

DRAFT

**Education and Young People's
Services**

Vision and Priorities for Improvement



**January 2017
2017 – 2020**



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Vision

We want Kent to be the most forward looking area in England for education, learning and early help services so that we are the best place for children and young people to grow up, learn, develop and achieve.

Our aim is for Kent to be a place where families thrive and all children learn and develop well from the earliest years so that they are ready to succeed at school, have excellent foundations for learning and are equipped well for achievement in life, no matter what their background.

We have the same expectations for every child and young person to make good progress in their learning, to achieve well and to have the best opportunities for an independent economic and social life as they become young adults.

Every child and young person should be able to go to a good or outstanding early years setting and school, have access to the best teaching, and benefit from schools and other providers working in partnership with each other to share the best practice as they continue to improve.

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

Our strategic priorities for Education and Young People's Services are to ensure that all children get the best start in the early years by attending good or outstanding childcare and early education settings and all pupils are able to go to a good or outstanding school where they will make good progress; to shape education and skills provision around the needs of the Kent economy and ensure all young people move on to positive destinations, training and employment; and to improve services and outcomes for the most vulnerable children, young people and families in Kent.

We aim to target early help services for the most vulnerable children, young people and families who require additional support, with a focus on delivering positive outcomes for them and avoiding the need for intervention by statutory services. Children, young people and families should be able to access the right services at the right time in the right place. We aim to place them at the heart of everything we do, working in an integrated way and avoiding, where possible, single service actions which may lack coordination or result in wasteful duplication.

Overall in Kent children and young people should have the best chances to flourish and be supported by effective support services, resilient families and good schools.

Patrick Leeson

Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services

Our Ambition

To deliver our vision we are ambitious to achieve the following essential features of a good system for children's development, protection and well-being. Firstly we work hard to ensure the best conditions in which pupils experience good learning and teaching which meets their needs, and where pupils' social, moral and intellectual development and confidence can flourish. We want every child in Kent to achieve well above expectations and not to be held back by their social background. We expect every young person to benefit from a broad range of pathways to further learning and employment, for their own achievement and for the success of the Kent economy. We want to ensure that vulnerable children and families have their needs met early so that they do not experience the level of challenge and difficulty in their lives that requires more intensive statutory services. They should have the same opportunities as all other children and families to flourish, to stay safe and well, and succeed in the education system.

We do this by focusing relentlessly on improving standards and the quality of education and learning so that excellence is promoted across the system. We aim to ensure children continue to get a good start in life, by working alongside all the agencies who work with very young children and their families, particularly health practitioners and those providing services through Children's Centres, and by promoting the highest quality early learning and childcare in pre-school settings and in the Foundation Stage. We work tirelessly to ensure every child can go to a good school where they can make good progress and every child can have fair access to school places. And we aim to ensure every young person to age 18 is engaged in purposeful education and training, and they are well prepared for skilled employment and higher learning.

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

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

We will have greater success in achieving our ambitions by learning from and spreading the influence of the best, whether locally, nationally or internationally and through working in partnership across agencies, all types of school and phases of education and learning. We also work with partners across the business sectors, local government, health, social care, the voluntary and community sectors, and especially with parents, carers, local communities and the children and young people themselves.

We will continue to support the best early years settings, schools and their leaders to lead the system and drive improvement through collaboration across all schools, settings and education and training providers, supporting and challenging one another to improve, so that we are able to transform outcomes for all children and young people more rapidly. We aim to promote innovation and creativity in teaching and learning and the curriculum, so that Kent achieves a world class education system, greater social mobility and reverses the national trends of under-performance for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups which hold back progress in our economy and our society.

We see learning as a lifelong process in which learners should always be able to progress successfully to the next stage of their lives, with the necessary foundations for success, to develop their skills, training and qualifications both in and out of work and in informal and formal learning situations. We give particular priority to improving the skills and employability of 14-24 year olds, so that they make a good start to adult life in employment and their potential is not lost to the Kent economy. This includes a focus on developing new technical and vocational learning pathways and qualifications routes, including raising the status of apprenticeships so that schools encourage more students to take them as a valid alternative career choice. This involves increasing the number of apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds, improving the quality of apprenticeships by matching apprenticeships to skills shortage areas in the local economy and promoting greater employer engagement with apprenticeships through the Kent and Medway Skills and Employability Commission.

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

The Challenges for the Future

The UK needs to achieve a more educated and skilled workforce and cannot afford to lose the potential of so many young people who, if they are not educated and appropriately skilled, will lead less productive and satisfying lives.

The economic and social cost of educational failure and too many young people with low level or no qualifications is immense. Gaps in our educational provision, and provision that is less than good, can damage the life chances of children and young people. In this mix the role of the Local Authority is to be ambitious, focused and strategic in bringing about further educational transformation for Kent by being a strong and influential partner and commissioner with schools and other stakeholders and providers.

It is our job to ensure the right educational provision of high quality is there for all children and young people, including appropriate pathways to ensure all young people can gain good qualifications and succeed to age 18 and beyond. It is our role to build and support effective partnerships and networks that are more effective in delivering better services and improved outcomes. We also see our role as championing more innovative and creative practice and ways of working.

Many aspects of education in Kent continue to improve, including more good and outstanding schools and better standards of achievement at the end of Primary education and at GCSE. The system as a whole has moved on significantly but some groups of children and young people are still being left behind, and these are our biggest challenges.

Our achievement gaps for Pupil Premium pupils, Children in Care and learners with Special Educational Needs are still too wide and their outcomes are not good enough.

Our NEET figures are still too high and too many 16-18 years are either not participating in education or training or they do not have the right options, support and provision to ensure they achieve success.

Too many 16-18 year olds and some older students with learning difficulties and disabilities do not have the right educational provision available for them in their locality, including the support they need to access training and employment.

We still have 10% of schools (15% of Secondary schools) that are not yet good or outstanding, which limits the opportunities for the children and young people attending those schools.

Like many parts of this country our educational success is put at risk by the challenges of recruiting the right teachers, headteachers and other staff in key services.

As more schools become academies, and form multi-academy trusts, there is a big challenge in the system to develop the kinds of leadership and governance that will deliver success in the future.

And as the system changes there is a challenge for the local authority to adapt its services and to work in even more robust partnership with schools to ensure the right services are available and all children are supported, with a sense of shared responsibility for the needs of all children and young people.

Going forward our priorities are to:

- **Raise** attainment at all key stages, narrow achievement gaps, particularly for vulnerable learners, increase the percentage of good and outstanding early years settings and schools, and ensure all young people are engaged in learning or training until age 18, with a good outcome that leads to employment.
- **Continue to increase** the number of good and outstanding schools, so that the maximum number of children and young people get a good education and achieve well.
- **Embed** our new partnership relationships with all early years and childcare settings, schools and other providers, based on collaboration and shared effort, particularly through the Kent Association of Headteachers, to build a more effective system of school to school support.
- **Ensure** all children get the best start in the early years by ensuring improved Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outcomes, increasing the take-up of free early education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds and ensuring there are sufficient high quality early education and childcare places.
- **Support** greater choice for parents and families in every area by commissioning a sufficient and diverse supply of places in strong schools and quality early years settings. In partnership with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) we shall ensure new Academies and Free Schools are established in areas of greatest need, led by strong Multi-Academy Trusts (MAT) sponsors.
- **Deliver** improved multi-agency support for children and families who have additional needs through our Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS) and work in an integrated way with Specialist Children's Services (SCS) to support children and families to achieve better outcomes, therefore reducing the need for statutory intervention in the lives of children and families.
- **Focus** on improving the support for vulnerable pupils, so that achievement gaps close for pupils on free school meals, children in care, young offenders and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- **Engage** with schools and all admissions authorities to ensure every child has fair access to all schools and other provision and are included and helped to participate in education which is appropriate for their needs.
- **Continue to review and further develop** our Pupil Referral Units and other services that support pupils at risk of exclusion, or who need short periods out of school, so that the need for permanent exclusion is reduced further, in year fair access protocols work effectively to place pupils that are hard to place, and we achieve a reduction in the numbers of children missing education or who opt for home education because better alternatives are not offered and supported.

- **Promote** and support smooth and successful transitions for every child and young person from any one educational stage and provision to another, so that they continue to make good progress.
- **Develop and improve** the opportunities and progression pathways for all 14-19 year olds to participate and succeed, so that they can access higher levels of learning or employment with training, including apprenticeships and vocational options to age 24.
- **Reduce** the number of NEETs by ensuring these young people move on to positive destinations, training and employment, particularly by increasing provision of targeted support for vulnerable learners.
- **Champion** twenty-first century learning so that schools and other settings innovate more and achieve more by delivering a broad curriculum that provides good qualification pathways for all learners and develops pupils' skills and knowledge for their future employment and higher learning. One example is to support the development of the IB Careers Related Programme in more Secondary schools in Kent.
- **Increase** the number of young people on employability and pre-apprenticeship pathways; promote improving standards in sixth forms through the development and extension of successful KS4 strategies and improved GCSE results in English and mathematics; and significantly increase the number of young people gaining level 2 English and mathematics qualifications by aged 19.
- **Ensure** all our Children's Centres are rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted, offer good provision for children and families, work in an integrated way with the health visiting service and effectively target, reach and support the most needy families to ensure a greater number of vulnerable children and families achieve good outcomes.
- **Deliver** the Troubled Families programme as an integral part of the Early Help offer that succeeds in turning around the lives of more families experiencing challenging circumstances.
- **Improve** the youth offer and programmes of support for vulnerable adolescents so as to increase their participation in positive activities and reduce offending, anti-social behaviour, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol misuse and youth unemployment.
- **Through** Community Learning and Skills (CLS) commissioned services, support young people and adults to improve their skill levels and reach their full potential by meeting the skills needs of the local economy and improving the training infrastructure for young people and adult learners.
- **Ensure** prompt solutions are found for schools that are under-performing and proactive support is provided for good and outstanding schools and collaborative partnerships that want to develop local MATs, by working in close partnership with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC).

- **Reduce** demand and costs by implementing changes in SEN transport, including rolling out Independent Travel Training for pupils, offering Personal Transport Budgets and the commissioning of new SEN transport arrangements for individual Special schools, in order to increase the independence and resilience of pupils and reduce the rising cost of SEN transport. This work has already seen the successful delivery of two pilots and the county-wide roll out has begun to build on the success of that.
- **Ensure** that children and young people are safeguarded and diverted from individuals, institutions and ideologies that promote violent extremism, terrorism and child sexual exploitation, by working with schools and other settings to educate children and young people about potential dangers that undermine British values.
- **Ensure** that the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reforms are effectively embedded through a review of the SEND Strategy, resulting in: higher achievement for all; Special Educational Needs (SEN) statements are promptly converted to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP); pupils and their parents are involved in determining the most appropriate support for their identified learning difficulties; funding is effectively targeted to address high needs; and the need for new provision is addressed through the implementation of the Special Schools Capital Programme and gaps in provision are met through commissioning of new provision in-county.
- **Continue** to develop our traded services so that schools have the services they need at an affordable cost, by developing new products to support schools and early years settings.
- **Develop** of an Education Services Company in partnership with schools, in order to increase the resilience and long term sustainability of education services in light of the changing role for local authorities in education.
- **Continue** to ensure that statutory duties and services required by schools are maintained in light of national proposals and possible legislative changes about the role of the LA in terms of supporting children and their families.
- **Support** the Kent Association of Headteachers in delivering the **Kent Leadership Strategy** so that we all remain focused on developing the leadership capacity in Kent schools, and in the local authority, that is required to have the best education and children's services in the country.

We will have greater success if we are good at collaboration and partnership, if we better integrate our services and ways of working, and we make optimum use of the networks that exist to support children and families.

We believe it is the job of all leaders across the system to be effective partners and to collaborate in the best interests of children and young people. Working effectively with many different providers across the early years, schools and post 16 skills and employment sectors, together with partners in the health service and the police, requires us to drive improvement through strategic influence, pooled effort and shared priorities. This can never be taken for granted and needs clear leadership, hard work and effort.

It continues to be a priority, therefore, to ensure success by supporting:

- **School** leaders to lead the system through stronger school partnerships, the Kent Association of Headteachers, working at a local level through District Forums and the Area Boards that have strong and purposeful working relationships in order to deliver the best opportunities and outcomes for children and young people.
- **Schools** to procure support services well, have real choice and be able to procure high quality services through EduKent.
- **Increased** collaborative working in the early years and childcare sectors.
- **Locality** based working and commissioning to pool and target resources to local needs in districts.
- **The Kent and Medway Skills Commission** which is prioritising the development of a new model to inform 14-24 vocational pathways and to provide better, employer-driven information about career and training options.
- **More** effective partnership with FE Colleges.
- **Local 14-19 strategic partnerships** to maximise effort and increase capacity to develop new provision, address gaps in provision and transform post 16 learning pathways and training opportunities so that they are truly excellent.
- **The district based Local Inclusion Forum Teams (LIFT)** and outreach work from Special schools to have more effective support for all schools in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- **District based integrated teams** and multi-agency working in Early Help and Prevention, so that EHPS work is more closely aligned to partners in schools and SCS, better reflects the needs of children, young people and their families and is more cost effective.
- **Local Children's Partnership Groups** that will drive improvements in outcomes for children and young people by providing a vehicle for identifying and addressing local

needs and gaps in provision and facilitating and pooling resources across agencies to meet the needs of local children and families.

- **Effective working in the Youth Justice Board**, to ensure all agencies contribute to the reduction in youth offending, and re-offending, and young people are helped towards positive destinations through education and training.
- **Improved** partnership between schools and colleges, employers and training providers, to develop more high quality 14-19 technical pathways including apprenticeships and encourage providers to make use of local market information and business data to inform decisions about provision and the design of the learning and training offer.

Key Strategic Developments in 2015-16

In the past year we have made a number of improvements to outcomes, to our services and our ways of working.

During 2015-16 we:

- **Refreshed** our Early Years and Childcare Strategy in April 2016, which sets out our ambitions to achieve improved outcomes for children in Early Years and Childcare settings. We have embedded the 'Kent Progress Tracker' which enables settings to monitor all children's progress and also piloted a Children's Centre Progress Tracker for future county-wide use; introduced the 'Enhancing Family Involvement in Children's Learning (EFICL) Toolkit for Early Years and Childcare providers to raise parental and family involvement in children's learning, a Toolkit which won the Nursery World Award 2016 for Staff Resources and has also been shortlisted for the Children and Young People Now Awards in November 2016 ; and embedded over 50 formal Early Years Collaborations (involving almost 450 settings) to work together to narrow the achievement gaps for vulnerable pupils, share best practice and utilise data to accelerate improvement in children's development and learning.
- **Delivered** the 'Free for Two' scheme in Kent with take up having increased to a maximum 70% in December 2015, as part of the Government's policy for Free Early Education places for disadvantaged two year olds. Work will continue to promote and support take up by eligible children and families.
- **Introduced** an Annual Conversation for all Early Years and Childcare providers on the OfSTED Early Years Register, which has significantly contributed to almost 97% of providers currently judged by OfSTED to be good or outstanding
- **Established** a project to ensure the delivery of the Government's manifesto pledge of 30 Hours of Free Childcare for the three and four year old children of eligible parents, with effect from September 2017.
- **Improved** the quality of education in Kent schools year on year since 2011, which is reflected in Ofsted Inspection judgements. The percentage of good and outstanding schools in Kent was 55% in 2011. Overall, the latest Ofsted data (as at October 2016) for Kent shows that 90% of schools are rated good or outstanding. This includes 20.8% of schools judged to be outstanding and 69.2% judged to be good. In Kent, there are now 373 good and 112 outstanding schools, 51 schools requiring improvement (including 38 Primary schools and 12 Secondary schools) and 3 schools in a category, out of a total of 539 schools that have a current inspection result. There are now 23 more good and better schools than at the same time the previous year. We expect this positive trend to continue towards our targets of at least 95% of Primary and 90% of Secondary schools judged to be good or outstanding by 2019.

- **Continued** to improve pupil outcomes. Performance in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 continues a very good upward trend over recent years, with performance in Kent well above national averages. At Key Stage 2 outcomes continue to improve and are above the national average for all indicators, apart from Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling where Kent is in line with the national average. Outcomes at Key Stage 4 indicate Kent has performed well against the new and old headline GCSE performance measures and against national averages. Compared with 2015 GCSE results, there has been a clear improvement in attainment with 58.6% of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSE graded A*-C including English and mathematics, which is an improvement on 2015's figure of 57.4% and 1.6% above the emerging 2016 national average of 57%. Results at Post 16 are more variable with a declining trend at A level but improving outcomes in vocational qualifications. This is disappointing.
- **Improved** the gap between boys and girls in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with 82.2% of girls achieving a Good Level of Development, compared to 68% of boys in 2016. This represents a marginally improved position from 2015, although there is still work to be done to narrow the gender gap which improved slightly from 15.0% in 2015 to 14.3% in 2016. At this measure Kent is ranked 6th amongst its statistical neighbours.
- Outcomes for children in care have improved at Key Stages 2 and 4, which is also very welcome.
- The gaps in the attainment of pupils who are in receipt of free school meals have not improved noticeably in 2016 which is very disappointing. At Key Stage 2 only 58 schools in 2016 improved outcomes for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium, compared to 185 schools in 2015.
- At Key Stage 4 in 2015, 40 schools improved outcomes in 5+ A*-C including English and Mathematics for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium, compared to **?? schools in 2016 (data not yet available)**. Over £55m is now allocated to the Pupil Premium in schools and to date there is limited impact. Slow progress continues to be made in raising attainment and narrowing attainment gaps for pupils with SEN at all key stages. Closing the gaps in achievement for all vulnerable learners continues to be a significant priority for improvement in 2016-2017.
- When you compare schools attaining at or above the national averages for each phase between 2015 and 2016, there is an improving picture at Early Years Foundation Stage. In 2016, 336 out of 427 schools attained at or above the national average of 69.3% for the proportion of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development. In 2015, 345 out of 420 schools attained at or above the national average of 66.3% for the proportion of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development.
- This improving picture is mirrored at Key Stage 1. In 2016, 320 schools attained at or above the national average of 60.3% for the proportion of pupils achieving the 'expected standard' for the combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics measure.

This compared favourably with 2015, when 286 schools attained at or above the national average of 82% for the proportion of pupils achieving Level 2B or above in Reading, 273 schools attained at or above the national average of 72% for the proportion of pupils achieving this standard in Writing and 281 schools attained at or above the national average of 82% for the proportion of pupils achieving the same standard in Mathematics.

