

Education and Young People's Services

Vision and Priorities for Improvement

Draft

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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 by attending good childcare and early education settings and all pupils can go to a good or outstanding school where they will make good progress; 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 a focus on delivering positive outcomes for them and avoiding the need for intervention by statutory services. 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 actions 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 Vulnerable Learners Strategy
- The Education Commissioning Plan
- The 14-24 Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy
- The NEETs Strategy
- The Early Help Strategy and Three Year Plan
- Youth Justice Plan

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Our Ambition

Central to our ambition is the development of the best conditions in which pupils experience good learning and teaching which meets their needs, 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 expect 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 services. 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 pre-school settings and 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 aim, as a priority, 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, in employment so that their potential is not lost to the Kent economy. This includes a focus on raising the status of apprenticeships so that schools encourage students to take them as a valid alternative career choice, increasing the number of apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds, improving the quality of apprenticeships by matching apprenticeships to skills shortage areas in the local economy and promoting greater employer engagement with apprenticeships through the Kent and Medway Skills and Employability Commission.

We aim to use our Community Learning and Adult Education services to support young people and adults to improve their skills and qualifications for employment, including access to, and success in, apprenticeship programmes and the attainment of basic skills in English, mathematics and information technology.

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 must 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 and too many young people with low level or no qualifications is immense. Gaps in our educational provision, and provision that is less than good, can damage the life chances of children and young people. In this mix the role of the Local Authority is to be 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 ensure the right educational provision of high quality is there for all children and young people, including appropriate pathways to ensure all young people can gain good qualifications and succeed to age 18 and beyond. It is our role to build and support effective partnerships and networks that are more effective in delivering better services and improved outcomes. We also see our role as championing more innovative and creative practice and ways of working.

In particular our priorities are to:

- Raise attainment at all key stages, narrow achievement gaps, particularly for vulnerable learners, increase the percentage of 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 outcome 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, particularly through the Kent Association of Headteachers, to build a more effective system of school to school support.
- Ensure all children get the best start in the early years by ensuring improved Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outcomes, increasing the take-up of free early education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds and ensuring there are sufficient high quality early education places.
- 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. In partnership with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) we shall ensure new Academies and Free Schools are established in areas of greatest need, led by strong sponsors.
- Deliver improved multi-agency support for children and families who have additional needs through our Early Help and Preventative Services and work in a more integrated way with Specialist Children's Services to redesign the way we support children and families 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, young offenders and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Work with schools and all admissions authorities 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.
- Continue to develop our Pupil Referral Units and other services that support pupils at risk of exclusion, or who need short periods out of school, so that the need for permanent exclusion is reduced further, in year fair access protocols work effectively to place pupils that are hard to place, and we achieve a reduction in the numbers of children missing education or who opt for home education because better alternatives are not offered and supported.
- Promote and support smooth and successful transitions for every child and young person from any one educational stage and provision to another, so that continue to make good progress.
- Continue to develop and improve the opportunities and progression pathways for all 14-19 year olds to participate and succeed, so that they can access higher Levels of learning or employment with training, including apprenticeships and vocational options to age 24.
- Significantly reduce the number of NEETs by ensuring these young people move on to positive destinations, training and employment, particularly by increasing provision for targeted support for vulnerable learners.
- Champion 21st century learning so that schools and other settings innovate more and achieve more by delivering a broad curriculum that provides good qualification pathways for all learners and develops pupils' skills and knowledge for their future employment and higher learning. One example is to support the development of the IB Careers Related Programme in more Secondary schools in Kent.
- Ensure all our Children's Centres are rated as good by Ofsted, make good provision for children and families and effectively target, reach, and support the most needy families to ensure a greater number of vulnerable families achieve good outcomes.
- Use the Troubled Families programme to develop a more sustainable model of family support, as an integral part of the Early Help offer, that succeeds in turning around the lives of more families experiencing challenging circumstances.
- Continue to improve the youth offer and programmes of support for vulnerable adolescents so as to increase their participation in positive activities and reduce offending, anti-social behaviour, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol misuse and youth unemployment.
- Through Community Learning and Skills (CLS) commissioned services, ensure young people and adults improve their skill levels and reach their full potential by

meeting the skills needs of the local economy and improving the training infrastructure for young people and adult learners.

- Ensure prompt solutions are found for schools that are under-performing and support is provided for schools that want to develop multi academy trusts, by working in close partnership with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC).
- Ensure that the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reforms are effectively embedded to ensure: higher achievement for all; SEN Statements are promptly converted to the new Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP); pupils and parents are involved in determining the most appropriate support for their identified learning difficulties; funding is effectively targeted to address high needs; and the need for new provision is addressed through the implementation of the Special Schools Capital Programme and gaps in provision are met through commissioning of new provision in-county.
- Continue to reduce demand and costs by implementing changes in SEN transport, including rolling out Independent Travel Training for pupils, offering Personal Transport Budgets and piloting the commissioning of SEN transport for individual Special schools, in order to increase the independence and resilience of pupils and reduce the rising cost of SEN transport.
- Ensure that children and young people are safeguarded and diverted from individuals, institutions and ideologies that promote violent extremism, terrorism and child sexual exploitation, by working with schools and other settings to educate children and young people about potential dangers that undermine British values.
- Continue to commercialise our traded services and maximise income from EduKent, by developing new products to support schools and early years settings.

New ways of working are critical for success in a more diverse educational 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, therefore, 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.
- The new Kent and Medway Skills Commission which is prioritising the development of a new model to inform 14-24 vocational pathways and to provide better, employer-driven information about career and training options.
- More effective partnership with FE Colleges.
- Local 14-19 strategic partnerships to maximise effort and increase capacity to develop new provision, address gaps in provision and transform post 16 learning pathways and training opportunities so that they are truly excellent.
- The district based Local Inclusion Forum Teams (LIFT) 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.
- Local Children's Partnership Groups that will drive improvements in outcomes for children and young people by providing a vehicle for identifying and addressing local needs and gaps in provision and facilitating and pooling resources across agencies to meet the needs of local children and families.

Key Strategic Developments in 2014-15

In quickening the pace of improvement we have focused attention on transforming the way we work and the delivery of services.

During 2014-15 we have:

- Introduced a new Early Years and Childcare Strategy in May 2014, which sets out our ambitions for Kent, to achieve improved outcomes for children in early years settings. We have also improved the 'Kent Progress Tracker' which enables settings to monitor all children's progress; developed the 'Enhancing Family Involvement in Children's Learning (EFICL) Toolkit for Early Years and Childcare providers to raise parental and family involvement in children's learning; and established 52 formal Early Years Collaborations (involving 408 settings) to work together to narrow the achievement gaps for vulnerable pupils, share best practice and utilise data to accelerate improvement in children's development and learning.
- Expanded the 'Free for Two' scheme in Kent with more than 4,274 eligible two year olds (68%) having accessed a free early education place, exceeding our October 2015 target of 60%, as part of the Government's policy for Free Early Education places for disadvantaged two year olds. From September 2015, 9,658 places for 2 year olds are available across the county. This achieves our target. Work will continue to ensure the development of more places with existing and new providers and to promote and support take up by eligible children and families.
- Improved the quality of education in Kent schools year on year since 2011, reflected in Ofsted Inspection judgements. The percentage of good and outstanding schools in Kent was 55% in 2011. Overall, the latest Ofsted data for Kent shows that 84% of schools are rated good or outstanding. This includes 18% of schools judged to be outstanding and 66% judged to be good. In Kent, there are now 362 good and 100 outstanding schools, 79 schools requiring improvement (including 60 Primary schools and 16 Secondary schools) and 9 schools in a category, out of a total of 557 schools that have a current inspection result. There are now 41 more good and better schools than at the same time the previous year. We expect this positive trend to continue towards our ambitious target of at least 90% of primary and 94% of secondary schools judged to be good or outstanding by 2018.
- Continued to improve pupil outcomes. Performance in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 continues a very good upward trend over recent years, with performance in Kent well above national averages. At Key Stage 2 outcomes continue to improve and are in line with the national average. Outcomes at Key Stage 4 remain above the national average but dipped slightly in 2015. Results at Post 16 continued a three year downward trend in 2015, which is a cause for concern. At the same time there was welcome improvement in the outcomes for post 16 vocational qualifications.
- Achieved welcome progress in narrowing attainment gaps between boys and girls at Key Stages 1 and 2 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Outcomes for children in care have improved at Key Stages 2 and 4, which is also very welcome. The gaps in the attainment of pupils who are in receipt of free school meals has not improved noticeably in 2015 which is very disappointing. Over £50m is now allocated to the Pupil Premium in schools and to date there is limited impact. Slow progress continues to be

made in raising attainment and narrowing attainment gaps for pupils with SEN at all key stages. Closing the gaps in achievement for all vulnerable learners continues to be a significant priority for improvement in 2015-2016.

- 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. KAH's work aligns with the school improvement work by KCC, the work of Teaching School Alliances and the support provided through the KAH boards, and is supported by funding from the School Funding Forum.
- Developed a new Leadership Strategy, with KAH, school leaders and support from CfBT which aims to support leadership development, succession planning and system leadership in Kent, through consultation with a wide range of school leaders.
- Reviewed and re-organised the PRU arrangements for children and young people who have medical needs, including mental health. Following consultation, we developed a new Health Needs Education Service. This Service became operational from September 2015. The new service aims to meet the needs of Kent schools in all areas of the County, and provides a new delivery model and service structure. Its purpose is to provide: an education support service to schools for young people with physical medical conditions; and an education outreach service for young people with mental health needs, located in six resourced bases and a specialist residential unit.
- Developed support to manage challenging behaviour in Primary schools that leads to high rates of exclusion. Last year, following the review of the Pupil Referral Units (PRU) in 2014 and the roll out of new arrangements across the eight PRU hubs, we allocated just over £1 million to support projects for Primary Schools in meeting the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour. We have seen a range of innovative approaches in local areas that have achieved a number of positive outcomes for pupils in Primary schools. This work has been supported by a further £750,000 for this financial year. Funding was allocated on the basis of bids from the eight hubs.
- Developed our strategy and vision for Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS) and a new way of working in Kent. There has been good progress since introducing the new model of working in each District. The services which came together in April 2014 have been redesigned in order to deliver new integrated ways of working and provide a firm foundation to improve the outcomes for children, young people and families in Kent. We set out our priorities and targets in the new Early Help Strategy and Three Year Plan 2015-2018.
- Delivered the new Kent Family Support Framework for Early Help, and its associated referral and assessment processes, supported by Early Help Units in each District and an integrated structure with Specialist Children's Services. The new structure and ways of working have resulted in better use of resources coupled with joint planning and delivery, more timely responses to needs and achieved significant efficiency savings.

- Established Triage, a single front door for Early Help referrals related to families requiring early help support. Triage was co-located with the Central Duty Team in June 2015 to improve joint working with Specialist Children's Services, to ensure a 'no wrong door' approach and to contribute to our goal of ensuring the consistent application of safeguarding thresholds and service allocation across the county. Early Help notifications are received and assessed by Triage.
- Agreed new procedures to ensure increasing numbers of cases closed to Specialist Children's Services are stepped down to Early Help (currently 27%). Weekly step down panels are established throughout the county and there is sustained commitment across SCS and EHPS to these panels to discuss complex cases and monitor the outcomes for step down cases.
- Established a new Information and Intelligence Unit with the function of gathering data and supporting services to achieve improved outcomes and to drive advances in efficiency and effectiveness. An Early Help casework tracker tool has been developed which allows the service to have greater visibility of workloads and progress towards achieving outcomes in casework. Key performance measures are now reviewed regularly at District, area and divisional level meetings and used to inform service developments.
- Conducted practice reviews of Children's Centres. These reviews have helped shape our planning to continue the improvement journey for Children's centres in Kent and ensure greater consistency across Districts.
- Reviewed Early Help's range of contracts with externally commissioned providers that deliver support for children, young people and their families to help them overcome their difficulties and address any barriers to learning. This commissioning budget has been refocused in 2015 with the intent of delivering more effective support, improved outcomes and increased value for money in the future. Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Family Support and Parenting and Young Carers Service and Youth work have been identified as the key areas of work for commissioned services over the next three years.
- Developed the Prevent Strategy, in response to the growing threat of radicalisation and violent extremism, following the statutory requirements of the Prevent duty in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. We have supported schools to be aware of their additional safeguarding responsibilities under the Act and the use of the Channel referral process for assessing and managing risk.
- Achieved the targets for the Kent Troubled Families Programme. In the last year 2000 families were turned around achieving 100% of the target number of families over the life of the programme. This means adults have been helped to access work or training, and offending and anti-social behaviour has reduced and children's attendance at schools has improved, with fewer exclusions. Of the 2,560 families turned around, 2,172 were for improvements in education, crime, and anti-social behaviour and 388 were for at least one family member returning to work.
- 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 curriculum pathways for 14 to 19 year olds. 12 new District data packs have been produced with detailed information on labour market intelligence and student performance to inform curriculum planning. The four key priorities are to: raise attainment and skill levels; improve and extend vocational education, training and apprenticeships; increase participation and employment; and target support for vulnerable groups of young people. The refreshed document outlines the key actions that we are taking to achieve further progress and improvement, including ensuring there is a more joined up approach between schools, FE colleges, training providers and employers.

- Further developed Kent's apprenticeship and youth employment programme so that youth unemployment has reduced significantly and 930 apprentices are now on the KCC Employment Programme. The percentage of schools offering apprenticeships increased to 53% in 2014-15, exceeding the target of 45%. The KCC Apprenticeship programme successfully met the target for 2014-15 of 140 apprentices taken on by the County Council each year.
- Improved employment or progression for vulnerable learners, through a range of projects managed by the Skills and Employability Service. These included: the appointment of six Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) Co-ordinators, jointly funded by schools and the service to mentor and support pupils transiting from Special schools to College; sponsored support for 32 young people to undertake Assisted Apprenticeships, in preparation for full Apprenticeships; establishment of a Special School Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Network; and placed 50 SEND young people on the Supported Internship Programme.
- Improved the NEET figure for January 2015 to 4.7% which was in line with the national average of 4.7%. A new NEETs Strategy is now in place and it is expected that the target of 3.5% NEETs for January 2016 will be achieved. The NEET figure should always be used in conjunction with the Not Known figures. The Not Knowns were at 11.2% in January 2015. This was higher than January 2014 (4.6%) but a number of significant changes have been made to the systems to reduce the Not Knowns to 7% by January 2016.
- Delivered the SEND Strategy, launched in January 2014, to improve the outcomes for Kent's children and young people with SEN and those who are disabled. The Strategy was designed to deliver the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014, including the new arrangements for education, health and care plans, the development of the local offer, increased SEN provision in Kent Special and mainstream schools, with less reliance on out of county placements and better outcomes and progress for pupils. We have also developed a new approach to allocating high needs funding to mainstream schools to support earlier intervention and better targeting of resources to meet the needs of pupils. This funding identifies high needs pupils and provides schools with a top-up for pupils with additional support costing more than £6,000 a year.
- Improved the outreach work from Special schools in supporting pupils with SEN and disabilities in mainstream schools, which is a key focus of the SEND Strategy. Through the work of the devolved Specialist Teaching and Learning Service and the LIFT process we are increasing the level of expertise in mainstream schools. Recent data shows 97% of interventions had some level of impact; with 86% good or better.

