

# Grammar schools and social mobility

## Select Committee

27 May 2016 DRAFT

For Select Committee Meeting on 6 June 2016



DRAFT

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# Foreword

Kent's mixed economy of secondary schools, of which grammar schools comprise a third, offer real choice for parents seeking a school that suits their child's abilities and needs. We recognise that schools of various types in the county, including grammar schools, high schools, faith schools, comprehensive schools and special schools provide an excellent education for their pupils.

The remit of this Committee focuses on what can be done to improve the representation of children from disadvantaged backgrounds in grammar schools, so that they can benefit from a selective education if it is suitable for them. We have broadened the definition of "disadvantaged" children to include not just those not entitled to Free School Meals, but also in receipt of the Pupil Premium, for which children who have been registered for Free School Meals at any point in the last six years are eligible. That just 57% of high ability children in receipt of Pupil Premium in Kent attend a grammar school, compared to 79% of similar ability children not eligible for Pupil Premium, highlights that concerted action needs to be taken to ensure that more academically able children from poorer backgrounds have the same access to selective education as their more affluent peers.

It is clear from the evidence taken by the Committee and from research elsewhere that nationally, white working class children are falling behind compared to other groups. It is essential that everything possible is done to raise aspirations and provide support to families in areas of deprivation so that their children benefit from an education that is best suited to their abilities, whether it be a grammar or non-selective education.

The educational landscape is changing rapidly with an increasing number of schools becoming academies. As such, the recommendations from this report are just that – none of them can be imposed on schools. We believe, however, that Kent County Council (KCC), primary and grammar schools have a moral responsibility to work together to ensure that the most academically able children from disadvantaged backgrounds access grammar schools in the same way other children do. We saw evidence of excellent partnership working between primary and grammar schools to support the most academically able pupils from poorer backgrounds. We would like to see this approach being consistently applied across the county, so that no child is denied an education that is best suited for their talents and abilities.

Social mobility takes a variety of forms and it would be wrong to say that this can only take place through a grammar school education. For example, somebody born into a family dependent on benefits, who takes a vocational course at college and goes on to create a successful plumbing business employing staff, is as socially mobile as a child registered for Free School Meals who attends grammar school and goes on to university. Non-selective schools in Kent achieve

outstanding outcomes for their pupils through academic pathways, apprenticeships and preparation for employment opportunities. It is clear, however, that more academically able children from poorer backgrounds and those in care are significantly under-represented in grammar schools. The Select Committee seeks to provide some practical recommendations to address the balance in the county's selective system.



*Jenny Whittle,  
Chairman of the grammar schools and  
social mobility Select Committee*

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# Executive Summary

## Membership

The Select Committee consists of nine elected Members of Kent County Council; 5 representing the Conservative Party, 2 representing the UK Independence Party, 1 representing the Labour Party and 1 representing the Liberal Democrat Party.

		
Mrs Jenny Whittle (chair) Conservative Maidstone Rural East	Mr Andrew Bowles Conservative Swale East	Mr Lee Burgess UK Independence Party Swale Central
		
Mr Roger Truelove Labour Swale Central	Mr Eric Hotson Conservative Maidstone Rural South	Mr Roger Latchford, OBE UK Independence Party Birchington and Villages, Thanet
		
Mr Alan Marsh Conservative Herne and Sturry, Canterbury	Mrs Paulina Stockell Conservative Maidstone Rural West	Mr Martin Vye Liberal Democrat Canterbury City South West

# Terms of Reference

The Committee was established under the rules which apply to Select Committees that are set out in Appendix 4 Part 4 of The Constitution of Kent County Council.

This report considers evidence from young people, parents, primary and grammar school Headteachers, education professionals and policy experts, and makes a number of recommendations which the Committee hope, when implemented in coordination with schools and partners, will ensure that young people who would thrive within a grammar school setting, irrespective of class or background, get the necessary support to access a grammar school place.

The environment of education is changing dramatically, however, through close partnership with schools we believe that we can collectively make a real difference to ensuring that children from disadvantaged backgrounds gain the same opportunities as their peers.

The Select Committee formally agreed its Terms of Reference on the 16 December 2015, which read as follows:

1. To determine whether disadvantaged children and their parents face barriers in accessing grammar school education.
2. To identify and better understand the drivers that underpin any such barriers
3. To consider and examine the effects of what KCC and partners are already doing to ensure fair access to grammar schools for all.
4. To consider what KCC and partners can do in order to further improve access to grammar schools for disadvantaged children.
5. For the Select Committee to make recommendations after having gathered evidence throughout the review.

Appendix A provides further information on the key lines of enquiry of the Select Committee.



Although the Committee originally defined the Terms of Reference to focus on children claiming or eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and children in care; after initial evidence sessions the Committee widened their scope to include children supported by the Pupil Premium as this includes those who move in and out of free school meal eligibility, children in care and service children<sup>1</sup>.

While much of the data provided to the Committee was around the current numbers of FSM claiming children and families, within this report the recommendations made by the Committee are, unless otherwise stated, also applicable to children supported by the Pupil Premium.

Within Kent the FSM Ever cohort (those children who are either currently eligible or have been eligible within the last 6 years for Free School Meals) makes up approximately 98% of the Pupil Premium cohort, therefore within this report the terms FSM Ever and Pupil Premium are used interchangeably.

#### A note on Free School Meals and Pupil Premium as an indicator

Free School Meal (FSM) is frequently used in educational research and policy. Parents may be able to claim Free School Meals (FSMs) if their family income (gross) is under £16,190, or if they claim income support or other income based allowance.

FSM is a readily understood and available indicator, government and local statistics are updated annually with regards to this indicator. However it does have a number of shortcomings which should be noted.

- It is likely to under-report numbers (many eligible parents choose not to apply and therefore will not be included in the statistics);
- Families whose income is just above the threshold will not be included in statistics;
- It measures income only and does not take account of other aspects of deprivation;
- It will not show the changing eligibility of individual children<sup>2</sup>;

The Free School Meal Ever measure includes children who have at some point qualified for FSM over the last 6 years. Where possible the Committee have sought to use this measure to negate some of the shortcomings noted above.

<sup>1</sup> A definition of Pupil Premium is available in the Definitions section of this document

<sup>2</sup> Northern Ireland Assembly: Research and Library Service (Nov 2010) Free School Meal Entitlement as a measure of deprivation

## Key Facts

- Nationally in 2015, 164,000 children attended grammar school in England. Of this number, 33,824 attended Kent grammar schools.
- There are 163 grammar schools in England.
- There are 98 secondary schools in Kent, of which 32 are selective grammar schools.
- 18,797 children applied for a place at secondary school in Kent in 2016. Of this number, 4,876 were offered a Kent grammar school place on National Offer Day (1 March 2016).
- Overall, 2.8% of pupils attending grammar schools in Kent are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), compared to 13.4% in non-selective Kent secondary schools.
- Overall, 6.3% of pupils attending grammar schools in Kent are in receipt of Pupil Premium, compared to 26.9% in non-selective Kent secondary schools<sup>3</sup>.
- For the Year 7 intake in 2015, 3.4% and 8.3% of grammar pupils in Kent were eligible for FSM and registered for Pupil Premium respectively.
- Of the 33,824 pupils attending Kent grammar schools in 2015, 40 were children in care (CIC), which is 0.1%. This compares to 601 (0.9%) children in care in Kent's non-selective schools (64,453).
- Those who are currently claiming FSM account for 7% of entries into the Kent Test and 3% of passes.
- Of the children who achieve Level 5+ in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2 in 2015 51.4% of children claiming FSM are attending grammar school compared to 72.7% of non-claiming children.
- Of the children who achieve Level 5+ in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2 in 2015 57.4% of FSM Ever children are attending grammar school compared to 78.7% of non-claiming children.
- Those FSM Ever children who do get into grammar school perform almost as well in their GCSE exams as others, with a gap in attainment of 3.5%.
- For those in grammar schools 79% of young people claiming FSM stay on to year 12 compared to 91% of those not claiming. Most of those leaving chose to attend college.

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<sup>3</sup> As at October 2015

# Recommendations

## Preface to Recommendations

There is considerable evidence that there is less social mobility in the UK now than was the case some years ago. This means that the circumstances of a child's birth and the family's social and economic conditions determine more than ever the child's success in the education system and the labour market.

The improvement of social mobility is a priority for the County Council. Lack of social mobility is damaging for the country's economic growth and wealth creation, and represents a waste of talent which the country cannot afford. For individual children and young people who live in poor and disadvantaged circumstances, the lack of sufficient opportunity to make good progress in the education system, to have greater fluidity in the pathways that they can take and to have the chance to become more upwardly mobile, is a double disadvantage. One of the biggest challenges for the education system, selective and non-selective, is to change this.

The school system cannot solve this lack of social mobility on its own, but it can contribute a great deal to improving life chances for young people. Schools matter and make a difference, and having access to a good school and good teaching matters even more. What matters most is that schools are inclusive, achieving good and outstanding outcomes for all pupils.

Children on Free School Meals are half as likely to gain five GCSEs as their better off peers, and are significantly less likely to attend university<sup>4</sup>. To promote social mobility it is critical that children and young people who live in poor and disadvantaged circumstances get the same educational opportunities as their peers, and within Kent this includes fair access to our grammar school system.

This report forms part of the Council's ongoing broader endeavour to increase social mobility, which affects many in our society. However, for the purposes of this Committee a particular focus is placed on ensuring children in receipt of Pupil Premium support are able to take advantage of a grammar school education, where this is most appropriate for them, and the opportunities this may provide.

Overall, 2.8% of pupils attending grammar schools in Kent claim Free School Meals (FSM), compared to 13.4% in non-selective secondary schools<sup>5</sup>. For pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium, the figures are 6.3% and 26.9% respectively. The number of children in care who attend grammar schools is 0.1% compared to 0.9% in non-selective secondary schools. The Committee believes

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<sup>4</sup> House of Commons Library (July 2015), 'Support for Disadvantaged Children in Education in England'

<sup>5</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

that this proportion is too low and action is required to ensure that children from low income backgrounds and children in care have the same chances and opportunities to access the grammar school system as those from more affluent backgrounds. For this to happen, a number of key barriers for low income families must be addressed in order to increase their chances of securing a grammar school place.

Speaking at the Grammar School Heads Association National Conference in June 2014, James Turner of The Sutton Trust observed<sup>6</sup>:

*"The debate about grammar school admissions is a controversial one, touching on both the rights and the wrongs of the 11-plus and so-called 'social engineering' in education admissions. But there is much to be gained in tackling the issue of widening access to grammar schools. [...] These schools really can provide a golden ticket of opportunity to the pupils that attend them. There's a long way to go in ensuring that opportunity is open to all, regardless of background, but things are heading in the right direction."*

KCC wishes to take a pragmatic approach with schools to open up grammar schools further to children from low income backgrounds. To improve the life chances of these children, grammar schools and primary schools need to accelerate work to break down the barriers that this Committee found to access grammar education.

## **Recommendations**

### Viewing grammar school as a potential option

**Recommendation 1:** As the champion of pupils, parents and families, KCC will work with all primary school Headteachers to identify those most academically able pupils and discuss with parents the opportunity to put their child forward for the Kent Test.

**Recommendation 2:** Grammar schools should engage fully with parents and families to address misconceptions and promote the offer grammar schools can make to all students irrespective of background.

**Recommendation 3:** KCC should target all children eligible for Pupil Premium and children from areas of low registration for the Kent Test, providing detailed information on the Kent Test process and their transport entitlements.

### Securing a grammar school place

**Recommendation 4:** All grammar schools should provide more outreach to primary schools including after school classes in English and mathematics, mentoring and preparation for the Kent Test for primary aged pupils in Yrs 4-6 including those most academically able children in receipt of the Pupil Premium.

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<sup>6</sup> Sutton Trust (press release) (2014) 'Sutton Trust welcomes commitment to widen access to grammar schools'

**Recommendation 5:** Urge all Primary Headteachers to utilise Headteacher Assessment Panels within the Kent Test process to advocate for those most academically able children supported by the Pupil Premium.

**Recommendation 6:** Identify a dedicated education professional in the Virtual School Kent to provide support and guidance to foster carers on appropriate secondary school destinations, as well as support through the secondary schools appeal process for children in their care, to be tracked through their Personal Education Plan.

**Recommendation 7:** Publish information on Pupil Premium spend for children in care on the Virtual School Kent website, including support for pupils from Key Stage 1 through to Key Stage 2, and detail on the type of secondary school destinations for these children.

**Recommendation 8:** KCC to monitor and challenge the proportion of pupils supported by the Pupil Premium who go on to grammar school.

**Recommendation 9:** KCC School Improvement Advisers to work with Primary Headteachers to consider how the most academically able pupils supported by the Pupil Premium are being identified and assisted to progress.

**Recommendation 10:** If not already in place, schools should follow best practice and nominate a lead governor for the Pupil Premium and how children in receipt of this are being supported to apply for the school most appropriate for them.

#### Removing financial barriers to grammar schools

**Recommendation 11:** Urge all grammar schools to use multiple uniform providers to minimise costs and subsidise/cover the costs of schools trips and other expenses for pupils from low income families to ensure these are not prohibitive factors to children applying for or securing a grammar school place.

Due to the severe constraints on local government finances, the decision was taken to remove free transport for pupils attending their nearest appropriate secondary school if located more than three miles away. This Committee would like to see this entitlement reinstated; however, recognising the continuing, and ever more severe, constraints on the Council's finances, we make the following interim recommendations;

**Recommendation 12:** KCC to extend the existing entitlement for children on Free School Meals to free school transport to their nearest appropriate school to all children in receipt of Pupil Premium;

**Recommendation 13:** KCC should raise the low income threshold to £21k to enable pupils from low income families but not entitled to Free School Meals to access free transport to their nearest appropriate secondary school<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> The Committee has been advised the estimated cost for recommendation 13 is approx. £500k.

**Recommendation 14:** KCC to create a schools focused supplementary transport bursary, that would enable grammar schools and other types of schools where appropriate, to provide bespoke transport solutions especially for children from rural areas without bus services to enable better access to grammar schools<sup>8</sup>.

Increasing fair access to grammar schools

**Recommendation 15:** To invite grammar schools to fully consider the disadvantage children eligible for Pupil Premium support face and take action within their oversubscription admissions criteria. Where this fails to happen we will expect KCC to challenge the determined admissions arrangements.

**Recommendation 16:** Urge all “super selective” grammar schools to allocate a number of places for pupils registered in that academic year for Pupil Premium support and who achieve an appropriate combined test score in the Kent Test. We would also invite these schools to review the impact of “super selection” on social mobility in their areas.

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<sup>8</sup> The Committee has been advised the cost for delivering recommendation 14 is dependent on the design of the bursary.





# Introduction

At the end of 2015 the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission published a report examining the position of social mobility within the UK. The Commission found that Britain has lower social mobility levels than most comparable countries and income inequality has increased significantly since 1979<sup>9</sup>. The Commission also found that those who claim free school meals are only half as likely to get five good GCSEs as their better off peers with fewer than one in six getting two or more A levels.

Children supported by the Pupil Premium are significantly less likely to attend university<sup>10</sup>. The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission found that there is a social divide between young people who go onto university and those who do not with non-graduates, who tend to come from low income backgrounds ending up in low-progression careers<sup>11</sup>. The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills reports a 17% gap between those who claim FSMs and those who do not who go on to Higher Education nationally. The report suggests that independent schools and state selective schools have a much higher percentage of children accessing the most selective higher education institutions than non-selective state schools<sup>12</sup>.

Unsurprisingly this translates to a differential in income levels in later life, with more than two-thirds of the job vacancies in elite legal and city firms being filled by university graduates who have been educated in private or grammar schools<sup>13</sup>. This is supported by recent Sutton Trust research which found that 'elite' professions including top officers within the military, top doctors, senior civil servants, journalism, the music industry, law, film and business were professions which (at the higher pay grades) were dominated by those who had either been educated privately or within grammar schools<sup>14</sup>.

If this is the case, what can be done? According to an article entitled 'Why we need open access' by James Turner<sup>15</sup>, we need to work with the grain of the education system to improve the chances of those from low income homes to provide better educational opportunities:

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<sup>9</sup> Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (Dec 2015), State of the Nation 2015: Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain

<sup>10</sup> Morrison (2014), TES ' Rise in poor pupils applying to university, but they still trail behind'

<sup>11</sup> Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (Dec 2015), State of the Nation 2015: Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain

<sup>12</sup> Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (July 2015), Widening Participation in Higher Education

<sup>13</sup> Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (Dec 2015), State of the Nation 2015: Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain

<sup>14</sup> Kirby (2016), The Sutton Trust, 'Leading People 2016: The educational backgrounds of the UK professional elite'

<sup>15</sup> Turner (2014), The Sutton Trust, 'Why we need Open Access'

*"Education has a tendency to wrap itself in ideological arguments which, to a poor parent wanting a good school for their child, must often seem introspective and indulgent".*

Kent County Council (KCC) acknowledges the need to work closer with grammar schools in Kent to open up these schools to more children from low income families by overcoming educational, financial and social barriers and perceptions.

We know that within Kent currently there are not enough children from poorer backgrounds in grammar school, with an average of 2.8% of pupils currently claiming Free School Meals, 6.3% in receipt of Pupil Premium and a very low number of children in care. More needs to be done to ensure that those supported by the Pupil Premium gain grammar school places.

The establishment of the Select Committee on grammar schools and social mobility was announced in County Council on 22 October 2015 by Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council.

*"I hope [the Committee] can be an All Party Group on how we can encourage more parents from impoverished backgrounds to enter their youngsters into the 11 Plus and that primary schools play a major role in making sure that those young people that have the potential for a grammar school education, irrespective of class or background, get all the necessary support to get them in the school that matches their academic ability.... [the Committee will] look at ways of increasing the social mobility into grammar school provision across the county of Kent."*

The Committee believe that all children and young people should be supported and encouraged to fulfil their potential irrespective of their social background be this within a non-selective or grammar school. All schools, selective and non, must work collaboratively to identify and nurture talent, supporting children onto a trajectory to achieve their capabilities and their goals. Effective teachers across all schools are able to use a variety of applied teaching methods and evidence based approaches to meet the needs of individual learners and ensure they can develop the skills to achieve in life, no matter what their background.

Supporting and promoting social mobility through education is not just the role of grammar schools but of all schools and there are excellent examples of primary and non-selective secondary schools working to narrow the gap on achievement and in supporting and growing their higher achieving children. The Committee recognises the essential and excellent provision from non-selective schools, but the focus of this report is on the under-representation of children from poorer backgrounds within Kent's grammar schools. The Committee believes that this under-representation must change and seeks to put forward practical recommendations to improve the life chances of poorer children across the county.

## Background

There are currently 163 grammar schools in England with a total of 164,000 pupils (Oct 2015)<sup>16</sup>. According to data collected by the government these pupils are much less likely to be supported by the Pupil Premium when compared to non-selective schools<sup>17</sup>. These schools also have very low numbers of children who are or have been in care.

The Department for Education classifies ten Local Education Authorities (LEAs) as having a wholly selective system<sup>18</sup> with a further 26 having one or more grammar schools in their local area. Kent as a local authority has the largest number of children in grammar schools; however, according to Institute for Fiscal Studies data in 2013, as a proportion Kent has the fourth largest percentage of their children within a grammar school setting. Within the majority of areas a significant number of pupils attend from outside local authority boundaries. Further information is provided in Appendix B.

Data from the Institute of Fiscal Studies<sup>19</sup> suggests that within each selective authority, around 3% of pupils at grammar schools are claiming FSM. This compares with about 18% at other state-funded schools. This gap increases in London, linked to higher levels of deprivation<sup>20</sup>. In Kent the position is 2.8% and 6.3% of FSM and FSM Ever pupils in grammar schools respectively.