- In terms of Key Stage 2, in 2016, 277 schools attained at or above the national average of 53% for the proportion of pupils reaching the 'expected standard' for the Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined. This compared favourably with 2015 when 260 schools attained at or above the national average of 80% against the historic measure of Level 4 and above in the Reading, Writing and Mathematics.
- At Key Stage 4 there is a slight decline in 2016 in the number of schools performing at or above the national average, compared to 2015. In 2015, 43 out of 99 maintained schools attained at or above the national average of 59.2% for the proportion of pupils achieving Grade C or above in English and Mathematics. In 2016, 40 Secondary schools achieved at or above the national average of 62.8% for the proportion of pupils achieving Grade C or above in English and Mathematics.
- **Further** developed the work of the Kent Association of Headteachers (KAH) and its organisation into four new Area Boards, together with the system of school to school support and collaboration. The KAH works in partnership with the Local Authority to develop a self-improving school system in the county. An important aspect of this process has been the promotion of collaboration and school-to-school support. During the past year 522 Kent schools were involved in collaborative projects for school improvement. Of the collaborating schools, 329 benefited from successful bids for funding to the KAH Area Boards. These bids were focused on raising standards, narrowing achievement gaps, improving teaching, building leadership capacity and supporting schools to improve OFSTED inspection outcomes.
- **Developed** a new Leadership Strategy for Kent schools, which was launched in October 2015 with a 3 year implementation plan which is being delivered and monitored through the Kent Association of Headteachers. The strategy was co-produced in partnership by the Local Authority, Kent Association of Headteachers, the Dioceses, Kent and Medway Teaching School Network and the Kent Association of Governors.
- **Reviewed and reorganised** the provision for children and young people with medical needs, including mental health. New management led by an Executive Headteacher is now in place to focus on continuous improvement of the Kent Health Needs Education Service (KHNES). All six resource hubs have been established with five already open and the remaining one to be opened in January 2017. The new model of service delivery enables the provision of an outreach service to schools and young people.
- **Developed** support to manage challenging behaviour in Primary schools and reduce rates of exclusion. We have put in place better quality assurance and monitoring

systems to ensure that the eight Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) Primary school hubs deliver the support that meets local needs and results in a reduction in permanent exclusions. In February 2016, we piloted a single digital point of access for PRU, inclusion and attendance providing information about prevention and statutory support. We have had particular success in reducing permanent primary school exclusions by 38% (47 in 2014-15 to 29 in 2015-16).

- **Delivered more effective** Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS) and a new way of working in Kent. There has been good progress since introducing the new model of working in each district. The services which came together in April 2014 now deliver integrated ways of working and provide a firm foundation to improve the outcomes for children, young people and families in Kent. We set out our priorities and targets in the new Early Help Strategy and Three Year Plan 2015-2018. In the past year the percentage of Early Help cases closed with a positive outcome is 84%.
- **Worked** to more closely integrate the referral and notification processes at the front door between Early help Triage and the Social Services Central Duty Team. This is vital to ensure that families receive the right support at the right time from the right service.
- **Embedded** and further developed the joint Early Help and Specialist Children's Services step-down panels and introduced best-practice step-down processes, and joint guidance for staff. Currently 22% of cases are successfully stepped down from Social Care.
- **Refreshed** the 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy to ensure a clearer focus on employer engagement, linking the curriculum to the world of work, collaborating on the delivery of English and Mathematics post 16 and more effective partnership work in providing improved curriculum pathways for 14 to 19 year olds. Twelve new District data packs have been produced with detailed information on labour market intelligence and student performance to inform curriculum planning. The refreshed document outlines the key actions that we are taking to achieve further progress and improvement, including ensuring there is a more joined up approach between schools, FE colleges and training providers to develop 14-19 progression pathways. Work with employers has significantly increased through the development of 8 Sector Guilds and the increased involvement of employers in the Kent and Medway Skills Commission.
- **Further** developed Kent's apprenticeship and youth employment programme so that youth unemployment has reduced significantly. The Kent Employment Programme completed this year and achieved 1031 young people in apprenticeships across Kent. The percentage of schools offering apprenticeships was 51% in 2015-16, exceeding the target of 50%. The KCC Apprenticeship programme has changed the annual target to 200 by March 2017 to reflect the current changes taking place, when KCC will have an annual target of 707 apprenticeship starts.
- **Improved** employment or progression for vulnerable learners, through a range of projects managed by the Skills and Employability Service. Professional sponsored

support for 32 young people to undertake Assisted Apprenticeships, in preparation for full Apprenticeships; and 28 SEND young people placed on to the pilot Supported Internship Programme. 40 places are available for vulnerable learners looking at moving in Assisted Apprenticeships, with a greater onus on the employer financially supporting the learner with professional support from Skills and Employability.

- **Maintained** the number of NEETs in Kent to under 5% for the second year running (rolling three month average for November, December and January) January 2016 – 4.96%, January 2015 - 4.7% and January 2014 - 5.8%. The Target was 3.5% NEETs for January 2016.
- **Delivered** the new the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014 so that, by January 2016, over 3,000 Kent children and young people were benefiting from Kent's SEND Strategy. This means that significantly more children and young people are receiving a better quality education and provision to meet their needs. We have firmly embedded the new 20 week assessment for education, health and care plans.
- **Developed** a new approach to allocating high needs funding to mainstream schools to support earlier intervention and better targeting of resources to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. We have improved support for severe and complex needs in Early Years settings and systems for pre-school children who need a Special school placement. We continue to provide a high quality service to ensure children with complex communication needs make good progress.
- **Achieved** good or outstanding Ofsted judgements for all of Kent's Special schools by September 2016.
- Developed Best Practice Guidance for the Early Years sector. This guidance and newly established Early Years Local Inclusion Forums (LIFT) is supporting settings to increase their expertise in supporting children with SEND.
- **Progressively increased** the level of expertise in mainstream schools through a partnership between 12 lead Special Schools, the devolved Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS), the Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFT). Schools report that 97% of LIFT activity has a positive impact (86% good or better) and 87% of schools rate the impact of the STLS as good or better. We have delivered a programme of training in each district through the lead Special school; over 40 different training modules were delivered to over 75% of schools. The evaluations demonstrate the staff who attended were more confident about their ability to support pupils with special educational needs.
- **Developed** the Kent **Local Offer** with parents and their role on the steering group means we can monitor how helpful and easily accessible it is for all parents of children with SEND and young people. To date it has highlighted that the local offer is already being well used by parents who consider it helpful and easily accessible. We will continue to develop this as a helpful and easily accessible resource for parents of children with SEND and young people.

- **Commissioned** placements in non-maintained and independent schools (sometimes referred to as ‘Out of County’), where the needs of individual pupils could not be met in Kent maintained Special Schools. There are currently over 500 of these placements and we are working in partnership with local providers to have the broadest range of specially organised education for pupils with SEN, to increase choice for families and to provide best value for public resources.
- **Opened** Primary aged specialist SEN resourced provision (SRP) for pupils with autism in North Kent at Oakfield Primary School and in East Kent at Canterbury Primary Academy. Plans are in place for further places in schools opening in West Kent at Kings Hill and Langley and Martello Grove in South Kent.
- **Opened** SRP places for children with speech and language disorder in South Kent at River Primary and places for children with Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) in East Kent at West Minster Primary School (Swale). We have plans in place for SLCN SRP in a new school in North Kent from 2017. We have established SRP for social emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) in East Kent at Thistle Hill Primary, in South Kent at Nonnington and Finberry Primary Schools with provision in West Kent at Holborough and Snodland Schools due to open.
- **Increased** the places through re-commissioning, for Secondary aged pupils with SLCN. In North Kent we relocated the secondary SRP to the Leigh Academy Trust following the closure of the host school. In South Kent, Goodwin Academy (formerly known as Castle Community College in Deal) SRP has re-designated to SLCN. For Secondary aged pupils with ASD we have created additional provision at Holmesdale Technology College and Hugh Christie Technology College in West Kent and in North Kent at Wilmington Academy.
- **Delivered** additional places in, and rebuilt and refurbished more Special schools. We have already achieved 3,642 Special school places with plans in place for additional places as building projects completed. We have established PSCN satellite provision in mainstream for pupils from:
 - Five Acre Wood School (Maidstone) at East Borough Primary School. And Holmesdale Technology College for secondary age
 - Oakley School (Tunbridge Wells) at Skinners Kent Primary School
 - St Nicholas School (Canterbury) at Chartham Primary School.

Plans are in place for a satellite of Ridge View School (Tonbridge & Malling) at Wouldham Primary as part of a new purpose built mainstream school in 2017.

- **Relocated** provision from September 2016 for Primary aged pupils with SLCN and autism. Provision had been hosted by Dartford Primary Academy in North Kent and is now provided by a satellite of Milestone Special Academy.
- **Delivered** all the targets for the Kent Educational Psychology Service (KEPS). In 2015 the service increased its trading to 55% of Kent schools, delivering an increasing range of innovative psychological applications which included Mindful – Based Approaches for children and Video Interaction Guidance. The service plays a

key role in LIFTs, enabling school to school support, providing evidenced based advice to improve staff confidence, knowledge and skills and to support an outcomes focused approach as a result of the Children and Families Act 2014.

- **Developed** our Fair Access services to achieve better integration of activity to support admissions, in year fair access, elective home education and children missing education. Collaborative working with the PRU Inclusion and Attendance team has resulted in identifying and securing provision for those not in receipt of education, more quickly. There has been significant improvement to our published materials and website content to help parents take informed school choices and the Admissions team met all its legal timeframes and duties in relation to administering the admissions process.
- **Developed** a more integrated approach to manage demand for home to school transport and reduce the financial pressure arising from SEN transport and out of county placements. We introduced Personal Transport Budgets (PTB) for families as an alternative to the existing service and almost 270 families are participating in the scheme. Compound savings since the inception of PTB are now in the region of £1m.
- **Continued** to develop our approach to District based working, utilising the feedback from District Reviews so that service delivery can be more coordinated and Early Help and Prevention for vulnerable children and young people can be more accessible for schools and families.
- **Continued** to develop EduKent and expand our traded services so that it is supported by more effective business planning, marketing and tailor made procurement of services for schools. Income has exceeded £36m and over 40 services are provided to schools. There are now 1600 customers with 23,000 contracts.
- **Revised and implemented** our policy for Elective Home Education (EHE), following a process of engagement with the EHE community to secure feedback on the revised policy. The revised policy addresses a significant increase in the numbers of families registered to EHE year on year, from 793 recorded in 2008 to 1,702 in August 2016. The new policy sets out more robust action that KCC will take where we have reason to believe that a child is not receiving a suitable education, including the use of School Attendance Orders. The policy has ensured that those who wish to return to school or those who are not in receipt of education, are identified early on in the process. In light of the feedback received, KCC's EHE website has been substantially redesigned in order to provide improved support and advice to parents, including access to information, learning materials and other support and advice that an EHE family may need.
- **Succeeded** in commissioning and delivering the planned number of new school places overall for September 2016. The majority of these new school places were within the Primary sector. We expanded 36 Primary schools, including 16.5 new forms of entry added to schools for Reception year classes and 150 temporary

Reception places that will not be needed in the long term. In addition, we opened two new Primary schools. Over 120 places have also been added to Secondary schools.

- **Secured** first preference schools for the highest number of parents to date. We set targets for the percentage of families securing their first preference schools for entry in September 2016. For Primary schools the target was 85% and on Offer Day 87.2% of parents secured their first preference. For Secondary schools the target was 85% and 81.4% of parents secured their first preference. The target for first and second preferences for both Primary and Secondary schools was 94%. 94.05% of secondary parents secured their first or second preference. 92.7% of primary parents secured their first or second preference. Last year the national averages for first preferences were 88.4% for Primary and 84.1% for Secondary schools.
- **Provided** a Community Learning and Skills programme which was recognised by Ofsted as Good in all key aspects in its June 2016 inspection of the Service, including its provision for 16-18 and 19+ Apprentices and Adult Education.
- **Ensured** that over 400 adult learners gained GCSEs in Maths and English with CLS, at pass rates above the national average for this group.
- **Developed** the Adult Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy with partners, established four Adult Skills forums, eight Sector Guilds are developing clear action plans between employers and training providers, colleges and schools to promote opportunities within the priority employment sectors in Kent. The Strategy continues to inform the service specification for CLS commissioned services.
- **Undertook** a Select Committee Inquiry into Grammar Schools and Social Mobility earlier this year (published in June 2016) in order to improve the representation of children from disadvantaged backgrounds in grammar schools, if suitable for their abilities. The report made a number of recommendations which were agreed by County Council and progress in implementing these recommendations is being monitored. Many of the recommendations have been cited by the new Government in bringing forward their selective schools' proposals contained within the DFE consultation document 'Schools that Work for Everyone'.

Progress in 2015-16 and Where We Are Now

We set very challenging and ambitious improvement targets and in 2015-16 there were positive indications that we are achieving good progress.

- In the **Early Years Foundation Stage**, 74.8% of children achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD). This is a 1.9% increase compared to 2015. Although this misses our challenging 2016 target of 77%, this outcome is above the national average of 69.3%. At this measure, Kent is ranked second amongst its statistical neighbours.
- At **Key Stage 1** in 2016, 66.6% of pupils in Kent met or exceeded the expected standard in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined**, which is 6.3 percentage points above the national average.
- **At Key Stage 2**, with new national measures in 2016, Kent performed above the national average for all indicators, apart from Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling which is in line with the national average. 58% of Kent pupils achieved the 'expected standard' in the **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined measure**, which is 5 percentage points above the national average of 53% and the highest amongst Kent's statistical neighbours. The proportion of pupils who attained a 'higher standard' in this combined measure was 6%, which is 1 percentage point above the national average. Compared to its statistical neighbours, Kent is ranked second for this measure.
- **At Key Stage 4** in 2016 there is an overall positive and improved picture. Secondary schools in Kent performed well against the new and old headline GCSE performance measures and against national averages. Compared with 2015 on the old measures there have been clear improvements in attainment.
- Kent achieved a Progress 8 score of -0.04 in 2016, which is slightly below the national average of -0.03. 58 out of Kent's 98 Secondary schools met or achieved above the national average for this measure and of these 30 are Grammar schools. Kent is ranked 6th out of its 10 statistical neighbours for this measure and 80th out of 151 local authorities nationally.
- On the previous measure (the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A*-C including English and mathematics) Kent achieved 58.6% in 2016 which is an improvement on last year's figure of 57.4% and 1.6 percentage points above the 2016 national average of 57.0%. Kent is ranked 5th out of its statistical neighbours for this measure and 54th out of 151 local authorities nationally.
- In the new headline Basics measure, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A*-C in English and mathematics is 63.5% which is 0.7 percentage points above the national average in 2016 and 3.7 percentage points above last year's result of 59.8%. Although this is a positive picture for all Kent pupils there are 58 Kent

Secondary schools below the national average. Kent is ranked 6th out of its statistical neighbours for this measure and 66th out of 151 local authorities nationally.

- Improvements have also been made in GCSE A*-C passes for English across the county. The success rate this year is 76.0%, compared to 70.4% last year, which is 1.3 percentage points above the national average of 74.7%. In mathematics, there is a small increase: this year to 68.0%, compared to 66.6% last year. Kent is just below the 2016 national average of 68.5%.
- **Performance at post 16** across a range of qualifications is variable with some measures in line with national averages but given improving performance at other key stages this is disappointing. It will be a priority to work with schools to continue to improve guidance for students in choosing appropriate pathways Post 16 and to ensure provision of a full range of technical pathways at 14-19.
- Post 16 outcomes for 2016 are based on new DfE performance measures in five categories. These are A Level, Academic, Technical Level, Applied General and the Technical Baccalaureate.
- The figures given below are based upon the 2016 provisional DfE statistical first release and therefore will be subject to change when the final validated DfE Performance Tables are available in January 2017. All Kent and national averages noted below are for state funded schools only.

A Levels

- DfE provisional results for 2016 show that the A Level Average Point Score per entry achieved by students in Kent schools is 30.8 which is in line with the national average of 30.7 and equivalent to a C grade. Kent is ranked 4th out of its statistical neighbours and 56th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.
- The percentage of A Level students achieving AAB or above including facilitating subjects is improving. The figure has increased to 16.8% from 12.9% in 2015, which is 1.4 percentage points above the national average of 15.4% and is encouraging. Kent is ranked 3rd out of its statistical neighbours and 34th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.

Academic qualifications

- Academic results include A Level, AS Level, International *Baccalaureate*, IBCP and extended project qualifications.
- In 2016, the Average Point Score per entry achieved by Academic students in Kent schools is 32.0 which is above the national average of 30.9 and equivalent to a C+. Kent is ranked 2nd out of its statistical neighbours and 26th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.

Technical Level 3

- Technical Levels are advanced (Level 3) technical and professional qualifications, on a par with A levels and recognised by employers. Taught from September 2014, for reporting in the 16-19 Performance Tables from 2016, they equip students with specialist knowledge and skills, enabling entry to an Apprenticeship, other skilled employment or a technical degree.
- DfE provisional results for 2016 show that the Average Point Score per entry achieved by students in Kent schools at Technical Level is 36.8 which is slightly below the national average of 37.0 and equivalent to a Distinction+.

Applied General Level 3

- Applied General qualifications are advanced (Level 3) qualifications that equip students with transferable knowledge and skills. Taught from September 2014, for reporting in the 16-19 Performance Tables from 2016, they are for Post-16 students wanting to continue their education through applied study.
- In 2016, the Average Point Score per entry achieved by Applied General students in Kent schools is 37.0 which is below the national average of 38.0 and equivalent to a Distinction+. Kent is ranked 7th out of its statistical neighbours and 84th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.

Technical Baccalaureate (TechBacc)

- The Technical Baccalaureate is a new performance measure that allows young people, aspiring to a technical career, a high-quality alternative to the A level route. This recognises the achievement of students taking advanced (Level 3) programmes which include a DfE approved Tech Level, level 3 maths and extended project qualifications. It was introduced for courses starting in September 2014, for reporting in the 16-19 Performance Tables from 2016.
- In Kent schools in 2016, 20 students achieved a Technical Baccalaureate compared to 130 students in state funded schools nationally. Kent is ranked 1st both in comparison to its statistical neighbours and 150 local authorities nationally for this measure. We are intending to expand this programme over the next academic year.

Apprenticeships

- Kent continues to perform well in increasing **apprenticeships**; in 2015-16 numbers are significantly higher for 16 to 18 year olds at 3000. Performance is better than our statistical neighbours. There has been a significant campaign by all Kent apprenticeship providers to increase the number of 16 to 18 year old apprentices and the latest trend in the data suggests that the final out turn will be well above last year's figures.
- In 2015-16, the new Kent Employment Programme exceeded the target of 100 by placing 129 young people aged 16-24 who were unemployed for more than three

months into apprenticeships. The final out-turn for the Kent Employment programme for the last four years now stands at 1031 young people taking up apprenticeships.