Feedback from schools showed that 87% of schools rated the overall impact of STLS intervention on the progress of the child as good, very good or excellent.

- Reviewed the effectiveness of the devolved model for the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) 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 STLS Review recognised the good work being done by the service and recommended a more coordinated service within each district, also using the outreach resources provided by Special schools.
- Developed the Local Offer for SEND provision, which is now on the Kent.gov website. This covers provision by schools, early years providers, FE colleges, health and social care services, including services that promote transition to adulthood, short break services and services commissioned by NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Local Offer was developed through co-production with parents, carers and partner agencies. We have established a multi-agency steering group to monitor the quality and relevance of information for families and the content of the Local Offer is being regularly improved.
- Reduced the reliance on independent and non-maintained Special schools from 526 placements to 395 by April 2015. In support of this reduction we have commissioned places for Primary and Secondary aged pupils with ASD and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN). Six new Primary schools, from September 2015 now provide for ASD, BESN and SLCN. Nationally the percentage of pupils with SEND statements in maintained mainstream schools has fallen to 52.4%. In Kent it has risen from 48.5% to 51.1% (57.5% of EHCPs). We have achieved a total of 3,576 Special school places which is an increase of 250 additional places since October 2014.
- Established new SEND Specialist Resourced Base Provisions in nine Primary schools in the past year, and more are planned. In addition we have developed additional SEND provision in five Secondary schools. At the same time new satellite provision has been developed for three of our Special schools. These satellites are based on mainstream school sites. Pupils who attend are on the rolls of the Special schools concerned, but pupils integrate into the mainstream schools' classes, with support, where this is appropriate for the individual pupils. Further satellites are planned.
- Delivered additional places in, and rebuilt and refurbished more Special schools. This programme has so far provided an additional 250 places in Special schools. There are 10 Special School projects in the programme. Seven of these projects have been completed or are underway. The three remaining projects are at planning stage and remain high priorities for bringing to a swift conclusion. Overall we are increasing the number of places in Special schools by 350 places.
- Delivered all the targets for the Kent Educational Psychology Service (KEPS). The service supports school staff to deliver better outcomes for children with special educational needs. The Service also plays a key role in embedding the work of the Local Inclusion Forum teams, supporting the shift towards school to school support, and enabling local decision making for children and young people with special educational needs. It has implemented the changes required by the Children and Families Act 2014,

increased its trading to 50% of Kent schools, supported the implementation of the new LIFT and SEN decision making process, responded in a timely and effective way to critical incidents across the county and continued to seek new innovative ways of developing and applying evidence supported practice in both its traded and statutory work.

- Developed our Fair Access services to achieve better integration of activity to support admissions, in year fair access, elective home education and children missing education. There has been significant improvement to our published materials and website content to help parents take informed school choices and the Admissions team met all its legal timeframes and duties in relation to administering the admissions process.
- 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. We introduced Personal Transport Budgets (PTB) for families as an alternative to the existing service and over 100 families are participating in the scheme. Compound savings since the inception of PTB are now in excess of £750k.
- 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.
- Further developed EduKent and expanded our traded services so that it is supported by more effective business planning, marketing and tailor made procurement of services for schools. Income has exceeded £36m and over 40 services are provided to schools. There are now 1500 customers with 23,000 contracts.
- Reviewed the strategic direction for the future provision of Secondary education in Kent in the context of a period of significant pupil growth, at the same time as school funding is reducing in real terms. We aim to provide effective support to 'vulnerable' Secondary schools that in the short term, are experiencing falling numbers on roll and consequent budgetary difficulties. The review seeks solutions to maintain and improve educational standards and ensure that Secondary schools are maintained to meet future growth in pupil numbers. The review has enabled us to work with partners to determine our priorities and plan for commissioning and managing future Secondary school provision in Kent.
- Successfully lobbied the DfE for a positive capital funding allocation for school places. The settlement from Government more accurately reflected the level of need in Kent for creating new additional school places for the rising school age population by expanding existing maintained schools, or academies, and by establishing new schools. The allocation of £92m provides a fair level of funding for 2016-18 and top up funding for 2015-17. This funding will help to deliver the necessary growth in school places detailed in the Education Commissioning Plan
- Revised our policy for Elective Home Education (EHE), to address a significant increase in the numbers of families registered to EHE from 793 recorded in 2008 to 1,340 in

2014-15. The new policy sets out more robust action that KCC will take where we have reason to believe that a child is not receiving a suitable education, including the use of School Attendance Orders.

- Succeeded in commissioning and delivering the planned number of new school places overall for September 2015. The majority of these new school places were within the Primary sector. We expanded 24 Primary schools, including 19 new forms of entry added to schools for Reception year classes and 300 temporary Reception places that will not be needed in the long term. In addition, we opened seven new Primary schools. A small number of places have also been added to Secondary schools. In total, over the last year, more than 2,500 places had been added to the Primary schools in Kent.
- Secured first preference schools for the highest number of parents to date. We set targets for the percentage of families securing their first preference schools for entry in September 2015. For Primary schools the target was 85% and on Offer Day 85.8% of parents secured their first preference. For Secondary schools the target was 84%, and 80.5% of parents secured their first preference. The target for first and second preferences for both Primary and Secondary schools was 94%, with 93.4% of parents securing their first or second preference. Last year the national averages for first preferences were 87.7% for Primary and 85% for Secondary schools.
- Reviewed and developed the Community Learning and Skills Service (Adult Education and Community Learning) as a commissioned service. There is now an improved business model and more robust growth strategy to ensure CLS can deliver the skills priorities for young people and adults as set out by KCC in the service specification.
- Delivered the largest apprenticeship programme in Kent, through Community Learning and Skills (CLS), achieving a success rate beyond the national average. CLS also achieved outstanding success rates for its large community and adult learning programmes – 97% and 92% respectively, which is an increase of 4 percentage points from the previous year.
- Developed the Adult Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy with partners, which was approved by Cabinet in April 2015. The Strategy sets out what we aim to achieve, focusing on increasing the skills levels for adults needed for economic growth and employment in Kent and the role that adult skills and learning can play in supporting the lives of vulnerable adults and families. A detailed action plan has been developed with the Kent and Medway Skills Commission. The Strategy has also informed the service specification for CLS commissioned services.

Progress in 2014-15 and Where Are We Now?

We set very challenging and ambitious improvement targets and in 2014 -15 there were positive indications that we are achieving good progress.

- In the **Early Years Foundation Stage**, 73% of children achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD). This is a 4% increase compared to 2014 and is well ahead of the 66% national average.
- At **Key Stage 1** standards at Level 2B and Level 3 improved by an average of 2.5% compared with 2014 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 80%, which is a 1% improvement compared to 2014, and in line with the national average. 207 Primary schools improved their results, compared to 283 in 2014. The free school meal achievement gap narrowed very slightly for the third successive year to 17.6% from 17.8% in 2014.
- **At Key Stage 4**, the GCSE result at 56.6% is a slight drop of 1.4% from the First result in 2014. The national figure has also dropped by 0.6% for the same period. Kent remains above the national average by 3.8%. Comparison with Kent's statistical neighbours shows a declining picture with Kent's ranking in terms of the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*- C grades including English and Mathematics slipping from third to sixth.
- Provisional expected rates of progress at Key Stage 4 (three levels of progress between Key Stages 2 and 4) declined this year in English to 71.9% from 74.3% in 2014. Kent however remains above the national average of 70%. Progress in Mathematics declined slightly from 66.8% of pupils achieving the expected rate of progress in 2014 to 66.2% in 2015. The national figure improved from 65.5% in 2014 to 66.6% in 2015, which means that Kent remains broadly in line with the national average for this measure.
- The provisional result for average GCSE A*-C grades in English is 69.7% and for Mathematics it is 66.3%. Both of these figures are above the national averages, which are 64.7% for English and 65.1% for Mathematics. Again for English, both Kent and the national figures have dropped in 2015. However, for Mathematics the national figure increased and the Kent outcome declined.
- The provisional **performance at post 16** shows a mixed and overall declining trend over three years. The data used in this report includes both state funded schools and colleges.
- The percentage of students achieving three or more A Level passes in Kent LA schools and colleges declined from 76.5% in 2013, 73.3% in 2014 to 72.4% in 2015. The national average is 76.5%. The percentage of students achieving AAB grades (in at least 2 facilitating subjects) also declined from 13.9% in 2014 to 12.5% in 2015. There

has also been a decline in the percentage of students achieving two or more passes at grades A* - E, which is now 87.8% compared with 88.4% in 2014 and 89.6% in 2013.

- The 2015 results (Kent LA schools and colleges) show a reduction in the academic Average Point Score per entry (APE) to 212.3, compared to 212.8 in 2014 and 216.1 in 2013. The trend over 3 years is one of slight decline.
- The academic Average Point Score per student (APS) in 2015 for Kent LA schools and colleges declined to 811.3 from 827.9 in 2014 and 844.8 in 2013. However Kent remains in the top national quartile for this measure, well above the national average of 761.6.
- Average Point Scores per student for vocational qualifications in Kent LA schools and colleges improved in 2015. Kent's provisional figures show a county wide increase of 13.6 points to 568.0 from 554.4 in 2014, with an average grade of Distinction.
- We continue to make progress in increasing **the number of good and outstanding schools** in Kent, following inspection by Ofsted. At the end of the last school year, July 2015, 82% of schools were good and outstanding compared to 75% at the same time in 2014 and 70% in the previous year. In 2011-2012 only 59% of schools were judged good or better. The national average was then 82%.
- The latest figure for Kent (December 2015) is 84% good and outstanding schools. The national average is now 84%. This includes 83% of Secondary schools, 84% of Primary schools, 91% of Special schools and 86% of PRUs in Kent, judged to be good or outstanding. Also, 88% of Early Years settings are good or outstanding.
- Currently, 83% of pupils attend a good or outstanding school. This includes 83% of Primary pupils, 83% of Secondary pupils, 95% of pupils attending Special schools and 97% of pupils attending a PRU. This equates to 15,420 more children and young people receiving a better education compared with last year. In 2013, 70% of pupils in Kent attended a good or outstanding school and this increased to 75% in 2014.
- There has been an increase in **the number of permanent exclusions**, up to 106 in 2014-15 from 88 the previous year. This is disappointing and reflects an increase in Primary exclusions, which has not been mirrored in Secondary schools.
- **School absence** rates have increased slightly from last year. Overall the percentage of total absences in Kent is 4.8% compared to 4.5% nationally. For Secondary schools the figures are 5.6% compared to 5.2% nationally, and for Primary the percentage is 4.2% compared to 4.0% nationally. In every case there is a higher level of authorised, unauthorised, persistent and total absence in Kent, compared to the national averages.
- The percentage of pupils who have missed 38 or more sessions (persistent absence) is 4.5% in Kent compared to 3.9% nationally. For Secondary schools this figure is 6.5% compared to 5.5% nationally and for Primary schools it is 3.1% compared to 2.7% nationally. The previous persistent absence figure for Secondary schools was 6.1%, and for Primary schools it was 2.8%. These figures have increased in the past year, and they continue to be worse than the national figures, which is a concern.

- Kent continues to perform well in increasing **apprenticeships**. The number of 16-18 year old apprenticeships has increased by 7% since 2014. Performance is better than our statistical neighbours.
- The Kent County Council Employment Programme exceeded the target of 800 apprenticeships for 16 – 24 year olds who have been unemployed for more than 3 months. The final out-turn was 930.
- The percentage of schools offering apprenticeships was 53% with a target of 45% in 2014-15. Currently, 271 schools are employing apprentices with 376 starts to date. This work continues to engage more schools with a target to increase the number of higher and advanced apprenticeships.
- The **NEET figure** for January 2015 was 4.7% which was an improvement on the January 2014 figure (5.9%) but below our target for 2015 of 4%. A new NEET Strategy is now in place which will help bring the NEET figure down in 2016 to 3.5% and 1% by January 2017.
- Since last year **youth unemployment** for 18 to 24 year olds has continued to fall. In August 2015 unemployment for this age group was 2.5%, compared to 3.35% in 2014. There has also been significant decrease in the five youth unemployment zones, with Dover at 3.7%, Gravesham at 3.7%, Shepway at 3.4%, Swale at 3.8% and Thanet at 5.6%. The comparable figures for 2014 were Dover (4.8%), Gravesham (4.3%), Shepway (5.1%), Swale (5.2%) and Thanet at (7.8%). These figures are all below the national average of 6.1%.
- The number of **assisted employment opportunities** for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities exceeded its target of 120 to 295.
- KCC made good progress in improving **performance in completing SEN statutory assessments** in 26 weeks, reaching 92% in Kent compared to 82% nationally in 2013-14. However from September 2014, the new assessment process has required completion in 20 weeks and it is evident from data published by the DfE in May 2015 that the impact of dual systems and preparation for the statutory changes in the Children and families Act has reduced performance nationally. Current performance in Kent is 78%.
- The completion of psychological statutory advice within the required time frames reduced to 98% in 2014-15 from 99% in 2013-14.
- In 2014-15, KCC delivered all of the **additional new school places** needed for September 2015. The majority of these new school places were within the Primary sector. We expanded 24 Primary schools, including 19 new forms of entry added to schools for Reception year classes and 300 temporary Reception places that will not be needed in the long term. In addition, we opened seven new Primary schools. A small number of places have also been added to Secondary schools. In total, over the last year, more than 2,500 places had been added to Primary schools in Kent.
- We commissioned 350 additional places in maintained Special schools during the course of the year and 125 places have been commissioned in Specialist Resource Base Provisions in mainstream schools.

