

19 June 2018

Primary and secondary school educational attainment 2017

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Councillor C. Towe, Education & Skills

Executive Summary:

Primary and Secondary 2017 results have now been validated and published, showing how Walsall's children and young people have performed compared to statistical neighbours and national averages. Acknowledging that overall averages can mask under-performance of groups within a cohort, differences are identified as appropriate within the main report.

Results have improved in Walsall for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage 2 combined Reading, Writing and Maths and at Key Stage 5 where applied and technical qualifications are above national averages. There are gaps in achievement, compared with all children, for pupils with Special Educational Needs, those who are Looked After and those eligible for Free School Meals. The report highlights this by Key Stage.

In Early Years, Walsall's performance for the measure of 'Good Level of Development' which children aged 5 at the end of the reception year are expected to have achieved, has improved by 1% from 65% in 2016 to 66% in 2017. This is 5% below the national average of 71%.

Outcomes in Year 1 Phonics for 6 year olds have declined in Walsall from 82% in 2016 to 80% in 2017. Walsall is now below the national average for the first time since the tests inception in 2012.

At the end of Key Stage 1 (7 year olds), Walsall pupils performed below the national average. 71% of pupils reached the expected standard in Reading, compared to 76% nationally. In Writing, 63% of pupils met the expected threshold, compared with the national average of 68%. In Mathematics, 73% of pupils met the expected threshold which was 2% below the national average of 75%.

At the end of Key Stage 2 (11 year olds at the end of primary school), the attainment gap to national has increased. In Reading 65% of pupils reached the expected level, which is 7% below the national average of 72%. Writing has declined from 77% in 2016 to 74% in 2017, although the gap to national has narrowed by 1% to a 2% gap.

In Maths, outcomes have improved by 1% from 67% in 2016 to 68% in 2017. Walsall remains below the national average of 75%.

The percentage of pupils in Walsall who achieved the expected standard or above in combined Reading, Writing and Maths stands at 53%, an increase of 3% from 2016. Walsall is below the national outcome of 61% by 8 percentage points.

Secondary success at Key Stage 4 (16 year olds) is now measured specifically in terms of Progress 8. On this measure, Walsall is -0.25 below the national average of zero. In 2016, Walsall outcome was -0.24. The statistical neighbours' average remains unchanged at -0.12.

Within Key Stage 5 (18 year olds), the A-Level qualification average points score has increased by 1.22 points. Walsall is now above the national outcomes for Average Point Score per entry for both Tech Level and Applied General Qualification groups. These qualifications include a more vocational and training element to them.

The School Improvement Strategy sets out ambitious but realistic targets to 2020. Progress towards these targets will be reported regularly. As the Education Challenge Board (ECB) has now been replaced with the Walsall Strategic Partnership Education & Inclusion Board which has recently been implemented, schools performance and those schools of concern will continue to be reported upon.

Reason for Scrutiny:

To provide Members with validated 2017 results for both primary and secondary schools in Walsall.

Recommendation:

The report to be noted.

Background Papers:

Validated results published by the Department for Education.

Resource and Legal Considerations:

Not applicable to this report.

Council Corporate Plan Priorities:

12. Ensure Walsall schools and academies deliver good education outcomes.
13. Narrow gaps in educational attainment between the least and most deprived communities and for all underachieving groups.
18. Raise self-esteem and aspirations for all children.

Citizen Impact:

In order for the children and young people of Walsall to be able to fully participate in adult life, it is vital that they be supported to reach their full academic potential, and that the school curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced. Schools are encouraged to provide a range of extra-curricular opportunities to supplement the taught curriculum.

Environmental Impact:

Not applicable to this report.

Performance Management:

As part of the Council's annual cycle of Employee Performance Reviews, all members of the school improvement team have non-negotiable objectives related to outcomes of Ofsted inspections and the achievement of pupils.

Reducing Inequalities:

If pupils are to reach their full potential, it is essential that schools plan to meet their learning needs and work to reduce barriers which could lead to under-achievement. For this reason, schools are challenged on the relative performance of different groups, such as the disadvantaged and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out.

Consultation:

Report has been prepared in consultation with the Information Services Team.

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Report

1. Early Years Foundation Stage (age 5)

- 1.1 The percentage of pupils achieving a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) in Walsall improved by 1% from 65% in 2016 to 66% in 2017. This places Walsall 5% below the national average, but on an upward trajectory.
- 1.2 Walsall's performance is within 1% of its statistical neighbours. The statistical neighbours include: Peterborough, Dudley, Stoke on Trent, Telford & Wrekin, Derby City, Doncaster, Rotherham, Bolton, Rochdale and Tameside.
- 1.3 Data shows that pupils with Special Educational Needs, summer-born children, those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and boys under-perform when compared with their peers.