2008 Sutton Trust research found that a national 'raw' gap existed in the numbers of vulnerable children in grammar schools. The report suggests that if access to grammar schools was determined purely by Key Stage 2 (KS2) scores alone grammar schools are enrolling half as many academically able children from disadvantaged backgrounds as they could<sup>21</sup>. In Kent, 51.4% of children claiming Free School Meals and 57.4% of children in receipt of Pupil Premium achieving Level 5+ at KS2 in 2015 went on to grammar school, compared to 78.7% of children not in receipt of Pupil Premium who reached the same level at KS2<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Bolton, (October 2015), Grammar School Statistics, Parliament Commons Library

<sup>17</sup> Bolton, (October 2015), Grammar School Statistics, Parliament Commons Library

<sup>18</sup> Bexley, Buckinghamshire, Kent, Lincolnshire, Medway, Slough, Southend-on-Sea, Torbay, Trafford and Sutton. The definition used is that they have a high concentration of selective schools, as set out in the Education (Grammar School Ballots) Regulations 1998.

<sup>19</sup> Cribb, Sibieta and Vignoles (2013) Institute of Fiscal Studies, 'Entry into Grammar Schools in England'

<sup>20</sup> Bolton, (October 2015) Grammar School Statistics, Parliament Commons Library

<sup>21</sup> Sutton Trust (2008) 'Social selectivity of state schools and the impact of grammars: A summary and discussion of findings from 'Evidence on the effects of selective educational systems' by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University'

<sup>22</sup> KCC Management Information Unit (February and May 2016)

## Kent Context

Kent has 69 non selective secondary schools and 32 grammar schools. Appendix C shows Kent secondary schools by district as of February 2016.

On average 28% of children from any one year will attend grammar school with the majority of other children attending non-selective secondary schools<sup>23</sup>. Within Kent, children claiming FSM make up approximately 12.5% of all school aged children overall, but only 2.8% of the pupils in grammar schools, which compares to 13.4% in non-selective secondary schools<sup>24</sup>. For children in receipt of Pupil Premium, these figures are 6.3% and 26.9% respectively. The proportions vary by year group, and in both selective and non-selective schools the number of young people claiming FSM reduces in Years 12 and 13 (sixth form). The evidence also shows that the attainment gap for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in grammar school compared to other children is very small.

Within Kent there are 11 grammar schools which make use of test scores to prioritise applicants for admission, either ranking all applicants by score, or prioritising those who have scored above a given level. Within the majority of these schools we see a further drop in FSM and FSM Ever pupils (Appendix D), with all 6 schools with the lowest numbers of FSM Ever children in the county being super selective. All but one grammar school operating super selective admissions criteria is situated in the North or West of the County.

Equally the numbers of children in care (CIC) are low in grammar schools with just 28 Kent children in a selective setting, as well as 12 children from other local authorities (0.1%).

In Kent there are currently 81 children in grammar schools with a Statement of Special Needs or an Education, Care and Health plan and 1,367 children who require school action, school action plus or SEN support (but are not statemented) (Appendix E). Common primary needs of children who are in grammar school include social, emotional and mental health needs, specific learning difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys in Canterbury has a Specialist Resourced Provision for boys with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and those with Statements or Education Health Care Plans for high needs support, within a Faculty of Support and Guidance which provides direct support to students to young people with diagnosed learning difficulties.

The school makes specialist provision for students with statements for Autism Spectrum Disorder. An allocation of up to three places per year group is funded by the local authority enabling the school to continue its specialist provision. The Autism Spectrum Disorder provision is fully

<sup>23</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>24</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016



integrated into the Faculty of Support and Guidance.

The school works to ensure that support for all students with learning difficulties is tailored specifically to the individuals need, enabling young people who require additional support to be fully included and integrated within the mainstream educational setting; this is done by proactively differentiating lessons and/or one to one support. Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys works to support young people affected by a large variety of learning needs and their associate difficulties such as anxiety. This holistic approach for those with direct needs has the knock on effect of supporting a wider group of students at differing times. It also means the teachers have a breadth of knowledge about supporting many different learning needs.

This is all done within a highly academic and challenging curriculum.

From the 2011 census and using the same definitions as the Pupil Census (inclusive of all ethnic groups with the exception of White British) Kent has a BME population of 12%. Grammar schools have a higher proportion of ethnic minority pupils than non-selective schools, 20.2% compared to 13.9%<sup>25</sup> (January 2015 school census figures). Appendix E provides further information.

A generation ago, evidence suggested that it was harder for children from minority-ethnic groups to overcome their socio-economic disadvantages. Now it is becoming apparent that nationally a group that requires special attention is the white working class. White children on FSM perform far worse than disadvantaged children from other ethnic groups. Just 28% of white children on FSM get 5 good GCSEs, including English and maths, compared with 38% of mixed race children, 41% of black children and 48% of Asian children<sup>26</sup>. Children of Traveller or Gypsy Roma heritage within Kent have lower attainment levels at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 than all other ethnic categories<sup>27</sup>.

While the performance of disadvantaged white children has risen modestly in recent years, other ethnic groups have soared. According to the Head of Ofsted, Sir Michael Wilshaw, white working class students are often "*invisible*" in disadvantaged rural and coastal areas<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Children who attend school from outside the county are included within these statistics

<sup>26</sup> Wigmore in the New Statesman (7<sup>th</sup> March) 'Why the struggles of the white working class matter – and what can be done'

<sup>27</sup> KCC Management Information Unit Data (2016)

<sup>28</sup> Wigmore in the New Statesman (7<sup>th</sup> March) Why the struggles of the white working class matter – and what can be done



# Methodology

How the review was conducted:

## Desk-top literature review

The initial deliberation of the Select Committee was informed by desk-top literature, in particular by the Sutton Trust report 'Poor Grammar: entry into grammar schools for disadvantaged pupils in England' (2011). The Committee subsequently considered a draft terms of reference which was agreed subject to minor amendments.

A further literature review has been used to support where appropriate the primary evidence given by witnesses.

## Evidence Gathering Hearings

Substantive time of the Select Committee was dedicated to Evidence Gathering Hearings where internal and external witnesses were invited to give evidence. The full details of all the evidence hearings at the public meetings can be accessed via the following link below:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=860&Year=0>

In addition, written evidence was submitted by a number of individuals or organisations.

## Site Visits

The Select Committee made a site visit to a primary school in Thanet to explore issues with parents.

Additionally a focus group was held with children in care and their carers' at Kent County Council offices.



# 1. Viewing grammar school as a secondary school option

**Recommendation 1: As the champion of pupils, parents and families, KCC will work with all primary school Headteachers to identify those most academically able pupils and discuss with parents the opportunity to put their child forward for the Kent Test.**

A significant proportion of FSM Ever pupils who went on to achieve Level 5+ in Reading, Writing and Mathematics at Key Stage 2 in Kent in 2015 did not enter the Kent Test (19.8%)<sup>29</sup>. Witness evidence presented to the Select Committee noted that this may be due to academically able children supported by Pupil Premium, their families, and their schools not viewing grammar school as a potential secondary school option. This is supported by national research including The Sutton Trust who found that more needed to be done to actively encourage high achieving students from low income backgrounds to apply for grammar school<sup>30</sup>.

## Identification and support

It is vital that primary schools nurture their pupils' academic progress to ensure all children make at least expected levels of progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. However, data presented to the Select Committee shows a significant difference between those pupils in receipt of Free School Meals who achieved Level 3+ at Key Stage 1 and go on to achieve Level 5+ in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2 compared to their non-Free School Meal peers.

Primary schools should also specifically identify those most academically able pupils and engage directly with their parents around all secondary school options, including grammar schools, to ensure their child is able to take up any future learning opportunity appropriate for them<sup>31</sup>. Data shows a considerable difference between FSM children who achieved Level 3+ at Key Stage 1 who go on to a grammar school compared to their non-Free School Meal peers.

	2015 Year 7 Pupils	Number of Pupils who achieved L3+ at KS1 and go on to achieve L5+ in Reading, Writing and Maths at KS2	Number of Pupils who achieved L3+ in Reading, Writing and Maths at KS1 who went on to a grammar school
FSM Pupils	2,068	44 (2.1%)	34 (1.6%)
Non FSM Pupils	11,332	1076 (9.5%)	1056 (9.3%)

<sup>29</sup> KCC Management Information Unit (2016) – Number of FSM Ever Pupils Achieving Level 5+ RWM KS2 2015 469, Number not entered in 2014 Kent Test 93, % not entered in 2014 Kent Test 19.8%

<sup>30</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>31</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility, Written Evidence 21<sup>st</sup> Feb

Whilst nationally 28.3% of pupils in mainstream secondary schools were eligible for the deprivation Pupil Premium<sup>3233</sup>, only 15.6% of pupils entered for the Kent Test were FSM Ever (those that are either currently eligible or have been eligible within the last 6 years for Free School Meals)<sup>34</sup>. There is also significant variation in the number of pupils put forward for the Kent Test from each primary school. For example, the percentage of the FSM cohort entered for the Kent Test ranges from 0 to 100%, with subsequent pass rates also ranging from 0 to 100%<sup>35</sup>.

An Ofsted report in 2013 found those schools which spend Pupil Premium funding effectively to improve achievement '*never confused eligibility for the Pupil Premium with low ability, and focused on supporting their disadvantaged pupils to achieve the highest levels*'<sup>36</sup>. The report also found that those schools who had successfully narrowed the gap between pupils supported by the Pupil Premium and their peers often '*ensured that low expectations were not a barrier to achievement by considering the potential of the individual and not settling for more able pupils only reaching expected levels for their age just because they were eligible for the Pupil Premium*'<sup>37</sup>.

The Select Committee has identified a number of examples of best practice within Kent where the key role of primary schools is evident in supporting parents to choose the most appropriate secondary school for their child. These include Kingswood Primary School where the Headteacher meets personally with individual parents to discuss their child's education and encourages those for whom grammar school would be appropriate to take the Kent Test<sup>38</sup> and Pilgrim's Way Primary School, which engages with parents to raise expectations through child/parent activities, offering opportunities for parents to visit the school and see ongoing classes first-hand, and use of their Family Liaison Officer<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> DfE, (2015), Pupil Premium allocations for 2014-2015

<sup>33</sup> Eligibility here refers to the 'Deprivation Pupil Premium' i.e. those children in receipt or who have been in receipt at any point in the past six years, of Free School Meals as opposed to Pupil Premium funding for Looked After Children or Service children.

<sup>34</sup> KCC Management Information Unit (2016)

<sup>35</sup> In the 25 schools where 100% of Free School Meal pupils passed, the size of the FSM cohort was typically small with the average number of FSM pupils entered across these 25 schools being 1 pupil from an average FSM cohort size of 4. (KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>36</sup> Ofsted, (2013), The Pupil Premium: How schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement

<sup>37</sup> Ofsted, (2013), The Pupil Premium: How schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement

<sup>38</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>39</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

## Case Study: Kingswood Primary School

The vision of Kingswood Primary school leaders is that all children can succeed and when children are vulnerable because the support from home is not there, there is an expectation that this is provided within school, e.g. daily reading, practice for a spelling test, etc.

Kingswood Primary school monitors the progress of all pupils academically and socially / emotionally every six weeks. Discussions take place in the form of pupil progress meetings and interventions are decided upon for those who are vulnerable in terms of less than expected progress or unusual behaviour. The pupils who are identified as Pupil Premium are always part of the list of those who are vulnerable, although they don't always receive direct support if they are making at least expected progress.

Pupils' books are moderated termly in year group teams across the collaboration and from this academic year with another local school. Pupils can be identified here as making good progress or needing additional support. This is discussed within the team of teachers.

The culture of the school is one of high expectations. The leadership team steered by the executive Headteacher ensures that there are high expectations for all children from all backgrounds. All pupils are set challenging targets, with interventions used as necessary to ensure progress is made by all. Interventions are closely targeted at pupils' next steps, and run for a maximum of six weeks. The success of these interventions is measured by the progress of the pupils. Where possible parents are encouraged to support the work at home, where this is not possible a member of the support staff will pick up this work within school.

Activities and interventions Kingswood Primary school have embedded to support vulnerable learners and ensure they reach their potential include one to one tuition, small group boosters, and funding for trips and extra-curricular activities.

Kingswood has benefitted over the last two years from working with other schools including providing and being in receipt of school to school support. This has provided collaboration, idea sharing, moderation, leadership and improved economies of scale.

Kingswood Primary school has seen improving outcomes for vulnerable children, and all children, especially at Key Stage 2 where historically data had been weaker. The school has successfully managed to close the gap for vulnerable pupils at Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.<sup>40</sup>

Many primary schools across Kent and their school leadership teams are creating similar school cultures of high expectations. It is crucial that all schools learn from this best practice and support

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<sup>40</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016 Written evidence Emma Hickling



those most academically able pupils who are supported by the Pupil Premium to achieve their full potential and consider all options for their future learning.

The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission's report, 'Cracking the Code', (November 2014) found that whilst an important step in improving pupils' life chances was building a culture of high expectations within a school, some teachers' expectations of students from disadvantaged backgrounds are too low<sup>41</sup> which can impact on future learning opportunities.

## Aspiration

A number of witnesses<sup>4243</sup> commented that the setting of high expectations should be combined with a focus on pupil aspirations. This is particularly noteworthy given the correlation between areas of the county where there is a high proportion of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals and areas with low employment. Appendices F and G illustrate this relationship which can further disadvantage pupils supported by the Pupil Premium.

Headteachers of both primary and grammar schools commented that this complex picture created additional barriers for pupils supported by Pupil Premium viewing grammar school as a potential option for secondary education. These include a lack of aspiration, an inability to take advantage of extra-curricular activities and a shortage of visible evidence of the benefits of a grammar school education.

*'Poverty of expectation and aspiration, looking inwardly rather than looking outwards, these all create barriers to getting into grammar school.'*<sup>44</sup>

Schools across all phases have an important role within their communities and can be a pivotal influence in shifting pupils' outlooks, raising their confidence and encouraging them to consider grammar school as an option if appropriate.

*'The most important thing we need to do is to empower the child to believe "I can do it"'*<sup>45</sup>

A number of witnesses provided examples of how they had built aspiration into the culture of their schools including Upton Junior School in Broadstairs, which focuses in their reception area on their pupils' hopes and dreams, regularly emphasised values in their discussions with pupils and

<sup>41</sup> Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, (Nov 2014), Cracking the code

<sup>42</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>43</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>44</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Evidence Session (Matthew Bartlett) 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>45</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Evidence Session (Alice Witty) 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016



reinforced with parents the importance of education in facilitating good life choices and equipping the students for their future careers<sup>46</sup>.

Raising aspirations of children from disadvantaged backgrounds must be a priority for all schools to ensure that pupils are able to take advantage of opportunities which otherwise they may not have considered. Disadvantage should not be a pre-determinate of life chances and it is vital for all primary schools to engage with pupils and their families about the range of destinations available to them.

## Parental perceptions of grammar schools

**Recommendation 2: Grammar schools should engage fully with parents and families to address misconceptions and promote the offer grammar schools can make to all students irrespective of background.**

**Recommendation 3: KCC should target all children eligible for Pupil Premium and children from areas of low registration for the Kent Test, providing detailed information on the Kent Test process and their transport entitlements.**

The Select Committee heard evidence from a range of witnesses including parents of primary age children, primary and grammar school Headteachers and education professionals and policy experts who all reiterated the importance of parental engagement with their child's learning and encouragement towards the most appropriate education setting. However, interviews conducted with a number of grammar school Headteachers, as part of The Sutton Trust research, suggested that parents from disadvantaged backgrounds can be reluctant to encourage their children towards a grammar school education<sup>47</sup>. This reluctance was attributed by Select Committee witnesses in part to misconceptions of grammar school environments and limited access to accurate information on suitable secondary school options for their children.

Perceptions of grammar schools which were often held by parents and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds were highlighted by Kent primary and grammar school Headteachers as including an image of grammar schools as places for middle-class students who can comprehend Latin and afford frequent and costly school trips<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>46</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>47</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>48</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

*'Parents can have an 'under-the-oak-tree' impression of grammar schools, likening them to expensive independent schools'<sup>49</sup>.*

This finding is supported by national research that parents from disadvantaged backgrounds often associate grammar schools with 'tradition, middle class values and elitism' which can create a 'social rather than educational barrier'<sup>50</sup>.

Further evidence also suggested that parents' own poor experiences of education can create a disinclination to engage<sup>51</sup>.

*'Some pupils may have parents who don't see grammars as an option or don't remember grammars fondly. They might not see grammar schools as part of their world'<sup>52</sup>.*

Parents and Headteachers of primary and grammar schools spoken to by the Select Committee commented on the link between misconceptions and a lack of available information around the realities of grammar schools. This is supported by The Sutton Trust which concluded that parents in disadvantaged families were often less knowledgeable of the grammar school system and 'therefore placed less value on what they could offer'<sup>53</sup>.

*'The aspirations of parents, who tend to want their children to follow where they went to school, and their knowledge of the system are barriers'<sup>54</sup>.*

Evidence from Headteachers locally and nationally suggests the lack of knowledge of grammar schools and their potential benefits means parents from disadvantaged backgrounds feel their children are excluded from a grammar school education. This can result in parents and pupils not considering grammar school as an option<sup>55</sup>. This is a particular issue, as Kent Headteachers amongst other witness commented on the important influence parents can have on their child's secondary school destination<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Evidence Session (John Harrison) 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>50</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>51</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>52</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Evidence Session (Matthew Bartlett) 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>53</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>54</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Evidence Session (Emma Hickling) 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>55</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>56</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>57</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>58</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

*'Parental choice is a key driver of a pupil's destination'<sup>59</sup>*

Therefore action is required to engage early with parents, illustrate the value of a grammar school education and encourage parents from disadvantaged backgrounds with academically able children to consider sending their children to grammar school.

Research nationally has highlighted the important role primary schools play in addressing these actions<sup>60</sup>. As evidence of this, the Select Committee heard from a number of primary and grammar schools who are directly working with parents to engage them in their child's learning and ensure they are knowledgeable on the full range of options available to their child. For example, parents are invited to the Dover Grammar School for Girls enrichment programme award ceremony for their Year 4 children on completion of the programme and are able to view the work undertaken<sup>61</sup>.

This is similar to national developments as highlighted by NatCen research which showed grammar schools across the country had introduced a variety of activities to increase engagement with their local communities. These initiatives included 'bridging the gap' between the grammar school and local community by hosting events designed to bring the community together and 'dispelling the myth' by enabling primary-age pupils to experience grammar schools first-hand<sup>62</sup>.

*'The aspirations of parents is an issue. Parents often don't seem to grasp the opportunities open to their children.'* – Denis Ramplin, The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham

The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham provide an example of this in action where they have a number of initiatives underway to encourage participation including primary school roadshows, where children and parents are engaged in activities and provided with information on their grammar schools and the process for applying to take the 11+ Test.

*'The biggest work is getting parents into the school and breaking down historic grammar school myths'* – Matthew Bartlett, Grammar school Headteacher

However the National Audit Office found that nationally whilst 91% of school leaders acknowledged the importance of parental involvement to improve disadvantaged pupils' attainment, a much lower percentage - 57% of schools - had implemented interventions to address this<sup>63</sup>.

It is vital, therefore, that the good practice which is happening nationally and across Kent schools is shared and all schools use tools available to them, including Pupil Premium funding, to develop

<sup>59</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Evidence Session (Patrick Leeson) 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>60</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>61</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>62</sup> NatCen, (2013), Access to Grammar Schools

<sup>63</sup> National Audit Office, (June 2015), Funding for Disadvantaged Pupils

their engagement work with parents. This recommendation is supported by The Sutton Trust which endorsed grammar schools actively encouraging parents of Pupil Premium pupils who are likely to pass the 11+ to apply. More informative engagement with parents would also respond to concerns the Select Committee heard from parents that their children may struggle with the academic pressures of a grammar school or be socially 'out of their depth' at a grammar school<sup>64</sup>.

Addressing perceptions and encouraging all parents of children who may benefit from a grammar school education, no matter their economic background, is particularly important as evidence shows that children who are supported by their parents do better at school<sup>65</sup>. Good parental engagement by schools can also have wider educational benefits including better attendance, behaviour and motivation for learning<sup>66</sup>.

Early help workers can also be a valuable resource in supporting primary schools with their engagement of families and in promoting parents' involvement in their child's learning. KCC's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019 recognises the priority for Early Help to work with parents to develop positive behaviours and attitudes towards school and high aspirations for the future. This additional support can include advice to all phases of schools and delivery of parenting programmes to ensure every child is able to maximise their potential<sup>67</sup>.

