

Schools Priority Education Investment Areas (PEIA) and Attainment Data

Ward(s): ALL

Portfolios: Education and Skills Councillor Kaur

1. Aim

The aim of this report is to inform members of school results for 2024 and to allow members to be able to contextualise these outcomes in relation to the national, West Midlands and our statistical neighbours. The report will also inform members of what the Priority Education Investment Areas (PEIA) is and how the local authority and schools have engaged with the programme to drive educational improvements across the borough.

2. Recommendations

For the committee to note the provisional results available this year and the progress made from 2023 and in reducing the gap to national. In particular, the trend in closing of the overall gap to national within Early Years – Good Level of Development (GLD) in section 3 of this report and also the outcomes for our vulnerable young people compared to the national average (section 11).

3. Report detail – Know

3.1 These are the assessments children undertake during their school career.

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – reported as whether a child has achieved a ‘Good Level of Development’. Undertaken at the end of reception. (Statutory)
- Phonics Screening – reported as achieved the standard. Undertaken at the end of Year 1 and repeated at the end year 2 if not achieved in year 1. (Statutory)
- Key Stage 2 (KS2) Reading, Writing and Maths assessments. Reported as ‘working at the expected standard’. Undertaken at the end of Year 6. (Statutory)
- Key Stage 4 (KS4) GCSE Exams. Generally reported as the percentage of students achieving a grade 5 or above. Undertaken at the end of Year 11. (Non-Statutory)
- Key Stage 5 (KS5) A-Level or Vocational Exams. Generally reported as an average point score. Undertaken at the end of Year 13. (Non-Statutory)

3.2 Overview

The main provisional results are shown in the table below for each key stage, where available.

The table demonstrates the improvements being made and where we are currently performing above national attainment standards, or where we are below national standards it shows how the work that is being done is closing the gap.

The improved attainment standards since 2023 are a result of the school improvement work undertaken by all our schools, including the PEIA programs, and also reflects the improving quality of our schools as shown by the improved OFSTED outcomes.

Key Stage	Headlines	Walsall 2024 Vs Walsall 2023	Walsall 2024 Vs National 2024- relative	Walsall 2024 Vs Gap to National 2024
EYFSP	% of pupils achieving a good level of development (GLD)	Better	Below	Narrowing
Y1 Phonics	% working at the expected standard	Better	Below	Narrowing
KS2	% of pupils achieving expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths	Better	Below	No change in gap
	% of pupils achieving expected standard in Reading	Better	Below	Narrowing
	% of pupils achieving expected standard in Writing	Remained the same	Below	No change in gap
	% of pupils achieving expected standard in Maths	Better	Below	No change in gap
	% of pupils achieving Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS)	Remained the same	Below	No change in gap
KS4	Attainment in English and Maths (grades 5 or above)	Remained the same	Below	Widening
	Attainment in English and Maths (grades 4 or above)	Remained the same	Below	Narrowing
	Attainment 8	Below	Below	Widening
	% Triple Science Entries	Better	Below	Narrowing
	% Languages Entries	Remained the same	Below	Widening
KS5	% A* Grades	Better	Below	Narrowing
	% A*-A Grades	Better	Below	Widening
	% A*-E Grades	Better	Below	Narrowing
	Average point Score - A 'Level	Better	Below	Widening
	Average point Score- Tech Level *	Better	Not available	Not available
	Average point Score- Applied General *	Better	Not available	Not available

* Based on indicative results submitted to Walsall directly from schools on A Level results date the 15th August 2024. The unvalidated release in November 2024 did not provide an update for these qualifications, this will be available in the validated data release in January/February 2025.

Priority Education Investment Areas (PEIA) are areas that have been selected based on low KS2 and 4 attainment and high rates of disadvantage.

The PEIA Programme will address the underperformance, including in literacy and numeracy, in areas with some of the highest rates of disadvantage in the borough. The core PEIA offer includes Intervention in 2RI+ schools, Trust Capacity Funding,

Levelling up Premium and Connect the Classroom funding for Ofsted graded Requires Improvement and inadequate schools.
The additional PEIA offer for targeted schools includes Local needs fund and a CEO Development Programme.