- In the past year the percentage of schools offering apprenticeships was 51%, which exceeded the target of 50%. Currently, 306 schools are employing apprentices with 453 starts to date. This work continues to engage more schools with a target to increase the number of higher and advanced apprenticeships.
- The **NEET figure** for January 2016 was 4.96% which was a slight increase on the January 2015 figure (4.7%) and above our target for 2016 of 3.5%. A new NEET Strategy is now in place which will help bring the NEET figure down. The target we are working towards in 2017 is 3.5% and 1% by January 2018.
- Since last year **youth unemployment** for 18 to 24 year olds has risen to 2.6%, which is slightly below the national average of 2.7% and accounting for 22.4% of all unemployed people in the area and above the national average of 21.6%. In August 2015 unemployment for this age group was 2.3%, compared to 3.35% in 2014. The five youth unemployment zones are registering the following percentages of young people unemployed with data for August 2015 in brackets: Dover 3.4% (3.7%), Gravesham 3.4% (3.7%), Shepway 3.4%(3.4%), Swale 4.5% (3.8%) and Thanet 5.2%(5.6%). Thanet has the highest unemployment rate in the South East. The comparable figures for 2014 were Dover (4.8%), Gravesham (4.3%), Shepway (5.1%), Swale (5.2%) and Thanet at (7.8%).
- The number of **assisted employment opportunities** for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities exceeded its target of 130 to 314.

The Quality of Education in Kent Schools

- We continue to make progress in increasing the **number of good and outstanding schools** in Kent, following inspection by Ofsted. As at the end of October 2016, 90% of schools were good and outstanding compared to 82% at the end of August 2015 and 75% in the previous year. In 2011-2012 only 60% of schools were judged good or better; the national average was then 70%. The national average for good and outstanding schools is now 88%.
- In Kent this overall figure of 90% includes 85.4% of Secondary schools, 91% of Primary schools, 100% of Special schools and 86% of PRUs in Kent, judged to be good or outstanding. Also, 97% of Early Years settings are good or outstanding.
- Currently, 88% of pupils attend a good or outstanding school. This includes 88.5% of Primary pupils, 86.5% of Secondary pupils, 100% of pupils attending Special schools and 98.2% of pupils attending a PRU. This equates to 10,300 more children and young people receiving a better education compared with last year. In 2015, 83% of pupils in Kent attended a good or outstanding school.

Exclusions

- The latest exclusion data for Kent indicates that the number of exclusions reduced significantly in the 2015/16 academic year. Countywide, the number of permanent exclusions has been significantly reduced from 105 to 67 compared to the same period last year, with 759 fewer fixed-term exclusions, reducing from 10,723 to 9,964. This reflects good practice in many schools, supported by LA services, in identifying and providing appropriate help for vulnerable pupils with challenging behaviour and other learning needs.
- In 2015-16, 96% of pupils left **Pupil Referral Units** with at least 1 A*-G GCSE pass or equivalent. 65% achieved at least 1 or more A*-C GCSE passes or equivalent. 10% of the students achieved 5 or more A*-G GCSE qualifications or equivalent and 8% achieved 5 or more A*-C GCSE qualifications or equivalent, including A*-C in GCSE English and Maths.

School Attendance

- School absence rates have increased slightly from last year. Overall the percentage of total absences in Kent was 4.9% compared to 4.6% nationally. For Secondary schools the figures were 5.7% compared to 5.3% nationally, and for Primary the percentage was 4.1% compared to 4.0% nationally. In every case there is a higher level of authorised, unauthorised, persistent and total absence in Kent. This is a concern.
- The percentage of pupils who have missed 38 or more sessions (persistent absence) was 4.4% in Kent compared to 3.7% nationally. For Secondary schools this figure is 6.5% compared to 5.4% nationally and for Primary schools it is 2.5% compared to 2.1% nationally. The previous persistent absence figure for 2013-14 for Secondary schools was 6.2%, and for Primary schools it was 2.3%. The latest data shows an increase in persistent absence for Secondary schools up to 6.5%, and an increase to 2.5% for Primary schools. These figures have increased in the past year, and they continue to be worse than the national figures, which means they are an even greater priority for improvement.

Education Health and Care Plans

- DfE published data for 2015 showed that Kent is performing well compared to other LAs nationally, issuing 86.2% of new EHCPs issued within 20 weeks, compared to 59.2% nationally and transferring 30.3% of all existing statements to EHCPs, compared to 18.2% nationally. The volume of transfers and maintaining this pace is an issue for all local authorities.
- The volume of psychological statutory advice completed in 2015-2016 increased by 16% (an increase from 904 in 2014-2015 to 1046 pieces of statutory work), with completion within required timeframes reducing from 98% in 2014-2015 to 91% in the past year.

Early Help

- In Early Help and Preventative Services support is being provided in a more timely way to 6,300 children and young people, and their families who have an Early Help Plan. 83.4% of cases are now closed with a positive outcome for children and the family, compared to 69% last year. 22.7% of the cases closed by Specialist Children's Services were stepped down to Early Help for on-going support, which is a marginal improvement on last year. Around 6% of cases closed to Early Help are stepped up to Social Care because children's needs and the risks to them have increased.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The key indicator for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD). There continues to be strong performance in the percentage of children achieving a GLD in Kent. The 2016 figure of 74.8% reflects an improvement from the 2015 figure of 73% and an 11.4 percentage point improvement since 2011. Although this misses our challenging target of 77% this is above the national average of 69.3% and Kent is ranked 2nd amongst its statistical neighbours for this measure.

	% Good Level of Development				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	+/- 2015 to 2016
Kent	63.4	68.5	72.9	74.8	+1.9
National	51.7	60.4	66.3	69.3	+3.0

The Department for Education (DfE) has decided not to introduce the new Baseline Assessment measure with effect from September 2015 as originally planned. The EYFS Profile will now continue to be a statutory requirement for schools to complete until at least 2017.

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1, Kent performed above the national average for every indicator. Although these are new measures which mean that it is not possible to compare with previous years, the figures do show continued positive outcomes compared to national figures.

In 2016, pupils were assessed against the new, and more challenging, national curriculum, which was introduced in 2014. Standards are no longer reported as levels but as scaled scores. At Key Stage 1, judgements for individual pupils are based on teacher assessment informed by externally validated tests in Reading, Mathematics and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. As in previous years, there is no Writing test and this continues to be judged by teacher assessment.

The DfE has made clear that owing to the raised expectations of the new curriculum, the 2016 outcomes cannot be compared with previous performance. However Kent has performed better than the national average across all measures at Key Stage 1 in 2016.

	Combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics			
	2013 %2B+	2014 %2B+	2015 %2B+	2016 % pupils met or exceeded the expected standard
Kent	77.4	66.9	78.4	66.6
National	N/A	N/A	N/A	60.3

	Reading			
	2013 %2B+	2014 %2B+	2015 %2B+	2016 % pupils met or exceeded the expected standard (Teacher assessment informed by Test)
Kent	79	82	84	78.2
National	79	81	82	74.0

	Writing			
	2013 %2B+	2014 %2B+	2015 %2B+	2016 % pupils met or exceeded the expected standard (Teacher assessment)
Kent	67	70	74	71.3
National	67	70	72	65.5

	Mathematics			
	2013 %2B+	2014 %2B+	2015 %2B+	2016 % pupils met or exceeded the expected standard (Teacher assessment informed by Test)
Kent	79	82	84	77.5
National	78	80	82	72.6

In 2016, 66.6% of Key Stage 1 pupils in Kent met or exceeded the expected standard in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined**, which is 6.3 percentage points above the national average.

In 2016, 78.2% of Key Stage 1 pupils in Kent met or exceeded the expected standard in **Reading**, which is 4.2 percentage points above the national average. 308 Kent schools attained at or above the national average for this measure. The proportion of pupils assessed as working at 'greater depth' is 24.6% which was 1 percentage point above the national average.

In 2016, 71.3% of Kent pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in **Writing**. This is 5.8 percentage points above the national average. 309 Kent schools attained at or above the national average for this measure. The proportion of pupils assessed as working at 'greater depth' was 15.1%, which is 1.8 percentage points above the national average.

The proportion of Kent pupils who met or exceeded the expected standard in **Mathematics** in 2016 was 77.5%, which is 4.9 percentage points above the national average. 329 Kent schools attained at or above the national average for this measure. The proportion of pupils assessed as working at 'greater depth' was 18.5%, which is 0.7 percentage points higher than the national average.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, with new national performance measures in 2016, Kent performed above the national average for all indicators, apart from Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling which is in line with the national average. Compared with statistical neighbours Kent's results overall are ranked top out of 11 other similar local authority areas.

In 2016, pupils were assessed against the new, and more challenging, National Curriculum, which was introduced in 2014. Standards are no longer reported as levels but as scaled scores. A pupil must attain a scaled score of 100+ in the Reading, Mathematics and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) tests in order to be assessed as being 'at the expected standard'. A pupil must attain a scaled score of 110+ in order to be assessed as having a 'high score' in the tests. As in previous years, there is no Writing test and this continues to be judged by teacher assessment. A pupil identified as high attaining in Writing is assessed as 'working at greater depth'.

The DfE has made it clear that due to the raised expectations of the new curriculum, the 2016 outcomes cannot be compared with previous performance.

School progress data has not yet been released but progress thresholds have been published.

	Combined Reading Writing and Mathematics			
	2013 % L4+	2014 % L4+	2015 % L4+	2016 % At the expected standard
Kent	74	79	80	58
National	75	79	80	53

	Reading			
	2013 % L4+	2014 % L4+	2015 % L4+	2016 % At the expected standard (Test)
Kent	85	89	90	69
National	86	89	89	66

	Writing			
	2013 % L4+	2014 % L4+	2015 % L4+	2016 % At the expected standard (Teacher Assessment)
Kent	83	86	88	80
National	83	85	87	74

	Mathematics			
	2013 % L4+	2014 % L4+	2015 % L4+	2016 % At the expected standard (Test)
Kent	83	86	87	71
National	85	86	87	70

	Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling			
	2013 % L4+	2014 % L4+	2015 % L4+	2016 % At the expected standard (Test)
Kent	71	74	78	72
National	74	76	80	72

At Key Stage 2, 58% of Kent pupils achieved the ‘expected standard’ in the **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined**, which is 5% above the national average of 53% and the highest amongst Kent’s statistical neighbours.

The proportion of pupils who attained a ‘higher standard’ in this combined measure was 6%, which is one percentage point above the national average. Compared to its statistical neighbours, Kent is ranked second for this measure.

In 2016, 277 Kent schools attained at or above the national average of 53% for the proportion of pupils reaching the ‘expected standard’ for the **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined measure**. In 2015, 260 schools in Kent attained at or above the national average of 80% against the historic measure of Level 4 and above in the Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined.

In 2016, 69% of Key Stage 2 pupils in Kent attained the ‘expected standard’ in **Reading**. This is 3% above the national average and ranks Kent highest among our statistical neighbours. 279 schools attained at or above the national average for this measure. The proportion of pupils attaining a ‘high score’ was 21%, which is 2 percentage points above the national average. Kent is ranked second against statistical neighbours for this measure.

In 2016, 80% of pupils in Kent attained the ‘expected standard’ in **Writing**. This is 6% above the national average and highest amongst Kent’s statistical neighbours. 315 schools attained at or above the national average for this measure. The proportion of pupils assessed as ‘working at greater depth’ was 15%, which is in line with the national average. Kent is ranked as third for this measure against statistical neighbours.

The proportion of pupils who attained the ‘expected standard’ in the **Mathematics** in 2016 was 71%, which is one percentage point above the national average and ranks Kent first among our statistical neighbours. 256 schools attained at or above the national average for this measure. The proportion of pupils attaining a ‘high score’ was 17%, which is in line with the national average. Kent is ranked second among statistical neighbours for this measure.

72% of pupils in Kent attained the ‘expected standard’ in the **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling** in 2016 which was in line with the national average. Kent was ranked third among its statistical neighbours for this measure. 257 schools attained at or above the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining a ‘high score’ was 22%, which is one

percentage point below the national average. Kent is ranked fourth against statistical neighbours for this measure.

The Floor Standard at Key Stage 2

In the 2015-16 academic year, schools are judged to be below the floor standard and therefore underperforming if:

- Fewer than 65% of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 meet the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Mathematics
- or**
- The school does not achieve sufficient progress scores in all three subjects (at least -5 in Reading, -7 in English Writing and -5 in Mathematics)

To be above the floor, the school needs to meet either the attainment or all of the progress elements. No school will be confirmed as being below the floor until December 2016 when schools' performance tables are published.

Key Stage 4

For GCSE outcomes in 2016, Kent is above the national average on most performance measures.

At Key Stage 4 there is an overall positive and improved picture in 2016. Provisional school reported results show that Secondary schools in Kent have performed well against the old and new headline GCSE performance measures. Compared with 2015 there have been clear improvements in attainment.

The percentage of pupils in Kent achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A*-C including English and mathematics, is 58.6%. This is above last year's figure of 57.3% and above the 2016 national average of 57.0%. On this old measure, Kent is ranked 5th among its statistical neighbours and 54th out of 151 local authorities nationally.

For the basics measure, the proportion of pupils who achieved A*-C grades in English and mathematics combined, the figure is 63.5%. This is 3.7 percentage points above last year's result of 59.8%. The 2016 national figure is 62.8%. The percentage of pupils in Kent entered for English and maths was 95%, compared to the national figure of 96.8%. On this performance measure 40 Secondary schools performed above the national average.

There has been improvement in GCSE A*-C passes for English where the success rate this year is 76%, compared to 70.4% last year. The national average is 74.7%.

In mathematics, there was a small increase this year to 68%, compared to 66.6% last year. The national average is 68.5%.

There has also been an increase in the headline English Baccalaureate measure. This year 29.5% of pupils achieved this qualification, rising from 26.5% last year. The national average is 24.6%. The percentage of pupils in Kent entered for the English Baccalaureate increased to 43.3%, compared to the national figure of 39.7%.

The average Progress 8 score for Kent is -0.04, which is just below the national figure of -0.03. The regional South East figure is -0.02.

The average Attainment 8 score per pupil in Kent is 50.3, compared to 49.9 nationally and 50.9 in the South East region.

Among our 11 local authority statistical neighbours, Kent is ranked 10th for the percentage of pupils entered for A-C in English and mathematics; and 5th or 6th for Progress 8, Attainment 8 and the percentage of pupils achieving A-C in English and maths.

Among all 151 local authorities, Kent is ranked 80th for Progress 8, 58th for Attainment 8, 66th for the percentage of pupils who achieved A-C grades in English and maths and 33rd for the percentage who achieved the English Baccalaureate.

Progress 8 Scores in Kent Schools

Progress 8 and the percentage of pupils achieving A-C grades in English and Maths are the two most important performance measures. English and maths are double weighted in the Progress 8 score.

The Progress 8 scores are above the national average of -0.03 in 59 Secondary schools. 32 schools performed well in relation to the national average, with 10 schools well above the average. The Progress 8 scores in 38 schools are below 0, which means pupils made less than expected progress. In 11 Secondary schools the score is -0.05 or below, which is well below average.

The highest performing school achieved a Progress 8 score of 0.81, while the lowest performing school achieved a score of -1.35. This means that pupils in this school achieved nearly one and a half GCSE grades less progress per subject than other pupils nationally with the same prior attainment at Key Stage 2.

Among 32 Grammar schools, 11 schools achieved Progress 8 scores close to the national average and were outperformed by a number of High Schools.

Attainment 8 Scores in Kent Schools

The Attainment 8 scores are at or above the national average of 49.8 in 37 Secondary schools. 24 schools performed well below the national average, with 32 schools well above the average.

Overall the GCSE results are positive and in a number of performance measures there has been improvement compared to 2015. However, there is wide variation across schools and aspects of performance in some schools are well below average. The new Progress 8 measure is a fairer reflection of the progress achieved by all pupils in their GCSE examinations and provides a more accurate picture of the performance of schools for all pupils.

A Level and Post 16 Results

Provisional results at Post 16 across a range of qualifications indicate that Kent is in line with national averages but given improving performance which is above average at other key stages this is disappointing. It will be a priority to work with schools to continue to improve guidance for students in choosing appropriate learning pathways at Post 16 and to ensure provision of a full range of technical pathways for students aged 14-19.

Post 16 outcomes for 2016 are based on new DfE performance measures in five categories. These are A Level, Academic, Technical Level, Applied General and the Technical Baccalaureate.

The figures given below are based upon the 2016 provisional DfE statistical first release and therefore will be subject to change when the final validated DfE Performance Tables are available in January 2017. All Kent and national averages noted below are for state funded schools only.

A Levels only

At Post 16 in 2016, based on provisional DfE results, for all A Level measures Kent is performing in line with or above the national average.

DfE provisional results for 2016 show that the A Level Average Point Score per entry achieved by students in Kent schools is 30.8 which is in line with the national average of 30.7 and equivalent to a C grade. Kent is ranked 4th out of its statistical neighbours and 56th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.

The percentage of A Level students achieving AAB grades or above including facilitating subjects is improving. The figure has increased to 16.8% from 12.9% in 2015, which is 1.4 percentage points above the national average of 15.4%. This is encouraging. Kent is ranked 3rd out of its statistical neighbours and 34th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.

Academic qualifications

Academic results include A Level, AS Level, International Baccalaureate, the International Baccalaureate Careers Related Programme (IBCP) and extended project qualifications.

In 2016, the Average Point Score per entry achieved by academic course students in Kent schools is 32.0 which is above the national average of 30.9 and equivalent to a C+ average grade. Kent is ranked 2nd out of its statistical neighbours and 26th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.

Technical Level 3

Technical Levels are advanced (Level 3) technical and professional qualifications, on a par with A levels and recognised by employers. Taught from September 2014, for reporting in

the performance Tables from 2016, they equip students with specialist knowledge and skills, enabling entry to an Apprenticeship, other skilled employment or a technical degree.

DfE provisional results for 2016 show that the Average Point Score per entry achieved by students in Kent schools at Technical Level is 36.8 which is slightly below the national average of 37.0 and equivalent to a Distinction+.

Applied General Level 3

Applied General qualifications are advanced (Level 3) qualifications that equip students with transferable knowledge and skills. Taught from September 2014, for reporting in the Performance Tables from 2016, they are for Post-16 students wanting to continue their education through applied study. They fulfil entry requirements for a range of higher education courses, either by meeting entry requirements in their own right or being accepted alongside and adding value to other qualifications at the same level.

In 2016, the Average Point Score per entry achieved by Applied General students in Kent schools is 37.0 which is below the national average of 38.0 and equivalent to a Distinction+. Kent is ranked 7th out of its statistical neighbours and 84th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.