The Select Committee were encouraged by the grammar school Headteachers spoken to who acknowledged the importance of outreach and engagement, supported further efforts to engage with parents and families and continue to address the misconceptions of grammar schools and promote the offer grammar schools can make to all students<sup>68</sup>. It is vital for this work to be built upon and all grammar schools to adopt similar best practice approaches to engage parents.

## Grammar and primary school collaboration

The Select Committee has heard evidence that the level of engagement schools have with parents and the degree to which they encourage parents and pupils toward the full range of secondary options available often depends on the culture of the particular school<sup>69</sup>. This concern was acknowledged by The Sutton Trust who questioned the extent to which some primary schools encouraged the most academically able pupils from low income backgrounds to apply to a grammar school<sup>70</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>65</sup> KCC (2016), Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

<sup>66</sup> KCC (2016), Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

<sup>67</sup> KCC (2016), Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

<sup>68</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>69</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>70</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

National research found that primary school disagreement with selective education in general can limit the amount of information they provide to parents and pupils who may benefit from a grammar school education and that this may 'create a barrier for disadvantaged pupils who require additional support from this primary school'<sup>71</sup>.

*'Additional support might be helpful to remove the anxiety from the process.'* – Parent of primary-age pupil

KCC encourages all primary schools to consult with parents of Year 5 pupils about their potential secondary school options and for this to include grammar schools where appropriate<sup>72</sup>. The Select Committee received a number of examples of good practice where primary school Headteachers met with all parents to discuss their child's learning and secondary school options<sup>73</sup>. An example where a primary school are not only being successful in closing the gap in attainment between those children on Free School Meals and their non-FSM peers but are also achieving significant numbers of their pupils in receipt of Free School Meals going on to grammar school is Upton Junior School<sup>75</sup>. In 2014 64% of FSM pupils were entered for the Kent Test, of which 33% (3 out of 9) were assessed as suited for grammar school. Further information is available in Appendix H. In recognition for the school's work in closing the attainment gap Upton Junior School were national finalists in the Pupil Premium Awards in 2015<sup>76</sup>.

However, despite examples of good practice, evidence from a number of witnesses spoken to by the Committee suggested that some schools might not be providing information on all options which best suit a child<sup>77</sup>. The extent to which primary schools highlight grammar school as an option to academically able pupils can depend on the existing relationships between a primary school and its local grammar schools<sup>79</sup>. It is therefore imperative that grammar schools do everything possible to build strong relationships with feeder primary schools to help strengthen parental choice, and that primary schools identify children, including those in receipt of Pupil Premium, who should be entered for the Kent Test.

There are significant benefits to strong partnerships between grammar schools and their local primary schools including providing pupils and parents with the information required to choose the most appropriate secondary school for them including information about grammar schools, their admissions procedures and the potential benefits they offer<sup>80</sup>. Partnerships including both grammar

<sup>71</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>72</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>73</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>74</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>75</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>76</sup> Pupil Premium Awards, (2015), <http://www.pupilpremiumawards.co.uk/ppawards2015/2015>

<sup>77</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>78</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>79</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>80</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England



and primary schools can have a significant impact through delivering effective outreach to their communities, encouraging academically able pupils to apply for grammar schools and supporting pupils in the admissions process<sup>81</sup>.

Where strong relationships are not in place, primary schools are often not in a position to give accurate information<sup>82</sup>.

*'There isn't enough narrative around finding the best school for you. This isn't advertised enough.'*<sup>83</sup>

Partnerships can also enable a joint focus between primary and grammar schools on the development and learning of disadvantaged groups, including children supported by the Pupil Premium, to counteract the disadvantages these children face.

*'Greater social mobility will only come about if the whole school system does better for children on Free School Meals.'*<sup>84</sup>

One potential difficulty to close working between primary and grammar schools is the significantly higher ratio of primary schools to grammar schools, with one grammar school Headteacher noting that his grammar school has a catchment area of 60-70 primary schools, many of which will only send a small number of pupils to his school<sup>85</sup>. An Institute for Fiscal Studies report<sup>86</sup> commented that the low numbers of pupils from an individual primary school 'may reduce the perceived value to primary schools from assisting pupils with grammar school admission' and the Committee's evidence gathering has equally shown may reduce the incentive for grammar schools to engage with individual primary schools. It is important for grammar schools to be accessible to all pupils and grammar schools may wish to consider how they can best target outreach to those pupils and primary schools in most need<sup>8788</sup>.

The Select Committee has identified a model of good practice from The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham which overcomes this issue through each grammar school identifying a specific co-ordinator to act as the contact point and link with a number of their local primary schools<sup>89</sup>. These greater links between grammar and primary schools can aid improved support and information provision to pupils with Pupil Premium funding and their parents and encourage them to consider applying for grammar school.

<sup>81</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>82</sup> NatCen, (Nov 2013), Access to Grammar schools for Disadvantaged Pupils

<sup>83</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, (Parent of primary age child) 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>84</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, (Patrick Leeson) 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>85</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>86</sup> Institute for Fiscal Studies, (2013), Entry into Grammar Schools in England

<sup>87</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>88</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>89</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016



The Select Committee recognises there are numerous examples of existing partnership good practice across all phases in Kent. Primary and grammar school Headteachers during the Select Committee evidence sessions recognised the need to build on these examples and expressed their support for the development of proactive relationships between grammar and primary schools<sup>90</sup>.

To do this, KCC has an important role in facilitating learning, from both local and national examples, of what types of outreach, engagement and support works most effectively. This includes championing those schools using creative interventions and promoting a focus on ensuring all children are supported towards an appropriate educational setting.

Schools also need to recognise that existing or new partnership arrangements need to ensure children are provided with all appropriate options for their future education.

Collaborative structures in education have changed significantly in recent years with schools now adopting a variety of formal arrangements including federations, multi-academy trusts and sponsored academy chains. This direction of travel will accelerate with the Government's recent White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' setting out plans for a significant increase in schools becoming academies and an expectation that the vast majority of these schools will work in multi-academy trusts (MATs).

Although terminology often shifts, typically there is a distinction between 'hard' arrangements such as multi-academy trusts which are a single legal entity with one overarching board, although delegation to individual schools often takes place, and 'soft' arrangements which are more informal partnership arrangements<sup>91</sup>.

Multi-academy trusts play a considerable role within the Kent and national education system, a role which continues to grow with Government's drive towards schools becoming academies. As of July 2015 there were 846 multi-academy trusts in England, a significant rise from 391 in March 2011<sup>92</sup>. Data presented to the Select Committee shows there are 191 academies across all phases in Kent (32.71% of all schools) and 25 different multi-academy trusts in Kent comprising at least two or more schools<sup>93</sup>. There are also nearly 500 schools in Kent working as part of a collaboration or partnership<sup>94</sup> including 70 improvement hubs with a focus on improving school performance, quality of teaching and standards of attainment<sup>95</sup>.

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<sup>90</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>91</sup> DfE, (October 2015), Effective school partnerships and collaboration for school improvement: a review of the evidence

<sup>92</sup> Robert Hill, (Aug 2015), The rise and rise of multi-academy trusts – latest DfE data

<http://roberthilleducationblog.com/2015/08/31/the-rise-and-rise-of-multi-academy-trusts-latest-dfe-data/>

<sup>93</sup> KCC Data (2016)

<sup>94</sup> KCC (2016), Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

<sup>95</sup> KCC (Feb 2016), Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2016-2019

These arrangements offer significant opportunities including more joint delivery of outreach, improved dissemination of best practice and the development of a shared ambition for improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This potential is recognised in Kent County Council's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners which identifies shared learning as a key impetus for developing collaborations between schools in Kent<sup>96</sup>.

However, whilst school networks can be important in supporting the spread of knowledge and increasing joint working, it is vital that the development of individual small groupings and 'greater autonomy does not lead to increased isolation'<sup>97</sup>.

Figures provided to the Select Committee show that Academy Trusts and Sponsored schools enter a significantly lower percentage of children for the Kent Test (36.2%) to other schools (68.0%). Academies and Sponsored schools also have a lower pass rate for the Kent Test (33.6% compared to 38.6%)<sup>98</sup>.

There may be a number of reasons for the percentage difference between academies and sponsored schools and other schools. However one factor which was corroborated by Headteacher witnesses was that school governance arrangements, such as multi-academy trusts, may influence the destination of students and that where such an arrangement does not include a grammar school the MAT may be less inclined to promote grammar schools as a secondary option<sup>99</sup>.

It is vital that all schools in Kent, no matter their governance arrangements, engage with their community and local schools across all phases and types, to ensure that any partnership arrangement encourages pupils and their parents to consider all appropriate secondary school options.

The Committee acknowledges the potential benefits for schools and their pupils in entering an academy chain including developing a shared sense of purpose, engagement across schools<sup>100101</sup> and improved staff professional development<sup>102</sup>. It is crucial, however, that all schools develop partnerships with the wider school system in their local areas including grammar schools so that they can offer their pupils the full range of options for their secondary education and beyond.

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<sup>96</sup> KCC (2016), Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

<sup>97</sup> The Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Foundation, (July 2015), The Pupil Premium: Next Steps

<sup>98</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016 (Additional Data Report)

<sup>99</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>100</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>101</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>102</sup> DfE, (October 2015), Effective school partnerships and collaboration for school improvement: a review of the evidence



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## 2. Securing a grammar school place

**Recommendation 4: All grammar schools should provide more outreach to primary schools including after school classes in English and mathematics, mentoring and preparation for the Kent Test for primary aged pupils in Yrs 4-6 including those most academically able children in receipt of the Pupil Premium.**

### Enrichment Support

Those primary schools in Kent who have consistently narrowed their Free School Meal attainment gap over the last three years and increased the proportion of their Free School Meal cohort achieving Level 5+ at Key Stage 2 have not seen a similar increase in the proportion of Free School Meal pupils passing the Kent Test<sup>103</sup>. This suggested that pupils from low income backgrounds face additional barriers beyond attainment in securing a grammar school place.

It is essential that every child is able to achieve their full potential, has fair access to appropriate schools and is helped to participate in the Kent Test process, where they and their parents choose to, through information, advice and guidance.

Schools can play a crucial role in supporting students through providing enrichment and extra-curricular activities which can aid a pupil's attainment, provide broader opportunities for the child's learning, demonstrate a vision for their future and help raise their aspirations.

KCC's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners promotes schools to engage further with vulnerable learners, including those children supported by the Pupil Premium, and enable them to take advantage of the range of enrichment activities available but which often are not accessible to those on lower incomes.

Many schools across Kent have recognised the value in enrichment activities including Dover Grammar School for Girls which runs a primary enrichment programme two days a week, using their own staff, for pupils in Year 4 and above<sup>104</sup>. The programme includes English, maths, science, Latin and sport and helps ensure that children who are supported by the Pupil Premium have access to activities they would otherwise not be able to take advantage of.

<sup>103</sup> Of the 55 primary schools in Kent that have consistently narrowed their FSM attainment gap over the last three years, 16 of them (29%) have also shown an increasing proportion of the FSM cohort achieving Level 5+ at KS2 over the last three years – KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>104</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

Programmes such as this which include English and maths tuition can have a significant impact, particularly when it is known that achieving high levels of literacy and numeracy are critical in pupils becoming 'successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens'<sup>105</sup>.

Extra-curricular school activities focusing on art, music and sport can also have a significant impact on a child's academic performance and motivation to learn<sup>106</sup>. Taking part in activities such as these can play a vital role in a child's whole life experience and support the development of a child's drive which can benefit their academic development.

*'These activities, (including sports and outward bound, the performing arts, music lessons, after school clubs and trips) are taken for granted by many children, but more effort is needed to ensure pupils on free school meals participate in them and get the benefits' – Kent Strategy for Vulnerable Learners<sup>107</sup>*

It is vital that pupils who are supported by Pupil Premium are able to take advantage of opportunities such as these and the Select Committee is encouraged that some schools are choosing to spend a portion of their Pupil Premium grant towards access to activities which can have such an important influence on a child's development.

*'Most primary Headteachers are relentlessly aspirational for their students, looking for opportunities for their pupils.'<sup>108</sup>*

The challenge which parents and primary schools often face is in ensuring pupils who are supported by the Pupil Premium are able to access and benefit from enrichment and extra-curricular activities<sup>109</sup>. Effective primary school use of Pupil Premium funding alongside support from local grammar schools to provide additional opportunities for enrichment activities such as after school supplementary English and mathematics can be key to ensuring this access.

The Sutton Trust and the Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit (see Appendix I) highlights a number of cost effective strategies which schools can take forward to provide additional learning opportunities and which have a high impact in raising attainment and closing the gap between those pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium and those who are not. One such approach is peer tutoring with a particular focus on maths and English<sup>110</sup>. Peer tutoring typically

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<sup>105</sup> Education England, (2009), Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum: Final Report

<sup>106</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>107</sup> KCC (2016), Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

<sup>108</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, (Matthew Bartlett) 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>109</sup> Patrick Leeson (11 Feb 2016), Weekly Update – KELSI

<sup>110</sup> Conor Ryan, The Sutton Trust (2012), Teaching Leaders Quarterly Q4/12 - Making the most of Pupil Premium



involves learners working in pairs or small groups to provide each other with teaching support and in the majority of studies shows positive effects for low cost<sup>111</sup>.

Another approach, which a number of witnesses to the Select Committee spoke highly of, was peer mentoring which can be a very powerful tool in supporting a child's learning and crucially developing a child's aspirations. The Select Committee heard evidence of the positive effects of peer mentoring including where younger pupils were inspired by an older student and that successful adults often refer to having been inspired at school by an older pupil or adult who took a special interest in them<sup>112</sup>. The benefits of peer mentoring are also not only restricted to younger pupils but are two way with older pupils often developing confidence and listening skills and the primary schools gaining additional valuable resource<sup>113</sup>.

Peer mentoring can take a number of different forms including cross-age support involving secondary school students (e.g. grammar school students) mentoring younger primary age pupils.

A number of examples were presented to the Select Committee of grammar school pupils acting as mentors to primary age pupils and using their school's resources to provide extra-curricular activities for primary schools<sup>114</sup>. These include Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Faversham whose Year 11, 12 and 13 pupils work with local primary schools on a regular basis to help with teaching maths, literacy, reading and sports<sup>115</sup>, Dover Grammar School for Girls whose Sixth Form students work with younger children as part of their Sport Leadership programme<sup>116</sup> and Dane Court Grammar School which works with Year 4 to 6 pupils on projects including maths, theatre and sports<sup>117</sup>.

A number of primary school Headteachers also voiced their support for peer mentoring and would welcome the opportunity to work more closely with grammar schools to develop peer mentoring programmes<sup>118</sup>.

*'Mentoring would be great as it would give children aspiration and give a much more realistic picture than information which comes from teachers.'*<sup>119</sup>

The Select Committee encourages grammar schools to work with primary schools to mentor and inspire younger children, including those most academically able children supported by the Pupil

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<sup>111</sup> <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/peer-tutoring/>

<sup>112</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>113</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>114</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>115</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>116</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>117</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>118</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>119</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, (Cliff Stokes) 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016



Premium. An approach which the Sutton Trust are supportive of, encouraging successful students from low income backgrounds to act as ambassadors within their communities<sup>120</sup>.

## Preparation

The Select Committee heard evidence from both Kent-based witnesses and national research which acknowledged the practice of coaching ahead of 11+ exams particularly by affluent, middle class families<sup>121122</sup>.

Kent County Council endeavours to provide a fair test for all candidates through the Kent Test which does not disadvantage pupils from low income backgrounds. The format of the Test has been reviewed in recent years with the first children taking the new test in September 2014<sup>123</sup>. A summary of the current Kent Test format is provided in Appendix J.

The Kent Test changes have made improvements to limit any benefit which may be gained from coaching<sup>124</sup>. This has been achieved through a greater focus on English and maths skills<sup>125</sup> with two of the three tests used in the process being curriculum based<sup>126127</sup>. The changes, including the non-verbal reasoning element, aim to avoid any cultural (ethnic or socio-economic) bias<sup>128</sup> and counter a potential test preparation culture<sup>129</sup>. Kent County Council does not permit schools to coach pupils for the Kent Test.

However, despite these changes, entry information for the Kent Test shows that whilst 15.6% of pupils entered the Kent Test are FSM Ever they account for only 8.3% of those passing the test<sup>130</sup>. This shows that those pupils who are FSM Ever are performing disproportionately worse in the Kent Test than their peers.

The Select Committee is mindful that children supported by Pupil Premium may benefit from broader after school enrichment activities which can supplement curriculum learning and that disadvantaged children may need additional support and information in preparation for the test.

Kent County Council currently publishes information for all children interested in taking the Kent Test on its website in May of each year, including a test preparation document – the Kent

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<sup>120</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>121</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England. (Almost a quarter of state school pupils receive private or home tuition, rising to 40% in London)

<sup>122</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>123</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>124</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>125</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>126</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>127</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>128</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>129</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>130</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016

Familiarisation Booklet<sup>131</sup>. Schools are contacted so that they can discuss the booklet with pupils and direct parents to the website<sup>132</sup>. The new Kent Test also includes practice drills preceding each section of the actual test. These practice drills explain how the right answer to example questions is worked out.

It is recognised by the Select Committee that access to this information including the Kent Familiarisation Booklet is important in understanding and preparing for the Kent Test process.

Therefore the Committee would like to see Kent County Council consider adopting a similar approach to authorities such as Bexley where, following registering their child for the test, parents receive direct communication with a link to the familiarisation booklet (which includes practice questions), with paper copies available if requested. This enables parents and pupils to know what the test papers look like and what type of questions to expect in the test environment<sup>133</sup>.

An exemplar of a model which offers engagement, enrichment and preparation activities was provided to the Select Committee by The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham. Their familiarisation programme engages with primary schools to enable those pupils, for whom grammar school may be appropriate, to experience grammar school life and understand more about the test process.

The 'Opening Doors' campaign includes a familiarisation programme aimed at primary school children and consists of five 2-hour sessions, four of which take place at grammar schools during weekdays and the fifth on a Saturday to replicate the environment of their 11+ test. The five sessions provide preparation for the test to children who would not otherwise be able to access this and also enable opportunities for a tour of the grammar schools, a talk by the Headteacher, activities for the children and an opportunity to meet current grammar school students. These sessions are not only designed for the primary-age pupils but also allow the grammar schools to challenge any parents' perceptions of costs and issues related to school transport and signpost to available support<sup>134</sup>.

Invitations to attend the familiarisation sessions are sent to primary school Headteachers who are asked to identify those pupils for whom grammar school would be an appropriate secondary school and particularly those most academically able children supported by the Pupil Premium<sup>135</sup>. These pupils also receive a free non-verbal reasoning booklet from a range of publishers<sup>136</sup>.

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<sup>131</sup> [http://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/14513/Kent-Test-familiarisation-booklet.pdf](http://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/14513/Kent-Test-familiarisation-booklet.pdf)

<sup>132</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>133</sup> <http://www.bexley.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=14479&p=0>

<sup>134</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>135</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>136</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

A full case study of the outreach work of the Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham is provided in Appendix K.

The Select Committee heard evidence that nationally some Headteachers favour supported test preparation for the most academically able pupils from low income backgrounds<sup>137</sup>.

Whilst the changes to the Kent Test, including a curriculum focus for two of the three elements, means that coaching should not be required, a number of Headteachers of both grammar and primary schools during evidence sessions voiced their support for a similar familiarisation programme to the Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham for Kent<sup>138</sup>. Such a programme could form part of a wider engagement with pupils interested in potentially attending a grammar school on the Kent Test process so that they understand the format of the test and the transition process to secondary school.

The Select Committee encourages all grammar schools in Kent to work with their local primary schools to provide more outreach opportunities including after school classes in English and mathematics, mentoring and preparation for the Kent Test for primary aged pupils in Years 4-6 with a particular focus on those in receipt of the Pupil Premium and achieving above expected levels of progress.

## Headteacher Assessment Panels

**Recommendation 5: Urge all Primary Headteachers to utilise Headteacher Assessment Panels within the Kent Test process to advocate for those most academically able children supported by the Pupil Premium**

All the grammar schools in Kent County Council's area use the Kent Test to help decide which children should be offered places. A Kent grammar school can only offer a place to a child who has been assessed suitable for admission to grammar school. A small number of grammar schools also run their own test with children being able to qualify for those schools under the Kent Test or their own school's test. Registration for the Kent Test opens in June each year. Parents can register their child on-line, by visiting [www.kent.gov.uk/ola](http://www.kent.gov.uk/ola), or they can fill in a paper form and return it through their primary school or direct to Kent County Council's Admissions team.

