

Appendix 1: Progress on Select Committee recommendations

Viewing grammar school as a potential option

Securing a grammar school place

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 8: KCC to monitor and challenge the proportion of pupils supported by the Pupil Premium (PP) 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.

Lead Officers: Celia Buxton
Principal Adviser Secondary PRU and Special School
Standards and School Improvement

Linda Pickles
Principal Adviser, Primary

Deadline for completion of work: Recommendations 1 and 9 – actioned September 2016
Recommendation 8 – actioned July 2017

Deadline for assessment of impact: September 2018

Actions:

These recommendations are being addressed through the visit programme of School Improvement Advisers in primary schools. Advisers are using data to identify more able vulnerable learners, in particular those in receipt of free school meals, with school leaders (including governors) and challenge attainment and rates of progress. They will additionally discuss the numbers of disadvantaged pupils who go on to grammar school. Where appropriate, advisers will recommend Pupil Premium reviews where performance gaps are not closing rapidly. The proportion of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium who attend grammar schools rose marginally from 7.3% in 2015 to 7.7% in 2016 but the 2017 data which should begin to show the impact of the work will not be available until January 2018.

In addition a Senior Improvement Adviser for Closing Gaps was appointed in June 2016 to provide a strategic lead across the county in reducing the attainment gap for all vulnerable learners. A priority in this role is to identify and promote effective practice in closing attainment gaps and this includes more able pupils in receipt of Free School Meals. Dissemination of effective practice continues through

headteacher briefings, conferences and the Vulnerable Learners' Strategy website. In addition, an online toolkit aimed at schools and promoting effective approaches for raising the attainment of Pupil Premium pupils has been launched.

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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.

Lead Officer: Tony Doran
Head of Virtual School Kent (VSK)

Deadline for completion of work: Recommendation 6 – actioned July 2016
Recommendation 7 – actioned July-October 2016

Deadline for assessment of impact: September 2018

Action being taken:

In July 2016 the lead member of the VSK team was identified to lead the actions in this area. The role has a responsibility to liaise with the School Improvement Team and facilitate a training programme for foster carers, liaise with fostering teams to promote this training and raise awareness of the support available from VSK particularly in relation to appeal processes. The role provides a point of contact for foster carers and social workers to provide information related to Grammar school applications and appeals and will establish a register of Children in Care attending Grammar schools to ensure they are receiving appropriate support via their Personal Education Plans.

The role also provides advice and training as necessary for Grammar school staff to ensure Children in Care have any additional support required. In addition, Children in Care currently in Key Stage 2 will be reviewed to identify pupils who have the academic ability to be considered for Grammar school provision.

The post holder will review Pupil Premium information published on the VSK website to ensure that details of all support offered to Children in Care in the primary phase is detailed on the site. They will also ensure that data is published on the site to show how many Kent Children in Care attend grammar schools and the support offered to professionals when a Grammar school destination for a Year 7 pupil is being considered. The role will also ensure that VSK staff members

promote applications to grammar schools where this is judged to be the appropriate destination school. The latest data is due to be published by VSK on the website by the end of November 2017.

Securing a grammar school place

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.

Lead Officer: Celia Buxton
Principal Adviser Secondary PRU and Special School
Standards and School Improvement

Linda Pickles
Principal Adviser, Primary

Deadline for completion of work: September 2016 and ongoing

Deadline for assessment of impact: September 2018

Action being taken:

Area Governance Officers check and where necessary challenge schools to ensure that Governing Bodies have a lead governor for Pupil Premium. As well as monitoring the use of Pupil Premium funding in the school, the lead governor's role is to challenge the Governing Body to ensure that all Pupil Premium pupils achieve their full potential, including the most able.

The Governance team provide training for Pupil Premium governors to enable them to understand outcomes data and hold to school leaders to account on the performance of disadvantaged learners. The Governance team is also offering Pupil Premium reviews where schools require further support in identifying where improvements can be made.

This academic year 2016/17 the Area Governance Officers will be monitoring school websites regularly and providing reminders to schools to ensure that all schools publish their Pupil Premium Strategy, in line with legal requirements.

Removing financial barriers to grammar schools

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

Lead Officer: Scott Bagshaw
Head of Fair Access

Deadline for completion of work: April 2017

Deadline for assessment of impact: From September 2017

Recommendation 12:

This recommendation has been incorporated into a revised Home to School Transport Policy which is in its final stages of drafting before being formally consulted upon. It is anticipated consultation will be initiated in early 2018 following Member approval of the proposed changes and acceptance of the financial implications.

Recommendation 12, 13 and 14:

These recommendations all require changes to transport policy, which can only be put into effect following an equality impact assessment and a public consultation. The full review of KCC's current transport policy is in progress and the recommendation will be included in the proposals consulted on following the review. Officers continue to seek a fair and reliable way to identify families with a household income below £21k. As already indicated It is anticipated that consultation will be initiated in early 2018 following Member approval.

Recommendation 14:

As previously reported, while the principle of this recommendation is approved there are very limited prospects of delivering it at a time of significant budgetary constraint. Notwithstanding the significant efforts taken to manage and reduce existing transport costs, expenditure on SEN transport continues to exceed the allocated budget, restricting scope for financial support for other projects. Maintaining the availability of bus services in rural areas also continues to be a challenge. The previous update set

out the invitation extended to schools to present any concise business case they could make individually or as a collective for a transport initiative demonstrating savings potential, so that these could be evaluated and approved as appropriate by the Transport Regulation Committee. To date there have been no such proposals presented by schools.

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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.

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.

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.