The Local Needs Funding for Walsall PEIA is £2.7 million and is DfE led. The programme has been delivering development support to targeted schools for nearly 12 months and will run until March 2025.

Our priorities for Walsall are:

Raising attainment in English (KS2 and KS4)

Raising attainment in Maths (KS2 and KS4)

Oracy (including SEND)

Our focus for the programme is to work with school leaders to understand challenge and improve outcomes for Walsall pupils through individual programs targeted at:

- Oracy and SEND
- KS2 English
- KS4 English
- KS2 Maths
- KS4 Maths
- Metacognition and self-regulation

Attached as Appendix A is an overview of the program content for each strand of work, and the delivery partner that has been commissioned.

A detailed breakdown of the outcomes at each Key Stage will now follow.

4. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

4.1 The EYFSP is an assessment of children's development and learning at the end of the reception year. There are 17 scales covering seven areas of learning. One point is awarded for a child whose profile shows he or she is 'emerging,' two points are awarded for 'expected' and A for a child who is unable to assess or an exemption applies.

Good Level of Development (GLD): Children are defined as having reached a GLD at the end of the EYFS in their reception year if they have achieved at least the expected level in the first 12 early learning goals (ELG's) listed below.

Communication and Language:

1. Listening, Attention and Understanding
2. Speaking

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

3. Self-Regulation
4. Managing Self
5. Building Relationships

Physical Development:

- 6. Gross Motor Skills
- 7. Fine Motor Skills

Literacy:

- 8. Comprehension
- 9. Word Reading
- 10. Writing

Mathematics:

- 11. Number
- 12. Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World:

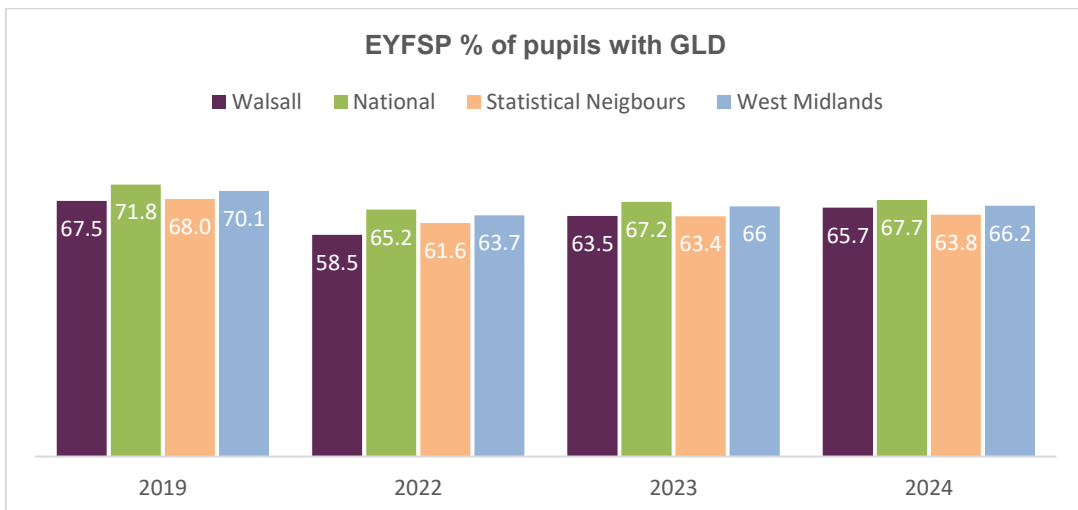
- 13. *Past and Present*
- 14. *People, Culture and Communities*
- 15. *The Natural World*

Expressive Arts and Design:

- 16. *Creating with Materials*
- 17. *Being Imaginative and Expressive*

*Childrens scores in the Early Learning Goals 13 – 17 are still recorded and reported upon by the DfE, but do **not** form part of the overall GLD judgement.*

4.2 Attainment for 2024 has increased by 2.2 percentage points to 65.7% and has closed the gap to national from 3.7% in 2023 to 2% in 2024. The trend since 2022 has seen Walsall’s GLD improve and reduce the gap to the national average. Walsall’s outcomes are now improving faster than the national which has only improved by 0.5% this year. These outcomes for Walsall are encouraging and reflects the hard work and dedication across our early years sector. We would anticipate these continued levels of improvement, for GLD outcomes next year to be broadly in line with national.