Kent County Council tests about 15,000 children each year. Testing takes place in September and parents are sent their child's assessment decision in October (by first class letter and an e-mail message for those who applied on-line), leaving them time to apply for secondary school places by 31 October each year. A familiarisation paper is available on the Kent website ([www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk)), and the papers themselves have introductory drills and practice questions.

<sup>137</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>138</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

## **The Kent Test**

The two tests taken in September are a Reasoning test and a combined maths and English test, both in multiple choice format. Further information on the current format of the Kent Test is available in Appendix J.

Children are also asked to complete a piece of writing under test conditions. This is not marked, but a local Headteacher Assessment Panel may consider it at a later stage.

When the Tests are marked, the scores are standardised. Standardisation allows each child's score to be compared with those achieved by other children of the same age so that the youngest children are not disadvantaged.

## **Headteacher Assessment Panel Stage**

Approximately 21% of the year group are placed on the "automatic G" list, the designation for those eligible for a grammar school place. This grammar assessment decision is based on the test results. However, before parents receive the decision letter, the child's primary school Headteacher has the opportunity to refer assessment decisions they disagree with, to a panel of local primary and secondary school Headteachers. This panel considers additional evidence before making a decision. This can include the child's test scores, performance levels, recent work, the writing task and comments from the child's current school. The Headteacher Assessment Panel considers the full range of work of the child, regardless of which scores may be below the threshold. An assessment will only be changed by the Headteacher Panel if the Panel is confident that the child would be well placed in a grammar school. The HTA process results in approximately, another 4-6% of pupils being assessed 'grammar' in the year group. It is at the professional discretion of each primary school Headteacher whether or not they refer an individual child for a Headteacher Assessment. Appendix L shows the typical grounds on which a request can be considered for a Headteacher Assessment.

The Headteacher Assessment (HTA) Panels meet in the short period after the tests have been marked and before final assessment decisions are sent out to parents. Panel membership normally includes grammar school Heads and Heads of primary schools. Cases are referred to their local HTA Panel by the primary school, which will submit a standard form and evidence, including examples of work and any relevant medical or social detail. Panels meet for between 1 and 3 days, depending on the volume of cases they have to deal with, and reach a decision on the cases presented, commenting very briefly in writing on the reason for their decision. They are empowered to change an assessment, but they cannot change a child's test score. They return their decisions to Kent County Council's Admissions team, which ensures that the database is updated so that the correct assessment decision goes out to the parents, and shares the panel decisions with primary Heads.

Parents are advised about the Headteacher Assessment (HTA) Panels in the Kent Secondary Transfer Book, which is available on-line and, on request, in hard copy.

The HTA Panel is a valued process which enables Headteacher professionals to look in more detail at the assessments for children who have scored below the threshold in the Kent Test but are believed to be suitable candidates for grammar school. When the Kent Test was reviewed in 2012, schools were consulted. Of the 135 Headteachers who responded to the question about whether HTA Panels should continue to carry out their function, 105 supported continuation of the process.

### **Number of children involved**

The process is well used. In 2015 just over 2,000 cases were referred to the panels and they changed the assessment for just over 1,000 children. Although the number of referrals has tended to rise slightly, a c.50% change rate overall is fairly consistent.

There is some variation between the HTA Panels in the number / percentage assessed suitable for grammar school. Panels are likely to consider more cases and change more assessments where applying the score threshold has identified fewer candidates, and consider fewer cases and change fewer assessments where the number already qualified is high.

There are four HTA Panels. They are East Kent (covering Swale, Canterbury, Dover, Deal, Sandwich and Thanet), Mid Kent (covering Maidstone, some of Tonbridge and Malling, Ashford and Shepway), West Kent (covering some of Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells and some of Sevenoaks) and North West Kent (covering Dartford, Gravesham and some of Sevenoaks). East Kent has the most number of referrals and proportionately assesses as grammar, the most number of applications. It is followed by Mid Kent, North West Kent and West Kent.

A child who gets a grammar school assessment is not guaranteed a grammar school place. If oversubscribed, like other schools, grammar schools will apply their published admissions criteria to rank applicants for places.

### **Appeals**

Parents cannot make an appeal against the assessment decision.

If a child takes the test but does not do well enough to be eligible for a grammar school place, a grammar school cannot offer a place. However, if parents think that a grammar school would be the best place for their child, they can name their preferred grammar school(s) on the Kent Secondary Common Application Form (SCAF), but they will not be offered a place at any of them in March. It does, however, give parents the right to appeal for admission to an Independent Appeal Panel. The information which is shared with parents about the offer of a school place will explain how to appeal.

## Children in Care

**Recommendation 6: Identify a dedicated education professional in the Virtual School Kent to provide support and guidance to foster carers on appropriate secondary school destinations, as well as support through the secondary schools appeal process for children in their care, to be tracked through their Personal Education Plan.**

*'In terms of access, (children in care) are the forgotten children, they have to fight for themselves, you can't expect young people to have to do that'*<sup>139</sup>

For many children who are in local authority care events in their lives which have necessitated their journey into care may have already had a negative impact on their educational progress and created barriers to learning. Once in care, children have to cope with the changes care brings and may be dealing with issues of loss and separation, as well as adjusting to life in a foster family and may be unable to achieve the same focus on their education as their peers.

*'I feel a lot of children in care miss out on grammar school places through no fault of their own'*<sup>140</sup>

Nationally the vulnerability of education and employment outcomes for children in care is well documented. Government statistics show that between 2013-14 the attainment gap between children in care and their peers at Key Stage 1 was 25 percentage points, at Key Stage 2 there is an attainment gap of 31 percentage points (reading, writing and mathematics combined)<sup>141</sup>.

Many children in care have suffered from a disrupted school experience and they may have attended a number of schools or been absent from school for extended periods of time. The subsequent gaps in their learning are very likely to have become barriers to progress.

However for some children schools may be acting as a consistent support and experience within their lives where other areas are disrupted. Therefore the child or carer may feel that stability of school takes precedence over any options for changed provision.

<sup>139</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Evidence Session (Matthew Bartlett) 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>140</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Evidence Session – Children in Care and carers

<sup>141</sup> Department of Education 'Statistical First Release: Outcomes for Children Looked After by Local Authorities in England as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014'



*‘Children in care often come from very unsettled backgrounds, sometimes their school has been a key point of stability, we have to consider this when looking at secondary options’ (Tony Doran, Head Teacher of Virtual School Kent).*

## Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are a statutory requirement for children in care to help monitor, support and promote the child’s achievements<sup>142</sup>. The plan helps young people set their own learning targets and monitors their progress. PEPs are also useful in assisting a school to identify the best support to meet the child’s needs including available resources and initiatives.

For the PEP to be effective it must be an evolving record, it must be regularly reviewed and grow with the needs of the child<sup>143</sup>. Evidence to the Committee suggested that the PEP could be used further to support and aid children who may wish to, or may benefit from, sitting the Kent Test;

*‘The PEP process could be used to identify which young people may have the ability to sit the eleven plus exam and extra support could be given during the year if it is felt that they are not quite at the necessary academic standard’<sup>144</sup>*

## Support and knowledge

The Committee found that in circumstances where a young person in care was in a grammar school, there had often been at least one, and often more, particularly active individuals involved in supporting that young person to take the Kent Test and apply for grammar school. This was often the foster carer but could also be a social worker, teacher or representative from Virtual School Kent.

However as one carer put it, *‘carers have different levels of experience of the education system... children receive different levels of care’*. The Committee heard from foster carers that sometimes the carers own experiences (or the experiences of their children) could impact on the advice and support given to the children in their care. Foster carers also commented that often not enough information was available to help them navigate the secondary transition and appeals process.

The Committee believes it is essential that all foster carers have access to information and support around secondary schooling and appeals processes. All children in care need a strong advocate who understands educational systems and processes and who is able to push forward and advocate on the child’s behalf.

<sup>142</sup> Virtual School Kent: Personal Education Plan (ePEP)

<sup>143</sup> Kent County Council, Kent Children’s Services Procedure Manual: Education of Children in Care’

<sup>144</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, Written Evidence (Social Worker)

## Pupil Premium

**Recommendation 7: Publish information on Pupil Premium spend for children in care on the Virtual School Kent website, including support for pupils from Key Stage 1 through to Key Stage 2, and detail on the type of secondary school destinations for these children.**

The Pupil Premium is provided by central government as additional funding to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers<sup>145</sup>. Since its introduction by the Coalition Government in 2011 the funding and the number of children who are eligible has increased<sup>146</sup>. Numbers of children claiming has also increased as (linked to the associated funding) schools encourage parents to apply.<sup>147</sup>

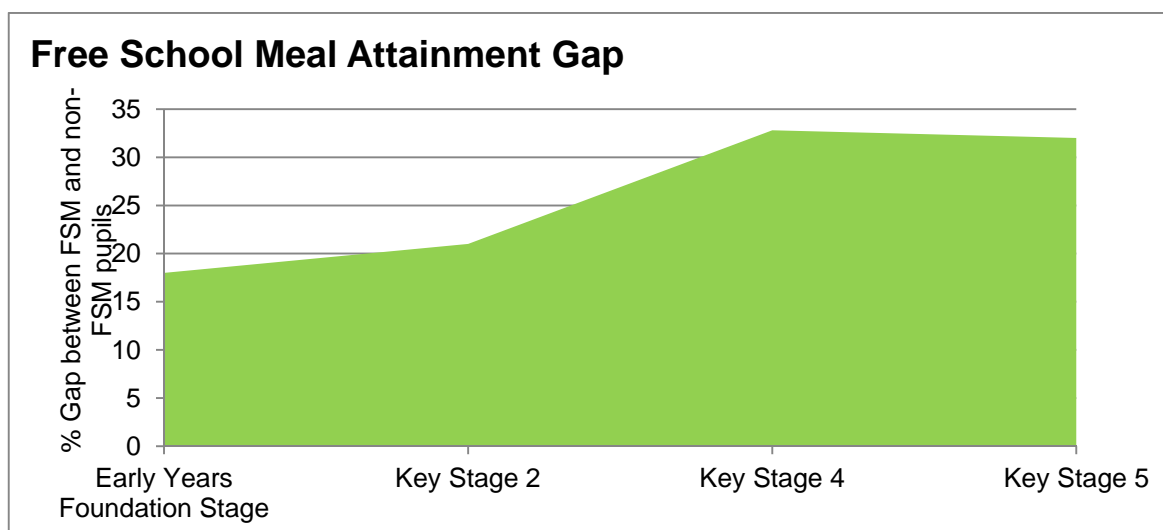
In 2014-15 Pupil Premium Plus was introduced for all children in care. Previously children in care had attracted the same Pupil Premium as children claiming free school meals. Virtual School Kent administers the Pupil Premium Plus Grant to local schools for children in care in contrast to the Pupil Premium which schools receive direct from Government.

In Kent the Pupil Premium provides a significant amount of money to schools with funding in 2015 totalling £50 million. However KCC's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners states '*the Pupil Premium has promised much but so far it has delivered relatively little improvement in Kent and nationally*'. A significant attainment gap remains between those eligible for the Pupil Premium and those who are not. The following chart is taken from Kent County Council's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners.

<sup>145</sup> Jarrett, Long and Foster, House of Commons Library (Nov 2015) 'School Funding: Pupil Premium'

<sup>146</sup> In 2011-12 the Pupil Premium increased from £430 per pupil to £1,320 per primary pupil and £935 per secondary pupil in 2015-16 (in 2014-15 the Government introduced different Pupil Premium rates for primary and secondary pupils).

<sup>147</sup> Department of Education (July 2013) 'Evaluation of the Pupil Premium Research Report'



The National Audit Office suggest that:

*'it will take time for the full impact of the Pupil Premium to become clear with the Department for Education not expecting the full impact to be felt until 2023; the early signs are that it does have the potential to bring about a significant improvement in outcomes. However while the attainment gap has narrowed no clear trend has been established and the gap remains wide'*<sup>148</sup>.

A recent House of Commons report<sup>149</sup> suggests that while there is evidence that the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers nationally has started to narrow at both Primary and Secondary school levels, in Kent, the gap remains large and progress has been uneven across the county<sup>150</sup>.

There are a wide range of resources for schools to help them identify and develop strong initiatives utilising the Pupil Premium; these resources include the work of the Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Fund as shown in Appendix I<sup>151</sup>. Gillian Cawley, Director of Education, Quality and Standards suggested to the Committee that schools use the Pupil Premium according to the needs of their students and there were examples where it had been used to great effect.

<sup>148</sup> LGiU (July 2015), Funding for disadvantaged pupils: NAO Report

<sup>149</sup> House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts ' funding for disadvantaged pupils – September 2015)

<sup>150</sup> KCC (2016), Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

<sup>151</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 5<sup>th</sup> Feb

Schools publish details of how they spend the Pupil Premium and the effect this has on the attainment of the pupils who attract the funding<sup>152</sup>. This is important in order to aid transparency and accountability. The National Audit Office (NAO)<sup>153</sup> found that parents from disadvantaged backgrounds were unlikely to hold a school to account for their use of the Pupil Premium. This was linked to a lack of awareness of parents and sometimes a lack of information being made available by schools. Therefore increasing the prominence of information on how schools target spend and educating parents about the impact that this funding could increase accountability.

Virtual School Kent administers the Pupil Premium Plus Grant to local schools for children in care. A small amount of the grant is used to provide countywide literacy development projects and pilots whilst the remaining 96% is allocated directly to local schools. Schools identify the additional needs of children in terms of support, interventions, training or resources and apply for additional funding. The levels of funding that a child receives are not set but depend on their educational requirements.

The Committee urge Kent County Council's Virtual School's Kent to publish detailed information around their Pupil Premium Plus spend hence offering transparency to schools and carers on how and when funding is allocated and the impact of this funding. The Committee also propose that figures are published in relation to the secondary school destinations of our children in care, to increase awareness of the low numbers of children getting into our grammar schools and to understand the impact of initiatives which aim to support higher attaining children.

**Recommendation 8: KCC to monitor and challenge the proportion of pupils supported by the Pupil Premium who go into grammar school**

KCC's recently published Strategy for Vulnerable Learners aims to identify new approaches and activities to ensure that every child and young person in Kent achieves their full potential. As part of this KCC is working with schools and partners to create and monitor a set of measures which will define progress. This will include a district data set with other indicators of impact alongside the attainment gap data. Collectively this information will help schools and KCC work together to comprehensively monitor the effects of specific initiatives and strategies<sup>154</sup>.

Within these measurements the Committee believe that it is important, as part of the Strategy for Vulnerable Learners, to focus on the number of high achieving children supported by the Pupil Premium getting into grammar school. In this way there will be significant alignment between the action plan from this Committee's report and the continuing work of the Directorate in relation to vulnerable learners.

<sup>152</sup> Department for Education and Education Funding Agency (2014) 'Pupil Premium: Funding and Accountability for schools'

<sup>153</sup> LGiU (July 2015) 'Funding for disadvantaged pupils: NAO Report

<sup>154</sup> KCC (2016), Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

Kent County Council should consider monitoring the number of children supported by the Pupil Premium who go onto grammar schools on a countywide or district by district basis. Through this measurement the Committee believes the issue of the low number of children supported by the Pupil Premium in grammar schools will be built into the work being delivered in relation to the Vulnerable Learners Strategy.

**Recommendation 9: KCC School Improvement Advisers to work with Primary Headteachers to consider how the most academically able pupils supported by the Pupil Premium are being identified and assisted to progress**

Local authorities have a legal duty to ensure that every child fulfils his or her educational potential. It must monitor the performance of maintained schools in its area and ensure that where improvements are necessary these are carried out effectively.

Kent County Council (KCC) works through School Improvement Advisers who monitor, challenge, support and if required intervene with those schools maintained by KCC. The level of support provided by a School Improvement Adviser will be determined by the need of the school.

During visits to the school the School Improvement Adviser will look at the progress of all groups of children including those supported by the Pupil Premium. However currently they may not focus discussion on the trajectory of specific children. Moreover while the School Improvement Adviser is likely to look at spend and outcomes of the Pupil Premium as an overall group, currently there may not be a specific focus on how the Pupil Premium is being used to support those who are higher achievers within the school.

Evidence from the Sutton Trust suggests that while a focus on narrowing the gap is important, it is equally important to maintain focus on high achieving children supported by the Pupil Premium. Dr Lee Elliot Major<sup>155</sup>, Chief Executive of the Sutton Trust commented that:

*'It's important for social mobility that the Pupil Premium continues to be paid for all disadvantaged pupils, without discrimination between low and high attainers. Our research has shown that disadvantaged but bright pupils fall behind at school so it is important that schools are able to use their additional funding to provide stretching lessons for this group as well as helping low attainers to make good progress.'*<sup>156</sup>

The Committee applauds and supports the work of Headteachers and School Improvement Advisers in supporting vulnerable groups. Within evidence sessions the Committee explored whether the role of School Improvement Advisers could be further developed to support Headteachers in considering opportunities for children supported by the Pupil Premium and for

<sup>155</sup> Sutton Trust (Oct 2015), Ministers considering the redistribution of the Pupil Premium' Press Release

<sup>156</sup> Sutton Trust and EEF respond to reports of a pupil premium funding shake-up: Press Release (Oct 2015)

ensuring a focus both on narrowing the achievement gap and that high achieving students are stretched and supported appropriately.

As we enter an environment where more schools convert to academies and school improvement becomes more school-led, the Committee urge schools to utilise external challenge around Pupil Premium spend and to include within this a focus on how high achieving children are supported by the Pupil Premium.

**Recommendation 10: If not already in place, schools should follow best practice and nominate a lead governor for the Pupil Premium and how children in receipt of this are being supported to apply for the school most appropriate for them**

While all schools are currently required to monitor and publish information on the Pupil Premium not all currently have a lead responsible governor for this area.

The Sutton Trust highlights the importance of a designated senior leader and governor having a clear overview of how funding is being allocated (including Pupil Premium funding) and strong reporting mechanisms to ensure clear measurable progress is being made by interventions for disadvantaged pupils<sup>157</sup>.

This is supported by Ofsted who also look at the role school governors play in making sure the Pupil Premium is well spent and that reviewing and evaluation processes are clear<sup>158</sup>. Ofsted lists engaged and proactive governors being part of the decision making and evaluation process as a core characteristic of schools who spend the Pupil Premium funding successfully to improve achievement. This was supported by evidence collected by the Committee;

*'The role of governors is crucial in ensuring the best use of the Pupil Premium in schools. Some schools have an FSM/Pupil Premium Governor which is best practice. KCC can provide support and training for Governors, in understanding and being confident to challenge and support as appropriate.'*<sup>159</sup>

A governor responsible for the Pupil Premium would encompass those claiming free school meals, children in care and service children and include oversight of the effectiveness and monitoring of interventions.

<sup>157</sup> KCC (2016), Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

<sup>158</sup> Ofsted (2013) The Pupil Premium: How schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement,

<sup>159</sup> KCC Select Committee on Social Mobility and Grammar Schools, Evidence Session (Gillian Cawley) 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016



The National Audit Office argue that governors can be very effective in challenging school leaders on areas such as the use of Pupil Premium, and they can be an invaluable tool in ensuring that support mechanisms and interventions succeed in helping children reach their goals<sup>160</sup>.

KCC offers training through the Governor and Clerk Professional Development Programme including a 'Narrowing the Gap in Pupil Outcomes' course which gives examples of best practice highlighted by Ofsted and develops governors' understanding of how to approach evaluating the impact of Pupil Premium usage<sup>161</sup>.