2. Year 1 Phonics (age 6)

- 2.1 Phonics has declined this year. The percentage of pupils passing the year 1 phonics screening test in Walsall fell by 2% to 80% in 2017. This outcome is 1% below the national average, but is 1% above our statistical neighbours.
- 2.2 Data shows that pupils with Special Educational Needs do less well on this measure than their peers (37% SEN pupils compared to 86% Non-SEN pupils). Similarly Children who are looked after in Walsall achieve less well than all pupils (72%).
- 2.3 The gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in Walsall is 13% (national gap is higher at 14%), and for those eligible for Free School Meals against all other pupils is 13% (national gap is higher at 15%). Walsall's gap between pupils with Special Educational Needs and Non SEN pupils is 49%. This is wider than the national gap (44%). Closing the gap for pupils with Special Educational Needs is therefore a priority.

3. Key Stage 1 (5 to 7 year olds)

- 3.1 Performance in Reading, Writing and Maths remains below the national averages for both the expected standard and for greater depth.
- 3.2 71% of Walsall pupils have met the expected standard in Reading (national 76%), 63% in Writing (national 68%) and 73% in Mathematics (national 75%). The gap to national is widest in Reading and Writing; both have a gap to national of 5%.
- 3.3 Nationally, the number of pupils reaching the greater depth standard is lower. For Reading, 17% of pupils in Walsall have achieved the greater depth standard, compared to a national figure of 25%. For Writing, Walsall's figure is 8% compared to 16% nationally. In Maths, 15% of pupils in Walsall achieved the greater depth standard, compared to 21% as the national average.

- 3.4 Data shows that pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), Children who are Looked After and those with Special Educational Needs perform less well than their peers. For Children who are Looked After in Walsall, the gap is widest for Writing which is 31% below the Walsall average of 63%.
- 3.5 The gap between Walsall and national outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those eligible for Free School Meals are within 2% of the national average for Writing, Reading and Maths. The gaps are wider for pupils with Special Educational Needs, except in Writing, where there is a 1% gap. For Reading, Walsall's SEN/Non SEN gap is 59%, compared to a national of 53%, for Maths the gap is 4% (Walsall 55% and national 51%).

4. Key Stage 2 (7 to 11 year olds)

- 4.1 Improvement is strongest in Reading where Walsall have improved by 4% at the expected standard threshold, from 61% in 2016 to 65% in 2017 and improved by 6% at the higher standard. Walsall remains below national by 7% at the expected standard and 6% below at the higher standard.
- 4.2 Results for Writing are less strong, having declined from 77% in 2016 to 74% in 2017 at the expected standard. This is slightly below the national average of 76%. Results at the higher standard have fallen by 4%, from 15% in 2016 to 11% in 2017.
- 4.3 In Mathematics, performance on both measures has improved from 2016 outcomes, with 68% (+1%) reaching the expected standard and 19% (+4%) reaching a higher standard. The gap to national has increased and Walsall is below national by 7% at the expected standard and 4% at the higher standard.
- 4.4 For Reading, Writing and Maths combined, 53% of Walsall's pupils met the expected standard, an increase of 3% from 2016 outcome. Walsall are now 8% below the national average of 61%. Nationally 5% pupils achieved the higher standard, whilst in Walsall this figure was 1%.
- 4.5 Data shows that pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), children who are looked after and those with Special Educational Needs perform less well than their peers. The gaps between Walsall LAC pupils and Walsall overall is widest in Maths (20%) and Writing (16%), with an 18% gap on the combined Reading, Writing and Maths measure.
- 4.6 There is a 51% gap in Walsall between pupils with Special Educational needs and non-SEN pupils achieving the expected standard or above in the combined Reading, Writing and Maths measure. This is slightly narrower than the national gap of 52%. Gaps for disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils are wider (25% gap in Walsall compared to a national gap of 19%).

5. Key Stage 4 (14 to 16 year olds)

- 5.1 In 2017 GCSEs in England were reformed in English and Mathematics and are now graded with a new scale from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade. For most other subjects the new grades will be awarded in 2018. A new grade 4 will be seen as a 'standard pass' and a grade 5 as a 'strong pass'. The Grade 5 'strong pass' will be included in the new accountability measure for schools.
- 5.2 In Walsall 54% of pupils have achieved a Grade 4 or above in English and Maths. This is 4% below the national average of 59%. 34% of pupils have achieved the strong pass threshold compared to 40% nationally. 18% of pupils in Walsall achieved the English Baccalaureate based on a grade 5 or above.
- 5.3 The new DFE KS4 agreed measure, Progress 8, measures a student's progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 across eight key subjects. It shows whether students have performed to expectation, based on a value-added measure using Key Stage 2 English and Maths as a baseline. Progress 8 compares schools with similar intakes. This new measure is designed to encourage schools to offer a broad, well-balanced curriculum.
- 5.4 The percentage of pupils in Walsall achieving the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) based on a grade 5 or above in English and in Maths is 18% which is 2% below the national average. Walsall achieved 2% better than our statistical neighbours at 16% and 2% below the West Midlands region at 22%.
- 5.5 Walsall's Progress 8 score is marginally below national at -0.25, where zero is national.
- 5.6 Data shows that on the Progress 8 measure, boys and pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), Children who are Looked After and those with Special Educational Needs perform less well than their peers. The performance of children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is -1.13 and Children who are Looked After is -1.20.
- 5.7 The performance of children who are disadvantaged in Walsall is -0.62 compared to -0.40 nationally.