- In **Early Help**, support is being provided in a more timely way to 5500 children and young people, and their families, including 1076 cases with an Early Help plan. Just over 80% of cases are now closed with a positive outcome for children and the family. 22% of the cases closed by Specialist Children's Services are stepped down to Early Help for on-going support and around 8% of cases closed to Early Help are stepped up to Social Care because children's needs and the risks to them have increased.

DRAFT

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The key indicator for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD). There continues to be strong performance in the percentage of children achieving a GLD in Kent. The 2015 figure of 73% reflects a 10% improvement since 2013, which is in line with our target and above the national average of 66% and statistical neighbour average of 67.9%. Kent is ranked second amongst its statistical neighbours.

	% Good Level of Development			
	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014
Kent	63	69	73	+4
National	52	60	66	+6

The Department for Education (DfE) has introduced a new Baseline Assessment measure with effect from September 2015. This will replace the measure of GLD at the end of the EYFS and September 2016 will be the last point at which there will be a statutory requirement for schools to complete the EYFS Profile.

Key Stage 1

In 2015, Kent performed at or above the national average at Key Stage 1 for attainment at Level 2B and Level 3. These improvements reflect a good three year upward trend and provide a strong basis for improved pupil progress and outcomes in Key Stage 2.

	% Achieving L2B+ Reading				% Achieving L2B+ Writing			
	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014
Kent	79	82	84	2	67	70	74	+4
National	79	81	82	1	67	70	72	+2

	% Achieving L2B+ Maths			
	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014
Kent	79	82	84	+2
National	78	80	82	+2

Standards in **Reading** at Key Stage 1 improved in 2015 for the third successive year and were above the 2015 national average. Standards in reading at Level 2B and above improved to 84%, from 82% in 2014, which is 2% above the national average and 1.3% above the statistical neighbour average. At Level 3 and above, outcomes in reading improved to 35%, from 32% in 2014, which places Kent 3% above the national average and 2.9% above the statistical neighbour average. Kent is ranked second amongst its statistical neighbours at Level 2B and above and first at Level 3 and above.

Standards in **Writing** at Key Stage 1 improved in 2015, continuing a three year upward trend. Standards in writing at Level 2B and above improved to 74%, from 70% in 2014,

which was 2% above the national average and 1.1% above the statistical neighbour average. At Level 3 and above, standards in writing improved to 18%, from 16% in 2014. Kent remains in line with both the national and the statistical neighbour averages in 2015 and is ranked second amongst its statistical neighbours at Level 2B and above and sixth at Level 3. While 84% of seven year olds achieved Level 2B and above for reading, only 74% achieved this benchmark in writing, which is a concern. This is a priority for improvement in 2015-16.

Standards in **Mathematics** at Key Stage 1 also improved for the third successive year across all indicators. Standards in mathematics at Level 2B and above improved to 84%, from 82% in 2014, which was 2% above the national average and 1.6% above the statistical neighbour average. At Level 3 and above standards in mathematics improved to 28%, from 25% in 2014, which means Kent is 2% above the national average and 2.2% above the statistical neighbour average. Kent is ranked first amongst its statistical neighbours at both Level 2B and Level 3.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2 there has been continued improvement at Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, in line with the national average. Kent also maintained standards above the national average for attainment at Level 5. There has been particularly welcome improvement in standards and progress in writing.

	% Achieving L4+ Reading, Writing & Maths				% Achieving L4+ Reading			
	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014
Kent	74	79	80	+1	85	89	89	0
National	75	79	80	+1	86	89	89	0

	% Achieving L4+ Writing				% Achieving L4+ Maths			
	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014
Kent	83	86	87	+1	83	86	86	0
National	83	85	87	+2	85	86	87	+1

	% Achieving L4+ Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar			
	2013	2014	2015	Diff from 2014
Kent	71	74	78	+4
National	74	76	80	+4

At Key Stage 2, 80% of pupils achieved Level 4 and above in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined** in 2015, compared to 79% in 2014. Attainment at Level 5 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined remained at 25% in 2015. Kent remains in line with the national average and slightly above the statistical neighbour average at Level 4 and above. At Level 5 and above, Kent is above the national average by 1% and above the statistical neighbour average by 1.9%. Compared to its statistical neighbours, Kent remains ranked fourth for Level 4 and above performance and second for Level 5 performance.

In 2015, 257 schools performed at or above the national average of 80% in Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, compared to 243 schools in 2014. In 2015, 207 schools improved their results compared to the previous year.

In 2015, 89% of Key Stage 2 pupils attained Level 4 or above in **Reading**. This means that Kent was in line with both national and statistical neighbour averages, but outcomes have remained static from 2014. There was a small decline in Reading attainment at Level 5 and above from 51% in 2014 to 49%. However, Kent remains 1% above the national average and 0.5% above the statistical neighbour average in 2015.

The percentage of pupils achieving the expected two levels of progress in **Reading** also remained the same between 2014 and 2015 at 91%. This is in line with the national figure and slightly above the statistical neighbour average of 90.5% but below the Kent target of 93% for 2015. Kent is ranked second amongst its statistical neighbours for this measure. The percentage of pupils achieving three levels of progress in Reading is 33.3%, a small decline of 0.8% since 2014. This is broadly in line with the national figure but below the Kent 2015 target of 36%.

Level 4 attainment in **Writing** improved for the third successive year in 2015 to 87%, from 86% in 2014, which was in line with the national average and 0.3% above the statistical neighbour average. At Level 5, outcomes also improved by 2% to 38% in 2015. Kent was above the national average by 2% and above the statistical neighbour average by 2.4% at Level 5. Kent is ranked second amongst its statistical neighbours at Level 4 and first at Level 5.

In Writing, 95% of pupils achieved two levels of progress in 2015 which is a 2% improvement on 2014 and continues a three year upward trend. This is in line with the Kent target of 95% and above both the national average of 94% and statistical neighbour average of 93.8%. Kent is ranked 3rd amongst its statistical neighbours for this measure. The percentage of pupils achieving three levels of progress in Writing is 38.5%, which is an improvement of 3% since 2014. This is above both the Kent target of 38% for 2015 and the national figure of 36%.

Level 4 attainment in **Mathematics** remained the same as 2014 at 86% in 2015. At Level 5 and above there was a decline of 2% to 41%. At Level 4 and above Kent was slightly below the national average of 87% and statistical neighbour average of 86.2%. At Level 5 and above Kent was below the national figure of 42% but above the statistical neighbour average of 40.1%. Kent is ranked sixth amongst its statistical neighbours at Level 4 and fifth at Level 5.

The percentage of pupils achieving two levels of progress in Mathematics improved for the third successive year and now stands at 90%, from 89% in 2014. This was in line with the

2015 national progress rates and above the statistical neighbour average of 88.5% but below the Kent target of 91%. Kent is ranked second amongst its statistical neighbours for this measure. The percentage of pupils achieving three levels of progress in Mathematics is 33.8%, a decline of 1.9% from 2014, and below the Kent target of 38% and in line with the national figure of 34%.

Good progress has been made in attainment in **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling** which has improved for the third successive year in 2015 to 78% at Level 4 and above, from 74% in 2014, and 52% at Level 5 and above, from 49% in 2014. However this continues to be a focus for improvement given that on both measures, Kent remains below the national average of 80% and statistical neighbour average of 78.9% at Level 4, and the national figure of 56% and statistical neighbour average of 53.4% at Level 5. Kent is ranked seventh amongst its statistical neighbours at both Level 4 and Level 5.

The Floor Standard at Key Stage 2

In the 2014-15 academic year schools were seen as below the floor standard and 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)

In 2015 the number of Primary schools performing below the floor standard remained static at 21, compared to 44 schools in 2013.

Key Stage 4

In 2015 the indicator that will appear in performance tables is the GCSE First Result which reflects the grade from the first time a student takes an examination in a subject. For example, pupils 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.

	% 5+ A*-C E&M (First result)			
	2013	2014	2015 Provisional	Diff from 2014
Kent	Figures not included as they are based upon best result	58.0	56.6	-1.4
National		53.4	52.8	-0.6

Kent's provisional First Entry result for performance at 5 or more GCSE grades A*- C including English and mathematics is: 56.6%. The national First Result is: 52.8% which is broadly in line with 2014 outcomes.

The GCSE result at 56.6% is a slight drop of 1.4% from the First result in 2014. The national figure also dropped by 0.6% for the same period. Kent remains above the national average by 3.8%. Comparison with Kent's statistical neighbours shows a declining picture with Kent's ranking in terms of the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grades including English and Mathematics slipping from third to sixth place.

Provisional expected rates of progress at Key Stage 4 (three levels of progress between Key Stages 2 and 4) declined this year in English to 71.9% from 74.3%. Kent remains above the national average of 70% which has dropped from 71.6% in 2014. Progress in Mathematics declined slightly from 66.8% of pupils achieving the expected rate of progress in 2014 to 66.2% in 2015. The national figure improved from 65.5% in 2014 to 66.6% in 2015 which means that Kent remains broadly in line with the national average for this measure.

The provisional result for average GCSE figures of A*-C in English is 69.7% and for Mathematics it is 66.3%. Both of these figures are above the national averages, which are 64.7% for English and 65.1% for Mathematics. Again for English, both Kent and the national figures have dropped in 2015. However, for Mathematics the national figure has increased and the Kent outcome has declined.

26 schools performed below the floor standard of 40% of pupils achieving five good GCSE grades including English and Mathematics. The validated results will be available in January 2016. It is worthy of note that in nine out of the eleven GCSE indicators Kent remains above national averages used by government to measure performance at Key Stage 4.

A Level and Post 16 Results

Performance at post 16 shows a mixed and overall declining trend over three years. The data refers to state funded schools and colleges. The table below sets out the trend data between 2013 and 2015, for all academic qualifications post 16, then more specifically vocational and 'A' level courses.

		Academic		Vocational		A Level		
		APS per entry	APS per Student	APS per entry	APS per Student	% 2+ A*-E	% 3+ A*-E	% AAB (in two facilitating subjects)
2013	Kent LA Schools	216.5	851.8	224.9	639.3	89.6	77.2	14.9
	Kent LA Schools & Colleges	216.1	844.8	214.8	563.8	89.6	76.5	14.6
	National	215.7	802.4	213.7	562.0	92.9	80.5	15.3
2014	Kent LA Schools	213.3	834.9	228.2	676.4	88.9	74.4	14.3
	Kent LA Schools & Colleges	212.8	827.9	216.7	554.4	88.4	73.3	13.9
	National	215.7	794.0	216.6	560.1	92.4	79.5	15.0
2015	Kent LA Schools	212.7	816.0	229.0	671.9	88.0	73.0	12.8
	Kent LA Schools & Colleges	212.3	811.3	219.0	568.0	87.8	72.4	12.5
	National	211.4	761.6	219.3	548.9	91.4	76.5	11.5

The percentage of students achieving three or more A Level passes in Kent LA schools and colleges declined from 76.5% in 2013, 73.3% in 2014 to 72.4% in 2015. The national average is 76.5%. The percentage achieving AAB grades (in at least 2 facilitating subjects) also declined from 13.9% in 2014 to 12.5% in 2015. There has also been a decline in the percentage of students achieving two or more passes at grades A* - E, which is now 87.8% compared with 88.4% in 2014 and 89.6% in 2013.

The 2015 results show a reduction in the academic Average Point Score per entry (APE) to 212.3, compared to 212.8 in 2014 and 216.1 in 2013. The trend over 3 years is one of slight decline.

The academic Average Point Score per student (APS) in 2015 for Kent LA schools and colleges has declined to 811.3 from 827.9 in 2014 and 844.8 in 2013. However Kent remains in the top quartile nationally for this measure, well above the national average of 761.6.

Average Point Scores per student for vocational qualifications in Kent LA schools and colleges improved in 2015, to 568.0 from 554.4 in 2014, with an average grade of Distinction.

Gender Differences

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, girls continue to out-perform boys with 80.5% of girls compared to 65.5% of boys achieving a Good Level of Development in 2015. This represents a marginally improved position from 2014, although there is still work to be done to narrow the gender gap. The gap in Kent remains unchanged since 2014 at 15% and is in line with the national figure, although it is 1% narrower than the statistical neighbour average of 16%.

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1, the attainment of both boys and girls continued to improve at Level 2B and Level 3 and above across all subjects in 2015. However, the gender gaps in attainment are narrowing marginally or in the case of Mathematics widening slightly.

Girls continued to attain higher standards than boys in **Reading**, with 88% of girls achieving Level 2B and above in 2015, compared to 86% in 2014. Level 2B and above attainment for boys also improved, from 78% in 2014 to 80% in 2015. It is a similar picture at Level 3 and above, with 40% of girls achieving this measure in 2015 compared to 37% in 2014. The attainment of boys at Level 3 has also improved from 28% in 2014 to 30% in 2015. However, the gap between the attainment of boys and girls has not narrowed at Level 2B and above and remains at 8% but is 0.6% narrower than the statistical neighbour average. The attainment gap at Level 3 has widened from 9% in 2014 to 10% in 2015 which is 0.3% wider than the statistical neighbour average. At both levels the gap in Kent remains in line with the national picture.

The attainment gap between boys and girls remains widest in **Writing**. At Level 2B and above the attainment of girls increased from 78% in 2014 to 82% in 2015. There was also an increase in the attainment of boys at Level 2B and above from 62% in 2014 to 67% in 2015. At Level 3, 24% girls achieved this measure in 2015, compared to 21% in 2014. Boys showed a similar increase in attainment, from 11.2% in 2014 to 13.2% in 2015. The gap between the attainment of boys and girls in writing has narrowed by 1% at Level 2B and above to 15% in 2015 which is 0.2% wider than the statistical neighbour average but in line with the national figure. The attainment gap at Level 3 has widened slightly from 10% in 2014 to 11% in 2015 which is 1% wider than the national average and 0.2% wider than the statistical neighbour average.

At Level 2B and above in **Mathematics**, 86% of girls compared to 82% of boys achieved Level 2B and above in 2015, which is an improvement from 83% of girls and 80% of boys achieving the same measure in 2014. At Level 3, however, boys continue to attain higher standards than girls, with 30% achieving this measure in 2015, an increase of 3% since 2014. Girls also improved their performance by 3% since 2014, with 26.1% achieving this measure in 2015. The gender gap in attainment in mathematics at Level 2B and above has widened by 1% in 2015 to 4% which means that the gap in Kent is now 1% wider than the national figure and 0.6% wider than the statistical neighbour average. The attainment gap at Level 3 and above has remained unchanged since 2014, at 4%, which is in line with the national picture and 0.3% narrower than the statistical neighbour average.