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<sup>160</sup> LGiU (July 2015) Funding for disadvantaged pupils: NAO Report

<sup>161</sup> KCC, Governor and Clerk Professional Development Programme, Sept 2015 – March 2016



### 3. Removing financial barriers to grammar schools

**Recommendation 11: Urge all grammar schools to use multiple uniform providers to minimise costs and subsidise/cover the costs of schools trips and other expenses for pupils from low income families to ensure these are not prohibitive factors to children applying for or securing a grammar school place**

#### Uniforms

School costs place pressure on all family budgets and low income can lead to unequal access to opportunities or some form of poverty related stigma and difference. Improving communication with parents about financial support, removing the need for expensive school uniform and finding alternative ways to fund the cost of school trips for low income families, can reduce stigma and ensure that children and young people have equal access to opportunities at school.

The Committee heard the following from parents at an evidence session when asked about barriers to grammar school:

*"The cost of their first uniform is extortionate. [...] As a single parent this was a struggle."*

*"Uniform – the cost is very expensive."<sup>162</sup>*

Emma Hickling advised the Committee:

*"My experience is that grammar schools often use certain suppliers which may cost more, rather than secondary high schools who often provide more options to get cheaper uniform."<sup>163</sup>*

According to a report by Aviva Insurance in July 2013, British parents are spending £1.9 billion on school uniform, shoes and sports kit every twelve months<sup>164</sup>. While incomes have been squeezed during the recession, the prices of many items remain high. While these costs represent a particular challenge for low income parents, many families on middle incomes also find them to be an unwelcome burden. Schools need to consider the impact of their school uniform policies on all families with low income each year.

School uniform is the cheapest option for families to clothe children but still presents a significant cost.

<sup>162</sup> KCC (2016) Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>163</sup> KCC (2016) Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>164</sup> Aviva (July 2013) The Aviva Family Finances Report

Survey research by Family Action in August 2013<sup>165</sup> found that:

- The average annual back-to-school cost – including uniforms, coats, bags and stationery was £285 for a child at secondary school;
- A family with one child at secondary school and one at primary school may spend £441 over the summer. This represents nearly 40% of the August income of a single parent on the poverty line – and almost 30% of a couple's;
- The majority of secondary schools expect parents to spend between £200 and £300, yet parents at some schools can spend up to £600 per child;
- Other costs that schools may expect parents to meet are for textbooks, workbooks, art and craft materials, school trips and outings, and even iPads;

According to an investigation by the Office for Fair Trading in August 2012, almost three quarters of schools (and 94% of state secondaries in particular), continue to place restrictions on where uniforms can be bought, which means higher prices for parents.

Low income families need help to cope with the growing cost of school uniform and increasingly strict demands on the uniform from some schools is a cause for concern to parents when they are considering the secondary school destination of their child. The cost of blazers, shoes, sports kit and winter coats can leave some parents being unable to afford these essential school clothing items, leaving them to feel guilty and children embarrassed and unable to fully participate at school.

*“By the time children return to school in September, single parents are reeling from summer holiday and back-to-school expenses. The poorest parents often end up out of pocket after paying for the extra costs of holiday childcare and play schemes; lunches and keeping the children entertained”<sup>166</sup>.*

(Satwat Rehman, Director of One Parent Families Scotland)

In October 2014, The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission<sup>167</sup>, published a report by The Children's Society stating that millions of families are struggling with the hidden costs of schooling. An Inquiry carried out by the Commission suggested that parents face average annual bills of £800 per pupil, with the cost of uniforms varying greatly between state schools. The Inquiry stated that a quarter of parents (and more than half of those in families which were not well off) said they had borrowed money in order to afford the cost of school.

<sup>165</sup> Family Action (August 2013) The Big Stitch-Up: How school uniform costs are punishing parents

<sup>166</sup> Child Poverty Action Group (2015) 'The Cost of the School Day'

<sup>167</sup> The Children's Commission on Poverty (2014) 'At What Cost? Exposing the Impact of Poverty on School Life'

The Children's Commission report <sup>168</sup> stated that more than two thirds (71%) of parents said they had to buy either some or all items of school uniform from a specific supplier. For a quarter of parents (24%), they had to buy the entire school uniform from a specialist supplier.

For families struggling financially, who may have more than one child going through school, the cost of school uniform can be daunting. The near-unanimous consensus of children, parents and experts that submitted evidence to the Inquiry was that schools should have uniform policies which allow parents to purchase clothing from supermarkets or other cheap shops, with the exception of certain items such as ties or sew-on badges.

The Children's Commission Inquiry <sup>169</sup> heard that there is a huge variability in the cost of school uniforms, with examples ranging from £34 for a complete uniform available from a supermarket, to state funded secondary schools with a uniform that costs more than £500. The Inquiry also pointed out that the cost of school clothes is not just limited to the cost of a single school uniform. Some schools have prescriptive sports kits, with many different items for different sports. Other schools also have separate summer uniforms or even different uniforms for different years.

It is for the governing body of a school to decide whether there should be a school uniform policy, and if so, what that should be. It is also for the governing body to decide how the uniform should be sourced.

There is no legislation in place that deals specifically with school uniform or other aspects of appearance, however, the Department for Education (DfE) expects schools to take full account of their School Uniform Guidance, September 2013<sup>170</sup>, which is non-statutory.

The DfE strongly recommends that in setting its uniform policy the governing body:

- Considers the cost, the available supply sources and year-round availability of the proposed uniform to ensure it is providing best value for money for parents;
- Ensure that the PE uniform is practical, comfortable and appropriate to the activity involved, and that consideration is given to the cost of compulsory PE clothing.

The School Admissions Code 2014<sup>171</sup>, which is statutory guidance, states “*Admission authorities must ensure that [...] policies around school uniform or school trips do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.*” No school uniform should be so expensive as to leave pupils or their families feeling unable to apply to, or attend, a school of their choice, due to the cost of the uniform. School governing bodies should therefore give high priority to cost considerations.

<sup>168</sup> The Children's Commission on Poverty (2014) 'At What Cost? Exposing the Impact of Poverty on School Life'

<sup>169</sup> The Children's Commission on Poverty (2014) 'At What Cost? Exposing the Impact of Poverty on School Life'

<sup>170</sup> Department for Education (Sept 2013) School Uniform Guidance

<sup>171</sup> Department for Education (December 2014) School Admissions Code

When considering how the school uniform should be sourced, governing bodies should give highest priority to the consideration of cost and value for money for parents. The school uniform should be easily available for parents to purchase and schools should seek to select items that can be purchased cheaply, for example in a supermarket or other good value shop. Schools should keep compulsory branded items to a minimum and avoid specifying expensive items of uniform.

Exclusive single supplier contracts should be avoided unless regular tendering competitions are run where more than one supplier can compete for the contract and where best value for parents is secured.

### **What can schools do?**

When grammar school governing bodies are developing and implementing their school uniform policy, they may wish to consider:

- Stopping the sale of branded school items from special shops, with the exception of school ties;
- Requiring parents to buy plain, standard clothing from any retailer of their choice;
- Scrapping branded sports kit and allow children to wear plain tops and shorts, which can be bought from supermarkets;
- Introducing a badge into the school uniform that is sold separately, at cost price, and sewn or added onto standard clothing later;
- Keeping the number of compulsory items required, for example, for different sports kits or different uniforms for winter and summer, to a minimum;
- Making the school uniform lists available to parents as early as possible, so they can begin planning, saving and purchasing the required items earlier;
- Providing a reasonable transition period for any change in uniform as per DfE guidance;
- Thinking carefully about the need for any uniform change and consider whether a new sew-on badge would be sufficient;
- Setting up a school uniform and equipment bank so that low income parents can purchase items at a reduced rate or be given them for free.

## **School Trips**

Low cost trips can be difficult to afford for families on low incomes and expensive trips abroad can prove impossible. Missing trips means that children miss out on the fun, new experiences and personal development and feel left out. Providing free or subsidised trips, using school hardship funds so no student misses out can avoid embarrassment for children and ensure that they participate in invaluable, exciting experiences linked to their studies.



A poll about the cost of school trips, carried out for Guardian Money in February 2014<sup>172</sup>, involving 1,000 families found that one in five had been asked by their child's school to pay more than £1,000 for a trip. Seven in 10 said they thought it was unacceptable for schools to ask for such sums, but 47% said that the pressure and guilt were such that they ended up paying.

The Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities. Government guidance ('Charging for school activities', October 2014) is clear that schools cannot charge for any materials related to the delivery of the national curriculum, whether that relates to education during or outside of school hours. School governing bodies cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).

Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of benefits, of support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Participation in any optional extra activity must be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

According to the DfE, there is no cap on the cost of school trips, however, schools must only cover the price of the excursion. It is up to individual schools to decide what is appropriate but they cannot make a profit. Parents in receipt of certain benefits should be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they, "*should make it clear*" that these parents will be exempt and that these are optional trips which are not a compulsory part of the curriculum.

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

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<sup>172</sup> Guardian Money (1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2014) 'The parent's expected to pay £3000 for a state school trip'

## The Cost Of Education 2013-14 Survey

A recent survey commissioned by the NASUWT of 2,500 parents (The Cost of Education 2013-14) published in January 2015, found that school trips have become unaffordable for many parents. Over a third of parents who responded to the survey admitted that the cost of sending children on educational visits is too expensive. Just over half of parents say that the cost of trips should be covered by schools.

Despite the DfE guidance on charging for school activities, large numbers of children are missing out on school trips due to affordability according to The Children's Commission on Poverty Inquiry<sup>173</sup>. In their survey, one in five (22%) of all children said they missed out on a school trip during term-time because the family couldn't afford it. This increased to two in five children (38%) who said their family was not 'well off'.

The findings of the survey found that for many children, access to many critical educational opportunities and key entitlements are based increasingly on parents' ability to pay.

### **Financial assistance available to low income parents**

Poverty proofing school policies on uniform and school trips would protect children from disadvantage and stigma rather than dealing with the consequences after they encounter it. Schools need to try and ensure that anything with a cost is as affordable as possible (e.g., uniform, trips), support children and parents to afford it and advising parents about any financial help that is available to access (e.g., flexible instalments for trips, signposting to cheapest uniform supplier, school financial bursaries or subsidies for low income students).

Conor Ryan advised the Committee that The Sutton Trust promotes a levelling of the educational playing field to provide a fighting chance for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, based on their ability and not on their ability to pay.

Denis Ramplin informed the Committee that The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham's 'Opening Doors' campaign seeks to widen access into grammar schools for able and talented young people from low income backgrounds. The campaign is seeking to increase awareness of opportunity and address issues of access and affordability. It is also worth noting that the two independent schools also offer free and assisted places to pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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<sup>173</sup> The Children's Commission on Poverty (2014) 'At What Cost? Exposing the Impact of Poverty on School Life'

## The King Edward VI 'Promise'

Mr Ramplin stated that in order to support low income pupils who gain a place at one of their grammar schools, the Schools Foundation established and promotes The King Edward VI 'Promise'. It was reported that white working class parents often failed to see the opportunities offered by a grammar school education. Some parents tended to believe that transport, uniform, school trips and other expenses made grammar unaffordable for their children.

If necessary, the Foundation pays for pupils' transport to access the familiarisation sessions. These sessions challenge the parents' perception of costs associated with a grammar school education and issues relating to transport. The King Edward's 'Promise', provides for:

- A free bus pass
- £50 towards the cost of school uniform;
- Essential academic equipment; and
- The cost of a compulsory school trip in Year 7.

In addition, the Foundation is looking to form alliances with school uniform suppliers to create efficiencies and drive down uniform costs<sup>174</sup>.

Further information on King Edward VI's 'Opening Doors' campaign is available in Appendix K.

A number of grammar schools in Kent offer financial support to pupils from low income families and this is to be commended and replicated by other grammar schools.

Paul Luxmoore told the Committee:

*"We provide financial support if needed. [...] We have used funds to help students take advantage of extra-curricular activities such as school trips."*<sup>175</sup>

Matthew Bartlett advised the Committee:

*"Parents in receipt of benefits or with a low income are able to apply to the School's general and voluntary funds for assistance with uniform. Parents are asked to fill in a form and attach a copy of their P60 or benefit award notice as evidence"*<sup>176</sup>.

<sup>174</sup> The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham: Our Promise (2015) <http://www.kingedwardvi.bham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/finalpromise.pdf>

<sup>175</sup> KCC (2016) Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>176</sup> KCC (2016) Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

*"The uniform is modestly priced at around £150 and there had been no increase to the cost for three years."*<sup>177</sup>

Pupil Premium monies are used by some schools to provide financial support. Dover Grammar School for Girls has spent well in excess of the £63,000 it received to support students who were eligible for the Pupil Premium.

Peter Read advised the Committee:

*"Open days (at grammar schools) can scream, it's going to cost e.g., school trips."*<sup>178</sup>

Grammar schools may choose to provide help with the cost of school clothing and school trips in cases of financial hardship. Schools may also wish to consider running their own schemes to provide financial assistance, particularly for supporting new intakes of children entering the school for costs associated with uniform, transport, school trips and equipment.

### Case Study: Maidstone Grammar School

Maidstone Grammar School (MGS) utilises its Pupil Premium funding to good effect. It details on its website, what the Pupil Premium is meant to be used for and how the funding is used flexibly to respond to the needs of its students. The following is an extract from their website<sup>179</sup>:

The Pupil Premium Grant is specifically aimed to raise the attainment of economically disadvantaged pupils and close the gap with their peers. Research indicates that poverty is a very strong predictor of a child's future life chances:

*"Material deprivation can influence educational outcomes by reducing the educational resources that families can provide, and by adversely affecting the home environment. Deprivation is commonly associated with other factors which can influence children's outcomes: ill health; family stress; low levels of parental education and parental involvement in their children's education; low levels of cultural and social capital; and low aspirations". (Source: Department for Education- Disadvantaged Pupils and the Pupil Premium)*

A key point is that "close the gap" does not mean "catch up" or "perform at a satisfactory level". Rather, it means that disadvantaged pupils **should fulfil their individual potential in line with other pupils of the same ability.**

Pupil Premium funding is used flexibly to respond to the needs of our students – either individually or in groups. As part of our inclusive ethos we are committed to helping all of our students to fulfil

<sup>177</sup> KCC (2016) Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>178</sup> KCC (2016) Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>179</sup> The Pupil Premium Grant at Maidstone Grammar School (2015-2016) <http://www.mgs.kent.sch.uk/>

their potential, regardless of circumstances. We therefore extend help and support, where appropriate, to those students who are not eligible for the Pupil Premium Grant but where there is known to be financial hardship. In addition, where we identify need, we continue to provide support to Sixth Form students who were previously eligible for the Pupil Premium.

Maidstone Grammar School (MGS) deploy some of their Pupil Premium funding to deliver support to students including:

- To provide a bursary grant to all Pupil Premium students to help parents with the purchase of school uniform, school equipment, books etc;
- To provide personal copies of exam revision guides to Pupil Premium students;
- To provide further financial assistance to enable Pupil Premium students to participate in trips, visits and Extended Learning Week;
- To provide access to support from a CXK advisor in school.

Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys uses funds to support some children in receipt of Pupil Premium with costs. This includes:

- Support in buying House T-shirts and other mandatory uniform items;
- Making available previously owned uniform, especially blazers;
- Deliberately keeping the main school uniform as simple as possible, using multi-suppliers and making available the school badge which can be sewn on to garments.

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls in Trafford<sup>180</sup>, Greater Manchester (part of the Bright Futures Educational Trust) uses the Pupil Premium to fund activities such as school trips and the cost of school uniform. It has the following key objectives for the use of its Pupil Premium funding:

- To continue to offer opportunities for those in receipt of Pupil Premium to access the same extra-curricular opportunities;
- To ensure all those in receipt of Pupil Premium have access to funding for curriculum trips, year group trips and for other opportunities where the pupils/students are representing the school;
- To allow every pupil to have a £200 contribution to a residential, extra-curricular trip, every two years;
- To make a contribution towards the cost of uniform.

Colyton Grammar School in Devon<sup>181</sup> has a Bursary Fund which is used to:

- Cover up to 50% of the residential and transport costs where students represent the school in regional or national finals of competitions;

<sup>180</sup> Altrincham Grammar School for Girls (2016) <http://www.aggs.trafford.sch.uk/our-school/pupil-premium/>

<sup>181</sup> Cloyton Grammar School, Devon (2016) Pupil Premium and Service Premium spend  
<https://www.colytongrammar.devon.sch.uk/pupilpremium/index.htm>

- Covers up to 20% of the residential and transport costs of a curriculum focused residential visit;
- Grants to individual students whose family have particular hardship, to cover up to 50% of the costs of visits and activities.

## **16-19 Bursary Fund**

Many grammar schools publicise their 16-19 Bursary Fund policy that can be accessed by students from low income families. Maidstone Grammar School is a good example of this and their website provides information. The Bursary is money that the student or the school can use to pay for things like:

- Clothing, books and other equipment for courses;
- Transport and lunch on school days;

Bursaries are expected to help students overcome barriers to participation.

There are two types of 16-19 Bursary, the Vulnerable Student Bursary and the Discretionary Bursary. Students could get the Vulnerable Student Bursary worth up to £1,200 if they are in or recently left, local authority care, get Income Support or are disabled.

The Discretionary Bursary is administered by the school and students will need to ask their Student Services about the criteria and any evidence they will need to produce to access these funds. It is up to the school to decide which students will receive a Discretionary Bursary and how much they will receive. However, bursaries should be targeted at students who cannot stay in education without financial help.

For Academies that already have a funding agreement with the Education Funding Agency, a discretionary allocation will be made annually within their school budget.

Maintained schools sixth-form Discretionary allocations are made through KCC who pass the funding to the school. The school is then responsible for administering the funds.

Each secondary school must have a policy that sets out who is eligible to receive the Discretionary Bursary and what the eligibility criteria are, enabling an assessment to be made of each student's actual need for financial help. Schools must publicise the Bursary and their policy so that students are aware of it and how to apply. Payments can be in cash or in-kind and schools must retain records of the pupils' regular attendance, punctuality, good behaviour etc.



## Transport

**Recommendation 12: KCC to extend the existing entitlement for children on Free School Meals to free school transport to their nearest appropriate school to all children in receipt of Pupil Premium;**

**Recommendation 13: KCC should raise the low income threshold to £21k to enable pupils from low income families but not entitled to Free School Meals to access free transport to their nearest appropriate secondary school.**

**Recommendation 14: KCC to create a schools focused supplementary transport bursary, that would enable grammar schools and other types of schools where appropriate, to provide bespoke transport solutions especially for children from rural areas without bus services to enable better access to grammar schools.**

Transport costs are significant for low income families. The cost of travelling to a grammar school every day may be a barrier for families with low income choosing grammar school. Young people's attendance and their participation in after school activities and learning support can be affected by the availability of transport and the cost of travelling.

The Committee heard from parents at an evidence session when asked about barriers to grammar school:

*"The Bus pass cost here has risen enormously; it's the families who are just above the FSM bracket that really suffer."*<sup>182</sup>

The Committee also heard from Keith Abbott that:

*"Transport may be a significant barrier [to families applying to grammar schools]. [...] While there is an offer around transport and FSM, perhaps this isn't published as well as it needs to be."*<sup>183</sup>

Sections 508A, B, C & D, 509AD and Schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996 requires KCC to ensure that suitable travel arrangements are made to facilitate children's attendance at school.

The DfE's statutory guidance for LAs: 'Home to school travel and transport guidance', July 2014 defines eligible children for whom free travel arrangements are required along with statutory walking distances eligibility, SEND eligibility, unsafe route eligibility and extended rights eligibility.

<sup>182</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>183</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

No financial support is provided for children and young people living less than 2 miles (Primary) or 3 miles (Secondary) from their school.

The Act extends rights to free transport for all children from low income groups of compulsory school age who are 11 or over in two ways – to a choice of schools within six miles of a child's home, and to the nearest appropriate school preferred by reason of a parent's religion or belief or choice of selective education up to a maximum of 15 miles from the child's home.

Children of compulsory school age who are 11 or over from low income families must have travel arrangements made to one of their three nearest qualifying schools, where they live more than two miles, but not more than six miles from that school.

Kent County Council has developed a home to school transport policy in line with the requirements of the law. It provides for free transport for low income families in the following way:

#### **KCC's Home to School Transport Policy low income families criteria**

Transport can be seen as a barrier to expressing a preference for a school. Kent County Council has therefore put measures in place for low income families to receive free transport to the nearest available grammar school, if it is appropriate for the pupil.