6. Key Stage 5 (16 to 18 year olds)

- 6.1 Average points per entry for all Level 3 qualifications in Walsall (32.29) is slightly below the national average (33.23).
- 6.2 Walsall's results for technical and applied qualifications at Level 3 are above national. Academic/A' Level qualifications are below national and statistical neighbours, Peterborough, Dudley, Stoke on Trent, Telford & Wrekin, Derby City, Doncaster, Rotherham, Bolton, Rochdale and Tameside, although there is an upward trajectory in outcomes.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 Regular updates are provided at internal Director's School Performance Review (DSPR) meetings, where schools of concern are discussed, solutions for schools are investigated, support is brokered to schools in need and strategies for challenge to underperformance are agreed.
- 7.2 A new approach has been introduced this academic year, called 'Team around the School'. This is implemented where a school is causing concern and needs a dedicated team of officers to work at a rapid pace on a robust action plan to bring about immediate impact. It is proving effective in bringing about the required improvement.
- 7.3 Walsall documents are presently being updated with reference to the 'schools causing concern' guidance issued by the DFE in February 2018. This will provide schools with a clear overview of the LA's approach to schools causing concern moving forward.
- 7.4 Walsall schools have been involved in Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) bids since September 2017. Ten primary schools have been involved in round 1 bids focused upon Early Years and KS1 Writing. These bids have been very successful in showing an impact on pupil performance and a further ten schools will be involved from September 2018. In round 2, a KS3 Literacy bid was successful and four Walsall secondary schools are involved. Walsall submitted a SEN support pupil's bid but unfortunately was unsuccessful. The Lead Teaching schools along with the LA, are presently in discussions regarding the possibility for the most vulnerable schools with large numbers of SEN support pupils a smaller scale version of this original bid, to impact and improve upon the provision and outcomes for these pupils commencing September 2018. Round 3 bids were submitted on the 20 April 2018, including a Language First – early years bid from Walsall supporting 36 schools across the Black Country. Across the Black Country, other bids submitted included a focus upon KS1 Reading, KS3 Maths and English as an additional language (EAL) with Walsall schools nominated for involvement. Notification of whether bids will be successful will take place in July 2018 with a start date with schools in September 2018.
- 7.5 Further analysis takes place at the SENDI Board, where regular updates are provided on pupil progress through scrutiny of score-cards. A SENDI strategy and action plan is updated for each meeting to see the impact of the strategies in place.
- 7.6 As the Education Challenge Board (ECB) has now been replaced with the Walsall Strategic Partnership Education & Inclusion Board, which has recently been implemented; schools performance and those schools of concern will continue to be reported upon. The Board has begun to identify priorities for Walsall to improve outcomes for our young people working through the newly set up Primary and Secondary strategy groups. Each group will have a Head teacher seconded from one of Walsall's schools, to discuss, commission and implement the project or initiative to improve pupil outcomes and report to the board.

- 7.7 Appointment of Walsall's Inclusion Leader to lead and implement Walsall's Inclusion Strategy for all. The Inclusion Leader will seek to reduce the high numbers of permanent exclusions in Walsall and develop school based solutions to deal with our most vulnerable pupils including those who are LAC, Disadvantaged and SEND. Our HMI, Peter Humphries, has been in attendance at our meetings.
- 7.8 Development and submission of an English as an additional Language (EAL) bid, including work with pupils, schools, families and communities with the LA Community Cohesion and Equalities team. The LA has recruited an ex-Head teacher for two days a week to work upon this bid, which if successful could attract a sum of £1m.
- 7.9 The Head of Service now holds half termly meetings with our three primary teaching schools to discuss staff training, leadership programmes, SSIF bids and school-to-school support. From September 2018, there will be a published joint Walsall teaching schools offer made to all schools for the first time.
- 7.10 The Head of Service meets separately with our two secondary teaching schools to discuss staff training, leadership programmes, SSIF bids and school-to-school support.
- 7.11 In 2018, a partnership meeting of LA officers and chairs of our forums was introduced. These meetings take place half-termly and give an opportunity on both sides to discuss topical issues, share future developments for discussion and encourage a partnership approach to the work undertaken with and by our schools.
- 7.12 Head teachers continue to lead clusters of schools in staff training, school-to-school support and peer reviews. Clusters continue to be a strength of good practice in Walsall. School Improvement Partners are in regular attendance at cluster meetings.
- 7.13 Head teacher briefings have provided an opportunity for discussion with schools about existing good practice and collectively improving outcomes for all pupils.
- 7.14 Regular meetings continue to be held with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) and our HMI for Walsall, Peter Humphries. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss schools, particularly those of concern, and appropriate interventions.
- 7.15 Our half-termly Walsall LA Executive Summary 2016-2017 can be seen overleaf and continues to monitor regularly schools Ofsted judgements and schools' overall effectiveness as well as pupil attainment across the vulnerable groups.