Technical Baccalaureate

The Technical Baccalaureate is a new Performance Table measure that allows young people aspiring to a technical career a high-quality alternative to the A level route. This measure recognises the achievement of students taking advanced (Level 3) programmes which include a DfE approved Tech Level, level 3 maths and extended project qualifications. It was introduced for courses starting in September 2014, for reporting in the Performance Tables from 2016.

In Kent schools in 2016, 20 students achieved a Technical Baccalaureate compared to 130 students in state funded schools nationally. Kent is ranked 1st both in comparison to its statistical neighbours and 150 local authorities nationally for this measure. We are intending to expand this programme over the next academic year.

Gender Differences

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, girls continue to out-perform boys with 82.2% of girls compared to 68.0% of boys achieving a Good Level of Development in 2016. This represents a marginally improved position from 2015, although there is still work to be done to narrow the gender gap which has slightly improved from 15.0% in 2015 to 14.3% in 2016. At this measure Kent is ranked 6th amongst its statistical neighbours.

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1, girls outperformed boys in **Reading** in 2016. The proportion of girls who attained or exceeded the expected standard was 82% compared with 74% of boys, with a gender attainment gap of 8%. The proportion of girls assessed as working at 'greater depth' in Reading was 28%, 7% higher than boys, who attained 21%.

In 2016, as in previous years, the attainment gap between boys and girls remains widest in **Writing**. 78% of girls who attained or exceeded the expected standard compared with 64% of boys, a gender gap of 13%. The proportion of girls assessed as working at 'greater depth' was 19%, which was 8% higher than boys' attainment against this measure.

In 2016, girls outperformed boys in **Mathematics** and the attainment gap was 2%. The proportion of girls who attained or exceeded the expected standard was 78% compared with 76% of boys. Boys outperformed girls against the 'greater depth' measure, with 20% of boys assessed as reaching this threshold compared with 16% of girls, a gap of 4%.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, 55% of boys and 61% of girls attained the 'expected standard' in the **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined measure** which compares favourably with the respective 2016 national averages of 50% and 57%. The gender attainment gap in Kent was 6% compared with the national gap of 7% against this measure. The proportion of boys assessed as attaining a 'higher standard' was 5% and 6% for girls, both of which are in line with the national average for each group, with a gap of 1%.

In 2016, 66% of boys and 73% of girls attained the 'expected standard' in **Reading**. Both boys and girls attained higher than similar groups nationally, by 4% and 3% respectively. The gender attainment gap in **Reading** in Kent is 7% which is narrower than the national gap of 8%. The proportion of boys who attained a 'high score' was 18%, which was 2% higher than boys nationally. The proportion of girls assessed as attaining a 'high score' was 24%, also 2% higher than girls nationally. The gender gap in Kent for this measure was 6%, which is in line with the national gap.

There was no attainment gap in **Mathematics** in 2016, with both groups attaining 71% at the 'expected standard, 1% above the national average. Boys outperformed girls against the 'high score measure' and 1% higher than boys nationally with 19%. 15% of girls

attained this measure, the same as girls nationally, a gap of 4%. Boys outperformed girls nationally on this measure by 3%.

As in previous years, girls outperformed boys in **Writing** in 2016 and the gap is widest in this subject. 74% of boys attained the 'expected standard' in **Writing** compared with 86% of girls, a gap of 12%. Both groups, however, achieved higher than boys and girls nationally and the attainment gap in Kent is slightly lower than the national gap of 13%. The proportion of boys assessed as 'working at greater depth' was 11%, which is in line with boys nationally. Girls also attained in line with girls nationally against this measure achieving 19%. At 8%, the gender gap in Kent is in line with the national gap for 'greater depth'.

Girls outperformed boys in the **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Test** in 2016. The proportion of boys who attained the 'expected standard' was 68%, which was 1% higher than boys nationally. 78% of girls attained the 'expected standard' which was in line with girls nationally. The attainment gap was 10% which was 1% lower than the national gap of 11%. 27% of girls attained a 'high score' which was in line with girls nationally, compared with 18% of boys. These outcomes and the gap of 9% are in line with the national average.

Key Stage 4 and Post 16

This data on gender differences at GCSE and Post 16 will be available later in the year.

Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups

All attainment gaps at any age are of great significance to the life chances of children as they move through their schooling. Children that fall behind in the earlier years of learning do not catch up sufficiently with their peers. We continue to be determined to narrow these gaps in the next three years, and reverse the trend that achievement gaps get wider as children get older.

As we continue to raise attainment overall, we need to work even harder to narrow achievement gaps for vulnerable groups, especially pupils supported by the Pupil Premium. Although Kent has performed above the national average for most Key Stages, gaps in attainment for pupils supported by Pupil Premium, Children in Care, and for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) remain too wide.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In 2016, the percentage of FSM pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) decreased very slightly from 60.1% in 2015 to 59.0% in 2016. The FSM Achievement Gap widened to 18.0% in 2016 from 15.0% in 2015. This is disappointing.

The percentage of SEN children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a Good Level of Development increased from 24.9% in 2015 to 26.7% in 2016. The SEN achievement gap narrowed from 53.3% in 2015 to 52.8% in 2016, which is a small narrowing but nevertheless positive.

The percentage of Children in Care (CiC) looked after for more than twelve months, achieving a Good Level of Development reduced from 46.7% in 2015 to 28.6% in 2016, which is very worrying. The achievement gap for CiC widened from 26.5% in 2015 to 46.3% which is also a cause for significant concern.

Key Stage 1

In 2016, the proportion of FSM pupils who attained or exceeded the expected standard in **Reading** was 63.6%, which was an attainment gap was 18.3%. The widest gap for FSM pupils was in **Writing**, 55% of FSM pupils attained or exceeded the expected standard, an attainment gap of 20.4%. The attainment gap in **Mathematics**, at 18.1%, was similar to Reading, 63.1% of FSM pupils attained or exceeded the expected standard.

The attainment gap for SEN pupils was wide across all subjects in 2016. In **Reading**, 30.4% pupils with SEN in Kent attained or exceeded the expected standard which was a gap of 55.0%. The gap was widest in **Writing**, 21.1% of pupils with SEN attained or exceeded the expected standard, a gap of 57.7%. In **Mathematics**, 32.1% of pupils with SEN attained or exceeded the expected standard, a gap of 52.2%.

In 2016, the proportion of Children in Care (CIC) who attained or exceeded the expected standard in **Reading** was 38.2%, an attainment gap of 40%. In **Writing**, 29.4% of CIC

attained or exceeded the expected standard, a gap of 42%. The attainment gap was widest in **Mathematics**, at 45%, 32.4% of CIC attained or exceeded the expected standard.

Key Stage 2

In 2016, the proportion of FSM pupils who attained the 'expected standard' in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined** was 41.2%, a gap of 23.2%. In **Reading**, 54.7% of FSM pupils in Kent attained the 'expected standard'. This was a gap of 20%. In **Writing**, 67.5% of FSM pupils attained the 'expected standard', a gap of 17.2%. The attainment gap was widest in **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling** at 21%, 57.2% of FSM pupils attained the 'expected standard'. In **Mathematics**, 57.1% of FSM pupils attained the 'expected standard', a gap of 19.7%.

The attainment gap for SEN pupils was wide across all measures in 2016. The proportion of SEN pupils who attained the 'expected standard' in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined** was 15.3%, a gap 50.7% In **Reading**, 31.3% pupils with SEN in Kent attained the 'expected standard'. This was a gap of 45%. The attainment gap was widest in **Writing**, 32.1% of pupils with SEN attained the 'expected standard', a difference of 56.8%. In **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling**, 26.6% of pupils with SEN attained the 'expected standard' a gap of 54.4%. In **Mathematics**, 31% of pupils with SEN attained the 'expected standard'. This gap was the narrowest at 48%.

In 2016, the proportion of Children in Care (CIC) who attained the 'expected standard' in **Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined** was 21.6%, a gap of 36.8%. In **Reading**, 41.9% of CIC attained the 'expected standard', a gap of 27.6%. In **Writing**, 51.4% of CIC attained the 'expected standard', a gap of 28.9%. The proportion of CIC who attained the 'expected standard' in **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling** was 44.6%, a gap of 28.2%, similar to that of Writing. The attainment gap was widest in **Mathematics** where 41.9% of CIC attained the 'expected standard', a gap of 29.7%.

Key Stage 4, and A Level and Post 16

This data on achievement gaps for vulnerable groups will be available later in the year.

Summary of Progress

Improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage continue the very good upward trend over recent years, with performance in Kent well above national averages. Outcomes at Key Stages 1 and 2 are also positive and although it is not possible to compare outcomes with previous years Kent is performing above the national average for the majority of indicators in 2016. At Key Stage 4 there is an overall positive and improved picture in 2016. Provisional results at Post 16 across a range of qualifications indicate that Kent is in line with national averages but given improving performance at other key stages this is disappointing. It will be a priority to work with schools to continue to improve guidance for students in choosing appropriate learning pathways Post 16 and to ensure more provision of a full range of technical pathways at 14-19.

Slow progress continues to be made in narrowing the achievement gaps for vulnerable learners, which is very disappointing. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the gender gap reduced slightly from 2015. At Key Stages 1 and 2, although no comparison can be made to previous years, the gender gap in Kent is in line with the national picture for the majority of measures. In the new measures at Key Stage 2, gaps for pupils in receipt of Free School Meals, Special Education Needs and Disability and Children in Care remain very wide, which is a concern. Data on outcomes for disadvantaged groups at Key Stages 4 and 5 are not yet available. Closing the gaps in achievement for all vulnerable learners continues to be a significant priority for improvement in 2016-2017.

Educational attainment gaps result in low social mobility. We need to do more to ensure that children's life chances are not determined so young and with so little chance of catching up for those who are less advantaged. Recent national and international reports have highlighted this key issue for the economy and for individual life chances. Raising the attainment of disadvantaged children and closing the gap between them and other children must be a priority for the whole of society. This is one of our top priorities in Kent.

Overall, there are mostly positive trends in the right direction on raising standards of attainment and increasing rates of progress. However, we need to continue to be very ambitious because there is still much to do to bring about the necessary improvements. Kent has a mixed economy of provision in the early years, schools and the skills and training sectors, serving diverse communities with many challenges. This ranges from outstanding and good provision to a significant amount of provision (10% of schools currently) that is not yet good, which is letting down children and communities, some of whom are the most disadvantaged. On many indicators we perform better against national averages and against our statistical neighbours but there is more to do and we need a continued sense of urgency to build on the improved performance in 2016 and more intensive work on those areas where performance is below average and gaps are wide.

The wide variations between schools highlight aspects of good practice that need to be more widely disseminated as part of the collaboration between schools. In many schools there is impressive narrowing of the gaps for different groups of pupils and very effective strategies, supported by the pupil premium, to accelerate the progress of these pupils. We will build on this good practice.

Our biggest challenges are to improve the achievement gaps for vulnerable groups and to improve 14-19 education and the outcomes achieved by students in this age group, including reducing the number of young people who do not participate and become NEET.

We aim to ensure more schools undertake Pupil Premium Reviews, recommended by the DFE for schools that need to make better use of the funding. In order to support these reviews, it is important that schools which are effectively using the Pupil Premium, share their best practice.

Research shows family engagement and family motivation is highly correlated with attainment at school. The National Audit Office similarly found that 91% of school leaders saw parental engagement as a barrier to closing the attainment gap of some disadvantaged pupils. However, only 57% of these leaders had an intervention in place to address this concern. We aim to ensure there is more focus on engaging and supporting parents and that support from the Early Help services is available for all the children and families who need it.

The funding for the Pupil Premium in Kent now exceeds £55 million in 2016, yet we have seen very little improvement in outcomes for pupils on free school meals at Key Stages 2 and 4. This is a significant resource and needs to make more of a difference to closing achievement gaps for these less advantaged learners.

Similarly, for SEN learners where achievement gaps continue to be too wide, we allocate over £200 million in Kent to supporting the needs of these pupils yet there is limited improvement to their progress and attainment in relation to other pupils. Once again we aim to ensure that schools make the most effective use of high needs funding and participate in the local LIFT arrangements, where additional support and advice can be accessed.

Schools that make limited use of the support services available through Early Help, SEN, the Pupil Referral Units, the Primary Behaviour Projects and the Education Health Needs Service are missing opportunities to contribute to improved outcomes and better learning progress for vulnerable pupils. We must do more to achieve maximum benefit from these additional resources.

In addition, there is a need to ensure that all schools embed the best practice in the regular monitoring of every pupil's progress and the formative assessment of their learning and achievement. All the research tells us that real gains are achieved when small steps are taken each day to improve progress in learning for every pupil. Investment in the kind of teaching and other adult support, in small groups, to help children catch up on the day, are proven to accelerate progress.

More generally many schools are accelerating progress by investing more time in the range and quality of assessment and feedback to pupils on their performance, provided routinely by teachers, and supporting this by teaching pupils the learning skills they need to monitor, evaluate and assess their progress against improvement goals which they understand and sometimes set for themselves. Some schools are investing in more use of peer mentoring and tutoring, enabling pupils to teach their peers in well-coordinated and structured ways

using high quality resources, including digital packages which motivate and structure the learning pathway.

Provision and Outcomes for 14-24 Year Olds

The 14-24 Strategy for Learning, Employment and Skills is designed to achieve a fundamental shift in the education system in Kent towards a more comprehensive and balanced academic and technical offer for young people aged 14 to 24. The Adult Skills Strategy also builds on the four priorities for the 14 to 24 age range, with a clear focus on meeting the skills needs of the local economy and support for vulnerable adults.

The priorities are to:

- Raise attainment and skill levels for all 14 to 24 year olds;
- Improve and extend the provision of technical and vocational education, training and apprenticeships;
- Increase participation in learning and in skilled employment;
- Target support for vulnerable young people to achieve and gain employment.

The 14-24 Strategy and the Adult Skills Strategy aim to ensure there is a coordinated approach to helping young people and adults to access skilled employment or higher levels of skills qualifications and learning. This requires investment in new learning pathways, the best use of new technical qualifications, effective partnership between schools, colleges, employers and training providers and a commitment to ensuring no young person drops out of the system between the ages of 16 and 19.

In the past year the role of employers in influencing skills provision has been strengthened through the development of eight Guilds in the following sectors Construction, Engineering, Creative Industries, Hospitality and Transport, Health and Social Care, Land Based and Life Sciences and Financial Services.

There has been a continued increase in the number of apprenticeships, improved vocational outcomes at post 16 and an increase in the available technical and vocational pathways for young people. However, we are still not doing well enough to meet the needs of all young people to ensure their full participation and success, particularly those who do not achieve level 2 English and mathematics qualifications at GCSE.

There have been a number of national changes which affect post 16 programmes. These include the introduction of new performance measures at post 16; significant changes to the A levels qualifications, the introduction of 3 new technical qualifications, the technical award for Key Stage 4; the technical certificates level 2 and 3 for post 16 programmes and the introduction of the Technical Baccalaureate. These create new opportunities for more young people to have better pathways and to succeed by gaining appropriate qualifications.

The DFE published the Post 16 Skills Plan in July 2016 which sets two clear pathways for young people at 16 of either academic or technical. These changes will have a major impact on the planning and delivery of post 16 provision for schools and colleges.

Many school sixth forms are still predominantly focused on an academic A Level offer and do not provide enough opportunities for young people who have not achieved five good GCSEs including English and Maths to increase their levels of qualifications. There is too much provision for Level 3 academic qualifications at post 16 and insufficient opportunity for students to follow technical qualifications and to gain mathematics and English qualifications by age 19.

Appropriate vocational and technical pathways are not always in place to support the progression of all learners from age 14 to 19, and into skilled employment. There continues to be a high drop-out rate for learners aged 17 in Kent schools and colleges which remains a concern. The NEET and 'not known' numbers overall are reducing, which is positive, but there are still too many young people in vulnerable groups who become NEET, particularly SEND learners and Children in Care.

Consequently, there is a need for continued effort to address these issues and achieve more rapid developments whereby the work of schools, colleges, training providers and employers become better integrated and respond to the needs of young people, adults and the economy. Facilitating and supporting these developments is a key priority. We aim to ensure, through the work of the Skills and Employability Service and 14-19 District Partnerships that there is further development of new technical 14 to 19 pathways, and increased take up of apprenticeships and employment with training.

Careers education and guidance is essential to ensuring young people take the best options and learning pathways available to them. There is a thriving careers education network, consisting of steering groups of lead careers co-ordinators and district Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance meetings, which supports the county's aims of improving participation and increasing levels of numeracy and literacy. It also supports the provision of appropriate learning programmes from starting points to positive destinations in further and higher learning and employment with training. In addition, the Kent Children's University is developing new programmes to support careers education and provide experiential opportunities for 7 to 14 year olds.

The eight Employers' Guilds provide new opportunities of enhanced employer engagement with schools. There is now a more effective employer engagement plan. The appointment of an Enterprise Co-ordinator by Kent County Council is helping to ensure twenty coastal Secondary schools have more support to engage with employers and develop their technical and vocational education offer.

Progress has been made in expanding the local learning and skills opportunities in all districts available on the Kentchoices4u website for young people looking to re-engage in learning, who are NEET, and looking for apprenticeships or employment with training. These programmes offer alternative pathways and have facilitated young people's access to over 63 training providers and colleges.

Apprenticeships and Improving Vocational and Technical Education

A number of schools and colleges have used the flexibilities within the post 16 programmes of study and new qualification reforms. Case studies have been shared on innovative and

collaborative approaches to 14 to 19 curriculum provision and work continues with individual schools and colleges to develop robust 14 to 19 technical pathways, which lead to sustainable employment.

In the past year, there was a 5% increase in the number of vocational learners. The Sainsbury Review – the Post 16 Skills Plan – offers more opportunities and greater investment in technical education programmes.

Recently, the Local Authority, with schools and FE Colleges, started an area review to identify the effectiveness of existing provision and pathways that require further development. The outcomes of this review will be used to plan new 14 to 19 provisions and strengthen the links with employers.

The Skills and Employability Service has been developing skills plans with the seven employment sector Guilds. There are over 200 employers involved in the Guilds and over 540 employment opportunities were created by the Guilds in 2015/16 including apprenticeships, work experience placements and internships. A priority for the Guilds is working with schools to provide information and guidance on employment opportunities in the seven sectors. This includes schools' visits, mentoring young people, taking part in careers fairs and events. The Guilds are providing an informed and coordinated approach to identifying the skills needed and the steps young people need to take to enter skilled employment. The Guilds meet the needs of the industry by working in partnership with the relevant sector experts, including employers, trade bodies, training providers, colleges, and the Local Authority.

