

TO: EXECUTIVE
16 DECEMBER 2014

**AN OVERVIEW OF BRACKNELL FOREST SCHOOL RESULTS IN 2014
AND SUMMARY OF THE APPROACH TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**
Director of Children, Young People and Learning

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Executive on the key changes in the curriculum, assessment and testing practice in schools, to provide an analysis of pupil achievement across key stages in 2014; and to update on developments in the Learning and Achievement Branch of the Children, Young People and Learning Directorate.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **NOTES** the expectation that schools continue to raise standards of pupil achievement to improve economic competitiveness in a global economy.
- 2.2 **NOTES** the unvalidated test and examination results in Bracknell Forest schools in the academic year 2013-14 (validated results are not available until later in the academic year) and changes to the School Improvement Service.
- 2.3 **ENDORSES** the actions taken to develop School Improvement practice to meet a more challenging context.
- 2.4 **REAFFIRMS** our ambition for all Bracknell Forest Schools to be 'good' schools.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Education nationally has undergone a decade of transformation and ongoing change. The cumulative impact on schools of a raft of ongoing changes is challenging to manage. In addition to the impact on schools, the changes have implications for LA school improvement services. This report presents the current state of play and outlines the changes being made to better meet the emerging needs of schools.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

National Expectations

- 5.1** Over the recent past, the education system nationally has undergone a period of transformation. This has been driven in part by comparisons between the outcomes of the UK education systems and those in other countries for example, through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA).
- 5.2** Another driver is the impact of technological development on the labour market, which current projections suggest will have a disproportionate impact on the number of low paid jobs available. This means that it is more important than ever that young people achieve to their full potential and develop the knowledge and skills to compete in a global market. A new study from the University of Oxford predicts that in the next 10 to 20 years, with the current rate of technological development, up to 35% of all lower skill jobs will be performed by robots, with people earning less than £30,000 per annum ten times more likely to find themselves redundant than those earning over £100,000.
- 5.3** The Coalition government's commitment to improving teaching and learning through increasing school autonomy and accountability has led to a new national landscape that includes academies and free schools. Locally the policy has been to support Governing Bodies to decide the best course of action for their schools and there has been little interest in academy status, with only one secondary school becoming an academy and one primary registering an interest with the DfE.
- 5.4** At a school level, there are unprecedented pressures brought about by the cumulative impact of ongoing changes which currently (2013-14) include:
- A new national curriculum, assessment and test requirements (primary).
 - Changes to key curriculum areas, reduced flexibility in 14-16 qualifications and the way in which vocational qualifications can be used as an equivalent for GCSEs, more demanding examinations and exams taken at the end of a two year course (linear rather than modular), results on first entry only published in national data sets, changes to accountability measures (Best 8 and Progress 8) are under development (secondary).
 - Changes to performance tables and floor targets (an increase in floor standards - KS2 from 55% to 60% and 65% and at GCSE 5A*-C inc English and mathematics 35% to 40% to 50%).
 - An increasing focus on the role of schools in tackling inequalities and improving social mobility, with targeted work to close the attainment gap between the 20% most deprived and the rest.
 - Annually updated Ofsted inspection frameworks.

Summary of 2014 assessment, test and examination results for Bracknell Forest

- 5.5** Generally the pace and number of changes across all key stages continue to make significant demands on school capacity. The effect of changes was anticipated to have such a significant impact in 2014, particularly at GCSE level, that the Office for

Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) took the unprecedented step of issuing a warning that GCSE results in summer 2014 would be very different from 2013. Despite the changes and new expectations, overall average results for Bracknell Forest schools as a group are around national averages in most areas. The results for Looked After Children are pleasing, but the performance of Pupil Premium funded pupils is a concern. Direct comparison with the previous year is not always valid due to major changes in assessment and examinations, though some 2013 data is included for information and comparisons made where relevant.

- 5.6** Data for the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** (Table 1) shows good average attainment at age 5, with 65% (60% nationally in 2013) achieving the benchmark of a *good level of development*, with the average total point scores of 34 (provisional national figure of 33). Data on the gap between the weakest 20% of children and the average is not yet available. This data is collected by teacher assessment.
- 5.7** At **Key Stage 1** (Table 2) teacher assessment results for reading, writing and mathematics at the expected Level 2, show improvements in mathematics, but a slight fall in reading and writing. At the higher level benchmarks, of 2b+ (a key indicator for future performance at the end of Key Stage 2) and Level 3, results improved. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2b+ in all subjects has increased by 2% from 2013 and remains above the 2014 national average. Results have improved at Level 3 in all subjects and significantly in writing.
- 5.8** Pupil Premium funded pupils achieved less well than the average, with a 32% gap. There were three Looked After Children in the Year 2 cohort, all of whom achieved the Level 2 or above standard in mathematics and two of whom achieved this in reading and writing.
- 5.9** Pupils were screened on **phonic knowledge** at the end of Year 1 (age 6) with 75% attaining the required level (74% nationally), a significant improvement on last year (69%).
- 5.10** **Key Stage 2** data (Table 3) shows the attainment for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and these three areas combined show improvement from last year. Pupils are continuing an upward trend seen over the last three years with higher results in reading, writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Results in mathematics have stayed the same and the overall combined reading, writing and mathematics remains the same as last year. Results at Level 4+ are above 2014 national average levels for writing, in line for reading and slightly below for grammar, punctuation and spelling, mathematics and the combined score for reading, writing and mathematics.
- 5.11** This year's floor standard is 65% of pupils achieving Level 4+ in reading, writing and mathematics; Bracknell Forest's average pupil score is 73%, with 3 schools currently below the floor standard. Results at Level 5+ also show an increase from 2013 in reading and grammar, punctuation and spelling, but declined in writing and mathematics so are below national results for 2014. This has resulted in the overall combined score in reading, writing and mathematics declining.
- 5.12** Of six LAC, one pupil was dis-applied and one had a statement of special educational need (SEN). The remaining four LAC achieved the Level 4 standard in all subjects. The gap between pupils eligible for Free School Meals and all pupils widened this year to 28%.