Key Stage 2

The attainment of girls at **Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics** combined continues to out-perform that of boys, with 83% of girls achieving the expected level in 2015 compared to 78% of boys. In 2015 the gender attainment gap for this measure narrowed by 2% since 2014. It is 1% narrower than the national gender attainment gap and 1.3% narrower than the statistical neighbour average.

The percentage of girls attaining **Level 5 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics** combined remained the same at 28% in 2015 compared to 2014. The attainment of boys improved slightly in 2015 to 23% from 22% in 2014. This reduces the gender attainment gap in maths from 7% in 2014 to 5% in 2015 which is broadly in line with the national and statistical neighbour averages.

There has been improvement in the attainment of boys in **Reading** at Level 4 and above since 2014, by 1% to 88%. However, there has been a decline of 2% to 45% in the attainment of boys at Level 5. The attainment of girls remained the same in 2015 compared to 2014, with 91% achieving Level 4 and above and 54% achieving Level 5. The gender attainment gap at Level 4 and above has reduced by 1% since 2014 to 3%. This means that the gap in Kent is 1% narrower than the national figure and 1.4% narrower than the statistical neighbour average. At Level 5 Kent is in line with national with a gap of 9%, a 2% reduction since 2014. The gap in Kent at Level 5 is 0.4% wider than the statistical neighbour average.

Girls continue to outperform boys in **Writing** at both Levels 4 and 5 although there has been improvement in the attainment of both girls and boys for the third successive year. 91% of girls (90% in 2014) and 84% of boys (81% in 2014) achieved Level 4 and above in 2015, and 45% girls (44% in 2014) and 31% boys (28% in 2014) achieved Level 5. The gap in attainment between boys and girls has narrowed for both measures since 2014, by 3% to 7% at Level 4 and above, which continues a three year trend of improvement, and by 2% to 14% at Level 5. At Level 4 and above, the gap in Kent is 1% less than the national figure and narrower than the statistical neighbour average by 1.7%. It is a similar picture at Level 5 with the gap in Kent being 1% less than the national figure and 1.8% narrower than the statistical neighbour average.

At Level 4 and above in **Mathematics**, the attainment of girls remained static at 86% while the performance of boys improved for the third successive year resulting in no gender attainment gap. At the higher levels, boys achieve better than girls and in 2015 the attainment gap widened by 4% to 8% owing to a decline in the performance of girls (from 41% in 2014 to 37% in 2015). This is in line with the picture both nationally and amongst statistical neighbours. The attainment of boys, at Level 5 in 2015, remains static at 45%.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, the gender gap in attainment of 5 or more A*- C grades including English and Mathematics remains around 9% as in the previous two years. Around 52% of boys and 61% of girls attained this level of achievement in 2015 compared to 48% of boys and 58% of girls nationally. Of the total of 68 mixed gender Secondary mainstream schools, 38 schools narrowed the gender attainment gap compared to 2014.

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 catch up sufficiently with their peers. We are determined to narrow these gaps in the next three years, and reverse the trend whereby achievement gaps get wider as children get older.

As we continue to raise attainment overall, we need to work even harder to narrow achievement gaps for vulnerable groups, especially pupils supported by the Pupil Premium. We have seen a welcome improvement in 2015 in narrowing the gaps for Children in Care (CIC), but a widening of gaps in attainment outcomes for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and minimal progress in narrowing the gaps for pupils on free school meals. These gaps continue to be mostly wider in Kent compared to national gaps and they are not narrowing, or they are narrowing far too slowly.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In 2015, the percentage of FSM pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a Good Level of Development improved to 60.1% compared to 57.6% in 2014. However, at the same time the achievement gap widened to 15%, compared to 2014 when the gap had narrowed to 12%.

The percentage of SEN children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a Good Level of Development declined from 27.1% in 2014 to 24.9% in 2015. The SEN achievement gap widened for the third successive year and by 5.3% since 2014 to 53.3%, which is a concern.

Key Stage 1

In 2015, the attainment of FSM pupils improved at Level 2B and above and at Level 3 across all subjects. These improvements reflect a three year upward trend. Disappointingly, gaps in attainment for SEN pupils did not narrow in 2015.

The attainment of FSM pupils in **Reading** improved at Key Stage 1 from 67.5% in 2014 to 72.4% at Level 2B and above and from 17.1% in 2014 to 19.8% at Level 3. The reading attainment gaps for FSM pupils narrowed in 2015 at both levels, by 3.1% to 15.2% at Level 2b and above and by 0.2% to 19.5% at Level 3.

The attainment of FSM pupils in **Writing** improved from 52.5% in 2014 to 58.7% at Level 2B and above and from 6.3% in 2014 to 7.9% at Level 3. Although the attainment gap for FSM pupils in writing narrowed at Level 2b and above in 2015, by 2.2% to 19.8%, there was a small widening of the gap at Level 3 by 0.8% to 13.4%.

The attainment of FSM pupils in **Mathematics** improved from 68.4% in 2014 to 73.6% at Level 2B and above and from 12.7% in 2014 to 15.1% at Level 3. The attainment gap of FSM pupils in mathematics at Level 2B and above narrowed in 2015, by 3.5% to 13.4%. There was a small widening of the gap at Level 3, by 1.1% to 16.9% in 2015.

The attainment gaps for SEN pupils widened in 2015 across all subjects, at both Level 2B and above and Level 3.

There was a decline in the attainment of SEN pupils in **Reading** from 42.5% in 2014 to 40% at Level 2B and above and from 6.7% in 2014 to 5.7% at Level 3. The SEN reading attainment gaps widened in 2015, by 2.7% to 50.8% at Level 2B and above and by 2.1% to 33.7% at Level 3.

Although there was a small decline in the attainment of SEN pupils in **Writing** at Level 2B and above from 25.2% in 2014 to 24.3% in 2015, there was a slight improvement at Level 3 from 1.4% in 2014 to 1.6% this year. The attainment gaps for SEN pupils in writing widened in 2015, by 2.7% to 57.2% at Level 2B and above and by 1.3% to 19.2% at Level 3.

There was also a decline in the attainment of SEN pupils in **Mathematics** at Key Stage 1 from 45.1% in 2014 to 41.8% at Level 2B and above and from 5.9% in 2014 to 5.4% at Level 3. At Key Stage 1, the SEN mathematics attainment gaps widened in 2015, by 3.8% to 48.5% at Level 2B and above and by 2.8% to 26.3% at Level 3.

Key Stage 2

In 2015, there were very small improvements in the gaps in attainment for children in receipt of Free School Meals, but not for children with special educational needs.

The attainment of FSM pupils in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined** improved at Key Stage 2 from 65.5% in 2014 to 67.3% at Level 4 and above. However, at Level 5 it declined slightly from 11.6% in 2014 to 11.4% in 2015. At Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, the gap between the attainment of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM Ever 6) and non FSM pupils reduced very slightly for the third successive year from 17.8% in 2014 to 17.6% in 2015. The FSM attainment gap at Level 5 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined widened slightly in 2015 to 18.9%, an increase of 0.5% since 2014.

The attainment of FSM pupils in **Reading** improved very slightly at Level 4 and above from 80.6% in 2014 to 80.8% but declined at Level 5 from 35.3% in 2014 to 32.8%. The FSM Reading attainment gaps widened in 2015, by 1% to 12% at Level 4 and above and by 2.4% to 22.8% at Level 5.

The attainment of FSM pupils in **Writing** improved at both Level 4 and above (from 74.9% in 2014 to 77.7% in 2015) and at Level 5 (from 19.4% in 2014 to 20.6%). The FSM Writing attainment gap at Level 4 and above narrowed for the third successive year to 13.4%, from 14.3% in 2014. At Level 5, the FSM attainment gap in Writing widened in 2015 by 1.7% to 23.7%.

The attainment of FSM pupils in **Mathematics** improved marginally at Level 4 and above from 76.6% in 2014 to 77.1%. At Level 5, there was a decline in attainment from 26.5% in 2014 to 24.8%. In Mathematics, the attainment gap for FSM pupils remained broadly the same from 2014 to 2015, at 12.7% at Level 4 and 22.3% at Level 5.

There was a disappointing decline in the attainment of SEN pupils in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined** from 42.3% in 2014 to 37.6% at Level 4 and above and from 4.0% in 2014 to 3.3% at Level 5. There was also a widening of the SEN attainment gap at Level 4 and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined in 2015, to 51.7% from 46% in

2014. At Level 5, in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, the gap narrowed slightly in 2015 to 26.7% from 27.6% in 2014.

In **Reading**, there was a decline in the attainment of SEN pupils from 65.8% in 2014 to 61.0% at Level 4 and above and from 21.2% in 2014 to 17.0% at Level 5. The attainment gap for SEN pupils in Reading at both Levels 4 and 5 widened in 2015, to 34.6% at Level 4 and above (from 31% in 2014) and to 39.4% at Level 5 (from 37.9% in 2014). The progress gap for SEN pupils achieving two levels of progress in Reading was 18.1%, an increase of 1.5% since 2014.

In **Writing**, the attainment of SEN pupils also declined from 54.5% in 2014 to 50.6% at Level 4 and above and from 7.2% in 2014 to 5.9% at Level 5. The attainment gap in Writing for SEN pupils at both Levels 4 and 5 also widened in 2015, to 44.7% at Level 4 and above (from 41% in 2014) and to 39% at Level 5 (from 37.1% in 2014). The progress gap for SEN pupils achieving two levels of progress in writing slightly widened to 13.6%, an increase of 0.2% since 2014.

In **Mathematics**, there was also a decline in the attainment of SEN pupils from 59.7% in 2014 to 54.2% at Level 4 and above and from 14.2% in 2014 to 11.1% at Level 5. The attainment gap in Mathematics for SEN pupils at Level 4 and above widened in 2015, to 39.1% (from 34% in 2014). It is a more positive picture at Level 5 with a narrowing of the Mathematics gap for the third successive year, from 37.4% in 2014 to 36.5% in 2015. The gap for SEN pupils achieving two levels of progress in Mathematics widened slightly in 2015 to 20.5% (from 19.8% in 2014).

The outcomes for SEN pupils at Key Stage 2 are a concern and their worsening attainment in relation to other pupils requires more focused attention in the year ahead.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 in 2015, the attainment gap between FSM pupils and their peers for 5 or more A*- C grades at GCSE including English and Mathematics was 32.9%, compared to 33.3% in 2014. The national gap in 2014 was 27%. While the gap narrowed slightly more FSM pupils achieved this GCSE benchmark, 30.6% compared to 26.5% in 2014, and compared to 63.5% of non FSM students. At the same time 46 schools reduced the FSM gap compared to 41 schools in 2014.

The 2015 gap between FSM students and non FSM students in achieving three levels of progress by the end of Key Stage 4, in English, is 19.9%. Only 56.2% of FSM students achieved this rate of progress compared to 76.1% of non FSM students. In Mathematics the gap is 27.3%, with 44.7% of FSM students achieving this rate of progress compared to 72% of non FSM students. This progress gap narrowed in both English (by 1.8%) and Mathematics (by 1.3%) compared to 2014.

Pupils with SEN statements achieve less well in Kent, where gaps are wider compared to the GCSE achievements of other similar pupils nationally. For 5 or more A*- C grades including English and Mathematics, in 2015, the gap between pupils with SEN and their peers was 39.4%, which is a very slight improvement compared to 40.7% in 2014.

A Level and Post 16

At post 16, the level 2 attainment gap for FSM students narrowed by 5 points to 20% in 2015 compared to 25% in 2014. While this is welcome improvement it is above the latest available England gap of 17% and places Kent in the bottom fourth quartile for the country.

The level 3 attainment gap remains static at 32% for 2014 and 2015. This is above the latest available England average of 25% and places Kent in the second quartile for the country.

The latest Learning Plus UK data set (November 2015) shows that FSM students attain on average 15 points fewer than non FSM students for each qualification type. Overall retention for FSM students in Kent is 61% compared to a national rate of 67.9%. Non FSM students have an overall retention rate of 68% in Kent, which is in line with the national rate.

Children in Care (CiC)

In 2015 the attainment of Children in Care (for 12 months or more) in the Early Years Foundation Stage significantly improved. At Key Stage 1 there was a welcome narrowing of the attainment gap at Level 2B and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. At Key Stage 2 there was good improvement and at Key Stage 4 there was also a welcome improvement in GCSE, for 5 or more A*-C grades with English and mathematics.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The percentage of Children in Care, looked after for more than 12 months, achieving a Good Level of Development improved significantly from 22.9% in 2014 to 46.7% in 2015. The achievement gap for CiC reduced to 26.5%, from 45.8% in 2014, which is very positive.

Key Stage 1

There was a very welcome narrowing of the attainment gap for Children in Care at Level 2B and above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics in 2015. The attainment gap widened at Level 3 across all subjects but remains narrower than outcomes in 2013.

In **Reading**, the attainment of CiC at Key Stage 1 improved at Level 2B and above from 47.4% in 2014 to 56.1%, but declined at Level 3 from 18.4% in 2014 to 12.2%. The attainment gap for CiC narrowed, by 6.3% to 28.1% at Level 2B and above. There was a widening of the gap at Level 3 by 8.8% to 22.8%.

In **Writing**, the attainment of CiC significantly improved at Level 2B and above from 26.3% in 2014 to 43.9%, but declined at Level 3 from 5.3% in 2014 to 4.9%. Although the attainment gap narrowed in 2015, by 13.1% to 30.2% at Level 2B and above there was a widening of the gap at Level 3 by 2.7% to 13.5%.

In **Mathematics**, the attainment of CiC also improved at Level 2B and above from 47.4% in 2014 to 58.5%, but declined at Level 3 from 23.7% in 2014 to 9.8%. The CiC attainment gap narrowed at Level 2B and above in 2015, by 8.7% to 25.5%. At Level 3 and above there was a widening of the gap by 17.2% to 18.5%.

Key Stage 2

The attainment gap for CiC at Level 4 and above in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined** reduced in 2015 for the first time in three years to 24.8% (from 37.8% in 2014) exceeding the Kent 2015 target of 30%. The attainment gap for this group of pupils has narrowed by 17.2% since 2013. At Level 5, in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, there was also a slight narrowing of the attainment gap, from 18.6% in 2014% to 18.4% in 2015.