Kent continues to perform well in increasing apprenticeships; in 2015-16 the apprenticeship numbers are significantly higher for 16 to 18 year olds at 3000. Performance is better than our statistical neighbours. There has been a significant campaign by all Kent apprenticeship providers to increase the number of 16 to 18 year olds in apprenticeships and the latest trend in the data suggests that the final out turn will be well above last year's figures. A new Apprenticeship website has been created which supports young people to find opportunities, and 600 young people have used this site since it was launched in July 2016.

The KCC Apprenticeship Programme has been running successfully in 2015-16 and numbers were on target. However, the target has now been increased in the Council and incorporates part of the 2016-17 Apprenticeship targets being introduced as part of the new public sector targets in April 2017. The cumulative target of 600 for 2016 has been met with a total of 674 apprenticeships in the County Council. Kent County Council is part of the national trailblazer programme and is piloting the new Apprenticeship standards with City and Guilds which is due to start in September 2016.

New data is not available until November.

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

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016 (up to 3rd Qtr.)
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Under 19	2,560	2,760	2,480*
19 to 24	3,540	3,440	2,550
25 Plus	3,580	4,830	3,310

* Which is a 15% increase compared to the same period in 14/15

In 2015-16, the new Kent Employment Programme exceeded the target of 100 by placing 129 young people aged 16-24 into apprenticeships who had been unemployed for more than three months. The final out-turn for the Kent Employment programme for the last four years now stands at 1031 young people taking up apprenticeships.

The percentage of schools offering apprenticeships in the past year was 51%, which just exceeded the target of 50%. Currently, 306 schools are employing apprentices with 453 starts to date. This work continues to engage more schools with a target to increase the number of higher and advanced apprenticeships.

The number of assisted apprenticeship opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities was 35, compared to the target of 30 in 2015-16. This programme has been very successful in placing some of our most vulnerable learners into employment and the service will seek to draw down further funding for 2016-17 and increase the target.

Work is underway to prepare for the introduction of the new national Apprenticeship Levy and new standards across all KCC departments to maximise apprenticeship opportunities. The aim of the Apprenticeships for All programme is to widen the range of entry points into KCC apprenticeships through the use of the Levy funding and incentive payments.

The NEET Figures and Youth Unemployment

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

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

The NEET figure for January 2016 was 5.0%, lower than January 2015 (5.3%) but above the national average of 4.2%. Work continues across all KCC services that support young people to reduce NEETs with clear plans and processes in place to make significant reductions to achieve the January 2017 target. The NEET figure should always be used in conjunction with the 'Not Known' figure (young people whose learning destination or employment is not known to the tracking system). The percentage of Not Knowns was 8.3% in January 2016. This was lower than January 2015 (11.2%) and a number of significant changes were made to the systems and the target to reduce the Not Knowns to 7% by January 2016 was actually achieved in May 2016. This was the lowest Not known figure for

2 years. These figures are still too high and the NEET Strategy is designed to significantly reduce them in the coming months.

Since last year **youth unemployment** for 18 to 24 year olds has risen to 2.6%, which is just below the national average of 2.7% and accounting for 22.4% of all unemployed people in the area, which is above the national average of 21.6%. In August 2015 unemployment for this age group was 2.3%, compared to 3.35% in 2014. The five youth unemployment zones are registering the following percentages with data for August 2015 in brackets: Dover 3.4% (3.7%), Gravesham 3.4% (3.7%), Shepway 3.4%(3.4%), Swale 4.5% (3.8%) and Thanet 5.2%(5.6%). Thanet has the highest unemployment rate in the South East region. The comparable figures for 2014 were Dover (4.8%), Gravesham (4.3%), Shepway (5.1%), Swale (5.2%) and Thanet at (7.8%).

Targeted Support for Vulnerable Learners

During 2016, the Skills and Employability Service has undertaken a range of targeted projects to ensure positive outcomes for vulnerable young people, including those with learning difficulties. These include Supported Internships, Assisted Apprenticeships, Supported Employment and collaborative programmes between Schools and Colleges in Dartford, Gravesend and Shepway. The Troubled Families employment programme in 2015/2016 has supported 18 young people to take up an apprenticeship and 46 young people into paid employment. The Service is currently working with 65 young people aged 16 to 18 and 81 young people aged 19 to 24, supporting them into positive destinations in education, training and apprenticeships. Four Special schools and several training providers are working with the Supported Employment team across Kent to support learners into suitable, sustainable employment opportunities with training.

16-24 year olds

The Service has been working with 52 vulnerable young people aged 16-24 supporting them into education, training and apprenticeships. This number represents good progress as it significantly exceeds the target for the year, which had been set at 30. To date, seven of the young people are now employed in apprenticeship placements. The Service has supported 173 young people from Special Schools over the past year with 70% of these learners remaining in education or taking up apprenticeships. We prioritised young people with Education Health and Care Plans who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) for our supported training with 19 professionals acting as change champions.

A wide range of supported employment pathways are being developed by the Kent Supported Employment Team. In 2015-16 this team supported 314 young people and adults into assisted employment opportunities, and 139 young people accessed and sustained paid employment. Others benefited from bespoke work experience, voluntary work and independent travel training.

Each district in Kent now has a District Employability Offer outside of mainstream education providers, which provides clear progression routes into employment or apprenticeships. There are approximately 80 offers across the districts involving 25 different providers. This is meeting the needs of over 500 young people in a variety of programmes. These include

traineeships, apprenticeships and employability full time programmes lasting for a year, and 12 week engagement programmes including work experience and intensive mentoring and resilience courses.

Adult Skills

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

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

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

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

The Strategy is built around the following priorities to:

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

The strategy is designed to address the significant gaps in the skill requirements of the local economy and the skill levels of the adult population in Kent, which cannot be addressed simply by improving the abilities of young people entering the workforce from school. Retraining and improving the skills of the existing workforce is vital if we are to gain the benefits of growth arising from economic recovery and the opportunities available in a global market. A considerable amount of resource is invested in adult learning. In order to maximise the effectiveness of this resource we must co-ordinate at a local level to ensure

collaboration between providers. This Strategy has as a key priority the importance of engaging employers in adult vocational education and training.

Community Learning and Skills

The Community Learning and Skills (CLS) service provides learning opportunities for adults, young people and families in order to meet their aspirations for improved work skills, better personal development, strong families and healthy and creative lives.

In the past year CLS engaged with over 22,000 learners in Kent, with a total of over 36,000 enrolments. A very wide range of provision is offered including study programmes, traineeships and apprenticeships to young adults aged between 16 and 18, as well as a broad range of apprenticeships and accredited programmes to adults over the age of 19. Successful engagement with 400 employers, the majority of whom are SMEs in Kent, provide carefully planned programmes that meet local and national skills needs. During 2015-16, CLS also began offering programmes to Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers and for the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. CLS also engaged over 100 learners on its Mental Health pilot for the Skills Funding Agency.

Accredited programmes include functional skills and GCSEs in Mathematics and English as well as English for Speakers of Other Languages. Non-accredited provision includes Family Learning programmes run in partnership with schools and Children's Centres across the County as well as Neighbourhood Learning programmes targeted at engaging hard to reach learners.

Improvements achieved during 2015-16

In June 2016, CLS had a full inspection by Ofsted under the revised Common Inspection Framework. As a result of this inspection, CLS was judged to be Good in Overall Effectiveness, as well as Good in the six other categories it was inspected under. CLS was identified as a Good provider because:

- Senior leaders and managers have successfully maintained the good quality of KCLS over the six years since the previous inspection.
- Leaders and managers have also secured improvements in increasing the proportion of learners who are new to adult learning programmes each year, and the use of performance information to monitor the service's effectiveness.
- The vast majority of learners and apprentices make good progress. Most gain their qualifications. They attain high standards of work in academic subjects such as mathematics and English, and on practical courses.
- The proportion of adult learners gaining grades A* to C in mathematics and English GCSEs is high and well above national rates.
- Many learners who do not have any formal qualifications when they start their courses make good progress from low starting points.

- The proportion of apprentices gaining their qualification is above national averages and is good. The vast majority of learners studying in the workplace gain their qualifications.

Ofsted Inspection Outcomes

Ofsted outcomes for Kent schools have improved significantly over the past four years and currently 90% of schools are judged to be good or outstanding, compared to 60% in 2012.

At the beginning of the school year in September 2016, 90% of schools were good or outstanding, compared to 82% in 2015, 75% in 2014, 71% in 2013, 60% in 2012 and 59% in 2011. Kent is now above the national average of 88%. Overall, 21% of schools are judged to be outstanding and 69% judged to be good, compared to the national position of 21% schools outstanding and 67% good.

This overall figure includes 85.4% of Secondary schools, 90.3% of Primary schools, 95.5% of Special schools and 85.7% of PRUs in Kent, judged to be good or outstanding.

In September 2016, 17.4% of Primary schools (72) are outstanding, 73% (302 schools) are good, 9.2% (38 schools) require improvement and 0.5% are inadequate (2 schools). 31.3% of Secondary schools (30) are outstanding, 54.2% (52 schools) are good, 12.5% (12 schools) require improvement and 2.1% are inadequate (2 schools). 36.4% of Special schools are outstanding (8), 59% (13 schools) are good and 4.5% requires improvement (1 school).

In Kent overall, in September 2016, 87.7% of pupils (186,661) were attending a good or outstanding school, including 88.4% of Primary pupils (99,302), 86.5% of Secondary pupils (83,782) and 98.0% of pupils (3,466) attending Special schools.

In September 2016, there are 371 good and 112 outstanding schools, 52 schools requiring improvement (including 38 Primary schools and 12 Secondary schools) and 4 schools in a category, out of a total of 539 schools with a current inspection result. This means that there are 22 more good and outstanding schools compared to the same point in 2015.

At the start of September 2015, there were 361 good and 100 outstanding schools, 88 schools requiring improvement (including 68 Primary schools and 15 Secondary schools) and 12 schools in a category, out of a total of 561 schools that had a current inspection result. Three schools were judged inadequate during the 2015/16 academic year and eight schools were removed from an Ofsted category of concern.

Of the 68 schools inspected in the 2015/16 school year 72.1% were judged to be good or outstanding, compared to 72% in 2014/15 maintaining a good rate of improvement.

There was improvement in outcomes for Secondary Schools, with 66.7% of the 12 schools inspected between September 2015 and July 2016 being judged good or outstanding, compared to only 54% in 2014-15. In the same period 55 Primary schools were inspected and 72.7% were judged good or outstanding, compared to 75% in the same period the previous year.

As we begin the 2016/17 school year, 87.7% of pupils in Kent are attending a good or outstanding school compared to 83% in 2015 and 78% in 2014. This means approximately 9,747 more children and young people are receiving a better education since 2015.

There has been continued strong improvement in the numbers attending a good or outstanding Pupil Referral Unit from 30% of pupils in 2012, 60% in 2013, 73% in 2014, 94% in 2015 to 98.2% in September 2016.

Many 'satisfactory' or 'requires improvement' schools are well led and making good progress, so that we are confident of future good inspection outcomes. As at August 2016 we have exceeded our target of having at least 86% of Kent schools being good or outstanding. Our priority for 2017 onwards is to continue to increase the rate of improvement in education in Kent. We expect this positive trend to continue towards our ambitious target of at least 95% of schools to be judged good or outstanding by 2019.

The proportion of schools in Kent judged to be Requiring Improvement (RI) at the end of the academic year 2015-16, decreased to 10.5% which is 0.5% below the national average of 11%. Kent's position represents a continued reduction in the number of RI schools from 36% in 2012, to 25% in 2013, 20% in 2014 and 16% in 2015.

In September 2016, four schools (0.7%) in Kent are in an Ofsted category of concern. This represents a decrease of 1.3% from the previous year and means Kent is below the national average of 1% of schools judged to be inadequate by Ofsted. This is an improved picture compared to previous years (4% in 2012 and 2013, 5% in 2014 and 2% in 2015).

Key lessons from schools that achieve a good or better inspection outcome include:

- Effective leadership with a track record of improvement
- Governance that challenges senior leaders and holds the school to account for its performance
- Having a clear and shared vision, with high expectations of all
- Developing staff
- Assuring the quality of teaching and learning
- Leading and building leadership capacity
- Providing a relevant and attractive curriculum
- Assessment and progress-tracking - making this clear, simple and easy to use
- Using external evaluation to challenge the work of the school
- Confident use of data to show evidence of pupil progress and attainment in all year groups
- A strong focus on improving rates of progress for all groups of pupils
- Procedures for ensuring the consistency and continuous improvement of teaching

- Effective use of the pupil premium and other funding to ensure under-achieving pupils catch up quickly and gaps narrow
- Good use of assessment to feed back to pupils and help them to do better
- Effective use of data to track individual pupils' progress and monitor teaching quality, which informs the school's procedures for targeting improvement activity
- Evidence of moderating school assessments and accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses with clear actions to address under-performance
- And clear evidence of improvement since the last inspection.

No school achieves consistency of practice and continuous improvement without highly effective leadership and governance.

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

All schools currently rated as inadequate and as 'Requiring Improvement' are working closely with the School Improvement Team, and are supported by other schools, to ensure they achieve a rapid rate of improvement.

The Local Authority takes its school improvement responsibilities very seriously and we use all the available powers of intervention and support to accelerate improvement, address decline and prevent school failure.

In 2016, a Kent School Improvement Strategy and Protocol for Schools Causing Concern were published clarifying the role of the Local Authority in working in partnership with schools to bring about improvement.

We continue to be determined to do everything we can, within the framework of Government policy and through our own local initiative, to bring about sustained improvement in the quality of schools in Kent to ensure every school requiring improvement becomes a good school within the next two years, and our aim is to continue to work in partnership to ensure no good and outstanding schools decline.

Inspection Outcomes for Kent Early Years Settings

In the 2015-16 school year, inspection outcomes for Early Years settings continued to improve significantly increasing the number of good and outstanding settings.

At the end of the school year in August 2016, 95.4% of Early Years settings were judged good or better. The figure in August 2015 was 88%.

At the end of August 2016, in Kent overall 96.6% of children under five were attending a good or outstanding Early Years setting.

Inspection Outcomes for Kent Children's Centres

During the past year Ofsted paused the Children's Centre inspection cycle, pending the outcome of the Government's consultation on the future of Children's Centres.

In seeking to continue to evaluate and improve the performance of Children's Centres in Kent we have commissioned a former Senior HMI from Ofsted to undertake a series of reviews of the Children Centres. These have now taken place in seven districts and the work has been valuable in identifying both strengths as well as areas for development. In April 2016 the former HMI concluded that 'overall effectiveness of centres in Kent has been strengthened considerably. It is apparent that Kent's internal QA and audit systems are now well-placed to supersede external scrutiny.' Currently 75 % of Children's Centres are rated as good or better.

Exclusions

The latest exclusion data for Kent indicates that the number of exclusions reduced significantly in the 2015-16 academic year. Countywide, the number of permanent exclusions has been significantly reduced from 105 to 67 compared to the same period last year, with 759 fewer fixed-term exclusions, reducing from 10,723 to 9,964. This reflects good practice in many schools, supported by LA services, in identifying and providing appropriate help for vulnerable pupils with challenging behaviour and other learning needs.

In order to disseminate the good practice and effective processes that have been adopted by many schools in Kent, we have produced the first Kent Exclusion Guidance for Schools and Governors. The document summarises the statutory requirements while promoting effective and preventative approaches that Kent schools and LA services have developed in the past year. The procedural sections reflect many good practices and new ways of working, which the PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service (PIAS) has worked with schools to develop.

The work of the Pupil Referral Units and other Alternative Provision has also played a key role in working with schools to identify alternatives to exclusions, providing appropriate support for children with challenging behaviours. There are now six PRUs, and two alternative provision arrangements managed by groups of schools in two areas of Kent, plus the Kent Health Needs Education Service, which has six satellite provisions around the county. In addition, we have invested in developing Primary projects to provide support for pupils with challenging behaviour in Primary schools. The quality of this provision is now mostly good, with 86% of PRUs rated good or better by Ofsted and 95% of pupils attending a PRU in provision that is good.

In 2016, the GCSE results show that nearly all pupils (96%) attending PRUs achieved at least one qualification and 68% achieved five or more GCSE passes. 79% achieved a GCSE pass in English and 70% in maths. 65% achieved the expected rate of progress in English and maths. In September 2016, 74% of these pupils are now continuing in some form of education and training post 16. While there is room for further improvement these results are significantly better than the outcomes achieved for these learners in previous years.

There has been very good work in the PRUs and across schools to improve provision and outcomes for these vulnerable learners. A very small number of schools now resort to permanent exclusion and the numbers continue to reduce. This means that more young people have a better chance of being helped and they can remain in the education system.

If we continue on this trajectory we will see even better outcomes. Schools need to make maximum use of Early Help, the SEND LIFT process and the available High Needs funding, in addition to the work of the PRUs, to continue to make sure every child and young person in Kent is supported to participate fully in education and to achieve well.

Attendance

Attendance is a key priority and improving students' attendance rates can have a significant impact on outcomes, particularly for vulnerable groups where early indications of other more serious underlying problems can be reflected in erratic or poor attendance. For example, nearly 50% of young people who become home educated have a history of persistent absence from school. Poor attendance is also a significant risk factor for children and young people who are excluded and those who become NEET.

Final absence statistics relating to the full 2014-15 school year were published in March 2016. This attendance data shows that absence from school in Kent is slightly higher than the national average.

Overall the percentage of total absences in Kent was 4.9% compared to 4.6% nationally. For Secondary schools the figures were 5.7% compared to 5.3% nationally, and for Primary the percentage was 4.1% compared to 4.0% nationally. In every case there is a higher level of authorised, unauthorised, persistent and total absence in Kent.

The percentage of pupils who have missed 38 or more sessions (persistent absence) was 4.4% in Kent compared to 3.7% nationally. For Secondary schools this figure is 6.5% compared to 5.4% nationally and for Primary schools it is 2.5% compared to 2.1% nationally.

The previous persistent absence figure for 2015 for Secondary schools was 6.2%, and for Primary schools it was 2.3%. The data shows an increase in persistent absence for Secondary schools up to 6.5%, and an increase to 2.5% for Primary schools.

The latest available data on attendance is not for a full school year. Available early data which combine autumn 2015 and spring 2016 figures indicate a persistent absence figure for Primary schools of 9.3%, which compares to 8.5% last academic year. The available early figure for secondary schools is 13.2%, down from last year's figure of 14.0%. National data for 2015-16 is not yet available, and national data for 2014-15 was for the previous 15% threshold, so there is currently no comparative data available. During the same period, the attendance rates for Primary schools has increased marginally from 95.8% to 95.9% while the rate in Secondary schools has improved slightly from 94.4% to 94.8%.

