girls.
- 4.2. 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 from 74% in 2013 to 78% in 2014. Nationally boys achieved 77% which is a 3% rise on 2013.
- 4.3. The attainment 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 attainment of higher achieving boys increased this year by 2% from 26% in 2013 to 28% in 2014. Nationally the rise was only 1% from 25% in 2013 to 26% in 2014.
- 4.4. 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 real need to focus on the gender gap at Key Stage 1 in writing. The national gap is 15% and the Kent gap is 16%.
- 4.5. 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.
- 4.6. 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 pupils 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.

4.7. Attainment 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 attainment 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.

4.8. **Priorities for Key Stage 1**

- Overall to ensure that the continuous improvement is maintained and Kent schools achieve well above the national average and we are at the top of our statistical neighbours.
- To succeed in narrowing the gaps for all vulnerable groups.
- To continue to improve the outcomes for boys in all three areas.

5 **Key Stage 2**

5.1. At **Key Stage 2** we continue to see improvement on the new measure of Level 4+ and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined. Kent achieved a 5% improvement in results in 2014. For the first time Kent is in line with the national average. We are above our statistical neighbour average of 77.2% and are now 4th out of the 11 Local Authorities within this group. Previous highest position was 7th. This is a significant improvement by Kent schools.

5.2. This is the second year of the new performance measure for attainment at Key Stage 2, the combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics Level 4 and above. 79% of pupils achieved this level of attainment compared to 74% in 2013. The national average is 79%. This is a 5% increase compared to 2013.

5.3. 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%.

5.4. In 2014, 243 schools performed at or above the national average in Level 4+ Reading, Writing and Mathematics. 283 schools improved compared to their 2013 results and 35 schools achieved 95-100%. This is a significant increase on 18 schools who achieved the 95-100% in 2013.

5.5. Attainment in **Reading** at Level 4 and above increased by 3% in 2014, following a 1% decline in 2013. At Level 5 and above it increased by 5% in 2014, following a decline of 3% in 2013. National performance also increased in 2014, by 3% at Level 4 and by 5% at Level 5. In Reading, 91% of pupils achieved the expected 2 Levels of progress between key stages 1 and 2. This is in line with the national figure also of 91%.

5.6. Attainment in **Writing** at Levels 4 and 5 shows a significant increase in 2014 by 3% at Level 4 and 5% at level 5. National performance improved by 2% at level 4 and by 3% at level 5. In Writing, 93% of pupils achieved the two levels of expected progress, which is a 2% improvement on 2013 and is exactly in line with the national average.

5.7. In **Mathematics**, there was a 2% improvement in 2014, at Level 4 and at Level 5. Nationally there was a 1% improvement at both Level 4 and Level 5.

In Maths, 89% of pupils achieved the expected two levels of progress, a rise of 3% on 2013, which is now in line with the national average of 89%.

6 The Floor Standard at Key Stage 2

- 6.1. In 2014 schools performed below the floor standards and are therefore 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 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)
- 6.2. In 2013, 44 schools performed below the floor standard. In 2014 only 22 schools are below the floor standard. This represents significant improvement.

7. Statistical Neighbours (SN)

- 7.1. 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 LA is now 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 Level 4+ performance and 2nd for Level 5 performance. This is the best performance Kent has achieved since comparisons began.

8. Key Stage 2 Gender Differences

- 8.1. 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.
- 8.2. Attainment for girls 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.
- 8.3. 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. Boys' results are 2% higher than the national average and the girls' outcomes are 1% above it. Attainment for girls improved compared to improvement nationally and boys' attainment improved by 2%, which is the same as the national improvement rate.

8.4. **Key Stage 2 Reading for Boys and Girls**

Attainment in Reading, at Level 4 and above, increased by 4% for boys and 2% for girls in 2014. 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.

8.5. **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.

8.6. **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. Attainment at Level 5, for girls, improved by 1% in 2014, which is the same as the national increase. The percentage for boys increased by 3% compared to a national increase of 1%.