In **Reading**, the attainment gap for CiC at both Levels 4 and 5 narrowed in 2015, to 15.5% at Level 4 (from 24% in 2014) and to 22.6% at Level 5 (from 30.1% in 2014).

In **Writing**, the attainment gap for CiC at Level 4 and above narrowed by 13.5% since 2013 to 23.5% in 2015. At Level 5 the gap narrowed by 6.6% between 2014 and 2015 to 22.6%.

In **Mathematics**, the attainment gap for CiC reduced by 12.9% since 2013 to 18.1% in 2015. At Level 5 there was a widening of the attainment gap by 3.4% since 2014 to 24.3% in 2015.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, 12.5% of Children in Care achieved 5 or more A*- C grades including English and Mathematics compared to 8.2% in 2014, which is a welcome improvement. The Key Stage 4 attainment gap is 44.4% which has reduced from 50.0% in 2014.

Although there was good progress in narrowing gaps for these children and young people in 2015, these are the widest achievement gaps of any pupil group and continue to be an important focus for improvement in 2016.

Summary of Progress

Overall, there has been continued improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1. This continues a very good upward trend over recent years, with performance in Kent well above national averages. At Key Stage 2 outcomes continue to improve and are in line with the national average. However, the rate of improvement has slowed down in 2015. Outcomes at Key Stage 4 remain above the national average but have dipped slightly. Results at Post 16 declined across the majority of indicators in 2015, producing a three year downward trend which is a cause for concern. At the same time there was welcome improvement in the outcomes for post 16 vocational qualifications.

There has been welcome progress in narrowing attainment gaps between boys and girls at Key Stages 1 and 2 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Outcomes for children in care have improved at Key Stages 2 and 4 with a good decrease in the achievement gap for these learners. The attainment gaps for pupils in receipt of Free School Meals have not improved noticeably in 2015 which is very disappointing, although their absolute attainment has improved. Over £50m is now allocated to the Pupil Premium in schools and to date there is limited impact. Slow progress continues to be made in raising attainment and narrowing attainment gaps for SEN pupils at all key stages. Closing the gaps in achievement for all vulnerable learners continues to be a significant priority for improvement in 2015-16.

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 2015 highlighted the low literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills of 16-29 year olds in the UK compared to other countries. The latest Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission Annual Report 2014, focused on what more should be done to improve social mobility through the education system and other government policy areas: *'Raising the attainment of disadvantaged children and closing the gap between them and other children must be a priority for the whole of society'*. This is one of our top priorities in Kent.

Overall, there are mostly positive trends in the right direction on raising standards of attainment and increasing rates of progress. However, we need to continue to be very ambitious because there is still much to do to bring about the necessary improvements. Kent has a mixed economy of provision in the early years, schools and the skills and training sectors, serving diverse communities with many challenges. This ranges from outstanding and good provision to a significant amount of provision (16% of schools currently) 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 averages 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 2015 and more intensive work on those areas where performance is below average and gaps are wide.

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

The Sutton Trust and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) hosted a summit meeting on the future of the pupil premium in July 2015. The summit considered how best to improve attainment for disadvantaged pupils, and closing the gap between them and their peers. Following the summit, the Sutton Trust published a new report 'Pupil Premium: Next Steps' which reviewed the impact and methods used by schools to decide how to spend the funding.

Schools have demonstrated the potential of the Pupil Premium, but it is not yet a success in every school. The report noted that relatively few schools choose what it considers some of the "best low cost proven approaches" like improving feedback between teachers and pupils (4%) and peer-to-peer tutoring (1%). This is surprising.

Too few schools have undertaken Pupil Premium Reviews, recommended by the DFE for schools that are not using the funding well. In order to support these reviews, it is important that schools which are effectively using the Pupil Premium, share their best practice.

The Education Endowment Foundation reported in September 2015 to the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee during their Inquiry into the Funding for Disadvantaged Pupils. Research shows family engagement and family motivation is highly correlated with attainment at school. The National Audit Office similarly found that 91% of

school leaders saw parental engagement as a barrier to closing the attainment gap of some disadvantaged pupils. However, only 57% of these leaders had an intervention in place to address this concern.

The funding for the Pupil Premium in Kent now exceeds £50 million in 2015, yet we have seen very little improvement in outcomes for pupils on free school meals at Key Stages 2 and 4. This is a significant resource and needs to make more of a difference to closing achievement gaps for these less advantaged learners. 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, sometimes in small group catch up sessions, 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, spoken communication 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 many 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 some 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.

In April 2015 an Early Years Pupil Premium was introduced for disadvantaged three and four year olds receiving free pre-school education, worth an additional £300 per year for each eligible child.

The fundamental issue in any school or setting is to ensure all groups of pupils receive consistently good teaching and the progress of every pupil is tracked and used to inform future teaching and learning. Where pupils are taught by teaching assistants the priority is 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 and set targets for, and achieve, above expected rates of progress for Pupil Premium pupils during Key Stage 2, and between Key Stages 2 and 4.

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 recent publication 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. These priorities are to:

- raise attainment and skill levels;
- improve and extending vocational education, training and apprenticeships;
- increase participation and employment;
- target support for vulnerable young people to achieve.

The review of the 14 to 24 Strategy and the development of the new Adult Skills Strategy aim to ensure there is a coordinated approach to helping young people and adults to access employment or higher levels of skills qualifications and learning.

At present there is a welcome increase in the number of apprenticeships, improved vocational outcomes at post 16 and an increase in available technical and vocational pathways for young people. However we are still not doing well enough to meet the needs of all young people and to ensure their full participation and success.

Many school sixth forms are still predominantly an academic A level offer and do not provide enough opportunities for young people who have not achieved 5 good GCSEs to increase their levels of qualifications. There is too little provision for level 1 and 2 qualifications at post 16 and not sufficient opportunity for students to gain maths and English qualifications by age 19. At the same time the vocational and technical pathways are not always in place to ease the progression of all learners from age 14 to 19, and into employment. The high drop-out rate for learners aged 17 in Kent schools and colleges is a particular concern. And while the NEET numbers overall are declining, which is positive, there are still too many young people in vulnerable groups who become NEET.

Consequently there is a need for continued effort to address these issues and achieve more rapid developments 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 and our 14-19 Local Partnerships.

To support this move towards more collaborative working between schools and colleges, new district data packs have been used to develop post 16 programmes that meet the needs of young people and the local economy. The pace at which schools and colleges realign the local curriculum offer needs to increase to address gaps in provision and the lack of clear learning pathways. Further work on the district data packs is underway to adapt the content to help parents and young people 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

A number of schools and colleges have embraced the freedoms and flexibilities with the post 16 programmes of study and new qualification reforms. Case studies have been shared on innovative and collaborative approaches to 14 to 19 curriculum provision and

work continues with individual schools and colleges to develop robust 14 to 19 pathways, which lead to sustainable employment.

Fewer technical and vocational qualifications were taken in 2014-15, although Average Point Score and Average Point Entry outcomes improved and some schools significantly broadened their post 16 vocational offer.

However we are still challenged to achieve the proposed target of 10% increase in the uptake of Level 2 and 3 Vocational qualifications in skills shortage areas. Major curriculum changes and new school performance measures (eg. the English Baccalaureate, Progress and Attainment 8) together with funding challenges are in danger of leading to a reduction in the vocational offer in Key Stages 4 and 5. The limited Key Stage 4 vocational offer leads to a reduction in student demand for technical programmes at post 16, and for many students with low qualification levels who want to follow a vocational pathway the new technical programmes at post 16 are often not accessible. To address this there is renewed effort to plan the curriculum offer in each local area, across schools, colleges and training providers.

In 2016 the Local Authority, with schools and FE Colleges, will carry out an area review to identify the effectiveness of existing provision and pathways that require further development.

During 2014-15 the Skills and Employability Service have been developing the skills plan with employers and supporting the development of employment sector specific Guilds. These provide an informed and coordinated approach to identifying the skills needed and the steps into skilled employment, including Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Work Experience in each Sector. Guilds meet the needs of the industries by working in partnership with the relevant sector experts, including employers, trade bodies, training providers, colleges, and the Local Authority.

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 successfully met the 2014-15 target of 140 apprentices taken on; up from 121 in 2014. The target for 2015-16 will be 150. The cumulative target of 520 for 2015 has been met with a total of 564 apprenticeships in the County Council.

Apprenticeship numbers are increasing across Kent in comparison to 2014 figures, except in the 19 to 24 age range. The table below highlights the difference compared to last year:

	12/13	13/14	14/15
Under 19	2600	2560	2778
19 to 24	3800	3540	2580
25 Plus	5190	3580	3320

In 2014-15, the Kent Employment Programme exceeded the target of 800 apprenticeships for 16 – 24 year olds who have been unemployed for more than 3 months. The final out-turn number was 930.

The percentage of schools offering apprenticeships was 53%, which exceeded the target of 45%. Currently, 271 schools are employing apprentices with 376 starts to date. This work continues to engage more schools with a target to increase the number of higher and advanced apprenticeships.

The number of assisted apprenticeship opportunities for learners with difficulties and disabilities was 32, compared to the target of 30 in 2014-15. This programme has been extremely successful in placing some of our most vulnerable learners into employment and the service will seek to draw down further funding for 2015-16.

Work continues to engage all KCC departments to develop apprenticeship opportunities and the programme has been widened to include work experience and traineeships. Fourteen higher (level 4) apprenticeships have been appointed within KCC in Accountancy and Project Management, up from three in 2014.

KCC has also been successful in being named as the South East Macro Employer of the Year by the National Apprenticeship Service, for the development of the KCC Apprenticeship Framework.

The NEET Figures and Youth Unemployment

The new NEETs Strategy sets out our commitment to the most vulnerable young people to ensure that they are able to engage in education and training, to maximise their life chances and to make a successful transition to adulthood. The aim of the Strategy is to ensure full participation by all young people to age 18 and beyond and to significantly reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training.

This Strategy sets out the key issues which contribute to young people not engaging in education, employment or training and identifies what, collectively, is needed to improve outcomes for young people who are vulnerable to becoming NEET and who are already NEET. It sets clear targets to ensure that the number of NEETs in Kent is reduced to 1% by January 2017. To achieve this ambitious target new approaches have been developed to reduce NEETs in schools, colleges and work based training providers.

The NEET figure for January 2015 was 4.7%, which was in line with the national average of 4.7%. The new NEETs Strategy is now in place and it is expected that the target of 3.5% NEETs for January 2016 will be achieved. The NEET figure should always be used in conjunction with the Not Known figures (young people whose learning destination or employment is not known to the tracking system). The Not Knowns were at 11.2% in January 2015. This was higher than January 2014 (4.6%) but a number of significant changes have been made to the systems to reduce the Not Knowns to 7% by January 2016. Currently (December 2015) the NEET figure is 4.89% and the figure for Not Knowns is 9%. These figures are still too high and the NEETS Strategy is designed to significantly reduce them in the coming months.

The Kent Employment Programme works directly with 17 to 24 year olds who have been NEET or unemployed for three months or more. In phase one local employers were helped to recruit 931 young people across Kent. Phase two started in April 2015 with 100 places available, 50 for traineeship vacancies and 50 for an apprenticeship route. The current number of young people placed on phase two of the programme is 58, including 11 in a traineeship and 47 in an apprenticeship.

Since last year unemployment for 18 to 24 year olds has continued to fall. In August 2015 unemployment for this age group was 2.5% compared to 3.35% in 2014. There has also been a significant decrease in the five youth unemployment zones, with Dover at 3.7%, Gravesham at 3.7%, Shepway at 3.4%, Swale at 3.8% and Thanet at 5.6%. The comparable figures for 2014 are Dover (4.8%), Gravesham (4.3%), Shepway (5.1%), Swale (5.2%) and Thanet at (7.8%). These figures are all below the national average of 6.1%.

To reduce youth unemployment further, below 2%, KCC has submitted a Social Impact Bond to the Department for Work and Pensions. If successful the bond would bring in £10 million of targeted funding to support young people aged 18 to 24 into apprenticeships or full time employment.

Targeted Support for Vulnerable Learners

During 2015-16, the Skills and Employability Service have undertaken a range of targeted projects to ensure positive outcomes for vulnerable young people, including those with learning difficulties. This includes Supported Internships, Assisted Apprenticeships, and a contract moving 100 young people from the Troubled Families agenda into an apprenticeship. The Service is currently working with 65 young people aged 16-18 and 81 young people aged 19-24, supporting them into positive destinations in education, training and apprenticeships. The positive progression achieved to date is leading to further work with Special schools across Kent to support learners into suitable, sustainable employment opportunities with training after leaving post 16 education. The service has supported more than 200 young people from BESD Special Schools over the year, leading to positive progression into further education, apprenticeships or paid employment.

New supported employment pathways are being developed by the Kent Supported Employment Team. In 2014-15 this team supported 295 young people and adults into assisted employment opportunities.

Kent Supported Employment programme has been working with 930 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.

Each district now has a District Employability Offer outside of mainstream education providers, which provides clear progression routes into employment or apprenticeships. A bespoke apprenticeship service is being offered to students in Years 11 and 12 to enable those young people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds to compete in the labour market. Schools and FE colleges are identifying their young people at risk of disengaging

before they leave, to enable the Skills and Employability Service to work with them to ensure a positive destination and continuity of progression.

Adult Skills

The Adult Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy was developed with and approved by partners and KCC during the first half of 2015. The Strategy builds on the work of the 14-24 Strategy and focuses on the education, training and employment of adults in the County. The importance of this Strategy has become more apparent with the release of a number of national reports on adults skills and employment which highlight the future direction for adult learners, economic growth and employment.

'.....there is no more important issue facing our economy than getting the education and skills system right – it is crucial to cementing recent improvements in growth sustainably over the longer term. It's essential we build the right skills base if we are to support a rebalancing towards those high-value, high-skill activities that will underpin our role in the global marketplace'. Confederation for British Industry 2014

The purpose of this Strategy is to set out our ambitions for the skills and qualifications of the adult population of Kent that all local providers of education and skills can aspire to and achieve by working in partnership. The Strategy is supported by all the relevant stakeholders, as an over-arching strategy for Kent to improve provision and outcomes.

Kent County Council contributes to the Strategy through some of its services as well as providing a strategic overview and by facilitating collaborative activity between education providers, training providers and employers. The overarching ambition for Kent providers is to maximise adult participation in training and learning in order to achieve economic growth, full employment, social inclusion, community cohesion, health and wellbeing.