We have re-organised our services to ensure pupils with a history of poor attendance at school get more coordinated family support through the Early Help Service. Schools requiring support from Early Help for attendance-only issues refer directly into the Inclusion and Attendance team.

A good Impact on improving attendance has been made in schools where:

- There are regular parent interviews where attendance targets are set.
- Heads of Year or other staff make home visits
- Taxis are arranged where transport may be a problem

- Reward trips are provided
- Texts and phone calls are made to the home for attendance at parents' evenings
- There is first day calling home for a pupil's absence
- Parental workshops are provided on how parents can support their child.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

In September 2014, the Children and Families Act 2014 introduced reforms to the way in which children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are supported to learn. Setting out a four-year transitional period ending March 2018, the Government acknowledged the scale of the reforms is enormous, and at the core, a new statutory duty to ensure that the views of children and young people with SEN and disabilities and those of their parents are given importance.

Kent's SEND Strategy sets out an ambitious plan to improve the educational, health and emotional wellbeing outcomes for Kent's children and young people. We believe that every Kent child and young person should have their needs met, as far as possible in their local community and we expect every setting to make effective provision so that they move on easily to the next stage of their life. All children with SEND must have their needs identified at the earliest possible opportunity and we aim to ensure they are provided with the support they need to make good educational progress and achieve good outcomes so that they and their families feel well supported.

The Strategy is focused on ensuring good SEN practice in every school and a stronger commitment to inclusion through the core standards delivered by a skilled workforce across all schools. To deliver the practice improvements needed, the SEND Strategy is supported by a workforce development plan which aims to ensure teachers have the skills to support children particularly those with autism, speech and language difficulties and behavioural needs.

Knowing that we are providing the right services and support for families is hugely important. Kent children and young people, along with their parents and carers, told us to keep their needs at the heart of what we do. Parents asked us to increase the support in local schools. Feedback from many families indicates that the reforms have brought about positive change; there are now more specialist places in Kent mainstream and Special schools and as our building improvements in Special schools are completed, there will be further increases.

We know that there is much we must do to ensure the changes are embedded in everything we do for our children and young people with SEND; every education setting must demonstrate good SEN practice and a stronger commitment to inclusion.

Our priorities for 2017-2020

We want to ensure that pupils with SEND are socially and educationally included in the life of their schools, they make better progress, they do not become NEET, they are not over represented in exclusions and they have good attendance.

We know that there are still gaps in our provision and the Kent Commissioning Plan has identified where the most significant pressures are.

The cost pressure from school transport means we must increase the capacity of local schools to support pupils with SEND without the need for unnecessary travel to Special

provision further away. We also want to increase the provision that is available in the early years and after statutory school age at 16 years old.

We want all young people with SEN and disabilities to participate in education or employment with training until they are 18, and those who need continuing education to age 25, to be able to access local settings. We want pathways for SEND learners aged 16-24 that are coherent, offer appropriate choices and are clear about intended outcomes at ages 16, 19 and 24.

Commissioning Education Provision

The Education Commissioning Plan sets out our plans for increasing education provision in Kent. We aim to secure good quality school places in every community so that every young person can have the best chance in life.

Progress in 2015-16

In 2015-16, KCC delivered the additional new school places needed for September 2016. The majority of these new school places were within the Primary sector. We expanded 25 Primary schools, adding 14 permanent forms of entry and 184 temporary Reception class places that will not be needed in the long term. Six forms of entry of Secondary school provision was commissioned across four schools. In addition, 263 temporary Year 7 places were added.

The programme to refurbish or rebuild all Special Schools has continued. In 2015-16 four further projects were completed: Broomhill Bank (West Kent), Laleham Gap (East Kent), St Anthony's (East Kent) and The Beacon School Folkestone (Formally Foxwood Highview). The remaining four projects Foreland, Ridgeview, Five Acre Wood and Portal House are underway. Two Special Schools are expanding: Wyvern (Ashford) and Meadowfield (Swale).

For September 2016 we commissioned 85 new SEND places across twelve Primary school specialist resourced provisions (SRPs).

Our planning and forecasting continues to have a high degree of accuracy. The Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent (KCP) sets out forecast roll numbers (by planning areas at Primary school level and by District at Secondary school level) across each District in Kent. We aspire to maintain a forecasting accuracy of plus or minus 1%. The forecast number of Year R pupils (as at January 2016) was accurate to within 0.1% across Kent. This is a smaller variation than the previous year. This is due to improvements in how we account for the effects of migration within the forecast model. Five of the 12 District forecasts were outside the plus or minus 1% tolerance we seek. The forecast Primary School roll number was 0.2% higher than actual rolls, with two of the 12 districts showing forecasts 1% higher than roll numbers. This demonstrates a high degree of accuracy.

The forecast number of Year 7 pupils across Kent was accurate to within two pupils. This represents a 0% variance, which is an exceptionally high degree of accuracy. The most extreme forecasting variance was Sevenoaks as it was last year. This is due to the opening of The Trinity Free school. The forecast Secondary roll number (Year 7 to Year 11) was 0.3% over the actual roll, which again represents a high degree of accuracy.

However, throughout the year we have experienced significant, but uneven, levels of migration of families into Kent who require school places for children of all ages. For example, in addition to the school places we planned for and delivered in September 2016, there were a significant number of new families and children arriving in Kent this summer.

This has been particularly evident in Canterbury and Maidstone where the London Boroughs of Redbridge and Tower Hamlets have purchased properties and families from those boroughs have now moved there and require school places in those Districts.

Surplus capacity in the Primary school sector is at 6.1% in Reception Year and 5.0% across all Primary school year groups. This is within our target of at least 5% surplus capacity. However, the proportion of surplus Reception Year places in Districts varies from 0.5% in Dartford to 10.9% in Swale. Three Districts had fewer than 5% surplus Reception Year places. Six had less than 5% surplus Primary places. Surplus capacity in Year 7 and across the Secondary school sector remains high both across the County at 9.1% and 10.1% respectively. There are exceptions to this across the districts. Surplus places in Year 7 in 2015-16 were below 5% in the Travel to Learn Areas of Dartford, Gravesham and North Sevenoaks and in Thanet. Across Years 7-11 surplus places were below 5% in Canterbury and Thanet.

Future Projections and Need

The number of Primary age pupils is expected to continue rising significantly from 119,940 in 2015-16, to 127,859 in 2020-21, which is more than 8,000 extra pupils over the next five years. Beyond this point strategic forecasts show that the number of pupils will continue to rise until 2030. There will be a need to continue to make new provision available in some Districts on both a permanent and temporary basis.

The number of Secondary age pupils (Years 7-11) in Kent schools is expected to rise significantly from 78,007 in 2015-16 to over 96,870 in 2026-27. Beyond this point the longer term strategic forecasts indicate a continuing rise in pupil numbers, although this estimate is heavily influenced by projections of new housing development beyond 2026.

From 2017-18 there is forecast to be less than 5% surplus Year 7 places across the County as rising rolls feed into Secondary schools. Actions planned in the Kent Commissioning Plan will address this.

The latest version of the Plan 2017-21 sets out our analysis of needs for the future and identifies in more detail what we need to do in the next five years to expand provision. The Area Education Officers continue to work hard to keep pace with the increasing demand for places through population growth and migration into Kent.

Additional provision will be achieved by expanding existing schools, and by creating new Primary and Secondary schools. The Commissioning Plan identifies the need for additional permanent and temporary school places as follows:

<p>By 2017-18</p> <p>Primary 9.5FE permanent 150 Year R places 30 Year 2 places 30 Year 3 places</p> <p>Secondary 10FE permanent</p>	<p>By 2018-19</p> <p>Primary 11.2FE permanent 30 Year R places</p> <p>Secondary 24FE permanent</p>
<p>By 2019-20</p> <p>Primary 13.1FE permanent</p> <p>Secondary 18FE permanent 60 Year R</p>	<p>Between 2020-2023</p> <p>Primary 64.1FE permanent</p> <p>Secondary 35FE permanent 210 Year 7 places</p>

Commissioning SEN Provision

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

We have established Specialist Resource Base Provisions in mainstream schools and satellite provision for Special schools in accommodation on mainstream school sites.

We are increasing the number of places in our Special schools through a substantial building programme with ten projects significantly underway or already completed.

There are approximately 7000 Kent pupils in Kent with a Statement or Education Health and Care Plan. This accounts for 2.9% of the total school population for which the Local Authority is responsible for commissioning school provision.

The Service commissions 4,000 specialist places in Kent maintained schools and academies, provision for 500 High Needs students in Further Education and Independent Colleges and 550 independent and non-maintained sector placements. It also commissions outreach and the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) to support 3,000 pupils in mainstream schools.

The increasing roll is impacting on the places needed in Special schools, Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) and Satellite units. There are gaps in our current provision in these areas:

Profound, Severe and Complex Provision (PSCN)

We are aware that for the most profound level of physical and cognitive difficulty there is no obvious provider within the non-maintained sector. Where placement difficulties occur, the nearest suitable school may be outside Kent with the daily distance requiring a boarding school placement. Provision is needed in Dover to ensure Secondary aged pupils can access a local provision.

Physical Disabilities (PD) and Accessible Schools

Kent maintains 275 specialist places for physical disabilities, including sensory disabilities with 30% of these at Valence Special School. Valence is an all-age county wide specialist resource and it offers boarding. Pupils travel to Valence from 11 different authorities. Concentrations of children are travelling from the Dartford and Gravesend area.

Observation & Assessment Nursery Provision – Tunbridge Wells

Oakley School is currently the only district Special school which does not admit children of pre-school age.

ASD secondary school age provision

The number of pupils with ASD has increased by 37% in the last five years, and this trend looks set to continue. Provision is required in Swale or Maidstone catering specifically for ASD for Secondary school age.

Specialist provision on the Isle of Sheppey

There is no Special school in the Isle of Sheppey (Swale). Currently 185 children living on the island are transported each day to a Special school or specialist provision off the island.

In order to address the gaps in provision above we will continue to commission SRPs or Satellite units linked to Special schools when new schools are opened. We will also encourage Free school applications for Special schools.

Early Education and Childcare

Assessing the childcare market and ensuring a sufficiency of provision is both a complex and a constantly moving challenge. Analysis of childcare places for 0-4 year olds shows that we have sufficient places in all Districts except Gravesham. However this masks where there may be deficit places within planning areas. In some cases, neighbour planning areas will have a surfeit of places. However, transport costs and availability may prevent access for families with lower household incomes.

We are working with providers and potential providers to encourage the establishment of additional provision where this is required, either for Free for 2 places or the delivery of sufficient places for the new entitlement of 30 hours of provision for 3 and 4 year olds by September 2017.

Post-16 Education and Training in Kent

We work closely with schools, colleges, training providers and workplaces offering apprenticeships to ensure that sufficient provision exists to enable all young people aged 16–19 years (up to 24 years for some pupils with SEND) to engage in education and training.

We recognise that attainment at age 16 is the single most important factor in securing participation, learning and achievement between the ages of 16 and 19 years, especially attainment in Maths and English. We recognise that this can only be achieved through strategic partnerships between 14-19 providers to maximise opportunities and outcomes, increase capacity, and develop appropriate high quality learning pathways. Vulnerable learners, particularly those who do not have Maths and/or English should have opportunities to engage in personalised pathways which lead to sustained employment.

The Skills and Employability Service's annual review of provision supports the development of personalised pathways within redesigned Study Programmes to improve the outcomes and destinations for all young people.

In developing new Post-16 provision the Local Authority would request providers to:

- Align provision to local labour market trends and avoid duplication of courses.
- Make provision for English and Maths to ensure students can gain a GCSE grade C or above qualification.
- Assure the long term viability of the provision.
- Establish robust monitoring of Post-16 learning and teaching.
- Offer a range of qualifications at all levels.
- Ensure levels of literacy and numeracy which are in accordance with EFA guidelines and which are appropriate for successful completion of learning.
- Develop a technical and vocational offer which leads to sustainable employment locally, regionally and beyond and which pays heed to the skills profile highlighted by LMI information.
- Develop an academic programme offer which leads to HE, degree apprenticeships and higher level apprenticeships.
- Develop a technical programme endorsed by employers and the Kent Guilds.
- Work collaboratively with other Post-16 advisers.
- Deliver guidance to all young people to strengthen aspiration, attitude and achievement and resilience.
- Plan personalised pathways for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners.
- Engage in systematic review of provision against local and national indicators.

Conclusion and Future Priorities

We have made good progress this year in delivering the school places required. We have some hot spots in the Primary sector, but these are fewer in number than in previous years, and we have achieved the overarching target of 5% surplus. We have delivered well against the need for additional capacity to support pupils with SEN. Overall our forecasting remains very accurate. Looking forward, the focus will shift to ensuring we have sufficient Secondary school capacity; ensuring that SEN specialist provision will continue to increase to address changes in need type and increases in future demand; and to identifying **academy schools interested in sponsoring new schools in the mainstream and specialist sectors.**

Early Help and Prevention

The Strategy and Vision for Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS) and Three Year Plan 2015-18 sets out the priorities, targets and a new way of working in Kent to support better outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

The priorities and vision remains the same, to provide early help for whole families in a timely and responsive way, so that they are safeguarded, their educational, social and emotional needs are met and they achieve good outcomes.

The plan outlines what we aim to achieve and describes how Early Help works with children, young people and their families to help them overcome difficulties and reach their full potential.

Vision and Approach to Early Help

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

We aim to ensure children, young people and families can access the right services at the right time in the right place. Our vision is that every child and young person, from pre-birth to age 19, and their family, who needs early help services will receive them in a timely and responsive way.

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

Range of Preventative Services

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

- Early Help Units
- Children's Centres
- Troubled Families Programme
- Early Intervention and Family Support Workers
- Attendance and Inclusion
- Pupil Referral Units
- Education Health Needs Service
- Support for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Youth hubs and commissioned Youth Work

- Youth Offending
- Targeted Support for NEET young people
- Services for Young People's Substance Misuse
- Teenage pregnancy and sexual health
- Commissioned parenting and family support services
- Commissioned mental health support services.

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

Our approach is based on the following key elements to:

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

Progress in 2015-16

In the last year, Early Help and Preventative Services has focused on further developing its strategy and shared values and embedding the structures and systems that will allow the division to achieve its outcomes.

During the past year we have:

- Embedded a new integrated structure that is more closely aligned to our partners in schools and Specialist Children's Services, better reflects the needs of children, young people and families and is more cost effective.
- Implemented the Early Help Module (EHM) in December 2015. This provides the Division with a full case management system that records and evidences effective casework from notification through to case closure. It shares a database with the Social Services Liberi system and this is supporting information sharing at step-ups and step-downs between Early Help and Social Care.
- Worked to more closely align the processes at the front door between Triage and the Central Duty Team. This is vital to ensure that notifications and referrals are responded to in an appropriate way and families receive the right support at the right time from the right service.
- Developed a suite of guidance, policies and process flowcharts to give a clear operational framework for staff and managers. Information is regularly updated on KNet for staff, and a weekly email from the Director of Early Help and Preventative Services has been introduced to ensure that all staff are made aware of key updates across EHPS.

- Introduced the Quality Assurance Framework and a regular cycle of audits to ensure casework is good and good outcomes are achieved for children and families. The EHPS Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) includes a range of performance, audit and evaluation tools, as well as a focus on feedback from children, young people and families, cross-directorate peers and key stakeholders, together with staff feedback and assessment of their competence, skills and motivation. A multi-agency audit programme provides evidence of good practice and supports workforce development. There is a clear cycle for audits and peer reviews and a process is in place to ensure feedback to staff from the audit outcomes and continuous improvement to EHPS processes and service delivery.
- Embedded and further developed the joint Early Help and Social Care step-down panels and introduced best-practice step-down processes, and joint guidance for staff.
- Embedded the use of operational and performance monitoring data to ensure an ongoing focus on continuous improvement embedded in the way the service operates. Monthly performance reporting provides clear evidence of improving outcomes for children, young people and families. A casework tracker tool has been developed which allows the service to have greater visibility of workloads and progress towards achieving outcomes in casework. Key performance measures are now reviewed regularly at District, Area and Divisional level meetings and are used to inform service developments.

0-25 Early Help Units

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

Working with Commissioned Services

Both the Early Help Units and open access services have a critical link with commissioned services in order to ensure an appropriate district, multi-agency response to need. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation takes place to ensure that KCC and commissioned services are appropriately meeting the needs of those children, young people and families in need of Early Help services.

Early Help and Commissioning have been working together closely over the last year to re-design priorities and approaches to commissioning services across Kent.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Family Support and Parenting, the Young Carers Service and Youth Services have been identified as the key areas of work for commissioned

services, and over the last year specifications have been developed for these services, and these are now at a range of different stages of the procurement process for delivery in early 2017.

Working with Specialist Children's Services

Safeguarding

Early Help continues to work in close partnership with Specialist Children's Services to ensure robust processes for the safe passing of responsibility and tracking of step-up, step-down and step-across referral pathways for children and young people at different interfaces of the safeguarding threshold.

In the past year joint step-up and step-down guidance has been developed and agreed and regular step-down panels now take place, which include joint visits to families and clear recording of all relevant information about children between systems and services. Overall 22% of cases are successfully stepped down to Early Help as a result of this process.

Missing Children

During 2015-16 the management and reporting of processes in relation to children missing from home, care and education moved to Specialist Children's Services, and this led to the appointment of two missing coordinators in the Central Duty Team.

Any missing and found notifications for children and young people not known to SCS are passed to Early Help. These are checked by the Triage team and then passed to the Districts to undertake the Return Interviews (RIs) with young people.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Work has been taking place to ensure the workforce is fully aware of and trained in CSE so that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to keeping children and young people safe from sexual exploitation and know how to respond appropriately when sexual exploitation is suspected.

A multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation Team (CSET) has been established this year with multi-agency representation including Early Help, and aims to pull together intelligence from a range of services and sources in order to tackle CSE in a more coordinated and effective way.

Young Carers

The Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2015 both identified key statutory duties for the Local Authority and its partners in relation to the identification and assessment of young carers aged 5-18. The 2011 Census suggested that the number of young carers in Kent may be as high as 10,500, although our commissioned service has previously known of and worked with around 3000.

Early Help has worked with partners from Adult Social Care, SCS, other LA services and Health commissioners and GPs to develop a working protocol to outline key pathways and responsibilities. All services are expected to understand and ensure support for 'hidden

carers' who often miss school and can become isolated from their peers and services as a consequence of caring for siblings, parents or other family members.

The engagement and support of partners, especially schools and health colleagues is central to success in tackling this issue. A new contract has been awarded to IMAGO for the young carers commissioned service.