9. **Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups at Key Stage 2**

- 9.1. At **Key Stage 2** whilst there is still too large an attainment gap between FSM pupils and their peers this 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 2011 and 2014, outcomes for pupils on free school meals improved by 7.4% in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined.
- 9.2. In Reading the FSM 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 is very welcome. Gaps in rates of progress have continued to narrow between FSM and non FSM pupils, and in 2014 these were 4.9% compared with 7.2% in reading in 2013, 4% compared with 6.5% in writing in 2013 and 6.3% compared with 8.6% in mathematics in 2013. This is a significant improvement. 210 Primary schools improved the FSM gap in 2014.
- 9.3. The SEN gap continues to be significant and there was only marginal improvement in 2014.
- 9.4. The gap for children with SEN in Reading, Writing and Maths (L4+) was 47%, compared to 50% in 2013. For children with a statement the gap in Reading, Writing and Maths (L4+) was 77%, the same as in 2013. These remain unacceptably wide achievement gaps for pupils with special educational needs.

10. Key Stage 2 - Priorities for Improvement

- To continue to support and challenge all schools to secure further improvement in 2015. To continue to challenge all schools to set and achieve aspirational targets for all pupils.
- To work with schools to ensure that all vulnerable groups are making accelerated progress with a particular focus on LAC and SEND.
- To develop the school to school support network to ensure the sharing of best practice.

11. Key Stage 4

11.1. 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. It is important to note that there are two indicators that need to be considered.

11.2. 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%. The national First Result is: 52.6%
- On this new indicator for 2014 we remain above the National Average by 4.9%.

11.3. Indicator 2: Best Results

- The second indicator reflects the best result a student achieved irrespective of when they took the exam. Their best grade will count in this indicator. Kent's Best Result is: 60.3%. The national Best Result is: 58.2%.
- This is a drop of 2.8% on the best result from 2013 but we remain above the National Average by 1.9%.

11.4. Provisional results at Key Stage 4 show Kent's performance against the new indicator of First results at 5 or more GCSE A*-C grades including English and Mathematics to be 57.5%. We cannot make a comparative judgement as the data from 2013 is not available in this format. The national average for First results is 52.6%. Kent is therefore ahead of the national average by 4.9%. The second important figure is the best result that students have achieved in their GCSEs. 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 ahead of the national performance by 1.9%. Kent is ranked third within our statistical neighbours group.

11.5. 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 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.

11.6. Kent's 5+ A*-G results were 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. Performance in English A* to C grades is 6.8% above the national average, Kent 71.4% against the national of 64.6% and in Maths performance is also above the national average, Kent 67.6% against the national of 64.7%.

11.7. 29 secondary schools performed below the floor standard of 40% of pupils achieving five good GCSE grades with English and mathematics compared to 9 schools in 2013. This is the direct effect of the new First Entry Indicator. Overall 30% of secondary schools improved or maintained their GCSE performance in 2014, including a small number of schools that declined by no more than 1%. Please note this figure is based on First Entry in 2014 compared to Best Result in 2013.

11.8. **Gender Differences at GCSE**

- 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. 53% of boys and 62% of girls attained this level of achievement in 2014 compared to 47.3% boys and 58.2% girls nationally.
- 31 schools narrowed the gender attainment gap compared to 2013. This is from the total of 67 mixed gender secondary mainstream schools.

11.9. **Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups at GCSE**

- The **GCSE** attainment gap between pupils eligible for FSM and their peers for 5+ A*-C including English and Maths in 2014 is 33.4%. This is disappointing and represents a reduction of only 1.1% compared to 2013. This has not improved significantly in the last few years. It is a slightly better improvement rate than the national gap figure reduction of 0.6%.
- In 2014, 26.5% of FSM pupils achieved 5 or more good GCSEs with English and mathematics. This is a decline on the previous year's figures and reflects the change to the First entry indicator.
- There remains a significant gap between FSM students and non FSM students in both three levels of progress in English of 22.4% and Maths at 29.8%. This gap has widened in English by 2.3% and 0.7% in Maths. This is very disappointing and will be a significant focus 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, although very wide, 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.

11.10 **Priorities for Improvement**

- Further develop and disseminate the successful strategies to support schools in their progress towards the 2015 floor standards.
- Narrow the performance gaps for vulnerable groups, particularly for FSM/non-FSM students, LAC and SEND pupils.

- Provide specific challenge and support to accelerate progress in those schools which are below the floor standard, and are causing concern.
- Identify good practice in securing progress for lower attaining students and disseminate it so as to narrow performance gaps for these and other vulnerable groups.

