

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Annual Report on School Performance for the Academic Year 2023 to 2024

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Summary

The Medway Annual Schools' Performance Report 2023-24 is attached in Appendix 1. This report summarises the performance of all state-maintained schools in Medway over the academic year 2023-24.

1. Recommendation

1.1. The Committee is asked to note the Annual Schools' Performance Report, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

2. Budget and policy framework

2.1 The report falls within the scope of the One Medway Council Plan. It demonstrates our progress in achieving our priority for Medway's children and young people to have access to high quality local education, including a focus on supporting those with special educational needs.

2.2 The report supports our vision for a Child Friendly Medway.

3. Background

3.1 Elected members champion children and young people and have an important role in scrutinising overall performance and standards in all schools. The analysis in the report provides Members with both an overview and detailed information to support this role.

3.2 Education policy in Medway reflects the council's ambition that all schools should be good or outstanding in order that life chances for all children and

young people are improved. This ambition is being secured by working in partnership with education leaders, governors, trusts, the Regional Director and the Regions Group, the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted.

- 3.3 Both the Local Authority and the Regional Director have mechanisms in certain circumstances to intervene where there are concerns about school performance, including leadership and governance. Such intervention may include formal warning notices, removal of governing bodies and, in the case of academies, re-brokerage to another Multi Academy Trust (MAT).

4. Performance summary and highlights

4.1. **Inspection Outcomes**

- 4.1.1. 93.3% of our primary schools and 83.3% of our secondary schools were judged by Ofsted to be Good or Outstanding. 100% of our PRUs and Special Schools are judged by Ofsted to be good or Outstanding.

4.2. **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

- 4.2.1. Fewer pupils in Medway achieved a good level of development in the EYFS in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23, and performance in this measure is below national for the first time in a number of years.
- 4.2.2. Pupils with SEN support in the EYFS achieved below children with SEN support nationally, again for the first time in a number of years. Children with an EHCP continue to perform less well than their peers nationally but the gap with national reduced in 2023/24.

4.3. **Phonics**

- 4.3.1. Outcomes have improved in Y1 and Y2 compared to the outcomes achieved in 2022/23. However, these remain lower than pre pandemic levels and below national.
- 4.3.2. Whilst Medway pupils with SEN support in year 2 matched national in 2022/23, other SEN groups were below national. In 2023/24, year 1 and year 2 pupils with SEN support or an EHCP performed less well than national.

4.4. **Key Stage 1**

- 4.4.1. End of key stage 1 assessment ceased to be statutory from September 2023, and therefore data is no longer collected by Medway LA or the DfE on performance at the end of this key stage.

4.5. Key stage 2

- 4.5.1. Medway's average combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics (RWM) score has improved compared to last year and now matches national. In 2024, performance of pupils in Medway with SEN support and EHCP improved on last year, as did national. However, performance remains below national.
- 4.5.2. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading and in maths has improved compared to 2023/24. Medway are still behind national however the gaps have narrowed. In reading, pupils with an EHCP improved on the previous year whilst national improved but not as significantly. Therefore, the gap on last year narrowed. In maths, pupils with an EHCP in Medway improved at the same rate as national and therefore the gap with last year remains the same.
- 4.5.3. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing has remained static which reflects the national picture. Medway remain level with national for the second year in a row. Pupils in Medway with SEN support performed better than last year and higher than national. Whilst Medway still outperforms national the gap has reduced. The performance of pupils with an EHCP in Medway and at national has remained static with national outperforming Medway.

4.6. Key stage 4

- 4.6.1. The percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate continues to increase and Medway's take-up is better than the national average. In 2023/24 the percentage of pupils with SEN support or an EHCP entering the English Baccalaureate was lower than last year and continues to be lower than national with the gap widening.
- 4.6.2. The 2023/24 attainment 8 score improved in Medway compared to the previous year, whilst national fell. However, performance nationally is better than Medway. Performance of both pupils with SEN support and EHCP is lower in Medway than the previous year whilst there was no significant change at national.
- 4.6.3. Pupils achieving a grade of 5+ in English and maths increased both in Medway and nationally compared to the previous year. The gap has reduced to 1pp. The percentage of SEN support pupils in Medway achieving 5+ in English and maths is fewer than in 2023/24 whilst there was a slight increase in the national figure. The performance of Medway EHCP pupils increased by 1.7pp and the gap with national has narrowed compared to last year.
- 4.6.4. Pupils achieving 4+ in English and maths remained the same at national compared to last year whilst improving by 2pp in Medway. However, national continues to outperform Medway. The percentage of SEN support pupils in Medway achieving 5+ in English and maths is fewer than in 2023/24 whilst

there was a slight increase in the national figure. The performance of Medway EHCP pupils increased by 5.1pp whilst national remained the same.