The Strategy is built around the following priorities:

- Increase adult employment in Kent
- Improve the education and the skill levels of the adult population of Kent
- Provide pathways, such as apprenticeships and re-training opportunities, to enable people to take up employment in priority sectors
- Increase participation in learning and employment amongst priority groups, in isolated communities, and deprived neighbourhoods; and including vulnerable adults such as those with disabilities.

The strategy is designed to address the significant gaps in the skill requirements of the local economy and the skill levels of the adult population in Kent, which cannot be addressed simply by improving the abilities of young people entering the workforce from school. Upskilling and retraining the existing workforce is vital if we are to gain the benefits of growth arising from the economic recovery and the opportunities available in a global market. A considerable amount of resource is invested in adult learning. In order to maximise the effectiveness of this resource we must co-ordinate at a local level to ensure collaboration between providers. This Strategy has as a key priority the importance of engaging employers in adult vocational education and training.

Ofsted Inspection Outcomes

Kent schools made very 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 2014-15 school year, 82% of schools were good or outstanding which was in line with the national average. This included 17% of schools judged to be outstanding and 65% judged to be good, compared to 20% outstanding and 62% good schools nationally.

This overall figure included 83% of Secondary schools, 82% of Primary schools, 87% of Special schools and 90% of PRUs in Kent, judged to be good or outstanding. Also, 90% of Early Years settings were good or outstanding.

In July 2015, there were 362 good and 96 outstanding schools, 85 schools requiring improvement (including 67 Primary schools and 14 Secondary schools) and 14 schools in a category, out of a total of 557 schools that had a current inspection result. This means that there were 38 more good and outstanding schools compared to July 2014.

In July 2014, 75% of Kent schools were good or outstanding, compared to 68% in 2013, 59% in 2012 and 55% in 2011.

In July 2014, there were 328 good and 92 outstanding schools, 110 schools requiring improvement (including 93 Primary schools and 11 Secondary schools) and 31 schools in a category. Four schools were judged inadequate in that year and 17 schools were removed from special measures, some to a judgement of good or outstanding.

Of the 115 schools inspected in the 2014-15 school year 72% were judged to be good or outstanding, compared to 65% in 2013-14, which was a better rate of improvement.

The greatest improvement was in Primary Schools, where 75% of the 87 schools inspected between September 2014 and July 2015 were judged good or outstanding, compared to only 54% in 2013-14. In the same period 22 Secondary schools were inspected and only 54% were judged good or outstanding.

In July 2015, 83% of pupils in Kent were attending a good or outstanding school compared to 75% in July 2014 and 70% in July 2013. This means approximately 15,420 more children and young people were receiving a better education since July 2014, including 12,700 Primary School pupils.

This overall figure included 81% of Primary school pupils (91,003), 85% of Secondary school pupils (83,551) and 94% of Special school pupils (3298) who were attending a good or outstanding school.

There has been very good improvement in the numbers attending a good or outstanding Pupil Referral Unit from 30% of pupils in 2012, 76% in 2013, 90% in 2014 and to 94% in July 2015. The quality of PRUs improved so that 90% were judged good or outstanding.

Many 'satisfactory' or 'requires improvement' schools are well led and making good progress, so that we are confident of future good inspection outcomes. As at July 2015 we reached our target of at least 82% of schools to be good or outstanding. Our priority for 2016 onwards is to continue to increase the rate of improvement in education in Kent. We

expect this positive trend to continue towards our ambitious target of at least 90% of Primary and Secondary schools to be judged good or outstanding in the next year or two.

The proportion of schools in Kent judged to be Requiring Improvement (RI) at the end of the academic year 2014-15, decreased to 16.6%. This took Kent to below the national average of 18%. It represents a continued reduction in the number of RI schools from 36% in 2012, to 25% in 2013 and 20% in 2014.

At the end of the academic year 2014-15, 3.1% of schools in Kent were in an Ofsted category of concern. This represents a decrease from the previous year and means Kent was in line with the then national average of 3% of schools judged to be inadequate by Ofsted. This is an improved picture compared to previous years; (4% in 2012 and 2013 and 5% in 2014). The latest figure (December 2015) is nine schools with an inadequate inspection judgement, which is 1.6%, below the national average of 2%.

Currently (December 2015) the latest Ofsted data for Kent shows that 84% of schools are now rated good or outstanding compared to 84% nationally. This includes 18% of schools judged to be outstanding and 66% judged to be good. In Kent, there are now 362 good and 100 outstanding schools, 79 schools requiring improvement (including 60 Primary schools and 16 Secondary schools) and 9 schools in a category of concern, out of a total of 557 schools that have a current inspection result. There are now 41 more good and better schools than this time last year. We expect this positive trend to continue towards our ambitious target of at least 90% of Primary and Secondary schools judged to be good or outstanding by 2017-18.

Key lessons from schools that achieve a good or better inspection outcome include: a strong focus on improving rates of progress for all groups of pupils; procedures for ensuring the consistency and continuous improvement of teaching; effective use of the pupil premium and other funding to ensure under-achieving pupils catch up quickly and gaps narrow; good use of assessment to feed back to pupils and help them to do better; effective use of data to track individual pupils' progress and monitor teaching quality, which informs the school's procedures for targeting improvement activity; accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses with clear actions to address under-performance; and clear evidence of improvement since the last inspection. No school achieves consistency of practice and continuous improvement without highly effective leadership and governance.

As always, we encourage schools to learn from each others' inspection experiences and some of the best preparation for inspection is to talk to a school that has been inspected recently.

All schools currently rated as inadequate and as 'requires improvement' are working closely with the School Improvement Team, and are supported by other schools, 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

At August 2015 72% of Children Centres in Kent were judged as good or outstanding compared to a national average of 67%. 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 2016.

Over the past year we have commissioned a former Senior Inspector from Ofsted to undertake a series of reviews of the Children Centres. These have now taken place in six districts and the work has been valuable in identifying both strengths as well as areas for development. In June 2015 an Ofsted Inspection of Maidstone Children Centres concluded the following; *'Since the last inspection, the local authority has taken concerted action in addressing the identified areas for improvement. Stringent performance monitoring arrangements have been introduced, with enhanced levels of staff development, and this has resulted in significantly improved practice'*. The Centres received a good inspection judgement.

DRAFT

Exclusions

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.

In the 2014-15 school year there were 106 permanent exclusions, against a target of 50.

In the Primary phase there were 1,693 fixed term and 48 permanent exclusions. This compares to figures for the end of the previous year of 1,604 and 26, resulting in a slight increase in fixed term exclusions and a significant increase in permanent exclusions. Further work is taking place to understand and address this increase in the Primary phase, which has not been mirrored in Secondary schools.

In the Secondary phase there were 9,030 fixed term and 58 permanent exclusions. This compares to figures for the end of the previous academic year of 8,912 and 61, which shows a slight increase in fixed term exclusions and a welcome slight reduction in permanent exclusions. This reduction has occurred in spite of some districts, such as Maidstone, Dartford and Gravesham, significantly increasing the use of permanent exclusion compared to previous years.

Maidstone was the highest excluding district with 17 permanent exclusions, compared to Ashford, Dover, Canterbury, Swale and Thanet where there were no permanent exclusions in Secondary schools.

In the Primary phase there were 13 permanent exclusions in Thanet compared to one permanent exclusion in Gravesham and none in Tunbridge Wells.

The use of permanent exclusion is concentrated in some districts and in some individual schools. For example 32 exclusions were produced by four Secondary schools and two Primary schools. The total number of permanent exclusions in Primary was produced by 36 schools and the total number of Secondary exclusions was produced by 27 schools.

The highest number of fixed term exclusions occurred in Ashford, Thanet and Swale. Overall 22,672 days were lost to education in 2014-15 due to fixed term exclusions.

The PRU, Inclusion and Attendance service adopts a new approach of intervening early and providing timely support to schools, children and families to address the issues of behaviour, attendance and exclusion. The Area Attendance and Inclusion Lead Officers work in partnership with schools to prevent exclusion where appropriate and to re-integrate excluded pupils with effective support. Working closely with practitioners both in the Early Help Service and external partners, the service, including the new Health Needs Service, will work to empower schools to manage inclusion, absenteeism and exclusion more effectively. We are asking schools to please use an Early Help Notification for any pupil that has accumulated 10 or more days fixed term exclusion.

The Factors that Make a Difference

The factors that make a difference to the rate of permanent exclusions include the effectiveness of school practice and in-school support; the cooperation of schools in the local 'In Year Fair Access' arrangements; the alternative curriculum provision and support for schools by the Pupil Referral Units; the availability of support to Primary schools for challenging behaviour; the early identification of special educational needs and the use of the LIFT process; and the use of Early Help notifications.

We shall continue to work with schools to make these mechanisms and sources of additional support more effective in each local area, in order to reduce the number of permanent exclusions in 2016.

Attendance

Final absence statistics relating to the full 2014-15 school year will be published in March 2016. The latest available attendance data (for Autumn 2014 and Spring 2015), indicates that absence from school in Kent is greater than the national averages.

Overall the percentage of total absences in Kent is 4.8% compared to 4.5% nationally. For Secondary schools the figures are 5.6% compared to 5.2% nationally, and for Primary the percentage is 4.2% compared to 4.0% nationally. In every case there is a higher level of authorised, unauthorised, persistent and total absence in Kent.

The percentage of pupils who have missed 38 or more sessions (persistent absence) is 4.5% in Kent compared to 3.9% nationally. For Secondary schools this figure is 6.5% compared to 5.5% nationally and for Primary schools it is 3.1% compared to 2.7% nationally.

The previous persistent absence figure for Secondary schools was 6.1%, and for Primary schools it was 2.8%. These figures have increased in the past year, and they continue to be worse than the national figures, which is a concern.

The DfE has changed the definition of persistent absence to 10% from the current 15% from September 2015. This will have a significant impact on persistent absence reporting. For example, the combined autumn and spring figures for 2014-15 would increase from 2.8% to 8.5% for Primary schools using the new threshold, and from 6.1% to 14.0% for Secondary schools.

We have re-organised our services to ensure pupils with a history of poor attendance at school get more coordinated family support through the Early Help Service. Schools requiring support from Early Help Service for attendance-only issues should refer direct into the Inclusion and Attendance team. If, during the course of this work, it becomes apparent that there are more complex issues requiring more intensive support, the Inclusion and Attendance team will liaise with colleagues to move this work into the Early Help Units. Conversely, if a school makes a request for intensive support but during assessment it appears to be an attendance-only issue, it will be passed across to the Inclusion and Attendance team.

Commissioning Education Provision

The Education Commissioning Plan 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 2015 was successful. Delivery of a small number of projects was adjusted in response to changing contexts during the year including new provision in light of increased inward migration

The growth in pupil numbers continues and will shortly feed into Secondary schools. Before 2023 we need to add a further 33,000 school places to our provision in Kent. At present we face particular pressures in Dartford, Gravesham and Swale as we go forward although growth continues right across the County.

The latest version of the Education Commissioning Plan 2016-20 sets out our analysis of needs for the future and identifies in more detail what we need to do in the next couple of years to expand provision. The Area Education Officers continue to work hard to keep pace with the increasing demand for places through population growth and migration into Kent.

While our planning and forecasting continues to be fairly accurate, we are also experiencing significant migration of families into Kent, throughout the year, who require school places for children of all ages. For example, in addition to the school places we planned for and delivered in September 2015, there were a significant number of new arrivals in Kent this summer of families and children that the local authority was not aware of.

The Plan sets out forecast roll numbers (by planning areas at Primary school level and by District at Secondary school level) across each District in Kent. We aspire to maintain a forecasting accuracy of plus or minus 1%. The forecast number of Year R pupils (as at January 2015) was accurate to within 1.8% across Kent. Although still relatively accurate this is a greater variation than in previous years. Eight of the 12 District forecasts were outside the plus or minus 1% tolerance we seek. This was due to high migration in the previous year which will have influenced the migration factor in the forecast model. The forecast Primary School roll number was 0.8% higher than actual rolls, with four of the 12 districts showing forecasts 1% higher than roll numbers. This demonstrates a high degree of accuracy.

The forecast number of Year 7 pupils across Kent was 0.3% lower than the actual roll, which is a very high degree of accuracy. The most extreme change, in Sevenoaks, is due to the opening of The Trinity Free School which was a change in parental preferences and the provision available. The forecast Secondary roll number (Year 7 to 11) was accurate to within 18 pupils, representing 0.0% variance.

Surplus capacity in the Primary School sector is at 5.4% in Reception Year and 5.2% across all Primary School year groups. Our target is at least 5% surplus. However, the surplus in districts varies across the County from 1.1% in Gravesham to 8.7% in Dover. Surplus capacity in Year 7 and across the Secondary School sector remains high both across the County and in districts, apart from Canterbury which is below 4%.

As we go forward the current Education Commissioning Plan sets out the following projections:

The number of Primary age pupils is expected to continue rising significantly from 114,275 in 2013-14, to 129,338 in 2018-19, which is more than 15,000 extra pupils over the next four years. The number of pupils continues to rise slightly further until the start of the next decade, following which they are expected to decline in all Districts, except Dartford. There will be a need to continue to make new provision available in some Districts on both a permanent and temporary basis.

The number of Secondary age pupils (Years 7-11) in Kent schools is expected to rise significantly from 78,222 in 2013-14 to over 94,000 in 2023-24. Beyond this point the longer term strategic forecasts indicate a slight fall in pupil numbers, although this estimate is heavily influenced by projections of new housing development beyond 2026.

The Commissioning Plan identifies the need for additional permanent and temporary school places as follows:

By 2016-17	By 2017-18	By 2018-19	By 2019-20
<i>Primary</i> 17.95FE permanent 188 Year R places 60 Year 2 places	<i>Primary</i> 15.9FE permanent 30 Year R places	<i>Primary</i> 14.4FE permanent	<i>Primary</i> 40.3FE permanent
<i>Secondary</i> 6FE permanent 90 Year 7 places	<i>Secondary</i> 19FE permanent	<i>Secondary</i> 21FE permanent	<i>Secondary</i> 39FE permanent 210 Year 7 places

Much of the additional provision will be achieved by expanding existing schools, although new Primary and Secondary schools will be needed. As we move forward with the next stage of the Education Commissioning Plan, we aim to focus on the following:

- The creation of all-age schools: St George's Secondary School in Thanet is in the process of becoming an all-through school from September 2016 with the addition of a new building for the Primary phase on site.
- The development of a significant number of new Secondary school places which will be needed in the future. The Secondary school population will soon start to increase dramatically, requiring an additional 60 forms of entry by 2018 and beyond. The Commissioning Plan includes proposals to develop 13 new forms of entry by 2016-17, a further 7 FE by 2018-19 and a further 60 FE from 2018 onwards for several years.
- Continue reviewing separate Infant and Junior schools to consider amalgamation where circumstances permit. In the past year four Infant schools and their linked Junior schools became all through Primary schools.
- We also propose to continue to explore ways to support parents of children in Infant Schools to secure a Year 3 place at a school in areas where Junior schools have changed their status to become all through Primary schools.
- We are also keen to identify schools that would be interested in sponsoring a new school.