12. A Level and Vocational Performance Post 16

- 12.1 Performance at post-16 has shown limited improvement this year. The percentage of students achieving two or more A Level passes, A* to E fell from 90.6 in 2013 to 89.6% in 2014.
- 12.2 Kent's Average Points Score per entry is in line with the national average. Kent is 212.9 compared to the national result of 212.8.
- 12.3 The Average Points Score per student was 831.2 against a national average of 782.0. Whilst we remain ahead of the National picture this is a drop from 2013 of approximately 20 points.
- 12.4 The Average Points Score per entry for vocational achievement was 228.2 and is in line with the national average of 228.9. This is a slight improvement on 2013.
- 12.5 The Average Points Score per student for vocational achievement was 666.1 against the national picture of 688.6. Kent has improved on the 2013 score of 639.3 but nationally there has been greater improvement.
- 12.6 The greatest improvement has been 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. Nationally the average is 8.4% so Kent is above the national average on this measure.
- 12.7 **Priorities for Action**
- Promote the raising of standards in sixth forms through the development and extension of successful KS4 strategies, and improved GCSE results with English and maths,
 - Improve teaching and learning, student progress tracking and intervention and strengthen sixth form leadership.
 - Support improvement in the quality and range of post 16 provision offered by different school sixth forms in order to support their work in ensuring a suitable range of post 16 options are made available to young people in Kent.

13. Children in Care

- 13.1 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 at Key Stage 2 in 2014 compared to 42% in 2013. This is the same as in 2013.
- 13.2 78.6% of CiC pupils achieved 2 Levels of Progress in Key Stage 2 Reading compared to 91% for all pupils. 85.7% achieved 2 Levels of Progress in Writing compared to 93.0% for all pupils and 80.4% achieved 2 Levels of

Progress in Maths compared to 89% for all pupils. There has been significant improvement in progress compared to 2013.

- 13.3 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.
- 13.4 The CiC gap at Key Stage 2 has widened in 2014 from 31.9% in 2013 to 35.6% in 2014. This is very disappointing and will be a significant focus for improvement in 2014 – 2015.
- 13.5 The Key Stage 4 attainment gap is 49.3%. This gap widened from 47% in 2013.
- 13.6 However these are the widest achievement gaps of any pupil group, and are an important focus for improvement in 2015.

14. Conclusion

- 14.1 While there has been improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and at all Key Stages in 2014, with the exception of Key Stage 4 with the new indicators, there is still wide variability in performance.
- 14.2 The improvements in the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 this year have been significant and represent good progress. Key Stage 4, whilst above the national average, reflected a drop against the new indicators. At Key Stage 5 there was a very small incremental improvement on one of the three main indicators, AAB grades, at A level. On the other indicators at A level there was a decline and this is a cause for concern.
- 14.3 Standards at all Key stages, with the exception of some A level indicators, show Kent to be in line with or above the national average.
- 14.4 Gender differences continue to be significant, opening up markedly in the EYFS and continuing to be a key issue at all key stages so that by GCSE just over half of boys achieve a good outcome. Boys are over-represented in figures for SEN, exclusion from school, children in care and the NEET data and improving their progress and attainment is a key element in raising standards overall in Kent and in achieving full participation for all young people until age 18.
- 14.5 Slow progress is being made in improving progress and narrowing the gaps in attainment for pupils with special educational needs and Children in Care. Whilst there have been small incremental improvements the achievement gaps for our most vulnerable children remain a concern. Closing these gaps continue to be a significant priority for improvement in 2014-2015.
- 14.6 It is encouraging to see the impact of the additional focus and resource through the pupil premium (£40 million in Kent in 2013-14) on the attainment gaps for pupils on free school meals particularly at Key Stage 2. The gaps have narrowed and this must continue in the next academic year. We now need to apply this focus to the SEN and CiC pupils in Kent schools, and to the stubbornly high pupil premium gaps in Secondary schools.

15. Recommendation

The members of the Committee are asked to note:

- (i) the significant improvement in many areas of school performance in 2014
- (ii) to note the areas that still require significant improvement and the priorities for action to ensure that improvement is achieved in 2015.

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