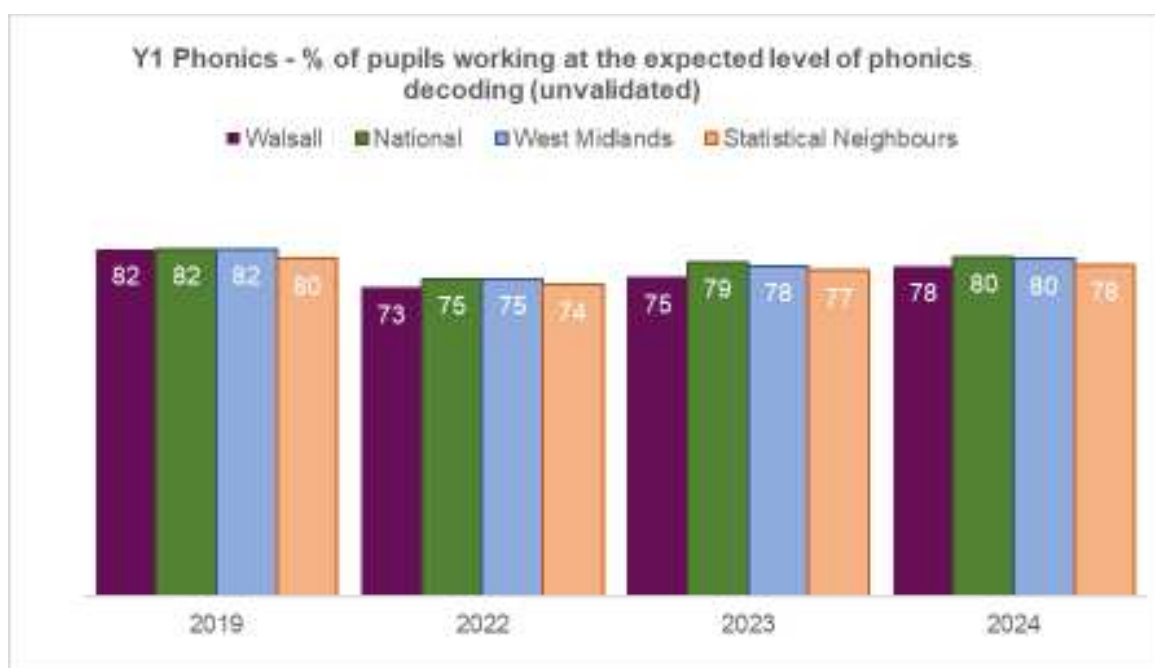


5 Phonics Screening Check

5.1 Pupils take the Phonics Screening Check at the end of year one, when most children have reached six years of age. The check is designed to confirm whether pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. The test comprises 20 real words, and 20 pseudo-words that each pupil must read aloud to the check administrator. Each pupil is, therefore, given an overall mark for the phonics screening check out of 40.

Each year, after the checks have been administered, the DfE announce the phonics screening threshold mark. If a pupil has scored at or above the threshold mark, they are said to be 'working at the expected standard of phonic decoding' (WA).

5.2 The percentage of year one pupils working at the expected standard of phonic decoding declined from 82% in 2019 to 73% in 2022 (-9%). Attainment for 2023 had increased by two percentage points to 75% and this has increased a further three percentage points in 2024 to 78%. The latest data demonstrates that Walsall is narrowing the gap to National from a 4% gap in 2023 to 2% in 2024.



6 Key Stage 1 (KS1)

The DfE has made the KS1 assessments non-statutory for 2024 onwards and no longer centrally collects these outcomes from schools.

7 Key Stage 2 (KS2)

7.1 Pupils take national curriculum assessments in year 6 at the end of KS2, when most will reach age 11 by the end of the school year. Pupils take tests (commonly referred to as SATs) in reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) and receive a teacher assessment (TA) in reading, writing, maths and science.