4.6.5. The average progress 8 score for Medway is -0.07 and is an improvement of 0.04pp on 2022/23. Medway remains below the national average progress 8 score of -0.03. SEN support and EHCP matched or were in line with the respective national figures.

4.7. **Key Stage 5**

4.7.1. At the point of writing, data on general entry and technical level entry had not been published by the DfE. It is expected for February 2024.

4.7.2. The Average Point Score (APS) per A level entry and academic entry in Medway is broadly in line with last year's figures and reflects the rate of improvement at national. In both measures Medway remains below the national average.

4.7.3. The Average Point Score (APS) per A level entry and academic entry for pupils with SEN support and EHCP significantly increased compared to last year. Whilst performance continues to be below national, the gap is reducing.

4.7.4. At the point of writing data on the percentage of pupils achieving grades AAB in 2 facilitating subjects had not been published by the DfE and is expected February 2024.

4.8. **Suspension and Exclusions:**

4.8.1. The permanent exclusion rate in the secondary school phase is higher than the national average. This was the same in 2023/24.

4.8.2. Suspension rates in Medway primary schools are higher than the national average.

4.8.3. This year there have been no permanent exclusions from special schools, but there have been from primary schools. This is a change from the previous year when no primary aged or pupils in special schools were excluded.

4.8.4. The rate of suspensions between Medway and national is broadly in line, with national at a slightly higher rate.

4.8.5. The percentage of pupils with SEN support or an EHCP who are suspended in Medway is lower than national for both pupil groups.

5. **Risk management**

5.1. The LA shares with its schools the wish to provide an excellent education for all learners in the area. It is required to work effectively with its schools and academies to ensure that its actions promote this objective.

- 5.2. Medway regularly risk assesses the schools and categorises them to determine the appropriate level of support and action. Decision making is based on a clear evidence base, drawing on both the performance data and shared understanding of each school to identify which are performing well, which are under-performing, and which are vulnerable. All schools are evaluated so that no school is left without the offer of support. The school effectiveness strategy sets out this process.

Priorities within the strategy are to ensure:

- *all schools at risk of being eligible for intervention (see Annex 5 and the summary in Annex 6) under section 60 (2) of the Education and Inspections Act, 2006 are identified through quality assurance and monitoring protocols.*
- *informal notices are given to schools that LA officers believe are eligible for intervention (an informal warning notice being a written notification to the governing body of a maintained schools).*
- *warning notices under section 60 (2) of the 2006 Act are issued in all instances where school effectiveness officers are satisfied that either conditions (a), (b) or (c) are met, and an informal notice has been served or deemed to be inappropriate in the particular circumstances of the school concerned.*
- *maintained schools judged to require improvement are supported to be good swiftly; and*
- *LA officers cooperate with the office of the Regional Director to ensure appropriate arrangements are made for any maintained school judged to be inadequate.*

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. The Local Authorities Dedicated School Grant (DSG) allocation is calculated in four separate funding blocks (Schools, Early Years, High Needs and the Central Service Schools Block) using national funding formulas. The DSG is calculated initially using the pupil numbers for all schools in Medway, including academies. Subsequently the Education Skills Funding Agency will reduce the Council's DSG allocation in respect of schools that have converted to academies.
- 6.2. Schools receive a separate grant to improve the attainment of pupils from deprived backgrounds based on pupils eligible for a free school meal, children in care and children with a parent in the armed forces.
- 6.3. Schools receive a SEND Notional budget to provide for the additional SEND needs of children up to £6000 above the core pupil funding.
- 6.4. The High Needs DSG Budget funds the additional SEND support over and above the SEND Notional budget. This is currently in deficit. A High Needs

Budget Recovery Plan (the Safety Valve Plan) is in place to control the spend and remove the deficit.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1. The Education and Adoption Act 2016 introduced new measures to improve school standards across the country. The measures in this Act are designed to speed up the process by which failing schools become sponsored academies.
- 7.2. The Local Authority's role in school improvement has changed with the increase in the number of schools that are academies. Local authorities have formal powers of intervention for maintained schools; however, they do not have the same powers for academies.
- 7.3. The Schools Causing Concern Statutory Guidance 2020 emphasises the different roles of local authorities, schools and the Regional Director. The guidance confirms the Government's intention to build a supportive school's culture in which local authorities work with school leaders to drive school improvement through system leadership.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Schools Annual Performance Report

Background papers

None