A child will qualify for free transport assistance under the low income criteria if they meet the criteria of attending their nearest appropriate school **and** are entitled to receive Free School Meals or parents are in receipt of one of the benefits listed below:

- Income Support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Child Tax Credit (without Working Tax Credit and with an annual income of no more than £16,190)
- Guaranteed element of state pension credit
- Income related employment and support allowance
- Maximum level of Working Tax Credit.

Children in the care of Kent County Council and children from Low Income Families, who are entitled to receive Free School Meals, will receive transport assistance to the **nearest grammar school** in the following circumstances.

- They must have met the entry requirements of the grammar school;

- They have been offered a place at the school;
- The school is the nearest school of that type to their home;
- The distance from their home and the school must be between 2 and 15 miles.

Transport assistance may also be available where a child in the care of Kent County Council or a child from a Low Income Family is unable to secure a place at their nearest grammar school, but who has named their nearest grammar school as a preference on their admissions application form and secured a place at the next nearest grammar school providing it is not more than 15 miles from their home.

### **Young Person's Travel Pass for 11-16 Year Olds**

Parents have an opportunity to purchase a discounted, subsidised, travel pass to provide free, at the point of travel, transport on the public bus network if they are not eligible for free transport. The Young Person's Travel Pass (YPTP) and the Kent 16+ Travel Card are available to young people who are not eligible to receive free home to school transport.

Kent County Council offers a YPTP, which is a discretionary pass subsidised by KCC, and which the majority of young people use to access their school. The YPTP provides unlimited access to the Kent public bus network for young people Monday to Friday between 6am and 7pm, available to use from the start of term until 31 July.

The YPTP scheme continues to be one of the most generous travel passes of its kind outside of London and, apart from the application fee, is wholly funded by KCC.

To apply for an YPTP every applicant must be a resident of Kent within Kent County Council's administrative area (i.e. whose parent/carers pay Council Tax to a Kent district council for KCC services).

Pupils in the academic years 7–11, are eligible to apply for a pass if they pay:

- **A standard fee of £250** for a full year pass, for use from the start of the academic year until 31 July 2016;
- **A reduced fee £100** for a full year pass, if in receipt of Free School Meals, for use from the start of the academic year until 31 July 2016;
- **Buy 2 and get the others for free** if you are paying full price for your pass. Please see further details below.
- **£0 (free)** A Young Carer or a Young Person in Care or a Care Leaver

## **Kent 16+ Travel Card**

To get a 16+ Travel Card young people must:

- be aged between 16 and 19 years old;
- live in a house that pays Council Tax to a Kent council;
- attend a participating school, college or work-based learning provider.

The most young people will pay is £400. They may pay less if they are only using it for part of the year or if they are from a low income family. The cost of the card is based on the following:

- students whose household income is between £16,191 and £20,817 a year could pay between £200 and £400;
- students whose household income is less than £16,191 (the same as our Free School Meals criteria) a year could pay no more than £200;
- an employed 16 to 19 year old apprentice who can demonstrate hardship caused by travel pressures could pay between £200 and £400.

If a young person has received the full vulnerable learner bursary payment or their household income is more than £20,818 they will pay £400.

Students can use the travel card all day, all year round. The card enables free travel on most public buses.

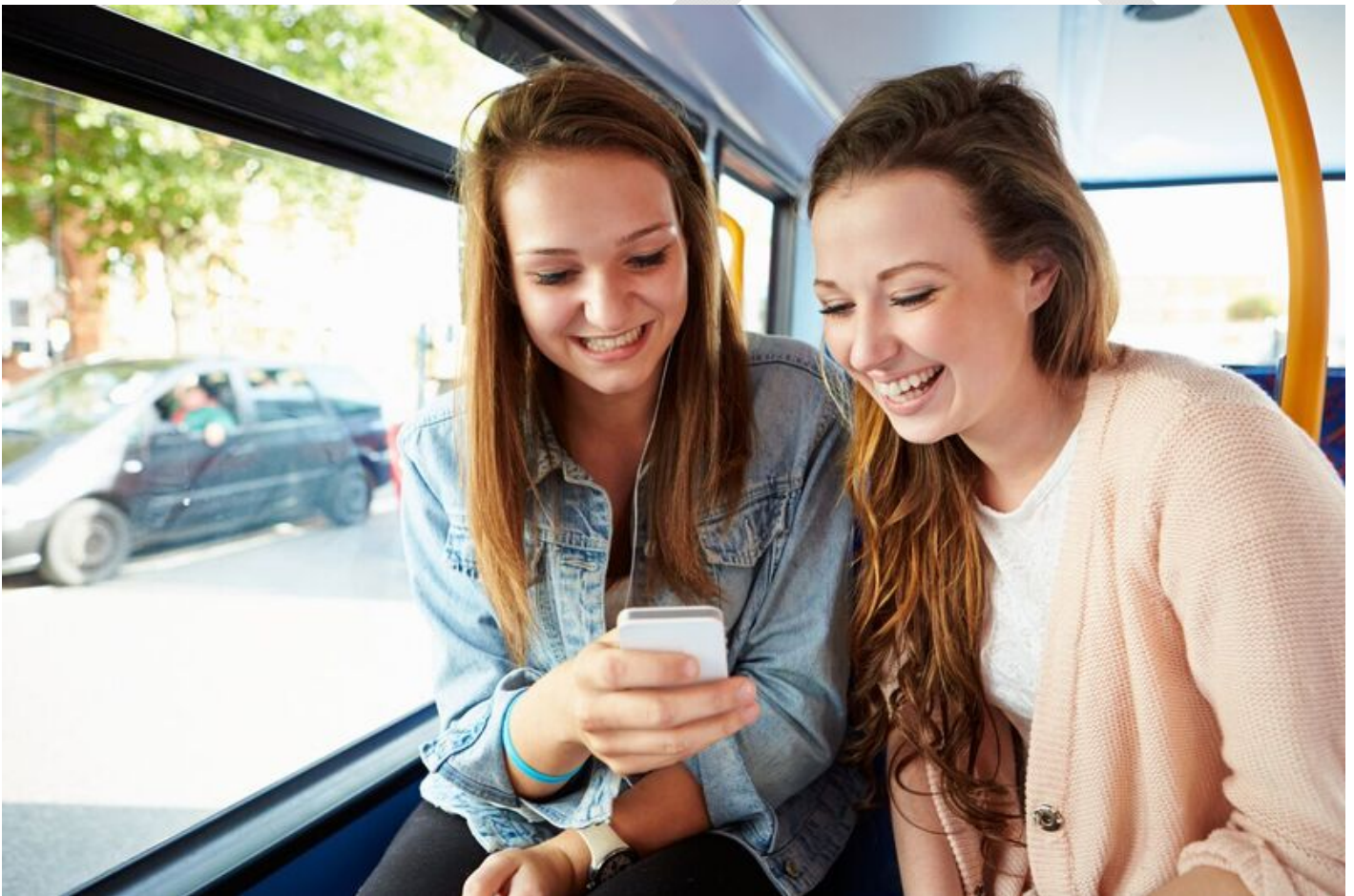
## **Individual School Transport Arrangements**

In addition to the financial support that KCC provides for low income families attending grammar schools in Kent, individual schools are also able to offer transport support. Ways in which grammar schools could do this include:

- using Bursary funding for individual children;
- negotiating school specific transport contracts which may include a parental contribution and subsidy from the school.

As identified above there are a number of provisions in place to support children from low income backgrounds to access their most appropriate local school. The Select Committee recognises that transport costs can prove a significant pressure for many families, not just those on the very lowest income. Therefore the Select Committee recommends KCC explore the potential of raising the low income threshold within its Home to School Transport policy to £21k to enable more pupils from low income families to access free transport to their nearest appropriate secondary school.

To ensure that young people's education is not affected by the availability or cost of transport, the Committee also recommends that KCC creates a supplementary transport bursary to provide bespoke transport solutions for those children most in need. The bursary would be schools focussed and enable grammar schools and other types of schools where appropriate to ensure those children most disadvantaged, for example from low income rural areas without bus services, are more able to access their most appropriate school. The bursary could be overseen by the Transport Regulation Committee.





## 4. Increasing Fair Access to grammar schools

### Grammar school Admissions

**Recommendation 15: To invite grammar schools to fully consider the disadvantage children eligible for Pupil Premium support face and take action within their oversubscription admissions criteria. Where this fails to happen we will expect KCC to challenge the determined admissions arrangements.**

*"Whatever your views on selection, grammar schools are a feature of our education system, so the priority must be to ensure they are opened up to bright pupils from low and middle-income backgrounds." James Turner, Director of Programmes, The Sutton Trust, 29 May 2014.*

The challenge for the selective system in Kent is how to ensure that grammar schools are open to all students, and not merely the preserve of better-off families. Opening up grammar schools and trying to ensure entry is based solely on merit and not the financial status of families, would help to increase social mobility for pupils from low income backgrounds. One way of doing this is to give priority to Free School Meals (FSM) / Pupil Premium pupils in grammar school admissions criteria.

The School Admission Code allows schools in their admission criteria to give preference to pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium. Conor Ryan advised the Committee that the Grammar School Heads Association was supportive of this change in the Code. The change has resulted in an increase in the number of FSM pupils being admitted into some grammar schools.<sup>184</sup>

On 14 December 2013 The Chief Inspector of Schools, Sir Michael Wilshaw, said in an interview with The Observer:

*"Grammar schools are stuffed full of middle-class kids. A tiny percentage are on free school meals: 3%. That is a nonsense. Anyone who thinks grammar schools are going to increase social mobility needs to look at those figures. I don't think they work."*<sup>185</sup>

The Sutton Trust who influence policy to improve social mobility through education, published research in November 2013 showing that just 2.7% of grammar schools' places went to pupils eligible for FSM, compared with around 18% at other state funded schools in selective local

<sup>184</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

<sup>185</sup> The Guardian (Dec 2013) 'Ofsted Chief declares war on grammar schools'



authorities<sup>186</sup>. In January 2016, there were 18.7% of FSM Ever children in Kent, 19.7% in all secondary schools and 6.2% of FSM Ever pupils in grammar schools<sup>187</sup>.

Proponents of the grammar school system argue that grammar schools aid social mobility by giving pupils from low income households an educational opportunity they could not otherwise obtain. However, the low prevalence of Pupil Premium pupils in grammar schools casts doubt on their ability to aid social mobility.

Rebecca Allen, Director of Education Datalab Research Group stated in an article in the Guardian on 17 October 2015 that,

*"I think they (grammar schools) could be a fantastic vehicle for social mobility if any poor kids actually went to them. .... That's the basic problem. Of course they could be good for social mobility, because what we know about grammar schools is that the children who get to go do better as a result."*<sup>188</sup>

If Kent is to increase social mobility, grammar schools need to expand the range of socio-economic backgrounds from which pupils are drawn, breaking the middle-class stranglehold on selective education. This could be achieved through Kent grammar schools reviewing their admissions policies and increasing the number of pupils from low income families, by giving priority to children who apply for a grammar school place, pass the Kent Test and who are eligible for Pupil Premium support.

According to an article in The Guardian on 1 May 2014, more than half of England's 164 existing grammar schools say they plan to revise their admissions criteria to give priority to qualifying children who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) or the Pupil Premium<sup>189</sup>. Barry Sindall, chief executive of the Grammar School Heads Association (GSHA) stated that 58 grammar schools are drawing up plans to do the same as the King Edward VI grammar schools:

*"We've been looking for some time for various ways we can improve access and encourage more able, disadvantaged children to apply to grammar schools."*

In an effort to attract children from lower social-economic backgrounds, some grammar schools, including Rugby High School for Girls in Warwickshire, are going even further by reserving a fixed number of places for FSM-eligible children, so potentially accepting pupils if they score marks below the entrance exam qualifying standard.

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<sup>186</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

<sup>187</sup> As at January 2016

<sup>188</sup> The Guardian (2015) 'Grammar schools could be fantastic for social mobility – if any poor kids went to them'

<sup>189</sup> The Guardian (2014) Grammar schools announce plan to give priority to disadvantaged pupils'

The King Edward VI grammar schools in Birmingham (five in number) have changed their admissions policies and give priority to admit able, gifted and talented pupils on Free School Meals in order to increase the proportion of grammar entrants from low income backgrounds. Children registered for Free School Meals at any point in the past six years have priority for up to 20% of Year 7 admission places<sup>190</sup>.

Pate's Grammar School, Gloucestershire gives priority to Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children and those attracting the Pupil Premium who meet the qualifying standard after taking the Admissions Test.

Chapter 1 of Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 contains the key provisions regarding schools admissions, including statutory basis for the School Admissions Code December 2014 (statutory guidance for Admission Authorities). This Code (along with the statutory guidance contained within School Admission Appeals Code, February 2012) includes the provisions relating to school admissions made in the regulations. The most relevant regulations are:

- a) The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012;
- b) The School Admissions (Appeals) (England) Regulations 2012; and
- c) The School Information (England) Regulations 2008.

Each Admission Authority (the body responsible for setting and applying a school's admission arrangements) for a school must set out in their arrangements the criteria against which places will be allocated at the school when there are more applications than places and the order in which the criteria will be applied. If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants must be offered a place (with the exception of designated grammar schools).

Oversubscription criteria must be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation. It is for admission authorities to decide which criteria would be most suitable to the school according to the local circumstances.

All selective schools must publish the entry requirements for a selective place and the process for such selection.

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<sup>190</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2016

Only designated grammar schools are permitted to select their entire intake on the basis of high academic ability. They do not have to fill all of their places if applicants have not reached the required standard.

Where admission arrangements are not based solely on highest scores in a selection test, the admission authority must give priority in its oversubscription criteria to all looked after children and previously looked after children who meet the pre-set standards of the ability test.

Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the pupil premium and also children eligible for the service premium. Admission authorities should clearly define in the arrangements the categories of eligible premium recipients to be prioritised.

### **Prioritising applications for pupils supported by the Pupil Premium**

Admissions policies are key to improving the representation of students in grammar schools from low income families and some grammar schools in Kent are helpfully revising their admissions procedures to enable able children from disadvantaged backgrounds to secure a place. Further grammar schools are encouraged to review their admissions policies and consider giving priority in their oversubscription criteria to pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium.

This would help to address underrepresentation of low income groups, and begin to balance grammar schools' intake in terms of a wider range of pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds on the school roll. By increasing access for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium, grammar schools in Kent could make a significant impact in challenging the notion that they do not aid social mobility. Selective schools could then be seen to be evidencing that they are helping more students from low income backgrounds become more upwardly mobile and successful.

Some Kent grammar schools are taking positive steps to become more accessible to pupils from all backgrounds. KCC urges all grammar schools to adopt good practice in prioritising applications from pupils supported by the Pupil Premium:

#### **Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Faversham**

David Anderson advised the Committee that eligibility for FSM was top of his school's admissions criteria. He explained that they had received 500 applications for 140 places. Priority was FSM and many have confirmed that they were choosing Queen Elizabeth's because of this priority.

Queen Elizabeth's oversubscription priority 3, after children in local authority care and current family association, states:

'Students currently in receipt of Free School Meals - in this instance Kent County Council will provide a supporting list for those students who apply to Queen Elizabeth's currently or historically in receipt of Free School Meals. Where a student from outside of Kent applies or where a student is attending an independent school, we will apply to the student's current school for evidence'.

### **The Skinners' School in Tunbridge Wells**

The Skinners' School oversubscription priority b), after children in local authority care states:

'Up to 5 places to pupils registered in that academic year for Free School Meals, ranked according to their combined test scores. Applicants in this category will need to have filled out a Supplementary Information Form'. This is a new inclusion to the over subscription criteria, with the first intake of students starting in September 2016.

In early 2015 Skinners' School consulted on changing its admissions criteria 'acknowledging the role of grammar schools in giving a better chance for all school pupils' (Skinners' School 2015). As a result of this consultation the school has inserted a clause into its over admissions criteria for 2017 which permits the school to admit up to five pupils (ranked by score) registered in that academic year for Free School Meals who are grammar school assessed in the Kent Test.

The change in place for September 2016 allowed up to five FSM pupils to access the school even though their scores were up to 10 marks below the lowest Skinners' entry score. Whilst under five children have gained a place through this revised admissions criteria this year it is hoped that as awareness increases higher numbers of children eligible for Free School Meals will apply and gain a place in the school.

### **Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys**

John Harrison advised the Committee that he would like to see more FSM children attending grammar schools as he believed they can do as well in the grammar school environment as non-FSM pupils<sup>191</sup>. He confirmed that the school had high expectations for all pupils including those in receipt of FSM. Mr Harrison advised that for 2017-18, children in receipt of Pupil Premium would be prioritised within each criterion of the school's admission oversubscription criteria.

The Tunbridge Wells Grammar School's oversubscription criteria states that:

'Priority will be given initially, within each of the following criteria, to children in receipt of Pupil Premium, who have completed and returned a Supplementary Information Form:

- Children in Local Authority Care or previously in Local Authority Care;

<sup>191</sup> KCC (2016), Grammar schools and social mobility Select Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

- Current Family Association;
- Health and Special Access reasons;
- Children who live within a 3 mile radius of the school;
- Children who live in specifically named parishes;
- Nearness of all other children's homes to school.

Within each of these criteria, applicants will be ranked in a higher priority according to Pupil Premium and then distance, with those nearer to the school gaining a higher priority.

**Recommendation 16: Urge all “super selective” grammar schools to allocate a number of places for pupils registered in that academic year for Pupil Premium support and who achieve an appropriate combined test score in the Kent Test. We would also invite these schools to review the impact of “super selection” on social mobility in their areas**

*'Grammar schools are over-subscribed, with pupils also travelling longer distances to attend them. A high proportion of students in grammar schools come from outside the local authority, as well as from the independent sector. By contrast, high achieving children from less privileged backgrounds are under-represented in grammar schools.'*<sup>192</sup>

The Office of the Schools Adjudicator considered objections from parents, school governing bodies and KCC, about the operation of super selection in West Kent by three grammar schools in October 2010. The Schools Adjudicator ruled that the grammar schools' super selective admissions arrangements were compliant with the School Admissions Code.

However, the grammar system as a whole in Kent needs to improve in terms of ensuring that more financially disadvantaged but academically able students access the grammar system. How to achieve an increase in pupils from low income families attending grammar schools needs to be considered step by step, in a practical and achievable way, beginning with a review of the operation of super selection by some grammar schools in Kent.

Of Kent's 32 grammars, 11 schools are operating a policy of super selection. A list of all Kent grammar schools, including those who are super selective, appears at Appendix D.

<sup>192</sup> The Sutton Trust, (2013), Poor Grammar: Entry into Grammar Schools for Disadvantaged Pupils in England

By using oversubscription criteria which take account of children's scores, 'super selective' grammar schools are able to admit the highest-scoring pupils ahead of others, so a greater proportion of their intake will have high test scores.

An example is Maidstone Grammar School (MGS) who explain their super selective oversubscription criteria in the following way for the September 2016 intake:

*The Kent Test pass mark was 320 out of 420. Criteria 2 for admission to MGS states that pupils must achieve at least a mark half way between the pass mark and the maximum marks available in the Kent Test.*

*For this year, this will mean a score of 370 or more will secure entry under the over subscription criteria listed for Criteria 2 (last year this would have resulted in 33 of the 175 boys that we admit each year, which is approximately 20% of the cohort) in the order of (a) siblings and (b) those living shortest distance from the school.*

*All other places will be allocated based on Criteria 3, pupils who have been assessed as suitable for a grammar school place resident in one of the listed parishes in the order of (a) siblings and (b) those living shortest distance from the school.*

It is apparent from Appendix D that grammar schools who operate super selection, admit a smaller percentage of FSM Ever children than grammar schools who do not operate super selection. Given that the overall aggregate percentage of FSM Ever pupils attending grammar schools in Kent is already very low (6.3%<sup>193</sup>), the operation of this policy makes a bad situation worse.

In order to address under-representation of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds in Kent's grammar schools, the process of entry into grammar schools needs to ensure that it does not further disadvantage students from low income backgrounds. Applying super selective oversubscription criteria in grammar school admissions policies results in fewer able Pupil Premium students securing a place in grammar school. KCC therefore urges all super selective grammar schools to review the impact of super selection on social mobility in their areas and allocate a number of places for pupils registered in that academic year for Pupil Premium support who achieve an appropriate combined test score in the Kent Test.