The data released by DfE provides provisional statistics on attainment in the following KS2 assessments:

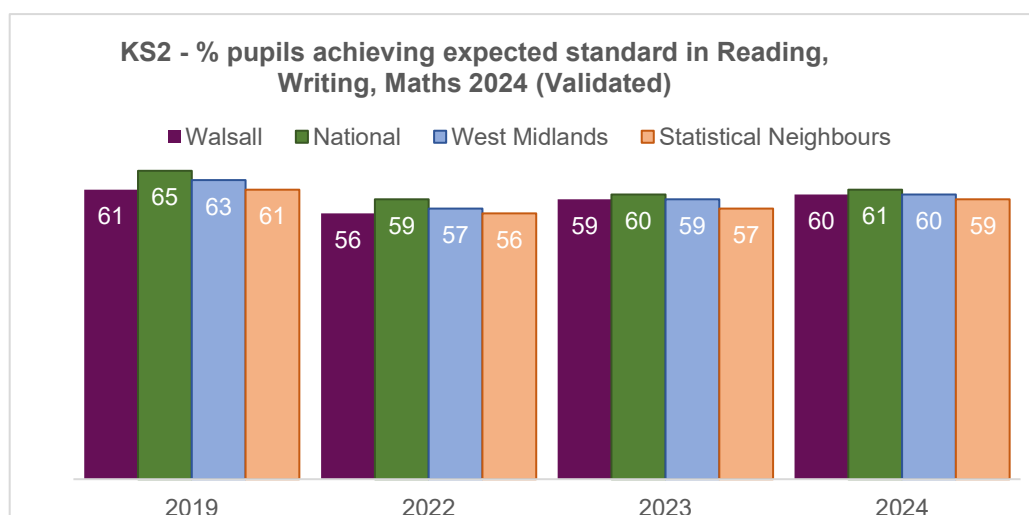
- Reading test
- Maths test
- Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) test
- Writing TA

The main KS2 measure is the percentage of children who reach the expected standard in both the reading and maths test and writing teacher assessment (RWM)

7.2 The percentage of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths for 2023 increased by three percentage points from 2022 to 59% and has improved by one percentage point to 60% in 2024.

The latest data demonstrates that Walsall's gap to national has remained unchanged in 2024 at one percentage difference to national, an improvement from three percentage points in 2022.

The percentage of Walsall children achieving the expected standard in 2024 is one percentage point higher than our statistical neighbours (59%) and equals the regional West Midlands average of 60%.



7.3 With no change in the writing outcomes and improvements in reading and maths the combined RWM outcome improved by one percentage point to 60%.

- Reading outcomes at KS2 **improved** by 3% this year to 74% which is one percent below the national average 75%.

- Maths outcomes **improved** by 1% this year to 73% and brings Walsall broadly in line with the national average of 74%.
- Writing outcomes have remained **unchanged** this year at 71% of children at KS2 achieving the expected standard, which is 1% lower than the national average of 72%. This is an area of focus for the PEIA program.

8 Key Stage 4 (KS4)

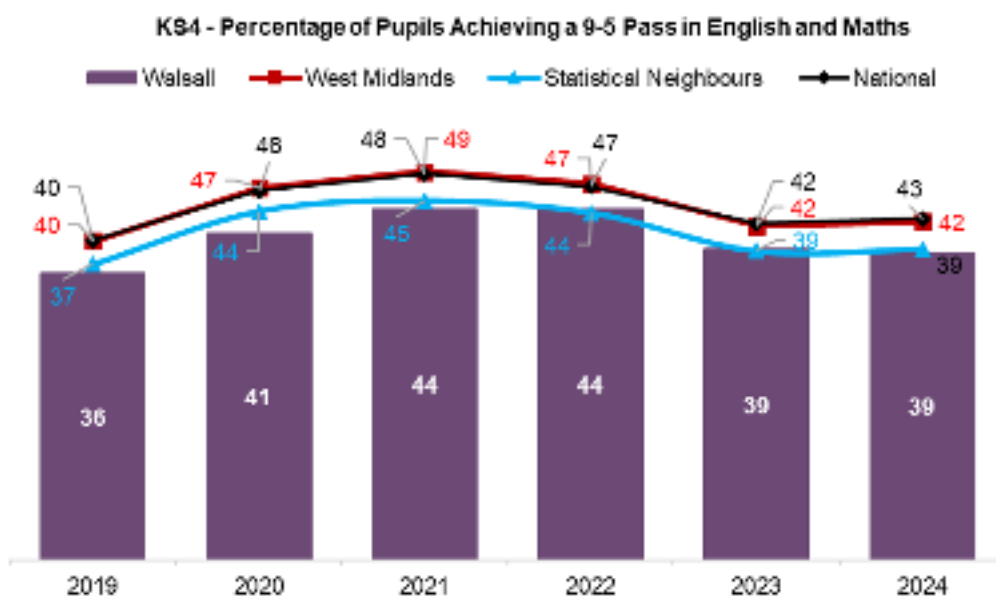
8.1 Pupils take GCSE exams at the end of Key Stage 4.