Working with Health

Work has taken place with Public Health to agree detailed specifications for Early Help services to promote and improve health outcomes for children and young people, and to integrate requirements across the 0-25 age-range. These have improved partnership working with clear priorities to give children and young people a healthy start in life, both physically and emotionally.

Children's Centres

Public Health is a key partner in Children's Centres, with health outcomes being at the forefront of most Children's Centres' priorities. Close partnership working takes place between Health Visitors and Children's Centres, with many of these services being co-located. Further work is underway to move this forward, and to make best use of buildings across Kent to provide a range of family services. This should be seen in the closer alignment between services around the universal health check for two year olds.

Healthy Weight of 5-11 Year Olds

Healthy weight amongst Reception age children and weight issues for 11 year olds remain a concern, with a significantly higher proportion of pupils in Year 6 classified as obese.

In 2014-15, 9.1% of Year Reception children were obese, up from 8.2% the previous year. For Year 6 figures are much higher, 18.1% in 2014-15, which was a slight improvement on 2013-14's figure of 18.5%. Kent's figures are the same as the national average for Year R children, and 1% below the national average for Year 6 children.

A new programme of work is underway with Public Health to address these issues, via Early Help open access provision at both Children's Centres and Youth Hubs. Junior youth clubs are being set up to engage the 8-11 age group and focus on a range of issues including healthy weight.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Early Help is currently leading on a wide-ranging review of Kent's emotional health and wellbeing pathway, including interventions and support networks to improve the resilience and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

New arrangements are being planned with Health which will be piloted this autumn in advance of new commissioning arrangements being introduced in 2017. CAMHS workers will be based within every Early Help Unit, ensuring a much more coordinated response to supporting positive emotional health and wellbeing in children and young people. CAMHS workers will also be based in the Health Needs PRUs. This is a critical area of need as more

than half of Early Help notifications relate to children and young people have mental health and emotional difficulties.

Children's Centres

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

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

Key Statistics about Children's Centres and their Target Groups

- In August 2016, 77.9% of children under 5 living in the 30% most deprived areas were registered with a Children's Centre, which is appropriately high, but only 49% are regularly attending. This needs to be higher, and our priority is to increase this to at least 70% of these families engaging fully with their local Children's Centre.
- 72% of children under 5 with current Social Services involvement are known to a Children's Centre. While this shows the close working relationship between Early Help and SCS we expect this figure to be higher. Children's Centres are using monthly lists to work with SCS and families to ensure this figure continues to rise.
- There is increased engagement with children under 2 years of age. 87.2% of all registered Children under the age of 2 are accessing Children's Centre services.
- 79.6% of teenage parents access Children's Centre services.
- 67,581 children under 5 are registered with a Children's Centre. This equates to 73.7% of the total population and an increase of 3.4% on this time last year.
- We have seen an increase of 11.5% overall reach compared to this time last year.
- A total of 68,956 individuals (37,414 adults and 31,782 children) were supported to improve healthier lifestyles. As a result of these interventions 1,735 mothers were supported to sustain breastfeeding, 6,645 children increased their intake of fruit and vegetables, 2,507 adults reported improved emotional wellbeing, a total of 1,274 new mothers reported an improvement in maternal mood and 12,508 adults reported reduced isolation with an increased ability to socialise and make friends. Information on smoking cessation is available in all centres and 109 adults were referred to smoking cessation services.
- During the last year a total of 18,995 events were held in Children's Centres across the county to support children's development through play, which is an increase of 3,373 from the previous year. A total of 40,544 individuals (18,176 adults and 22,368

children) were supported to experience play opportunities that link to the Early Years Framework. The outcomes include the following: 12,739 children developed their fine motor skills, 14,400 children developed gross motor skills, 2,368 children developed hand to eye coordination, 5,693 children enjoyed an increasing range of books, 9,904 children improved attention and listening skills and 3,327 children improved their ability to manage feelings and behaviours.

- Over the last year 20,670 individuals (10,763 parents and carers and 9,907 children) were supported in interventions that are aimed to improve parenting skills and outcomes. As a result of these interventions 777 adults reported that were able to implement positive behaviour strategies, with 339 going on to report that they had embedded positive discipline methods in daily routines at home. 4,783 adults reported improved adult and child interaction and 905 adults reported an improvement in family relationships with 2,507 adults reporting an improvement in emotional wellbeing.
- In addition, families in crisis were supported to access the right support at the right time, with 628 food parcels issued, 212 families supported to access the right benefits, 76 families better able to manage their debt, 122 families supported to complete an Early Help Notification and 121 families supported to improve their housing situation.

New arrangements with Health Visitors are now in place to register children as part of their role. This will increase the level of registrations and will have a direct impact on our involvement with target groups, and will support the increase of Children's Centre registration and reach figures going forward.

Free for Two (FF2)

Children Centres play a key role in identifying and supporting eligible families take up their entitlement of a free Early Years childcare place for their two year olds. The average take up nationally is 68% and in Kent the latest figure is 67%, having risen from 58% for the same period in 2015. This means that a significant number of eligible disadvantaged 2 year olds are not benefitting from the learning and development opportunities available in good quality childcare settings hence it is a priority to continue to promote and support increased take up. Positively, 91% of those 2 year olds that are participating are in good or outstanding provision.

Open Access – Youth Hubs and the Youth Offer

Youth Work enables young people to develop socially and emotionally, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential.

An important element of the new Early Help and Preventative Services model is the establishment of twelve Youth Hubs, located across all districts in Kent:

- North – Dartford, Gravesend, Swanley
- East – Sittingbourne, Whitstable, Margate
- South – Deal, Folkestone, Ashford

- West – Tonbridge, Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells

These Hubs are the focus of service delivery to adolescents, managed by Youth Hub Delivery Managers. They provide a comprehensive programme of open access activities for all young people, and also play a vital role in delivering a targeted offer and additional support to identified vulnerable young people, working very closely with the Early Help Units in their district. Wider collaboration with other partner agencies, commissioned providers and local District and Borough Councils is central to the success of the Youth Hubs within the Early Help offer to young people. As well as this important hub-based work, services to young people are also provided in a range of different settings across every district, thus extending the 'reach' of the Early Help service.

Following last year's internal review of our Youth Hubs, work has been taking place this year to develop a toolkit of guidance, flowcharts and processes for Youth Hubs, in line with the existing toolkit successfully in place for Children's Centres. There are many synergies with Children's Centres and they are working more closely together to provide open-access services across the 0-25 age range.

The content has been agreed for the universal youth offer, giving clarity to workers and managers in Youth Hubs, as they support a range of adolescent needs, including supporting and reducing young people who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET). Youth Hubs are also key to the undertaking of Return Interviews for children and young people who have gone missing, who are not known to Specialist Children's Services.

Outdoor Education

EYPS maintains an extensive range of Outdoor Education Centres, offering a breadth of experience and challenge to children and young people in a residential setting. The Swattenden Centre near Cranbrook and Bewl Water Outdoor Centre near Lamberhurst provide extensive land and water-based activities, whilst the Glyn Padarn Centre in North Wales delivers a tougher challenge against the backdrop of the Snowdonia National Park.

This year saw the Launch of 'Adventure Kent' as a collective organisation for all the County's Outdoor Education Centres, utilising staff and other resources more productively across all our provision and marketing ourselves consistently as a single entity. This has delivered early successes, and staff from every centre and area of expertise have worked innovatively and collaboratively across sites to deliver an exciting programme of High Quality Outdoor Education.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Kent County Council holds one of the largest Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award Operating Licences in the UK, supporting more than 120 registered centres (schools and youth projects) and more than 1000 adults helping to deliver the programme – the vast majority of whom are volunteers - across the county in 2015-16. Following the record enrolment figures in 2014-15, 2016 has seen a further increase in completions, to a new record. The past twelve months saw a record 2592 completing an Award at Bronze, Silver or Gold.

Support for Young People Who Are NEET

The percentage of the 16-18 cohort that were NEET in 2015-16 based on the average across the year was 5.0%. This was a slightly worse than the previous year's figure of 4.7%, and did not meet the challenging target of 3.5%. The national figure was 4.2%. However, significant work has been taking place to put in place more integrated processes to ensure that young people who are NEET are supported and engaged, and that their education or training provision is suitable and can be sustained.

Early Help plays a key role in the NEET Strategy. Young people who are supported in Early Help Units or Youth Justice teams may be NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. They may also require additional support from a Youth Hub. A significant number of young people, not already known to Early Help, are referred into Open Access centres via multi-agency District Participation Meetings. A light touch assessment is undertaken and then Early Help works with the young person to prepare them for education or training, works with the Skills and Employability Service to engage them in suitable provision, and then maintains contact and support to ensure that provision is sustained. Young People who have been NEET for a sustained period of time or who do not sustain a placement are referred to the commissioned NEET service for more intensive support.

Youth Participation

Kent County Council is committed to supporting young people in their communities, helping them to develop the skills and confidence to have a voice about issues that affect their lives. One very important mechanism for this is the Kent Youth County Council (KYCC). Young people are elected every year during a week of voting held in schools, youth groups and other settings across Kent. In November 2015, just over 30,000 votes were cast across Kent to elect the members of the new Youth Council.

Each year, KYCC members decide on a number of key campaigns that they will actively work on, frequently with the engagement of both Officers and Elected Members from the County Council. Over the past year, these have included transport, activities for young people, mental health and bullying.

A small representative group from KYCC also takes the voice of young people from Kent onto a national stage through their work with the British Youth Council and the UK Youth Parliament.

The Youth Participation Team has been working with colleagues in all Districts over recent months to establish an effective network of local youth forums at District level, thus increasing the breadth and diversity of young people involved in issues affecting their lives and their local communities, and establishing a strong voice for young people in future service development.

Youth Justice

The Youth Justice service is responsible for assessing, planning and intervening with young people aged 10 to 17 years who have come to the attention of the Police and receive either an out of court disposal or a court sentence. Ten years old is the age of criminal

responsibility and age 18 is when the majority of those subject to statutory supervision transfer to either the National Probation Service or the Community Rehabilitation Company which are responsible for working with adult offenders. The principal aim of the youth justice system is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people.

Youth Justice is now embedded across the work of Early Help and Preventative Services. The central Youth Justice service focuses on court disposals, and the Early Help Units focus on out of court disposals. However, a core principle of Early Help is that children and young people should have stability of case worker wherever possible as a high-quality relationship supports positive outcomes and this applies whether there is a post-court or out of court disposal.

The annual statutory Youth Justice Plan for the county outlines the key priorities and performance targets for the year. Three national indicators are included, focusing on reducing first time entrants to the criminal justice system, reducing custodial sentences and reducing re-offending. Additional targets are set in relation to young offenders' participation in education (both at school age and post statutory school age), suitable accommodation and remands to youth detention accommodation. These are all key contributory factors to reduce re-offending and assist in achieving positive outcomes for young offenders.

In 2015-16 the number of first time entrants into the Youth Justice system fell to 426, which meant that the target of 615 was exceeded. This compares with 614 in 2014-15 and 709 2013-14. In 2015-16 there was a significant reduction due to a focus on restorative approaches by the Police. A Community Resolution is a diversionary option for the Police while still holding the child or young person to account for their behaviour. It ensures that the victim's views are heard and that the young person is able to make an apology for the crime committed. Within the past year, the Police have given 671 Community Resolutions. From April 2016 a new process has been implemented between Early Help and Kent Police, which means that any complex cases are discussed at a multi-agency panel. These cases include all Children in Care as well as cases where there is gang involvement or other issues of concern. The aim is to ensure a well informed decision is made which delivers the most appropriate outcome and support to both the victim and the offender. This also forms part of the Early Help commitment to keeping Children in Care out of the Criminal Justice system whenever this is appropriate.

The number of remands to youth detention accommodation has reduced in the last year from 44 in 2014-15 to 30 in the last year, but the fall in the numbers of the youth offending population mean that the percentage measure has increased to 8%.

The engagement of young offenders in full time education or training (EET) of statutory school age is 58.9% compared to 76.6% in 2014-15 and for post 16 it is 53.0%, similar to the previous year. These figures are very poor and a real cause for concern. The performance has declined compared to previous years for both age groups. Work is underway by Early Help and partner agencies to secure and sustain appropriate education placements for this cohort of young people.

In 2015-16, 92.3% of all young people aged 16 and 17 years leaving custody moved into suitable accommodation for their needs, which is slightly down on the previous year when it

was 95.7%. However, the numbers are low and this difference equates to one young offender in 2014-15 leaving custody not in suitable accommodation compared to two young people in 2015-16.

In the remaining areas the performance for the number of custodial sentences in 2015-16 was 5.4% of all court disposals, against a target of 3.5%. The target of 90% for suitable accommodation of 16-17 year olds on community based interventions was achieved at 89.9%. This has slightly reduced compared with 93.8% in 2014-15.

Kent's Youth Justice Plan for 2016-17 sets out the service priorities, which include:

- Working with criminal justice partners to continue the downward trend in reducing first time entrants by the use of restorative interventions. This will include considering new ways of working in order to significantly reduce first time entrants in Kent and as a consequence improve the life chances of our young people
- Working with all staff in Early Help to explore how the risk factors most commonly associated with the offending behaviour of children and young people can be most effectively addressed by preventative strategies
- Reducing the disproportionate number of Children in Care in the Youth Justice system by increased co-ordination of decision-making between services
- Reducing the rate of re-offending. During 2016-17 a cohort of young repeat offenders will be the focus of more intensive work and use will be made of the Youth Justice Board toolkit to understand the characteristics of their re-offending. The findings will inform reviews of the interventions currently offered and changes to their design to ensure their effectiveness is increased
- Increasing engagement of young offenders in education, employment and training

The Prevent Strategy

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

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

Kent has appointed a Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager, to focus on early intervention to reduce the chances of individuals who support extreme ideologies becoming terrorists. Early Help and Preventative Services are linking in with this corporate role to

ensure that our work takes into account these requirements and always responds in the most appropriate and timely way.

Troubled Families Programme

The Kent Troubled Families Programme has been successful in supporting families with multiple problems. The Troubled Families programme is integrated into the Early Help Units, and families receive intensive support through the Kent Family Support Framework. Some families are supported through our specialist family support commissioned services.

The Kent Troubled Families programme began a five year Extended Phase in January 2015. Phase 2 of the programme extends the criteria to include families where there are the following needs :

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

The family will be deemed 'turned around' when all the criteria have significantly improved for a sustained period, and at this point a claim can be submitted.

The programme now requires Kent to turn around 9,200 families over the five years of the programme. This was increased by the Department of Communities and Local Government in June 2016. In order to achieve this target the programme will have to identify substantially more than 9,200 families. All families known to Early Help are assessed against these six criteria.

By March 2016, around 3,024 families were worked with under the four principles. The focus and outcomes of the Troubled Families programme are supported through local partnerships and District Councils. The delivery streams for the programme includes all early help workers and commissioned intensive family workers and a new programme action plan will drive further successes in engaging and helping families.

HeadStart Kent

The Big Lottery Fund has awarded Kent County Council £9.89 million to support young people's emotional wellbeing and resilience over the next 5 years, following a successful pilot trial in Kent for the last 2 years.

The new funding will enable us to support young people to develop their own resilience to cope with the everyday pressures they may face throughout their lives, as well as supporting them in helping each other. HeadStart Kent aims to make changes through

schools, families and within communities and has been designed with young people at its heart.

The Project will include the following:

- A Kent-wide offer that includes the Kent Resilience Hub available to all schools and communities in Kent to increase knowledge and skills, promote evidence based best practice, and provide a range of tools and training resources.
- Universal Plus – working with priority groupings of schools and their local communities, this level will provide a number of developmental and training programmes for staff, activities for young people and their families, and community services.
- The programmes will ensure that young people, the wider workforce, community and the voluntary community sector (VCS) understand the importance of developing resilience and engaging with and improving young people's emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Additional support will be available in the geographic areas covered by the groupings of schools. This level will identify young people who are affected by family domestic abuse, have experienced trauma or adversity and whose emotional wellbeing may be at risk. It will provide additional support to young people to build their resilience, recover from trauma or adversity and improve their emotional health and wellbeing.

The first new phase will start in Swale and Gravesham and, over the next five years, HeadStart Kent will deliver across nine districts.

Education Safeguarding

The Education Safeguarding Team (EST) provides support, guidance and challenge to schools and early years settings and services within the Directorate to ensure that children are kept safe and their welfare is promoted, as required by Section 175 of the Education Act 2002. Statutory guidance, including Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), the Early Years Foundation Stage Welfare Requirements (2014), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) and Kent Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB) procedures, help to inform the work of the team and any good practice guidance that is developed. The principles that underpin the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 provide a framework for our service standards, with the needs of the child considered paramount at all times.

As part of the core functions, the Education Safeguarding Team provides a consultation service to schools and settings, with over 4000 enquiries during the 2015-16 school year. These have been on a variety of subjects, including online safety, policy and procedure alongside welfare concerns about specific children. A training programme for Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools and settings is rolled out centrally each year which meets both DfE and Ofsted requirements and exceeds what Kent Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB) or Working Together to Safeguard Children 2016 advocates. Training days and twilight sessions are also delivered in schools and settings and there is a programme of training delivered to school governors. In the 2015-16 school year, over 7000 individuals were trained according to their roles and responsibilities.

The Education Safeguarding Team works closely with multi-agency partners and the Kent Safeguarding Children Board to ensure education is represented on various safeguarding groups and meetings held Countywide. The Education and Early Help subgroup of the KSCB and the Education Safeguarding Team Child Protection newsletter, published three times a year, ensure education professionals are kept informed of any changes in statutory requirements and local and national procedures.

Commissioned work has been steadily increasing over the past year with reviews of safeguarding arrangements in schools, based on Ofsted's 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings' (updated August 2016). This is proving to be particularly popular with both the maintained and independent sectors.

Our Future Targets and Priorities 2017-20

As part of our continued improvement, our planned outcomes are ambitious and challenging. We are determined to pursue them relentlessly and we believe we have the ways to achieve them.

As part of our ongoing discussions and partnership with Early Years settings, Headteachers and governors in schools, and other stakeholders, there is a good level of shared ambition to achieve the following improvements in the period leading up to 2020.

By 2017, we aim to:

- **Improve** good outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to 81% and the free school meal achievement gap is no more than 9%.
- **Improve** by a further 2% the age related expectations achieved by pupils at Key Stage 1.
- **Improve** Key Stage 2 attainment to 70% of pupils attaining age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined.
- **Improve** KS4 attainment to ensure at least 64% of pupils achieving a good pass in English and mathematics and achieve the expected standard in Attainment and Progress 8.
- **Improve** the percentage of students achieving 2 or more A level grades to 95% and 3 or more A level grades A to E to 79%.
- **Increase** the average point score per student for vocational qualifications to 685.
- **Reduce** the Pupil Premium gap at Key Stage 2 to 18% and reduce the GCSE gap by at least 5%.
- **Increase** the percentage of good and better schools to at least 92%.
- **Reduce** the number of schools in an Ofsted category to 0.
- **Increase** the percentage of good and better early years settings to 96%.
- **Increase** the percentage of good and better Children's Centres to 80%, and ensure at least 70% of needy families engage with, and benefit from, support by Children's Centres.
- **Reduce** NEETS to 1% or below.
- **Reduce** permanent exclusions to no more than 55.
- **Reduce** the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system to no more than 520 young people, and the rate of re-offending will be no more than 28%.