Progress in 2014-15

In 2014-15, KCC delivered all of the additional new school places needed for September 2015. The majority of these new school places were within the Primary sector. We expanded 24 Primary schools, including 19 new forms of entry added to schools for Reception year classes and 300 temporary Reception places that will not be needed in the long term.

In addition, we opened seven new Primary schools. These are Kings Hill, Holborough Lakes, Leybourne Chase in Tonbridge and Malling, Martello Grove in Shepway, Thistle Hill in Swale, Skinners Kent Primary School in Knights Park, Tunbridge Wells and Finberry Primary School, Cheeseman's Green in Ashford. A small number of places were also added to Secondary schools. In total, over the last year, more than 2,500 places have been added to the Primary schools in Kent.

Commissioning SEN Provision

A key part of our commissioning strategy has been to meet a wider range of special educational needs in mainstream schools, by increasing support and places for children in mainstream with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Behavioural, Emotional and Social Needs (BESN) and Speech and Language Needs (S&L).

We have established new SEND Specialist Resource Base Provisions in nine Primary schools in the past year to meet these needs, and more is planned. In addition we have developed additional SEND provision in five Secondary schools.

At the same time new satellite provision has been developed for three Special schools. These satellites are based on mainstream school sites. Pupils who attend are on the rolls of the Special schools concerned, but pupils integrate into the mainstream schools' classes, with support, where this is appropriate for the individual pupils. Further satellites are planned.

The Special schools programme, together with the re-designation of pupil numbers, has so far provided an additional 250 places in Special schools. There are 10 Special School projects in the programme. Seven of these projects have been completed or are underway. The three remaining projects are at planning stage and remain high priorities for bringing to a swift conclusion. Overall we are increasing the number of places in Special schools by 350 places.

Conclusion and Future Priorities

We have made good progress this year in delivering the school places required. We have some hot spots in the Primary sector, but these are fewer in number than in previous years, and we have achieved the overarching target of 5% surplus. We have delivered well against the need for additional capacity to support pupils with SEN. Overall our forecasting remains very accurate. Looking forward, the focus will shift to ensuring we have sufficient Secondary School capacity.

Early Help and Prevention

In May 2014 we set out our strategy and vision for Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS) and a new way of working in Kent. We have had a productive year since introducing the new model of working and good progress has been made. The services which came together in April 2014 have been redesigned to deliver new ways of working and provide a firm foundation to improve the outcomes for children, young people and families in Kent. There is still more to be done, and we set out our priorities and targets in the new EHPS Strategy and Three Year Plan 2015-18.

One year on from our initial prospectus, the priorities and vision remains the same; *"providing early help for whole families in a timely and responsive way, so that they are safeguarded, their educational, social and emotional needs are met and they achieve good outcomes"*.

The Early Help Three Year Plan sets out our vision, ways of working and direction of travel for Kent's Early Help and Preventative Services. The plan outlines what we aim to achieve and the ways we will be working over the next three years. It describes how Early Help will work with children, young people and their families to help them overcome difficulties and reach their full potential. The Plan sets out in greater detail how the service is structured and organised across all elements of EHPS in Kent.

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.

We aim to ensure children, young people and families can access the right services at the right time in the right place. 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

The Early Help and Preventative Services have been organised to provide targeted support to vulnerable children, young people and families through an integrated service in each District. The components include:

- Early Help Units
- Children's Centres
- Troubled Families Programme
- Early Intervention and Family Support Workers
- Attendance and Inclusion
- Pupil Referral Units
- Support for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Youth Work
- Youth Offending
- Targeted Support for NEET young people
- Services for Young People's Substance Misuse
- Teenage pregnancy and sexual health
- Commissioned parenting and family support services
- Commissioned mental health support services

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.

Progress in 2014-15

In the last year, Early Help and Preventative Services have focused on redefining and clarifying its strategy and shared values and implementing the structures and systems that will ensure the Service achieves its outcomes over the next three years.

During the past year we have:

- **Developed a vision and brand set out in the Early Help and Preventative Services Strategy and Three Year Plan**
Early Help and Preventative Services brought together a range of disparate services, some of which had been developed in isolation. We have worked with partners, including schools, to understand their expectations, define our offer and determine how

to deliver it most efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of children, young people and families.

- **Implemented a new integrated structure and better ways of working with schools and Specialist Children's Services**

A staff restructure was undertaken that simplified and rationalised job roles and moved provision of services to a District based, whole family approach with integrated support from specialist teams. Early Help Units deliver support to children and families in a planned way that is assessed carefully and monitored. Cases are managed to ensure a positive outcome is achieved. The new structure has resulted in better use of resources coupled with joint planning and delivery, and achieved significant efficiency savings.

- **Established Triage, a single front door for referrals related to families requiring early help support.**

Triage was co-located with the Central Duty Team in June 2015 to improve joint working with Specialist Children's Services, to ensure a 'no wrong door' approach and to contribute to our goal of ensuring the consistent application of safeguarding thresholds and service allocation across the county. Early Help notifications are received and assessed by Triage and cases that meet thresholds for social care are passed across to Specialist Children's Services.

- **Ensured safe Step Down processes from Specialist Children's Services to Early Help Units.**

Jointly agreed procedures and processes are in place and improved arrangements have resulted in increasing proportions of the cases closed to SCS are stepped down to EHPS (currently 27%). Weekly step down panels are established throughout the county and there is sustained commitment across SCS and EHPS to these panels to discuss complex cases and monitor the outcomes for step down cases.

- **Conducted practice reviews of Children's Centres**

These reviews have helped shape our planning to continue the improvement journey for Children's centres in Kent and ensure greater consistency across Districts. The Ofsted Inspection of Maidstone Children's Centres conducted in June 2015 achieved a judgement in all categories of Good. This is a significant achievement by managers and staff in improving standards from an Ofsted judgement of Inadequate in June 2014.

- **Improved Outcomes**

In Early Help, support is being provided in a more timely way to 5500 children and young people, and their families, including 1076 cases with an Early Help plan. Just over 80% of cases are now closed with a positive outcome for children and the family. 22% of the cases closed by Specialist Children's Services are stepped down to Early Help for on-going support and around 8% of cases closed to Early Help are stepped up to Social Care because children's needs and the risks to them have increased.

0-25 Early Help Units

The Early Help Units (EHU) are in place to deliver intensive support for children, young people and families.

The units undertake casework with a range of families requiring early help support. These cases include out of court disposals, step-downs from SCS or prevention of the need for statutory social care intervention, children and young people experiencing attendance or behaviour difficulties at school or older young people who are NEET. The Units work closely with open access services to ensure an integrated approach. Families supported by targeted casework in the units can also benefit from open access support in Children's Centres and Youth Hubs, and ongoing engagement with open access services supports the case closure in the units once outcomes have been achieved.

EHPS have a range of contracts with external providers that deliver support for children, young people and their families to help them overcome their difficulties and address any barriers to learning. This commissioning budget has been reviewed and refocused in 2015 with the intent of delivering more effective support, improved outcomes and increased value for money in the future. Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Family Support and Parenting and Young Carers Service and Youth have been identified as the key areas of work for commissioned services over the next three years. It is these collective priorities that will inform the commissioning of new services that will work alongside the Early Help Units and Universal Services to bring the best possible outcome for Kent's children and young people.

Children's Centres

Kent's Children's Centres are managed in hubs within 12 Districts. The Centres are now an integral part of the 0-25 Early Help service. The work delivered through open access services such as Children's Centres, youth hubs and other settings is critical to achieving positive outcomes for children, young people and their families, and incorporates a range of key services.

Children's Centres continue to provide their core offer, as required by Ofsted, which is to improve outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on those in greatest need. They work to make sure all children are properly prepared for school, regardless of background or family circumstances. They also offer support to parents.

In August 2015 78% of children under 5 living in the 30% most deprived areas were registered with a Children's Centre, but only 47% were regularly attending. This needs to be higher, and our priority is to increase this to 65-70% of these families engaging fully with their local Children's Centre.

Children's Centres play a key role in increasing the take-up of free early education places by eligible two year olds to ensure more disadvantaged children develop well in the early years. Take up of this entitlement has risen from 53% in November 2014 to 69% in November 2015. By 2017 we aim to ensure the take up of the free place by eligible 2 year olds will improve to 80%.

75% of children under 5 with Current Social Work involvement are known to a Children's Centre, which requires close working between EHPS and Specialist Children's Services (SCS). Children's Centres are using monthly lists to work with SCS and families to ensure this figure continues to increase to 100%.

Public Health are a critical partner for Children's Centres and play a significant role in helping to ensure a range of improved health outcomes for children and their families.

There are 4 clear targets 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. 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.

There has been significant improvement in reducing teenage conceptions over the past 3 years. Children Centres offer a variety of services that support this area of work using well evidenced and successful prevention programmes. Moving forward Children Centres will increasingly support the focus on reducing the number of NEETS amongst this particular target group.

Youth Offending

The annual statutory Youth Justice Plan for the county outlines the key priorities and performance targets for the year. 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

The Youth Justice Service is responsible for assessing, planning and intervening with the 10-17 age group who have come to the attention of the Police and receive either an out of court disposal or a sentence. Ten years is the age of criminal responsibility and 18 years is when the majority of those subject to statutory supervision transfer to either the National Probation Service or the Community Rehabilitation Company which is responsible for working with adult offenders.

The principle aim of the Youth Justice System is to prevent offending by children and young people.

In addition to its statutory duties, the Youth Justice Service also:

- Fulfils duties to victims of youth crime, including informing them of the progress of the offender's case and providing information about appropriate services if they ask for additional support
- Provides restorative justice opportunities for both victims and offenders to assist with bringing closure to the conflict between them and to identify how the child or young person may repair the harm they have caused

Youth Justice is now embedded across the work of Early Help and Prevention. The central Youth Justice Service focuses on court disposals, and the Early Help Units focus on out of court disposals. However, a core principle of EHPS is that children and young people should have the stability of a case worker wherever possible as a high-quality relationship

supports positive outcomes. If a young person becomes known to the Youth Justice Service and they already have an Early Help Worker, a discussion will take place to see whether that worker can continue to support that young person, including undertaking the statutory youth justice work, depending on the severity of the offence and disposal.

In 2014-15 the number of first time entrants into the Youth Justice system fell to 614, which meant that the target of 628 was achieved. This compares with 709 in 2013-14 and 1121 first time entrants in 2011-12.

The number of remands to youth detention accommodation increased slightly to 44 from 40 in the previous year, but this compares favourably with 68 in 2011-12. The engagement of statutory school age young offenders in full time education is now 76.6%, compared with 72.4% in 2012-13. This is below the target for 2015 which was 83%. However, the percentage of young offenders post statutory school age in full time education or employment with training (EET) is only 50.9%, which is significantly lower than the target of 80%. The NEET Strategy is expected to achieve significant improvement in this low figure.

In 2014-15, 95.7% 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 2014-15 was 4.7%% of all court disposals, against a target of 3.5%. The target of 90% for suitable accommodation of 16-17 year olds on community based interventions was exceeded, achieving 93.8% against 88.8% in 2013-14. This represents a significant improvement when compared with 2011-12 at 81.4%.

Kent's Youth Justice Plan for 2015-16 sets out the service priorities, which include:

- Working with criminal justice partners to continue the downward trend in reducing first time entrants by the use of restorative interventions. This will include considering new ways of working in order to significantly reduce first time entrants in Kent and as a consequence improve the life chances of our young people.
- Working with all staff in EHPS to explore how the risk factors most commonly associated with the offending behaviour of children and young people can be most effectively addressed by preventative strategies.
- Reducing the disproportionate number of children in care in the youth justice system by increased co-ordination of decision-making between services.
- Reducing the rate of re-offending. During 2015-16 a 'live cohort' of young offenders will be established and use will be made of the Youth Justice Board toolkit to understand the characteristics of their re-offending. The findings will inform reviews of the interventions currently offered and of changes to their design where assessed as being as necessary to ensure they are appropriately focused on the key factors associated with re-offending and so that their effectiveness is increased.
- Increasing engagement of young offenders in education, employment and training.

Prevent

Education and Young People's Services has responded to the growing threat of radicalisation and violent extremism by being fully engaged with the Prevent duty statutory requirements under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, ensuring schools are aware of their additional safeguarding responsibilities and the use of the Channel referral process for assessing and managing risk. The priority is to raise awareness and work with vulnerable groups who may be at risk of radicalisation or violent extremism.

From 1 July 2015, local authorities, schools, and childcare providers are under the duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. To help schools and childcare providers keep children safe from the risk of radicalisation and extremism the DfE has issued practical Prevent duty advice which complements statutory Prevent duty guidance.

Troubled Families Programme

The Kent Troubled Families Programme has been successful in supporting families with multiple problems in turning their lives around. In the last year 2000 families were turned around with positive outcomes, achieving 100% of the target number of families over the life of the programme. This means adults have been helped to access work or training, and offending and anti-social behaviour has reduced and children's attendance at schools has improved, with fewer exclusions. Of the 2,560 families turned around, 2,172 were for improvements in education, crime, and anti-social behaviour and 388 were for at least one family member returning to work.

The Kent Troubled Families programme began a five year Extended Phase in January 2015. Phase 2 of the programme extends the criteria to include:

- Crime and anti-social behaviour
- Education
- Children in need
- Out of work or at risk of financial exclusion
- Domestic abuse
- Health

The programme now requires Kent to turn around 8,960 families over the five years of the programme. All families known to EHPS will be assessed against these six criteria. The wider set of criteria means that most children, young people and families who come to the attention of Early Help for targeted support will be included in the programme.

Our Future Targets and Priorities:

As there is much to improve, 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 2019.