The latest unvalidated KS4 dataset was released in December 2024. Validated data is expected to be released in January 2025 and changes to results are highly likely. The Attainment 8 score is the average measure of an individual student's progress across their 8 best performing subjects taken at GCSE level.

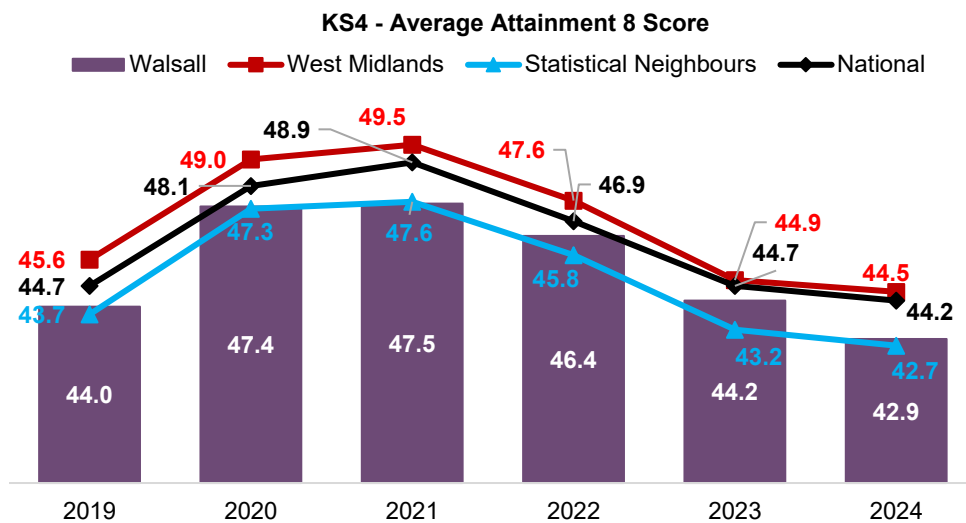
The average point score per entry is calculated by dividing the total number of points achieved by students in a particular cohort by the total size of entries for those students.

A strategic approach to improving English, specifically writing, at KS2 is being implemented across our primary and secondary sectors as part of the Priority Education Improvement Area work. One of the main priorities is to raise attainment in English at KS2 and KS4.

Over the past six years, the percentage of pupils in Walsall achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths has increased from 36% in 2019 to 39% in 2024.



8.2 Over the past six years, the average attainment 8 score in Walsall has decreased slightly from 44.0 in 2019 to 42.9 in 2024.



9 Key Stage 5 (KS5)

9.1 Headline attainment measures for KS5 are the average point score (APS) per entry which report level 3 qualifications by four performance cohorts (A level, academic, applied general, and tech level). The average point score per entry is calculated by dividing the total number of points achieved by students in a particular cohort by the total size of entries for those students.