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<sup>193</sup> As at October 2015





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## Conclusion

Within Kent we have the benefit of a wide choice of secondary school options, with more than 4 out of 5 of our secondary schools judged by Ofsted to be Good or Outstanding<sup>194</sup>. For those most academically able children, grammar schools can often provide the most suitable educational environment tailored to developing and supporting pupils academically. However with just 6.3% of all pupils going to grammar schools claiming Pupil Premium and with the most academically able children from poorer backgrounds being less likely to apply and attend grammar school than their more affluent peers, current access to these schools is not solely based on academic ability but is impacted by family income.

More must be done to ensure that opportunities are open to all children in Kent, and that those children from disadvantaged backgrounds who may benefit most from attending a grammar school do not face additional barriers in accessing a grammar school education.

The report focuses on realistic and practical recommendations. Working collectively with schools, parents and pupils we will encourage further engagement with parents and families by primary and grammar schools, greater outreach including after school English and maths, mentoring and preparation for the Kent Test and the removal of financial barriers such as uniforms and school transport. To increase social mobility it is also crucial for all grammar schools to prioritise children in receipt of Pupil Premium in their admissions arrangements. Whilst we welcome steps already taken to prioritise FSM/Pupil Premium children in admissions arrangements for grammar schools, the work of identifying suitable children and support to take the Kent Test and overcome some of the perceptions acting as barriers to accessing grammar schools needs to take place as early as possible. Strong partnerships between primary and grammar schools are essential to see a greater proportion of poorer pupils in grammar schools.

The Select Committee heard from a range of primary and secondary school Headteachers who were keen to further their efforts in reducing barriers to grammar schools for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. KCC is eager to build on this work and the momentum of The Sutton Trust report, *Poor Grammar*, and the Grammar School Heads Association (GSHA)<sup>195</sup>, whose members include a number of Kent schools. It is only through both individual and united actions that social mobility into grammar schools can be improved.

As champions for pupils, parents and families, KCC wants to engage in a genuine dialogue with Kent schools about how to promote more social mobility and make a reality of increased numbers of children from disadvantaged backgrounds attending grammar schools. This report forms a starting point for this discussion.

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<sup>194</sup> 84% of secondary schools as at October 2015

<sup>195</sup> Grammar School Heads Association (Spring 2015) Newsletter



# Appendices

## Appendix A: Key Lines of Enquiry

1. To determine whether disadvantaged children and their parents face barriers in accessing Grammar school education.
  - a. Explore whether there is a gap between the percentage of children on Free School Meals (FSM) and the percentage of children not on FSM who achieve Level 5s at KS2 and are entered for and pass the Kent Test.
  - b. What percentage of children in care achieving Level 5s at KS2 are entered for the Kent Test?
  - c. How are children identified to be entered for the Kent Test?
  - d. What are the barriers to children on FSM in entering the Kent Test? Are these social as well as educational?
  - e. To examine attainment levels / educational outcomes of FSM children in grammar schools up to 18 yrs old.
2. To identify and better understand the drivers of any barriers.
  - a. Review what guidance, if any, is given to schools on providing support to disadvantaged children who may benefit from access to grammar schools.
  - b. To explore opportunities to engage with parents of disadvantaged children who have recently sat the 11+ or who are considering taking the Kent Test.
3. To consider and examine the effects of what KCC and partners are already doing to ensure fair access to Grammar schools for all.
  - a. Explore case studies of primary schools with high FSM intake going onto grammar schools and consider factors in their success.
  - b. Review the impact of Gifted and Talented classes on FSM intake delivered by grammar schools in primary schools.
  - c. Explore whether the Pupil Premium for children on FSM and the pupil premium for children who are in care / have been looked after has led to an increase in their intake in grammar schools in Kent (look at Yr 7 intake compared to current Yr 12).
  - d. Consider the value and impact of collaboration / partnerships between primary schools and grammar schools.
4. To consider what KCC and partners can do further to improve access to grammar schools by disadvantaged children.

- a. To gather evidence from KCC Members and officers, schools, and representatives of relevant external organisations to identify what steps need to be taken to overcome these barriers.
- b. Explore the role of parents and Headteachers in identifying appropriate options for children in Yr 4/5 and the role of primary schools in shaping children's access to grammar schools.
- c. To investigate best practice examples from other United Kingdom selective areas of what actions they have taken to improve access to Grammar schools for disadvantaged children and how these might be utilised in Kent.

5. For the Select Committee to make recommendations after having gathered evidence throughout the review.

## Appendix B: Local Authorities with Selective Education

Table adapted from the Institute of Financial Studies (2013)

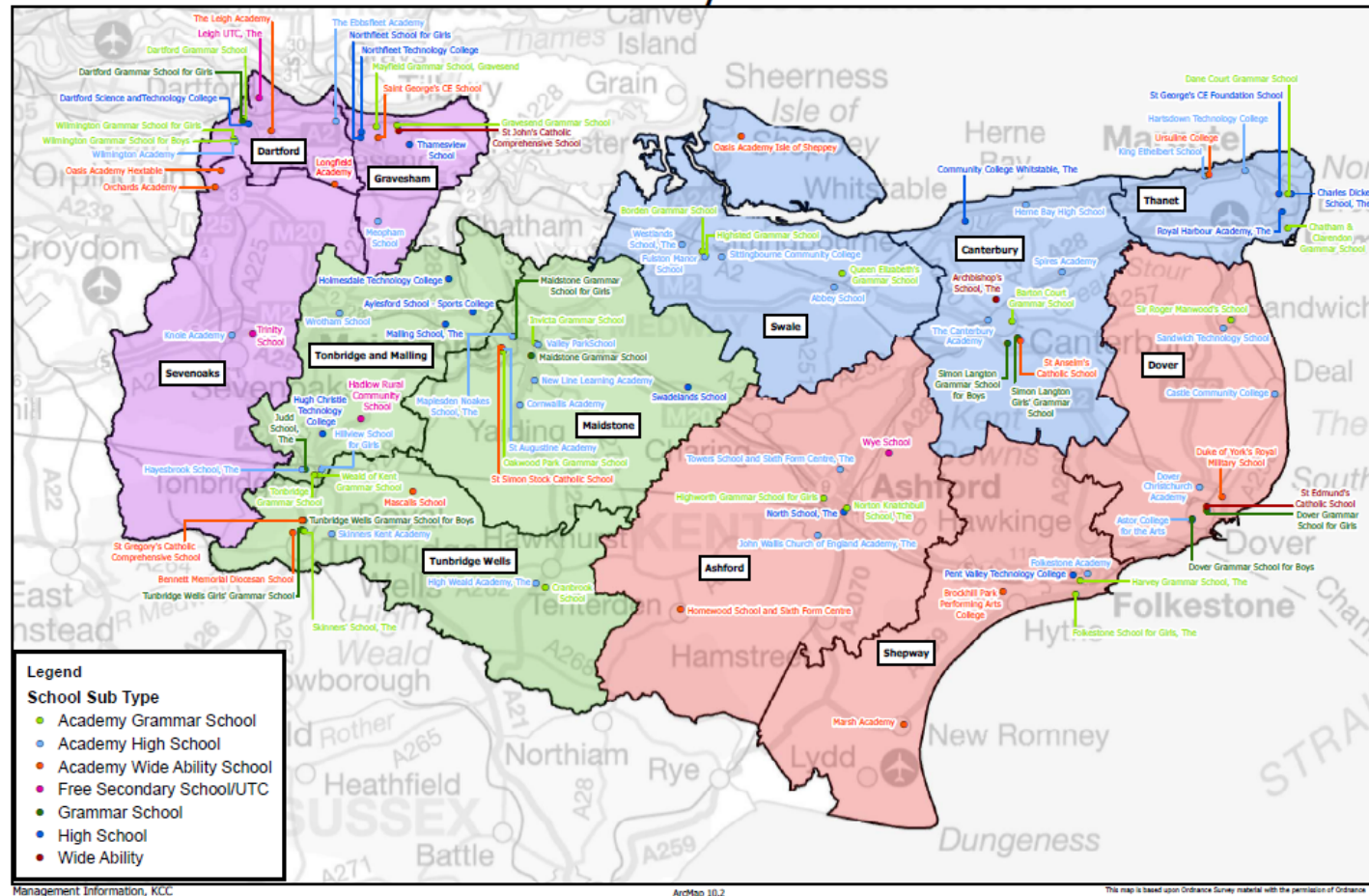
<sup>196</sup> Local authority (LA)	Number of schools	Proportion of pupils in LA at grammar schools (%)	Proportion of pupils at grammar schools living outside LA (%)
<b>All</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24.9</b>
<b>Selective local authorities</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>19.3</b>
Trafford	7	38.5	28.5
Buckinghamshire	13	36.0	19.2
Slough	4	32.4	60.0
<b>Kent</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>6.8</b>
Southend-on-Sea	4	28.3	53.4
Torbay	3	27.6	40.6
Medway	6	27.5	12.0
Wirral	6	25.8	8.9
Lincolnshire	15	22.7	17.7
Bournemouth	2	18.8	37.8
Reading	2	18.8	75.0
Plymouth	3	14.8	34.5
Gloucestershire	7	12.6	4.5
Calderdale	2	11.7	30.0

<sup>196</sup> Institute of Financial Studies, 2013, [http://www.ifs.org.uk/docs/Grammar\\_Schools2013.pdf](http://www.ifs.org.uk/docs/Grammar_Schools2013.pdf)



# Appendix C: Kent Secondary Schools by District

## Kent Secondary Schools by District February 2016



## Appendix D: FSM Ever Grammar school pupils with super selective comparison

DfE	School	School Type	School Sub Type	Status	Super Selective	District	Area	Number on Roll January 2016	Number FSM Ever	% FSM Ever	Number Eligible FSM	% Eligible FSM
8865459	Dover Grammar School for Boys	SEC	GRA	Foundation	No	Dover	South	792	92	11.6	40	5.1
8865460	Dane Court Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Thanet	East	1275	146	11.5	82	6.4
8865437	Folkestone School for Girls, The	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Shepway	South	1075	117	10.9	43	4.0
8865462	Chatham & Clarendon Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Thanet	East	1314	142	10.8	71	5.4
8864101	Harvey Grammar School, The	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Shepway	South	902	88	9.8	39	4.3
8864109	Dover Grammar School for Girls	SEC	GRA	Community	No	Dover	South	859	81	9.4	34	4.0
8864527	Borden Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Swale	East	822	75	9.1	29	3.5
8865444	Barton Court Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Canterbury	East	851	74	8.7	31	3.6
8865467	Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	Yes	Gravesham	North	966	82	8.5	27	2.8
8864080	Highsted Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Swale	East	820	66	8.0	28	3.4
8865465	Gravesend Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Gravesham	North	1144	90	7.9	21	1.8
8864528	Norton Knatchbull School, The	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Ashford	South	1109	85	7.7	46	4.1
8865403	Wilmington Grammar School for Boys	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Dartford	North	926	66	7.1	21	2.3
8865428	Sir Roger Manwood's School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Dover	South	953	61	6.4	19	2.0
8865411	Dartford Grammar School for Girls	SEC	GRA	Foundation	Yes	Dartford	North	1066	66	6.2	30	2.8
8864092	Highworth Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Ashford	South	1371	83	6.1	37	2.7
8865422	Oakwood Park Grammar School, Maidstone	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Maidstone	West	981	57	5.8	20	2.0
8864058	Invicta Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Maidstone	West	1314	70	5.3	34	2.6
8864045	Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys	SEC	GRA	Community	No	Tunbridge Wells	West	1286	67	5.2	30	2.3

8864523	Maidstone Grammar School for Girls	SEC	GRA	Foundation	No	Maidstone	West	1218	63	5.2	31	2.5
8865449	Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Swale	East	958	48	5.0	18	1.9
8864522	Maidstone Grammar School	SEC	GRA	Foundation	Yes	Maidstone	West	1216	59	4.9	21	1.7
8865412	Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	SEC	GRA	Foundation	Yes	Canterbury	East	1139	54	4.7	21	1.8
8864534	Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School	SEC	GRA	Voluntary Controlled	No	Canterbury	East	1086	51	4.7	20	1.8
8865400	Wilmington Grammar School for Girls	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	Yes	Dartford	North	864	35	4.1	26	3.0
8864046	Weald of Kent Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	No	Tonbridge and Malling	West	1189	45	3.8	20	1.7
8865406	Dartford Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	Yes	Dartford	North	1332	43	3.2	19	1.4
8864043	Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School	SEC	GRA	Foundation	Yes	Tunbridge Wells	West	1008	28	2.8	14	1.4
8865443	Tonbridge Grammar School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	Yes	Tonbridge and Malling	West	1143	25	2.2	12	1.0
8864622	Judd School, The	SEC	GRA	Voluntary Aided	Yes	Tonbridge and Malling	West	1079	18	1.7	11	1.0
8865418	Skinnners' School, The	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	Yes	Tunbridge Wells	West	943	14	1.5	6	0.6
8865416	Cranbrook School	SEC	ACA GRA	Academy	Yes	Tunbridge Wells	West	744	11	1.5	9	1.2

**Note:**

**1) Super Selective Schools have been defined as schools which make reference to test score in their published admission criteria**

## Appendix E: Diversity Information

Grammar schools have a higher proportion of ethnic minority pupils than non-selective schools, 20.2% compared to 13.9%.

January 2015 figures are included due to ethnic minority data being reported annually.

Grammar Schools Contextual Data								
Year Group	Total Pupils - Oct 2015	Number of FSM	% FSM	Number of CIC	% CIC	Total Pupils - Jan 2015	Number of Ethnic Minority	% Ethnic Minority
7	5,066	172	3.4	11	0.2	4,871	1082	22.2
8	4,910	183	3.7	5	0.1	4,789	1031	21.5
9	4,902	129	2.6	8	0.2	4,748	951	20.0
10	4,746	120	2.5	3	0.1	4,708	891	18.9
11	4,685	134	2.9	6	0.1	4,644	818	17.6
12	4,996	108	2.2	5	0.1	5,044	1035	20.5
13	4,519	95	2.1	2	0.0	4,541	935	20.6
All Year Groups	33,824	941	2.8	40	0.1	33,345	6743	20.2

### SEN:

Pupil Group	Number on Roll October 2015	Number SEN Statements	% SEN Statements
Kent Primary Total (exc Nursery)	121138	1383	1.1
Grammar	33829	81	0.2
Non Selective	65408	1196	1.8
FSM Eligible – No	198220	4403	2.2
FSM Eligible – Yes	25822	1701	6.6
Kent LAC	1040	209	20.1
OLA LAC	297	96	32.3

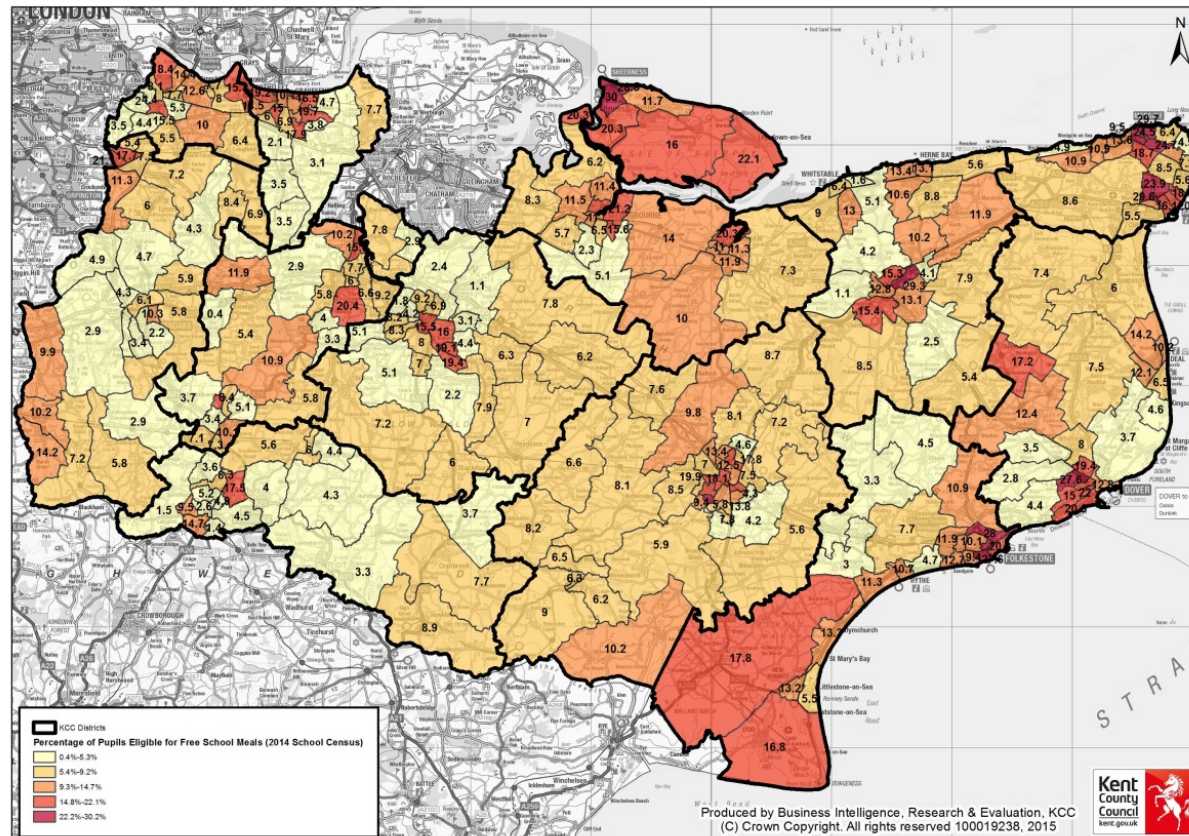
#### Notes:

- 1) SEN Statements include those pupils with an Education, Health & Care plan.
- 2) Dually registered pupils are only included at their main base.
- 3) Data includes academies and free schools.
- 4) CIC data is as at 12/02/2016. All other data is from the October 2015 School Census.



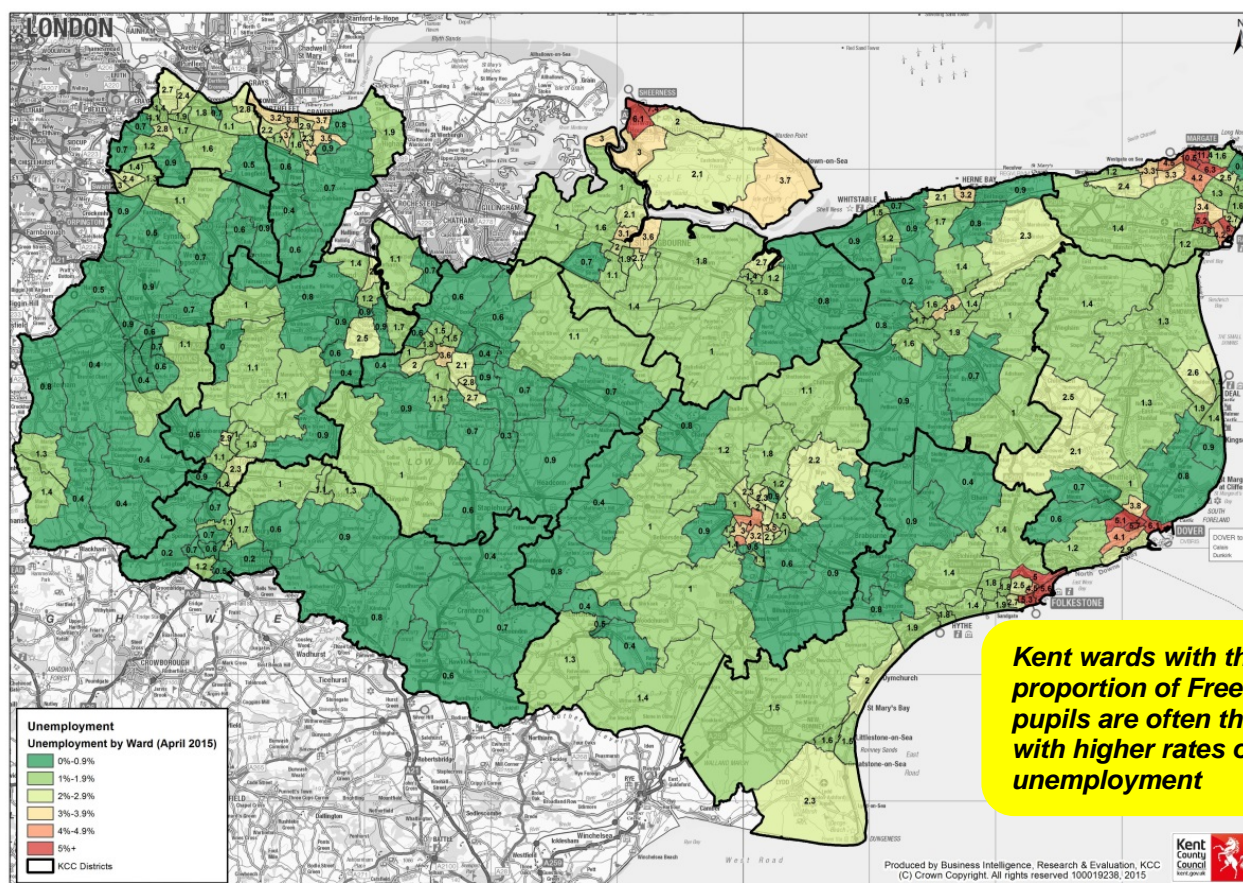
## Appendix F: Map of Pupils Eligible for FSM

The map below highlights communities across the county with a high prevalence of pupils eligible for FSMs. These communities have a higher prevalence of vulnerable learners.