In 2015-16 we aim to:

- Improve good outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to 77% and the free school meal achievement gap is no more than 10%
- Improve by a further 3% the age related expectations achieved by pupils at Key Stage 1
- Improve Key Stage 2 attainment to 82% of pupils attaining age related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics combined
- Improve KS4 attainment to ensure at least 60% of pupils achieve good GCSE grades in English and maths and achieve the expected standard in Attainment and Progress 8
- Improve the percentage of students achieving 2 or more A' level grades to 93% and 3 or more A' level grades A to E to 77%
- Increase the average point score per student for vocational qualifications to 680
- Reduce the pupil premium gap at Key Stage 2 to 15% and the GCSE gap to 30%
- Increase the percentage of good and better schools to at least 86%
- Reduce the number of schools in an Ofsted category to no more than 6
- Increase the percentage of good and better early years settings to 93%
- Increase the percentage of good and better Children's Centres to 80%, and ensure at least 70% of needy families engage with and benefit from support by Children's Centres.
- Reduce NEETS to 3.5% or below.
- Reduce permanent exclusions to no more than 64.
- Reduce the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system to no more than 540 young people, and the rate of re-offending will be no more than 29%.
- Deliver the Vulnerable Learners Strategy to ensure we achieve a significant improvement in outcomes for vulnerable groups, specifically in narrowing achievement gaps and reducing the numbers of young people who are excluded, who are NEET and who become young offenders.

- Deliver the Early Help Three Year Plan, and embed and integrate Early Help and Preventative Services so that there is at least a 22% reduction in the numbers of children in need and those with a child protection plan, and at least 85% supported through an early help programme achieve a positive outcome.
- Continue to deliver the targets in the 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy, including priorities to improve the vocational, technical and training offer so that there is further improvement in the employability skills of young people and in the number taking up and successfully completing apprenticeships (85%), resulting in a further reduction in youth unemployment to no more than 2.5% by summer 2016.
- Deliver 7800 apprenticeships for 16-24 year olds, including 3500 for 16-18 year olds and ensure at least 85% successfully complete their apprenticeships.
- Recruit at least 100 apprentices each year to the KCC Apprenticeship Scheme so that by 2016 the numbers will increase to 600.
- Improve the employability skills of 19 year olds, especially in English and mathematics, so that Level 2 attainment at age 19 is well above the national average. By 2016 we expect this to be 87%.
- Improve the outcomes at Level 3 for 19 year olds to 60% by 2016.
- Deliver the NEETs Strategy to ensure there is a significant reduction in NEET numbers and Not Known figures for Children in Care, children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, young offenders, pupils attending PRUs and alternative provision and other vulnerable groups such as young carers and those who are home educated.
- Deliver the SEND changes required by the Children and Families Act 2014 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.
- Reduce out of county SEND placements to no more than 495 and ensure 90% of new Education, Health and Care Plans are completed within 20 weeks.
- Following feedback from Headteachers, improve the new system of high needs funding for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, which proves to be more effective at earlier intervention to improve pupil outcomes.
- Ensure earlier interventions through the LIFT process, outreach support from Special schools and the use of high needs funding has a bigger impact on improving attainment and progress for SEND pupils and on narrowing the achievement gaps between them and other learners.
- 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 the new Health Needs Education Service and improve outcomes for pupils with mental health needs, with good re-integration rates (90%) for pupils back into mainstream schools.
- Deliver phase 2 of the Troubled families programme and ensure it is integrated into the models of family support provided through Early Help, to ensure that high numbers of families are 'turned around', up to 1075 by summer 2016.
- Champion school leadership which is 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.
- Continue to 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. By summer 2016 we expect no more than 6 schools to be inadequate.
- Ensure schools are well supported to continue to implement the new National Curriculum and assessment arrangements, as well as new GCSE and vocational qualifications, and new school performance measures from 2015-16.
- Continue to support and develop more effective school to school support through the Kent Association of Headteachers, and plan the next steps of the Leadership Strategy, so that there are fewer schools requiring improvement and more good leaders are appointed to headships and executive headships.
- Continue to develop and expand Edukent as a successful trading organisation delivering good value support services to schools at competitive cost.
- 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 sponsorship, 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, 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.
- Implement the provisions of the Childcare Bill which provide for an additional entitlement of childcare support for working parents up to 30 hours per week, and ensure that parents are aware of this entitlement so that there is good take up.
- Ensure at least 74% of eligible 2 year olds take up a free childcare place.

- Continue to improve District based working so that more decision making and coordination of services for children and young people happens locally through local boards and forums, school collaborations and better integrated working between education, early help, 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 2016, and ensure that improved parental choice and planned improvements for September 2017 are on target.
- Deliver 22 new forms of entry in Primary and Secondary schools, 218 Reception places and 60 Year 2 places in Primary schools, together with 90 Year 7 places in Secondary schools by September 2016.
- Ensure that at least 85% of parents achieve their first preference for their children when they start Primary and Secondary school.
- 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.
- Develop the SEN School Transport Pilot involving three special schools who are making local arrangements to provide transport for their pupils, to expand the model to other Special schools where these arrangements better meet the needs of pupils and are more efficient and cost effective, leading to necessary reduction in the cost of SEN transport.
- Ensure the Community Learning and Skills Service is developed as a fully commissioned service within KCC, delivering the improved outcomes in the Business Plan for adults and young people, especially the more vulnerable.

To ensure all pupils meet their full potential, working in close partnership with schools and settings, we aim to achieve the following by 2019:

- 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 73% in 2015 to 87% in 2019.
- The FSM achievement gap in the EYFS has widened since 2014 (12%) to 15% in 2015. Work will be done to reduce this gap to 10% in 2016 and to 7% by 2019.
- We aim to ensure 74% of eligible two year olds will be taking up a free nursery place by 2016 and this should rise to 92% by 2019.
- Key Stage 1 attainment will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and improve in Reading to 86% in 2016 and 92% by 2019; in Writing to 76% in 2016 and 82% by 2019; and in Maths to 86% in 2016 to 92% by 2019.
- Key Stage 2 attainment at Level 4 will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours, above the national average and pupils achieving age related expectations will improve to 82% in 2016 and to 88% by 2019.
- Key Stage 4 attainment will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and improve to at least 60% of pupils achieving good GCSE grades in English and maths and achieving the expected standard in Attainment and Progress 8 in 2016 and to 66% by 2019.
- The FSM achievement gaps at Key Stages 2 and 4 will continue to reduce from the 2015 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 15% by 2016 and to 12% by 2019. In Key Stage 4 the FSM gap will reduce to 30% in 2016 and 25% by 2019.
- There will be an increase in the number of good schools, with at least 92% of all schools judged as good or outstanding by 2019. In 2016 we expect to see this increase to at least 86%.
- We will reduce the number of KCC schools in an Ofsted category of concern year by year, so that by 2019 no schools will be in this category. In 2016 we aim to ensure there will be no more than 6 schools in an Ofsted category.
- We will increase the percentage of good and better early years settings from 93% in 2016 to 96% in 2019.
- By 2016, 90% 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 2019.
- By 2016, we will reduce the number of Kent's children who are placed in independent and non-maintained Special school placements to 495, from 526 in 2015. 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 no more than 250 by 2019.

- We will increase the number of Special School places by 426 to a total of 3,859 by 2019, which represents a 12% increase from the 2015 total capacity.
- We will continue to help more parents access a preferred school place for their child by increasing the number of online admission applications to 96% by 2019 and ensure the number of parents who get their first preference Secondary school remains above 80% and first preference Primary school to above 86% by 2019.
- We will maintain 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 2020.
- As part of the Commissioning Plan, by the school year 2018-19, we will expand school places by 94 permanent forms of entry, with 248 additional Reception places, 60 places in Year 2 Primary schools and 90 Year 7 places in Secondary 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 2019:

- By 2016, we aim to ensure there will be no more than 3.5% 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 2019.
- 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 2016 we expect this to be 87% and 93% of the cohort will achieve a Level 2 qualification by 2019.
- We aim to improve the outcomes at Level 3 for 19 year olds to 60% by 2016 and to at least 75% by 2019.
- 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 20% by 2016 and to 16% by 2019.
- The uptake of Level 2 and 3 vocational training in skills shortage areas will increase to 25,600 young people by 2016 and 27,000 by 2019.

- The KCC Apprenticeship Scheme will continue to recruit at least 100 apprentices each year, totalling 900 successful apprenticeships delivered by KCC by 2019. By 2016 the numbers will increase to 600.
- By 2016 we aim to ensure the number of apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds increases to 3,500, and for success rates for completion to be at least 85%. By 2019 we expect the number to increase to 4,500 and success rates to be in excess of 92%.
- By 2019 we aim to ensure at least 80% of schools will have provided one or more apprenticeships which have been taken up successfully by young people. By 2016, we expect at least 50% 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 2019 youth unemployment will be no more than 1.8%, from 2.5% in 2016.
- By 2019, the number of assisted employment opportunities for vulnerable learners with learning difficulties and disabilities will increase to 165 and by 2016 at least 25 young people will be supported in this way.
- Post 16 attainment in English and mathematics will improve so that by 2019 we aim to ensure at least 65% of 16 year olds that do not attain Level 2 in Year 11 will achieve the qualification by age 17. By 2016 we expect this will be 49%.
- By 2019, 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 30% by 2016.
- By 2019, 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 25% by 2016.
- We expect to see an improvement in A Level performance in Kent to above the national average on all measures by 2019. The percentage of students achieving 2 or more A' level grades should improve to 98% and 3 or more A' level grades A to E to 82%.
- Increase the average point score per student for vocational qualifications to 680
- 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 2019. In 2016 we expect the average point score per student to be at least 680 and this should improve to 695 by 2019.
- 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.

Through Early Help and Preventative Services we aim to ensure we achieve the following and by 2019 we will:

- Have delivered the Early Help Three Year Plan, so that there is at least a 30% reduction in the numbers of children in need and those with a child protection plan, and at least 88% supported through an early help programme achieve a positive outcome.
- Reduce the rate of re-referrals to either Early Help or Specialist Children's Services within 12 months of case closure by EHPS down to below 20% by 2019.
- Work with SCS to increase the number of step-downs to EHPS up to 28% by 2019.
- Increase the percentage of good and better Children's Centres from 80% in 2016 to 100% by 2019, and we will ensure at least 80% of needy families engage with and benefit from support by Children's Centres by 2019.
- Reduce permanent exclusions from no more than 64 in 2016 to 20 exclusions or less by 2019.
- Work with schools on behaviour management strategies and monitoring to reduce the levels of fixed term exclusions down to 1050 in Primary schools and 5000 in Secondary schools by 2019.
- Reduce the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system from no more than 540 young people in 2016 to 480 by 2019, and the rate of re-offending will be no more than 26%.
- Work with services across Education and Young People's Services to increase the education participation levels of young offenders, to ensure that by 2019, 86% of those who are statutory school age receive full time education and 85% of those aged 16 and 17 are in education or employment with training.
- Ensure appropriate levels of early help support are given to children, young people and their families in order to reduce the number of notifications leading to assessment down to 60% by 2019.
- Increase the timeliness of response for targeted casework to ensure that 95% of plans are in place within 4 weeks of notification by 2019.
- Work in an integrated way with all services involved with vulnerable young people to reduce the percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET down to 1% by 2019.
- Improve the attendance of children and young people by supporting the reduction of persistent absence and focusing on the new 10% threshold for persistent absence. The percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from Primary schools is currently 8.5%. This will reduce to 6% by 2019. Similarly, the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from Secondary schools currently stands at 14% and this will reduce to 9% by 2019.

- Ensure 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.
- Deliver the Troubled Families Programme to ensure that high numbers of families are 'turned around', up to 7000 by 2019 out of the target cohort of 8,960 families.

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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:

- Building on the work of the Kent Association of Headteachers and the development of collaborative approaches to school to school support, to achieve even better rates of improvement in Kent and a more sustainable model of school improvement.
- Developing the proposals to create a charitable trust arrangement for all Education and Young People's Services in Kent, jointly governed by schools, KCC and other stakeholders, to secure the services and joint ways of working that schools need for the future and KCC needs to discharge its statutory responsibilities.
- Being a better commissioner of services, especially in Early Help and in other 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, Early Help and education, health, social care services and other partners.
- Providing high quality performance data at school, district and county levels to monitor and evaluate what we do, challenge under-performance and produce more insightful analysis and intelligence gathering to sharply focus improvement and identify and learn from rapidly improving trends.
- Focusing on improvement and innovation in the curriculum and in teaching and learning so that we address more effectively the challenges we face in delivering more effective transitions, progression pathways and qualification routes for all young people to age 18.
- Working in effective partnership with schools, FE colleges, universities, training providers and employers to secure the best vocational and technical pathways for young people into employment and higher learning.
- Recognising the best early years providers, schools, teachers and school leaders and using them effectively across the system as System Leaders to develop and disseminate best practice and improve the quality of schools.
- Supporting early years collaborations to deliver a faster rate of improvement and developing similar approaches to system leadership in the Early Years.
- Supporting families' enhanced involvement in their children's learning, especially in the earliest years, by providing more effective parenting and family support through Early Help and the Early Years services.
- 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 Regional Schools Commissioner, developing more Kent schools as multi-academy trusts to sponsor new schools and support the improvement of under-performing schools.
- 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 to secure improvement where necessary.
- Ensuring that education, health and social care work closely together and commission services jointly to bring about the necessary improvements in the quality of provision for vulnerable children and young people, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities, from the early years of childhood to early adulthood.
- Developing ways to give parents, 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, especially in the way we deliver our SEND and Early Help services.
- 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, more effective system leadership and more sustainable models of school organisation and governance. It is a key role for the local authority to support and facilitate this way of working and we will continue to give this priority.

For children and young people to thrive they need good parenting, a good school where their needs are met, and they need to develop emotional wellbeing and resilience. Our over-arching priorities are to continue to ensure there are more good schools in Kent,

families and parents who need additional support receive it through Early Help and to target more resources to supporting children's and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

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 Learning , Employment and Skills Strategy, the Adult Skills Strategy, the NEETs Strategy, the Early Years and Childcare Strategy, the SEND Strategy, the Vulnerable Learners' Strategy, the Education Commissioning Plan, the Prospectus Strategy and One Three 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.

Patrick Leeson
Corporate Director
Education and Young People's Services

Education and Young People's Services Performance Management
Vision and Priorities for Improvement – Performance and Targets

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