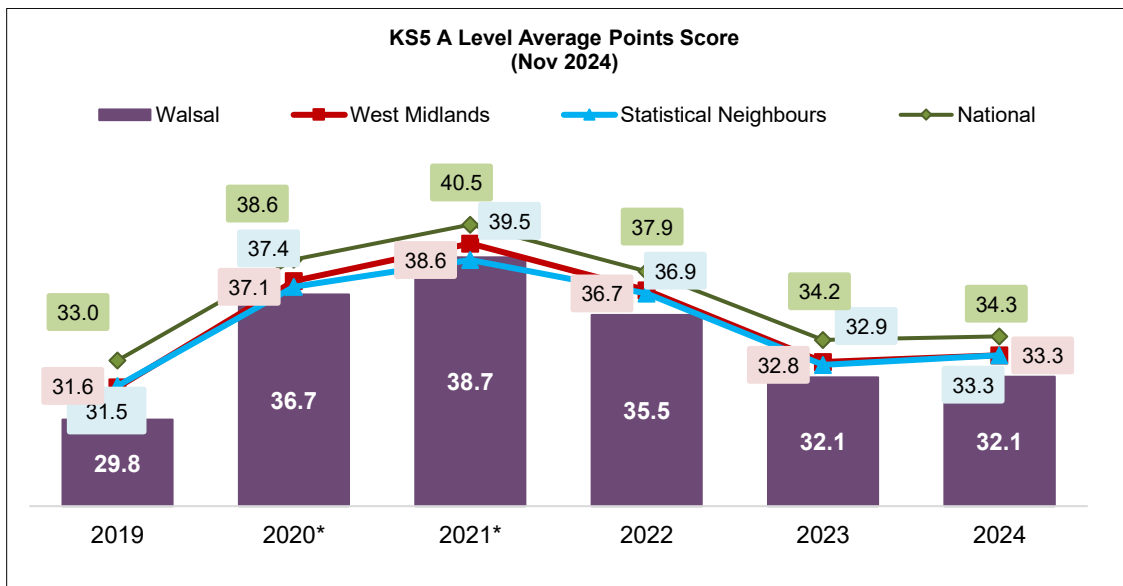
To be included in a particular performance cohort for a provider, the student must have entered for at least one of the following qualifications:

- **A-Level** qualifications cover applied single award AS or A levels or applied double award AS or A levels. This covers students at the end of advanced level study who were entered for at least one A/AS level, applied single A/AS level, applied double A/AS level or combined A/AS level during 16-18 study. It does not include those pupils taking Tech levels.
- **Academic** qualifications cover A levels and a range of other academic qualifications taken at level 3, including AS levels, the International Baccalaureate, Applied A levels, Pre-U, Free-standing mathematics qualifications and the extended project.
- **Applied general** qualifications are defined by the DfE as 'rigorous level 3 qualifications for post-16 students who wish to continue their education through applied learning and that equip students with transferable knowledge and skills. These qualifications are reported in terms of a Distinction*/Distinction/Merit/Pass rather than a grade at A Level/Academic.
- **Tech levels** are defined by the DfE as 'rigorous level 3 qualifications for post-16 students wishing to specialise in a specific industry or occupation and that develop specialist knowledge and skills to enable entry to employment or

progression to a related higher education course. These qualifications are reported in terms of a Distinction*/Distinction/Merit/Pass rather than a grade at A Level/Academic.

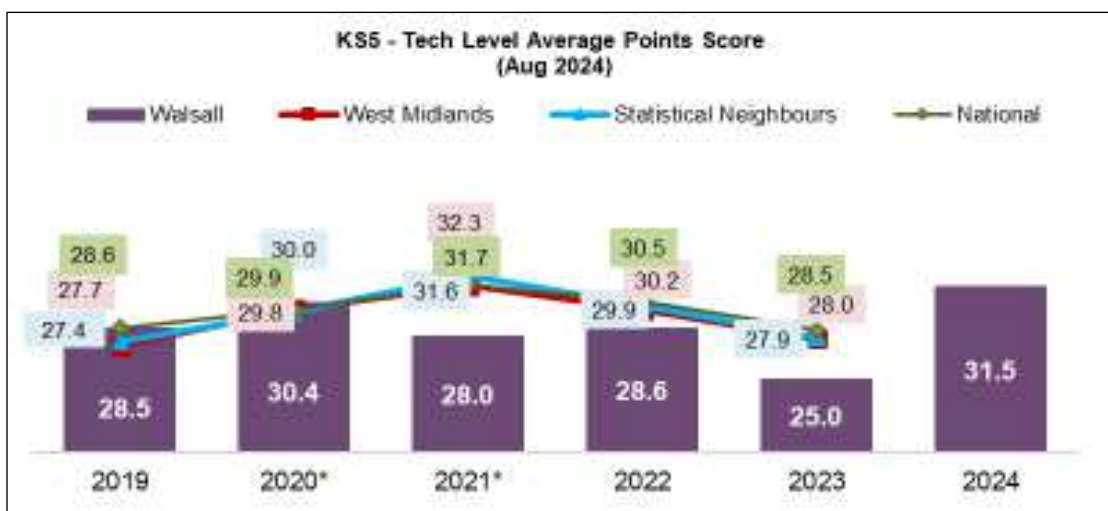
9.2 The latest unvalidated KS5 dataset was released in November 2024. Validated data is expected to be released in February 2025 and changes to results are likely.