Lead Officer:	Scott Bagshaw Head of Fair Access
Deadline for completion of work:	Recommendation 3 & 4 – Spring 2017 Recommendation 5 – Completed October 2016
Deadline for assessment of impact:	September 2018

Action being taken:

Recommendation 3 was implemented in April 2017, prior to Kent test registration opening. The specific advice sent to the Heads of primary schools (“Instructions for Procedure for Entrance to Secondary Education”) was expanded to support the recommendation, and a further letter which went to schools with the initial results for their pupils reminded Heads to have particular regard to the situation of potential grammar school candidates from disadvantaged groups, including children in care and those eligible for free school meals. They were also advised to look at the admission arrangements for their local grammar schools to ensure that their knowledge of which grammar schools gave priority to pupils in receipt of Free School Meals was up to date, and reminded of the existing transport concessions available to low income families. Prior to HT Assessment Panels meeting the Panel Chairs were reminded that this advice had been sent to schools, and might increase referrals for this group. They agreed that the initiative was helpful. This is the second year in which this action has been taken. In 2016 and in 2017 Head Teacher Assessment Panels were responsible for some 39% of the grammar assessments

achieved by FSM pupils, with the other 61% achieved on scores alone. Following a change in the software provided to support online registration the opportunity was taken this year to invite parents to indicate when registering for the Kent test whether their children were eligible for Pupil Premium, which will help monitor progress in line with Recommendation 8 going forward.

Like all selective Admission Authorities, Kent does not endorse the coaching of pupils for the 11+ assessment tests, though it does provide a familiarisation paper on its website, following the advice of GLA, the current test provider, that a degree familiarisation is helpful for children who have not seen tests of this type before. The varying degrees of access to 11+ preparation for children from more and less privileged backgrounds is a concern which has been highlighted nationally in reports and discussions on grammar school selection and is sometimes raised locally in feedback from parents and primary schools. Unlike CEM, the other main provider of selection tests, GLA publishes commercially 11+ materials which parents can buy. This has been identified as potentially giving an unfair advantage to candidates whose parents have the means to undertake preparation at home. In response to this criticism, GLA published on its website in the Summer of 2017 a range of free resources to help parents and pupils understand the nature of selection tests. Kent's Fair Access team have discussed with GLA the positive use which has been made of these materials by grammar schools undertaking outreach in their local community, and by parents, and a direct link to these free resources on the GLA site will be placed on the website, and the attention of primary schools drawn to them.

Primary schools have already been encouraged to use their Headteacher Assessment Panels as per recommendation 5. This was completed prior to the 2016 Headteacher assessment stage of the selection process. The specific advice sent to the Heads of primary schools ("Instructions for Procedure for Entrance to Secondary Education") was expanded to support the recommendation, and a further letter which went to schools with the initial results for their pupils reminded Heads to have particular regard to the situation of potential grammar school candidates from disadvantaged groups, including children in care and those eligible for free school meals. They were also advised to look at the admission arrangements for their local grammar schools to ensure that their knowledge of which grammar schools gave priority to pupils in receipt of Free School Meals was up to date, and reminded of the existing transport concessions available to low income families. Prior to HT Assessment Panels meeting the Panel Chairs were reminded that this advice had been sent to schools, and might increase referrals for this group. They agreed that the initiative was helpful.

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Removing financial barriers to grammar schools

<p>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</p>

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

Lead Officer: Scott Bagshaw
Head of Fair Access

Deadline for completion of work: Spring 2017

Deadline for assessment of impact: September 2018

Action being taken:

Information was sent to all grammar schools in June 2017 which included guidance on targeted parental engagement in order to promote the grammar school offer to all children. The pack provided a list of feeder primary schools to help grammar schools target outreach activity and guidance on how to incorporate clearer information on school websites explaining the support that is available for pupils from lower income families. In addition, the pack included guidance on the specific support schools can offer on school uniform, school trips and other potentially prohibitive features that may dissuade lower income families in considering a selective school choice.

Increasing fair access to grammar schools

Recommendation 15: To invite grammar schools to fully consider the disadvantaged 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.

Lead Officer: Scott Bagshaw
Head of Fair Access

Deadline for completion of work: November 2016

Deadline for assessment of

Impact:

September 2018 – September 2019

At the time of the last update 17 out of 32 Kent Grammar schools had made provision for Pupil Premium or FSM eligible children within their admission arrangements. In addition to the Kent Grammar schools which already include priority for these groups, a further 10 consulted this year to include it in 2018 admission arrangements. This is clearly a positive move and one supported nationally by the Grammar Schools Heads Association. Some schools consider they serve poorer communities well and do not intend to make further pupil premium provision in their admissions arrangements.

The Council has asked grammar schools in Kent to consider the introduction of such a criterion to support the Committee's aim of ensuring that a grammar school education is widely accessible to all able children. This is in line with the declared intention of national Government, but it should be noted that there is as yet no legislation mandating priority for FSM pupils, so determined admission arrangements which do not include it will not meet the current terms for a challenge via the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. Schools which can demonstrate that they already admit a higher than average proportion of FSM pupils may see no reason to adopt an FSM criterion, unless to signal their willingness to admit pupils from this group.

The last update confirmed that the Skinners' School, the only grammar school in Kent still admitting pupils ranked solely according to their aggregate score, had made early provision to prioritise up to 5 applicants registered for FSM and was consulting on increasing that number.

In 2018 up to 10 places will be offered, with applicants within this category ranked by score. Consideration is being given to further changes to the school's oversubscription criteria to take effect for 2019 admissions.

Other schools identified in the last update which take account of aggregated test scores in their admission arrangements but had not adopted an FSM criterion for 2018 admissions were Dartford Grammar, Maidstone Grammar, Mayfield Grammar and the Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys. Barton Court is consulting on the inclusion of a Pupil Premium criterion for 2019. Dartford Grammar and Mayfield Grammar have responded to highlight the degree of social inclusivity already achieved within their existing criteria.