- **Deliver the Vulnerable Learners Strategy** to ensure we achieve a significant improvement in outcomes for vulnerable groups, specifically in narrowing achievement gaps and reducing the numbers of young people who are excluded, who are NEET and who become young offenders.
- **Deliver the Early Help Three Year Plan**, and further integrate Early Help and Preventative Services so that at least 90% of intensive support cases are closed with outcomes achieved, and work with Specialist Children's Services so that at least 30% of closed children in need cases are stepped down to Early Help.
- **Continue to deliver the targets in the 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy**, including priorities to improve the vocational, technical and training offer so that there is further improvement in the employability skills of young people and in the number taking up and successfully completing apprenticeships (7,900), resulting in a further reduction in youth unemployment to no more than 2% by summer 2017.
- **Deliver 7,900 apprenticeships** for 16-24 year olds, including 3,600 for 16-18 year olds and ensure at least 88% successfully complete their apprenticeships.
- **Recruit at least 100 apprentices each year** to the KCC Apprenticeship Scheme so that by 2017 the numbers will increase to 700.
- **Improve the employability skills of 19 year olds**, especially in English and mathematics, so that Level 2 attainment at age 19 is well above the national average. By 2017 we expect this to be 90%.
- **Improve the outcomes at Level 3** for 19 year olds to 65% by 2017.
- **Deliver the NEETs Strategy to ensure there is a significant reduction in NEET numbers** for Children in Care, children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, young offenders, pupils attending PRUs and alternative provision and other vulnerable groups such as young carers and those who are home educated.
- **Deliver** the priorities in the SEND Strategy to increase provision and pupil outcomes in Kent, so that there is improved attendance, attainment and progress for SEN learners, a reduction in out of county places and their cost, and a reduction in SEN transport costs.
- **Reduce out of county SEND placements** to no more than 495 and ensure 90% of new Education, Health and Care Plans are completed within 20 weeks.
- **Following feedback from Headteachers, improve the new system** of high needs funding for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, which proves to be more effective at earlier intervention to improve pupil outcomes.
- **Ensure earlier interventions through the LIFT process**, outreach support from Special schools and the use of High Needs Funding have a bigger impact on

improving attainment and progress for SEND pupils and on narrowing the achievement gaps between them and other learners.

- **Make a significant improvement to outcomes for Children in Care** and markedly reduce the number of CiC who are NEET and in the Youth Justice system.
- **Deliver the new Kent Health Needs Education Service (KHNES) and improve outcomes for pupils** with mental health needs, with good re-integration rates (90%) for pupils back into mainstream schools. The rate of re-integration is steady but not at the expected level yet. This is in no small part due to the high numbers on home tuition.
- **Champion school leadership in Kent** through supporting the implementation of the 'Kent Leaders in Leadership' strategy co-produced with the Kent Association of Headteachers and other relevant stakeholders, which aims to ensure that school leaders in Kent are supported and developed for the future and that system leadership continues to grow across the county.
- **Continue to deliver the School Improvement Strategy** to ensure all schools requiring improvement become good and outstanding schools within the next 18 months and there are no Kent schools providing an inadequate quality of education. By summer 2017 we expect no schools to be inadequate.
- **Continue to support and develop more effective school to school support** through the Kent Association of Headteachers (KAH), and deliver the Kent Leadership Strategy in partnership with KAH so that there are fewer schools requiring improvement and more good leaders are appointed to headships and executive headships.
- **Continue to develop and expand EduKent** as a successful trading organisation delivering good value support services to schools at competitive cost.
- **Work with schools and early years settings to deliver a more focused approach** to narrowing achievement gaps and achieve better outcomes for all vulnerable groups with a specific focus on the Pupil Premium, SEN and Children in Care.
- **Work with outstanding and good schools, and multi-academy trusts,** to increase their capacity to sponsor new schools and provide support for the improvement of other schools, through academy sponsorship, federation, trust, executive headship or other structural arrangements.
- **Continue to implement the Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2016 - 2019** to ensure there continues to be sufficient high quality free places for two year olds, robust plans are in place to deliver the 30 hours of free childcare for the eligible working parents of three and four year old children with effect from September 2017, more good early years settings achieving positive outcomes, more children are well developed to start school and there is better integration of the work of Children's Centres, Early Years settings and schools.

- **Ensure 80% of eligible 2 year olds take up a free childcare place.**
- **Continue to improve District based working** so that more decision making and coordination of services for children and young people happens locally through local boards and forums, school collaborations and better integrated working between Education, Early Help, Health and Social care.
- **Deliver the Education Commissioning Plan** so that the needed growth in good quality school places is delivered on time for September 2017, and ensure that improved parental choice and planned improvements for September 2017 are on target.
- **Deliver 22 new forms of entry in Primary and Secondary schools, 218** Reception places and 60 Year 2 places in Primary schools, together with 90 Year 7 places in Secondary schools by September 2017.
- **Ensure that at least 85% of parents achieve** their first preference for their children when they start Primary and Secondary school in 2017.
- **Reduce the rising cost of SEN Transport** and make more efficient use of SEN funding by reducing the increasing costs of SEN pupils placed out of county, as well as working with schools at risk of deficit budgets to ensure there are clear improvements by 2017.
- **Further develop the successful SEN School Transport Pilot involving three special schools** who are making local arrangements to provide transport for their pupils, to expand the model to other Special schools where these arrangements better meet the needs of pupils and are more efficient and cost effective, leading to necessary reduction in the cost of SEN transport.
- **Ensure the Community Learning and Skills Service is** delivering the improved outcomes in the Business Plan for adults and young people, especially the more vulnerable.

To ensure all pupils meet their full potential, working in close partnership with schools and settings, we aim to achieve the following by 2020:

- **Foundation Stage** outcomes for 5 year olds will continue to improve so that the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development will improve from 75% in 2016 to 88% in 2020.
- **Work to reduce the FSM achievement gap in the EYFS** to 9% in 2017 and to 6% by 2020.
- **We aim to ensure 80% of eligible two year olds** will be taking up a free nursery place by 2017 and this should rise to 90% by 2020.
- The percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard at **Key Stage 1** will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and improve in Reading to 80% in

2017 and 86% by 2020; in Writing to 74% in 2017 and 80% by 2020; and in mathematics to 80% in 2017 and to 86% by 2020.

- **Key Stage 2 attainment** will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours, above the national average and pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and mathematics combined will improve to 70% in 2017 and to 85% by 2020.
- **Key Stage 4 attainment** will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and improve to at least 64% of pupils achieving a good pass in English and mathematics and achieving the expected standard in Attainment and Progress 8 in 2017 and to 70% by 2020.
- **The FSM achievement** gaps at Key Stages 2 and 4 will continue to reduce from the 2016 baseline, and be less than the national gap figures for pupils from low income backgrounds. In Key Stage 2 the gap for FSM will reduce to 18% by 2017 and to 14% by 2020. In Key Stage 4 the FSM gap in Attainment 8 will reduce to below the national average by 2020.
- **There will be an increase in the number of good or better schools**, with at least 95% of all schools judged as good or outstanding by 2019. In 2017 we expect to see this increase to at least 92%.
- **We will reduce the number of KCC schools in an Ofsted category of concern year by year**, so that no school will be in this category.
- **We will increase the percentage of good and better early years settings from 96% in 2017 to 97.5% in 2020.**
- **By 2017, 90% of Education, Health and Care plan (EHC) assessments will be completed** within a reduced timescale of 20 weeks (from 26 weeks) and pupils with plans will be making good progress and achieve above average outcomes when compared with national benchmarks. This figure will be at least 95% by 2019.
- **By 2017, we will reduce the number of Kent's children who are placed in independent and non-maintained Special school placements to 495, from 526 in 2015.** We set out our intention to provide more specialist provision in local schools to reduce the number of children who require placement out of county to no more than 250 by 2019.
- **We will increase the number of Special school places by 426** to a total of 3,859 by 2019, which represents a 12% increase from the 2016 total capacity.
- **We will continue to help more parents** access a preferred school place for their child by increasing the number of online admission applications to 96% by 2020 and ensure the number of parents who get their first preference Secondary school remains at 85% and first preference Primary school to 87% by 2020.

- **We will maintain our surplus capacity in school places** to at least 5% and ensure we deliver additional school places in line with demand and parental preferences, each year, as set out in the Education Commissioning Plan to 2020.
- **As part of the Commissioning Plan, by the school year 2018-19**, we will expand school places by 94 permanent forms of entry, with 248 additional Reception places, 60 places in Year 2 Primary schools and 90 Year 7 places in Secondary schools.
- **By 2020 the Kent Educational Psychology Service** will have service level agreements with 70% of Kent schools, in addition to the delivery of its core services.

To improve outcomes for 16-19 year olds and shape education and skills around the needs of the Kent economy we will work with our partners to achieve the following by 2020:

- **By 2017, we aim to ensure there will be no more than 1% of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET** and there will be full participation in education and work based training for all 16-18 year olds following year on year reductions in the NEET figures to no more than 1% by 2020.
- **The employability skills of 19 year olds will have improved**, especially in English and Mathematics, so that Level 2 attainment at age 19 is well above the national average. By 2017 we expect this to be 90% and 95% of the cohort will achieve a Level 2 qualification by 2020.
- **We aim to improve the outcomes at Level 3 for 19 year olds** to 65% by 2017 and to at least 75% by 2020.
- **The Level 3 achievement gap for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds is a priority for improvement.** We aim to ensure this will be above the national average and the gap between this group and other students will have reduced to 18% by 2017 and to 14% by 2020.
- **The uptake of Level 2 and 3 vocational training** in skills shortage areas will increase to 26,000 young people by 2017 and 27,700 by 2020.
- **The KCC Apprenticeship Scheme will continue to recruit at least 100 apprentices** each year, totalling 1000 successful apprenticeships delivered by KCC by 2020. By 2017 the numbers will increase to 700.
- **By 2017 we aim to ensure the number of apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds** increases to 3,600, and for success rates for completion to be at least 80%. By 2020 we expect the number to increase to 4,600 and success rates to be in excess of 83%.
- **By 2020** we aim to ensure at least 85% of schools will have provided one or more apprenticeships which have been taken up successfully by young people. By 2017, we expect at least 60% of schools will have taken on apprentices.

- **There will be a significant impact on unemployment among 18-24 year olds so that current levels reduce.** By 2020 youth unemployment will be no more than 1.6%, from 2.5% in 2016.
- **By 2020**, the number of assisted employment opportunities for vulnerable learners with learning difficulties and disabilities will increase to 175 and by 2017 at least 135 young people will be supported in this way.
- **Post 16 attainment in English and Mathematics** will improve so that by 2020 we aim to ensure at least 70% of 16 year olds that do not attain Level 2 in Year 11 will achieve the qualification by age 17. By 2017 we expect this will be 55%.
- **By 2020**, we aim to ensure the percentage of young people achieving a Level 2 qualification by age 19 will improve to 95%. We expect this to be at least 90% by 2017.
- **We expect to see an improvement in A Level performance in Kent** to above the national average on all measures by 2020. The percentage of students achieving 2 or more A Level grades should improve to 98.5% and 3 or more A Level grades A to E to 83%.
- **Performance in technical and applied general qualifications post 16 should also improve more rapidly** and the gap between Kent's results and the national average should narrow progressively each year between now and 2019. In 2017, we expect the average point score per Tech Level student to be at least 38.5 and this should improve to 40 by 2019. We also expect in 2017 the average point score per Applied General student to be at least 39 and this should improve to 40 by 2019.
- **All young people aged 16 to 19 will be tracked by the LA working in partnership with schools and colleges** so that their participation can be monitored, as required by statutory duty and participation rates improve year on year.

Through Early Help and Preventative Services we aim to ensure we achieve the following and by 2020 we will:

- **Deliver the Early Help Three Year Plan**, and further integrate Early Help and Preventative Services so that at least 90% of intensive support cases are closed with outcomes achieved, and work with Specialist Children's Services so that at least 30% of closed children in need cases are stepped down to Early Help.
- **Reduce the rate of re-referrals to Early Help** within 12 months of case closure by EHPS down to below 12% by 2020.
- **Reduce permanent exclusions** from no more than 55 in 2017 to 25 exclusions or less by 2020.

- **Work with schools on behaviour management strategies** and monitoring to reduce the levels of fixed term exclusions down to 998 in Primary schools and 4,796 in Secondary schools by 2020.
- **Reduce the number of first time entrants** to the youth justice system from no more than 520 young people in 2016 to 460 by 2020, and the rate of re-offending will be no more than 25%.
- **Work with services across Education and Young People's Services** to increase the education participation levels of young offenders, to ensure that by 2020, 88% of those who are statutory school age receive full time education and 88% of those aged 16 and 17 are in education or employment with training.
- **Ensure appropriate levels of early help support are given to children, young people and their families** in order to reduce the number of notifications leading to a plan down to 50% by 2020.
- **Increase the timeliness** of response for targeted casework to ensure that 90% of plans are in place within six weeks of allocation by 2020.
- **Work in an integrated way** with all services involved with vulnerable young people to reduce the percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET down to 1% by 2020.
- **Improve the attendance of children and young people by supporting the reduction of persistent absence** and focusing on the new 10% threshold for persistent absence. The percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from Primary schools is currently 9.3%. This will reduce to 7% by 2020. Similarly, the percentage of pupils who are persistently absence from Secondary schools currently stands at 13.2% and this will reduce to 9.5% by 2020.
- **Ensure all young people attending a PRU will have achieved qualifications at age 16** including English and Mathematics, and will have a positive learning or training destination at ages 16 and 17.
- **Deliver the Troubled Families Programme** to ensure that high numbers of families are 'turned around', up to 100% of the target cohort of 8,960 families.

Getting There

In order to bring about these improvements we will put most of our effort into delivering and embedding well thought out strategies which:

- Build on the work of the Kent Association of Headteachers and the development of collaborative approaches to school to school support, to achieve even better rates of improvement in Kent and a more sustainable model of school improvement and system leadership.
- Develop the Education Services Company for key elements of our service delivery and trading, jointly governed by schools, KCC and other stakeholders, to secure the services and ways of working that schools need for the future and KCC needs to discharge its statutory responsibilities.
- Ensure that education, health and social care work closely together and are more integrated as one system for children, and commission services jointly, to bring about the necessary improvements in the quality of provision for all children and young people, especially the more vulnerable including those supported by Early Help and Social Care and those with special educational needs and disabilities, from the early years of childhood to early adulthood.
- Ensure we are a better commissioner of services, especially in Early Help and in other services that support vulnerable children and young people, and in relation to expanding educational provision in early years, schools, 14-19 and for SEND pupils, so that we meet demand with improved and more cost effective provision.
- Develop District based working so that there is more coordinated and integrated work between schools, early years settings, Early Help and Education, Health, Social Care services and other partners.
- Provide high quality performance data at school, district and county levels to monitor and evaluate what we do, challenge underperformance and produce more insightful analysis and intelligence gathering to sharply focus improvement and identify and learn from rapidly improving trends.
- Focus on improvement and innovation in the curriculum and in teaching and learning so that we address more effectively the challenges we face in delivering more successful transitions, progression pathways and better technical and vocational qualification routes for all young people to age 18.
- Work in effective partnership with schools, FE colleges, universities, training providers and employers to secure the best vocational and technical pathways and outcomes for young people so that they can access skilled employment and higher learning.

- Recognise the best Early Years providers, schools, teachers and school leaders and using them effectively across the system as System Leaders to develop and disseminate best practice and improve the quality of schools.
- Support Early Years collaborations to deliver a faster rate of improvement and developing similar approaches to system leadership in the Early Years.
- Support families' enhanced involvement in their children's learning, especially in the earliest years, by providing more effective parenting and family support through Early Help and the Early Years services.
- Encourage and promote more effective school partnerships and collaboration, and partnership working with academy sponsors, employers, health commissioners and providers and other key stakeholders, to build capacity for system wide improvements in Kent.
- Work in close cooperation with the Regional Schools Commissioner, developing more Kent schools as multi-academy trusts to sponsor new schools and support the improvement of underperforming schools.
- Support governors to carry out their role effectively, be more informed about best practice, use data constructively to plan for improvements in their schools and keep the performance of the school under review, taking prompt action to secure improvement where necessary.
- Develop ways to give parents, children and young people a greater say in the services that affect them and make better use of their views in designing and implementing new ways of working, especially in the way we deliver our SEND and Early Help services.
- Provide a range of quality information and advice for pupils and their parents so that they can make more informed choices. Our services will continue to improve the way we listen and engage with children, young people and their families so that they are influencing and shaping services and provision.

A key means of getting there is to integrate our services more effectively and to continue to promote a more self-improving school to school support system and system leadership. We should be able to make even more effective use of existing good capacity in Kent, in schools and settings and in our own services.

System leaders in schools and in the local authority build partnerships of support that focus effort and energy in the same direction to ensure improvement is sustained and the pace of change increases. For example in world class systems 'poor to fair' schools become good schools quickly and performance gains are significant in a short time because the influence of the best performing schools is effectively spread around the system. In the highest performing local authorities there is a determined approach to using evidence based practice and to achieving the best outcomes.

A more effective and longer term sustainable strategy for improvement across the whole system is to recognise that children and families needed joined up support and that this requires collaboration, more effective system leadership and more sustainable models of service delivery, including new models of school organisation and governance. It is a key role for the local authority to support and facilitate this transformation.

Our ambitions are supported by detailed service plans with year on year milestones and performance measures. A detailed performance framework is attached as an appendix to this document.

More detailed delivery plans have been set out in the School Improvement Strategy, the 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy, the Adult Skills Strategy, the NEETs Strategy, the Early Years and Childcare Strategy, the SEND Strategy, the Vulnerable Learners' Strategy, the Education Commissioning Plan, the Youth Justice Plan, the Strategy and Three Year Plan for Early Help and the business plan for the Education Services Company.

To achieve our goals and the better outcomes set out in this document we rely on developing and working in ever more successful partnership with schools and settings, colleges and training providers, employers, social care, health and the police.

Patrick Leeson

Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services

Education & Young People's Services Performance Management

Vision & Priorities for Improvement - Performance & Targets

UPDATED AS AT 01/11/2016