The average point score for A-levels has increased from 29.8 points in 2019 to 32.1 points in 2024. Attainment for 2024 has remained unchanged compared to 2023.



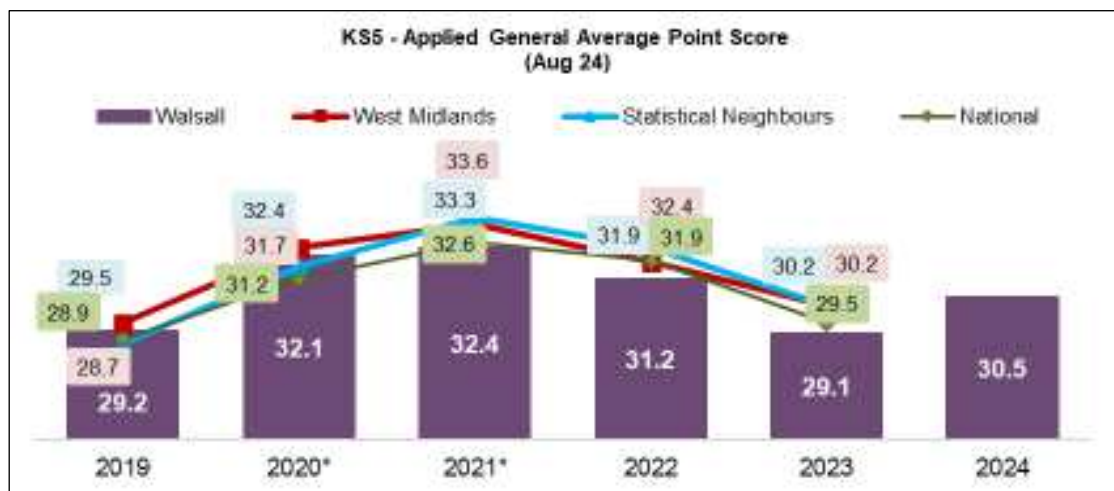
9.3 Only provisional data is currently available for tech level and applied general qualifications, as the provisional release did not include some of the vocational data. Complete data will be included in the revised data in February 2025.

The average point score for Tech has increased from 28.5 points in 2019 to 31.5 points in 2024. In 2024, Walsall's performance improved by 6.5 points compared with the 2023 result of 25.0.



9.4 The average point score for Applied General has improved from 29.2 points in 2019 to 30.5 points in 2024.

In 2024, Walsall's schools' performance increased by 1.4 points compared with 2023 results of 29.1.



10 Conclusion

10.1 Outcomes for children in Walsall have broadly improved this year upon last year's outcomes. Results at this stage are still provisional for some key stages and validated outcomes will not be available until later in the new year.

Strengths:

- A good level of development (GLD) in Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) increased from 63.5% in 2023 to 65.7% in 2024, narrowing the gap to the national average by 2%.
- Positive trends in Y1 Phonics: the percentage of pupils working at the expected standard improved from 75% in 2023 to 78% in 2024, reducing the gap with the national average from 4% to 2%.
- Children in Care (CiC) are consistently performing better than national across all key stages except for KS2 writing where Walsall are on par with national.