Map as used in KCC's Kent Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019

## Appendix G: Map of Unemployment Rates in Kent



Map as used in KCC's Kent Strategy for Vulnerable Learners 2016-2019



## Appendix H: Upton Junior School Data

School	FSM Pupils entering Kent Test 2014		FSM Pupils on Roll	
	Assessed Grammar	Number of FSM Cohort Entered	Total FSM Cohort in Year 6	Total Year 6 Cohort
Upton Junior School	3 (33.3% of cohort entered)	9 (64.3% of Year 6 FSM cohort)	14	125

## Appendix I: Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Foundation – Teaching and Learning Toolkit

Evidence from the Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) shows that significant improvement in narrowing the gap can be made when schools target funding.

A teaching and learning tool kit has been produced which takes evidence from over 30 studies, matching cost effectiveness against evidence of impact (positive and negative).

While improving feedback between teachers and learners, early years interventions, meta cognition and self-regulation (aiming to help learners think about their own learning more explicitly through for example setting goals - self-regulation as managing one's own motivation towards learning), peer tutoring, one to one support, and active encouragement of parental involvement in learning score very well other interventions such as repeating a year can be seen as having low or negative effects.<sup>197</sup>

Polling for a Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Foundation summit (July 2015) illustrated that many schools learn what works from each other (62%) and most use this and their own learning of what works when developing future interventions. The poll shows that 48% of secondary school leaders and 32% of primary school leaders use the Sutton Trust/EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit to inform their interventions<sup>198</sup>.

Further information on the Teaching and Learning Toolkit can be found at:  
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>

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<sup>197</sup> <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>

<sup>198</sup> CSN Policy Briefing – The Pupil Premium, Next Steps – Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Foundation

## Appendix J: Kent Test

Most Kent children take the Kent Test in their primary schools during September. Children from schools outside of Kent Local Authority are invited to attend Kent Testing Centres also during September.

The current Kent Test format, which has been in use since 2014, is:

- i) One paper (about an hour long including practice drills) which has 25-minute sub-tests for English and maths. The English section comprises a comprehension exercise and separate questions testing technical literacy skills such as spelling, grammar and punctuation. The maths paper is based on the National Curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 2, with a standing instruction that questions should focus on topics which more able children can reasonably be expected to have covered by the start of Year 6.
- ii) One paper (about an hour long including practice drills) tests Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning skills, including spatial reasoning, a class of question for which the test designers do not sell practice materials. The Reasoning test includes some questions which use words or numbers to test verbal reasoning and some which use patterns and sequences to test non-verbal and spatial skills. The reasoning tests look at how quickly and efficiently children solve problems of increasing difficulty. Pupils are given a single Reasoning score, which takes account of all the question types.
- iii) An unmarked writing exercise which has been trimmed to 40 minutes – 10 minutes for planning and 30 minutes for writing up.

Pupils are given separate scores for English, Maths and Reasoning. The grammar threshold uses a minimum aggregate score with no single score below a given level.

## Appendix K: The Schools of King Edward VI, Birmingham

The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham include two independent schools, five free grammar schools and a free sponsored academy. The Schools have recently adopted a strategy to widen access into the grammar schools. A key driver for the 'Opening Doors' campaign is a recognition that the Schools of King Edward VI should be reflective of the communities that they serve and available to all families whatever their background.

The campaign operates on a number of fronts including changes to their schools' admissions policies which prioritise applications from Pupil Premium students, inspiring and challenging learning activities and initiatives for prospective pupils and their families that challenge the perceptions of fitting in to a grammar school environment.

The grammar schools all recently expanded by 20% to enable more bright children from less privileged backgrounds to join the schools. Alongside the expansion, they changed their admissions criteria to encourage pupils receiving free school meals to apply. The five grammar schools have a lower qualifying score for students supported by Pupil Premium which has enabled them to significantly increase the number of Pupil Premium students in their schools.

The 'Opening Doors' campaign also comprises a series of initiatives including outreach work, familiarisation activities, professional development courses and community work. These initiatives involve working with Primary schools, Primary school teachers, parents and businesses across Birmingham.

The independent schools within The Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham also place a priority on supporting their community. The outreach programme at King Edward's School, an independent school, in 2014-15 has engaged over 500 teachers, 150 schools and over 11,000 pupils. Highlights include:

- A Year 4 city-wide Maths competition, entered by children from 63 schools, and a Year 6 Maths competition, entered by 47 teams.
- A sports outreach programme, with three junior school classes visiting the Grammar school facilities for free coaching in a variety of sports throughout the summer term.
- Workshops in Reading, Writing, Shakespeare, Cricket and Maths, all focused on the needs of gifted children in primary classrooms.

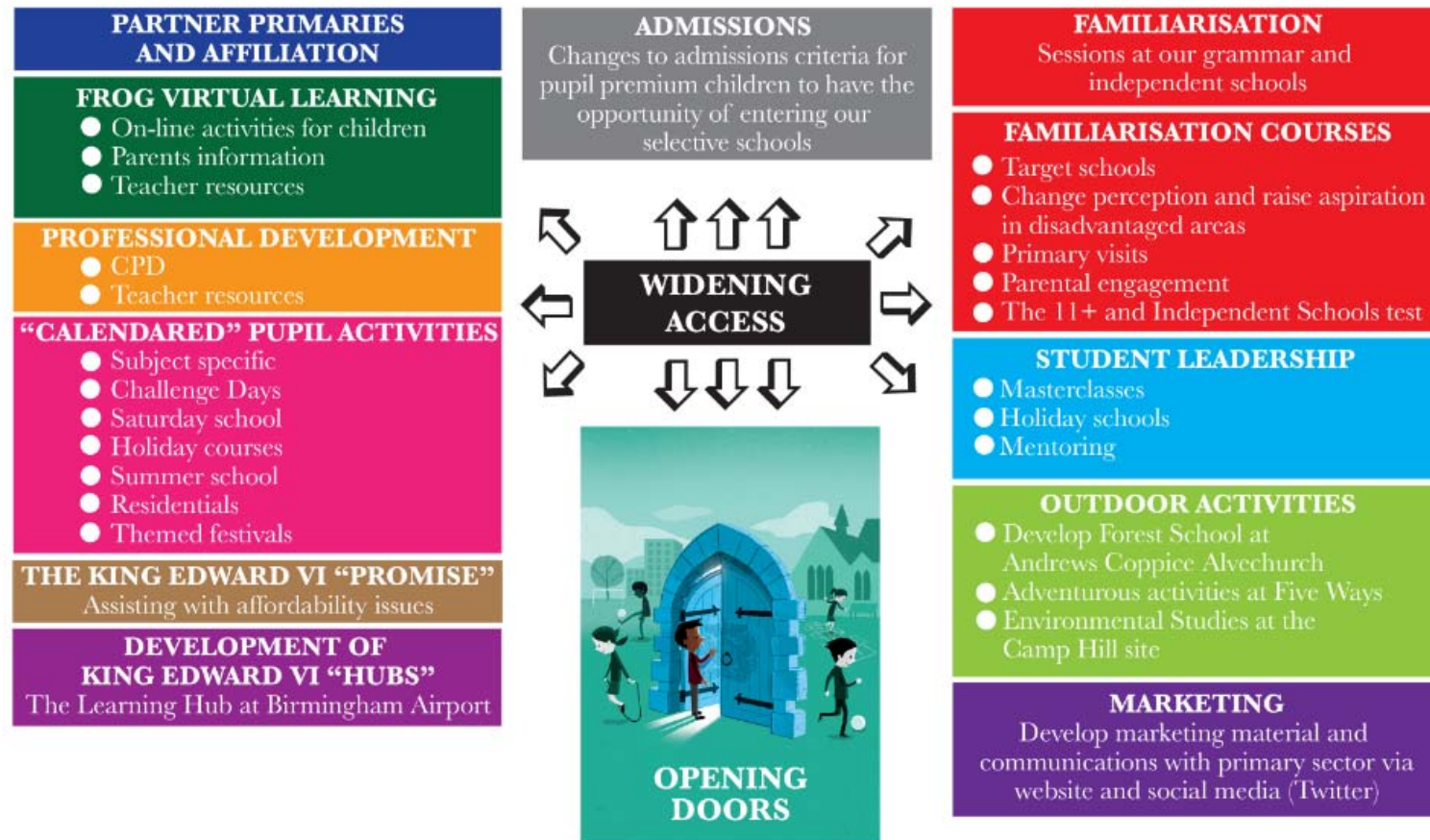
One example of the work The Schools of King Edward VI have taken forward to raise the aspirations of Primary school pupils is a Children's University Graduation Ceremony held at King Edward's School, Edgbaston. The awards were in recognition of the hours of learning the children had completed outside the classroom and enabled the children and their parents to visit the school, see what opportunities were available to them and appreciate that Grammar school and beyond was a realistic aspiration for their children.



**THE SCHOOLS OF  
KING EDWARD VI  
IN BIRMINGHAM**

*In pursuit of educational excellence for all*

## WIDENING ACCESS



## Appendix L: PESE 2016 – Headteacher Assessment

The selection procedure is based on objective testing. It is Kent LA's policy to use the standardised results of the three tests as the major indicator which will automatically select about 21% of the countywide cohort, leaving a small percentage for assessment by Headteacher Panels so as to achieve a genuine 25% selection as the final outcome across the whole LA.

The Headteacher assessment stage is designed to identify the small proportion of children who are of grammar school ability but have not qualified through testing for a grammar school place. Headteachers may request a panel assessment where they have evidence that a child's test scores have not done him/her justice. There may be a range of reasons, for example :

- Illness at time of test(s)
- Trail of illness during the last year, that has depressed learning
- Emotional problems, that have interfered with test performance
- Emotional problems, that have previously depressed learning
- Recently moving schools
- Transfer from a different system of education
- Additional Educational Needs, that may include Special Education Need
- English as an Additional Language
- Recent rapid progress
- Disturbance to the pattern of teaching
- Unidentified cause of clearly uncharacteristic low test scores

Headteachers should be **very specific** about their reasons for requesting a panel assessment and must provide clear evidence to support their case. **The minimum evidence submitted for each pupil must include :**

- **History of scores from standardised tests**
- **All available Year 6 work, flagged and with annotations relevant to the appeal.**
- **Work from the Summer term of Year 5**

And, where relevant:

- Medical documentation
- Any information held about Specific Learning Difficulties
- **Any permission granted by the LA for special arrangements in tests**
- Absence data
- Records from previous school(s)
- AEN information
- Minority Communities Achievement Service data

The PESE Writing Task will automatically form part of the Panel's scrutiny.



<b>CHILD'S NAME :</b>	<b>PRIMARY SCHOOL :</b>
<b>Date of Birth :</b>	<b>Head:</b> <b>DfE:</b> <b>Tel :</b>

<b>HEADTEACHER ASSESSMENT REFERRAL</b>	
<p><i>Give the <u>reasons</u> (see over) which in your view may show that the child should be placed in grammar school. For each reason indicate the supporting <u>evidence</u> provided. <b>If you have already completed one of the PESE forms below for this child, please circle as appropriate and supply a copy.</b></i></p>	
<b>SEN/AEN</b>	<b>U/AGE</b>
<b>EAL</b>	
<b>REASON</b>	<b>EVIDENCE</b>
<p>Y4 Teacher Assessment NC Framework:</p> <p>Maths:            Reading:            Writing:            Date:</p> <p>Y5 Assessment NC Framework:</p> <p>Maths:            Reading:            Writing:            Date:</p> <p>CAT 3 (or similar ) Standardised Scores (<b>all</b> subtests)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date:</p> <p>Latest Reading Age / Standardised score:            Date recorded:</p>	
<p><b>DECISION :    G   /   H</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>SUB GROUP :</b></p>	
<p>Signed (Chair) .....</p> <p>Date .....</p>	



## Definitions

Children in care (looked after children)	The preferred term used by Kent County Council. However the term 'Looked After' has a specific legal meaning based on the Children Act 1989 (section 11 (1) a, b) in this report children in care ("looked after children") means children under 18 who are subject to a care order under Section 31 of the 1989 Act (including an interim care order), or are accommodated under Section 20 of that Act.
Disadvantage	In the context of this report the term 'disadvantage' relates to financial disadvantage. The report refers to those on lower income and often specifically identifies those with an income which entitles children to Free School Meals or Pupil Premium support.
Free School Meals (FSM) Eligible	FSM Eligible pupils are all pupils who were eligible for FSM at the point at which the last school census was taken
Free School Meals (FSM) Ever	FSM Ever pupils are those pupils who have been eligible for Free School Meals at any point in the last 6 years.
Grammar schools	Grammar schools are fully selective state funded secondary schools which select their pupils by means of examination. In Kent the examination process is the Kent Test, although a small number of Kent grammar schools also operate their own test with children being able to qualify for those schools under the Kent Test or their own test.
Headteacher assessment	Primary school Headteachers may refer the outcome of a child's Kent Test assessment to a Headteacher Panel for consideration where they believe that child would be well placed in a grammar school. Further information on the Headteacher assessment is included in Appendix L.
Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs)	A Multi-Academy Trust is a formal arrangement whereby a number of schools form a single legal entity with one overarching board and one set of Articles of Association which govern all academies in that Trust. MATs have a Master Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State although each academy has a Supplemental Funding Agreement. MATs may delegate some decision making to each Academy.

Parental appeals	Parents, rather than the school, are responsible for initiating this appeal process. Parents present evidence to the panel, for example evidence of mitigating circumstances or supporting evidence that their children should be accepted to a particular school.
Personal Education Plan	A Personal Education Plan (PEP) is a document describing a course of action to help a child or young person reach their full academic potential. It is a legal requirement for every young person in care of statutory school age to have at least two PEP meetings each academic year.
Pupil Premium	<p>The pupil premium is additional funding for publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers.</p> <p>In the 2015 to 2016 financial year, schools received the following funding for each child registered as eligible for Free School Meals at any point in the last 6 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £1,320 for pupils in reception year to year 6</li> <li>• £935 for pupils in year 7 to year 11</li> </ul> <p>Schools will also receive £1,900 for each pupil who has left local authority care because of one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption</li> <li>• A special guardianship order</li> <li>• A child arrangements order</li> <li>• A residence order</li> </ul> <p>If a pupil has been registered as eligible for Free School Meals and has also left local authority care for any of the reasons above, they will attract the £1,900 rate.</p> <p>The Pupil Premium also supports children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces (£300 per pupil)</p>
Pupil Premium Plus	Children who are currently in local authority care for one day or more also attract £1,900 of Pupil Premium Plus funding. Funding for these pupils goes to the Virtual School Head (VSH) in the local authority that looks after the child. VSHs are responsible for managing Pupil Premium funding for looked-after children. <sup>199</sup>

<sup>199</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings>

<p><b>Social Mobility</b></p>	<p>Social mobility is often used to refer to the relationship between income or social class in a person's early years and their income or social class in later life.</p> <p>For the purpose of this report the Select Committee refer to the relationship between the child's family income (as identified by Free School Meals eligibility or receipt of Pupil Premium grant) and the child's secondary school destination.</p>
<p><b>Grammar schools with 'Super Selective' admissions criteria</b></p>	<p>Grammar schools which differentiate further between children already assessed suitable for grammar school by using test scores to prioritise applicants for admission. Whether they do this by drawing up a rank order with the highest scorer at the top and working downwards, or by giving first priority to those pupils who have scores above a given level, it is likely that a greater proportion of their intake will have high test scores by comparison with other grammar schools.</p>
<p><b>Vulnerable Learners</b></p>	<p>Kent County Council describes vulnerable learners as pupils who are at greater risk of poorer education outcomes, often including children in care, children who receive the Pupil Premium Grant and those who are eligible for Free School Meals.</p>

## Acknowledgements

The Select Committee would like to thank the range of witnesses who kindly gave their time to support our review by attending evidence gathering sessions, submitting written evidence, or providing background information. They include young people, parents, primary and grammar school Headteachers, Members, KCC officers and education professionals and policy experts.

Our thanks for the research, writing and production of the final report go to Serine Annan-Veitch, David Firth and John Reilly and to Democratic Services for supporting the Committee.



# Witness List

## 1 February 2016:

Katherine Atkinson, Head of Information and Intelligence, Kent County Council (Kent CC);  
Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform, Kent CC;  
Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services, Kent CC

## 4 February 2016:

Scott Bagshaw, Head of Fair Access, Kent CC;  
Gay Reay, PESE (Procedure for Entrance to Secondary Education) Manager, Kent CC;  
Tony Doran, Headteacher, Virtual School Kent (VSK)

## 5 February 2016:

Gillian Cawley, Director of Education, Quality and Standards, Kent CC;  
Keith Abbott, Director of Education Planning and Access, Kent CC

## 9 February 2016:

A focus group with parents.

## 12 February 2016:

Emma Hickling, Executive Headteacher, Kingswood, Leeds and Ulcombe Primary schools;  
Paul Luxmoore, Executive Headteacher, Dane Court Grammar School, Broadstairs and King Ethelbert School;  
Andrew Fowler, Headteacher, Dane Court Grammar School, Broadstairs;  
John Harrison, Headteacher, Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys;  
Matthew Bartlett, Headteacher, Dover Grammar School for Girls

## 17 February 2016:

A focus group with children in care, their foster carers and a VSK officer

## 22 February 2016:

Conor Ryan, Director of Research and Communications, The Sutton Trust;  
Denis Ramplin, Director of Marketing and Communications, The School of King Edward VI in Birmingham;  
Peter Read, Independent Education Adviser, Kent Independent Education Advice

## 24 February 2016:

Michaela Lewis, Headteacher, Upton Junior School, Broadstairs;  
Cliff Stokes, Headteacher, Newington Community Primary School, Ramsgate;  
David Anderson, Headteacher, Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Faversham;  
Andy Williamson, Headteacher, Wilmington Grammar Schools for Boys;  
Alice Witty, Headteacher, Pilgrim's Way Primary School, Canterbury

# Minutes of Evidence Sessions

The full details of all the public evidence sessions can be accessed via the link below:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=860&Year=0>

In additional, written evidence was submitted by a number of individuals or organisations. These were:

- Katherine Atkinson, Head of Information and Intelligence, Kent County Council (Kent CC);
- Scott Bagshaw, Head of Fair Access, Kent CC & Gay Reay, PESE (Procedure for Entrance to Secondary Education) Manager, Kent CC;
- A Kent Child in Care attending a grammar school in the county and a foster carer;
- Emma Hickling, Executive Headteacher, Kingswood, Leeds and Ulcombe Primary schools;
- Kent Education Network;
- Denis Ramplin, Director of Marketing and Communications, The School of King Edward VI in Birmingham;
- Peter Read, Independent Education Adviser, Kent Independent Education Advice;
- A Kent County Council Social worker.

DRAFT

**Grammar schools and  
social mobility**

**Select Committee**

27 May 2016 DRAFT