Key Areas of Focus:

- Although the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths at KS2 increased by one percentage point to 60% in 2024, national also increased by one percentage point, therefore there is no change in the gap to national which remains at one percentage point.
- Performance in writing at KS2 remains a concern, as Walsall remained the same as 2023 results, although there is no change in the gap between Walsall and the national average.

- At KS2 combined reading, writing and maths, the gap for children with SEN Support is still too wide compared to national.
-

11 Reducing Inequalities

11.1 The DfE publishes outcomes for some vulnerable cohorts of children. Some of these groups will also be eligible for additional funding from the DfE to support their learning. The tables below show the relative outcomes of these vulnerable groups in comparison to their peers nationally.

EYFSP % GLD					
Vulnerable Group	Walsall 2024 Vs Walsall 2023	Walsall 2024 Vs Walsall 2019	Walsall 2024 Vs National 2024 - relative	Walsall 2024 Vs National 2024 - % point difference	Walsall 2024 Vs Gap to National
All Pupils	Better	Below	Below	-2.0	Narrowing
Disadvantaged	Better	Below	Better	2.5	Widening
Free School Meals (FSM)	Better	Below	Better	2.3	Widening
SEN with EHCP	Better	Better	Better	1.2	Widening
SEN Support	Better	Better	Below	-3.6	Narrowing
Gypsy Roma	Better	Better	Better	0.6	Widening
Children in Care (CiC)*	Better	Below	Better	2.0	Widening

*CiC data taken from local Virtual School cohort.

SEN = Special Education Needs - EHCP = Educational Health Care Plan

- Within Early Years, the gap is narrowing for SEN Support, for all the other vulnerable groups we are above the national average.

Y1 Phonics % Working at the expected standard					
Vulnerable Group	Walsall 2024 Vs Walsall 2023	Walsall 2024 Vs Walsall 2019	Walsall 2024 Vs National 2024- relative	Walsall 2024 Vs National 2024- % point difference	Walsall 2024 Vs Gap to National
All Pupils	Better	Below	Below	-2.0	Narrowing
Disadvantaged	Better	Below	Below	-0.8	Widening
Free School Meals (FSM)	Better	Below	Below	-0.5	Widening
SEN with EHCP	Better	Better	Below	-0.7	Narrowing
SEN Support	Better	Better	Below	-2.6	Narrowing
Gypsy Roma	Below	Better	Better	7.7	Narrowing
Children in Care (CiC)*	Better	Below	Better	8.0	Widening

*CiC data taken from local Virtual School cohort.

- For Phonics the gaps to national for vulnerable children are narrowing with the exception of disadvantaged and FSM cohorts. However, both of these gaps are less than one percent below the national average.

KS2 RWM - % Expected standard or above					
Vulnerable Group	Walsall 2024 Vs Walsall 2023	Walsall 2024 Vs Walsall 2019	Walsall 2024 Vs National 2024- relative	Walsall 2024 Vs National 2024 - % point difference	Walsall 2024 Vs Gap to National
All Pupils	Better	Below	Below	-1.0	No change
Disadvantaged	Better	No change	Better	3.0	No change
Free School Meals (FSM)	Better	Better	Better	3.0	Widening
SEN with EHCP	Better	Below	Below	-1.0	Narrowing
SEN Support	Better	Better	Below	-6.0	Widening
Gypsy Roma	Better	Better	Better	14.0	Widening
Children in Care (CiC)	No change	Better	Better	7.0	Narrowing

*CiC data taken from local Virtual School cohort.

- For KS2 the gaps for our children with an EHC plan to national are narrowing. The gap for children with SEN support has slightly widened. For the other vulnerable groups, Walsall's outcomes are above national.
- KS4 and KS5 outcomes will be published in full in January/February 2025.

12 Decide

The committee may decide to request further information on the education outcomes of children within Walsall.

13 Respond

Any recommendations made by the committee will be responded to by the appropriate service area.

14 Review

The actions and outcomes within this report are monitored by Access & Inclusion SMT and by individual schools.

Author(s)

Nicholas Perks
 Quality Assurance Teams Manager
 ☎ 07944 279911
 ✉ nick.perks@walsall.gov.uk

Background Papers
 Appendix A Priority Education Investment Area Program Overview