- 5.13** At **Key Stage 4**, data collected from schools in August formed the basis of the initial briefing documents by officers reflected *Best Entry results* that proved to be significantly higher than *First Entry results*, which are those that are published in national league tables.
- 5.14** Results (Table 4) show that the proportion of young people obtaining 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C including English and mathematics was 56.2%, just below the national average of 56.3%. The proportion of young people achieving the other main measure of attainment at Key Stage 4 (5 or more GCSE grades A* - C) is at 68% above the national results of 66%.
- 5.15** With regard to vulnerable pupils, of the eight Looked after Children in the cohort, six attended mainstream provision and two attended special schools. All were entered for some form of examination and succeeded in achieving at least a qualification which has enabled them to continue in their chosen education provision post -16. Four of the six in a mainstream setting achieved in line with the expected levels of progress, with one achieving at least 5 A* - C grades including English and mathematics (compared with 10% for 2012 – 13) and seven of the group secured at least 1 A* - G grade. A number of pupils took entry level and college based courses and qualifications. Results for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding show significant gaps in their achievement, with a widening of the attainment gap this year at the end of KS4 in some schools. Although overall the gap at KS4 narrowed.
- 5.16** **Post-16** the number of students who took A Level examinations in Bracknell Forest schools continues to rise. The A* - E pass rate at A Level remains high, with 98% of entries resulting in a pass grade, reflecting the national pass rate. Schools report that the great majority of young people seeking entry into higher education have received the grades they require. Despite reports that the proportion of students obtaining the highest grades nationally has fallen, several Bracknell Forest schools report increases in this figure.

The School Improvement offer for Bracknell Forest Schools

- 5.17** Whilst test and exam results are generally in line with national averages, the number of schools identified as *Requiring Improvement (RI)* is a cause for concern and targeted work is underway to move these schools and the two schools judged as *Inadequate to Good*. Both Section 5 Ofsted Inspection and Section 8 HMI Monitoring reports identify the extensive and good quality support provided by the Local Authority. Since June 2014 there has been a renewed focus on the challenge role which has been further developed.

Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
6 = 15%	18 = 46%	13 = 33%	2 = 5%

- 5.18** **All Bracknell Forest schools to be good schools.** The ambition is for all Bracknell Forest schools to be good schools. Good in this context is judged against a range of pupil outcomes including attainment, personal wellbeing, behaviour and a positive attitude to learning as a lifelong activity.
- 5.19** To support schools to achieve the Bracknell Forest ambition of all schools to be good schools and address areas of need a number of changes have been made to the school improvement service which include:-

- Increasing the rigour and challenge to schools, building their capacity to self evaluate through making changes to the primary adviser visits. The records of visits now sharply focus expected school action and timescale.
- Increasing capacity in data analysis, particularly looking at trajectories of current pupils from years 4 to 6, which is more relevant intelligence to inform planning in order to accelerate pupil progress than the analysis of results at end of KS 2.
- More pre-Ofsted 'health-checks' by current Ofsted inspectors, with recommendations for improvement.
- Targeted support on English, mathematics and SEN to assist in implementation of the recent reforms and Pupil Premium strategy and practice.
- Strengthening governance, scoping an increased contribution to school improvement and particularly targeting the development of Governing Bodies in RI schools.
- More strategic use of existing headteachers to provide school to school support.

5.20 The LA strategy *Pupil Premium: Closing the Gap* has been updated in consultation with Headteachers and targeted work is underway based on a four stage process:-

- Find the gaps** – analyse data to identify groups who have underachieved in relation to other groups in the school, regional and national averages. Identify areas of the curriculum where performance is weak.
- Determine and implement strategies to reduce the gaps** - identify solutions, including planning for progression with targets, match teaching to needs, research what has worked elsewhere.
- Monitor the gaps** - use efficient tracking and accurate assessment to monitor the effectiveness of provision and review and refine provision.
- Celebrate success** - make sure pupils, teachers and governors identify successes and report these to parents and the wider community.

5.21 Data analysis shows other variations by groups in comparison to Bracknell Forest averages and the LA advisers ensure that this level of analysis is reflected in school priorities when developing the School Development Plan and LA support. For example, the data in Bracknell Forest reflects national data with regard to the achievement of boys which is below that of girls at every key stage. The equalities report shows variation by ethnic group, again this is a factor which will inform school improvement planning.

5.22 With regard to schools which have been judged to *Require Improvement (RI)* these receive

- Additional adviser time per term to support on meeting identified priorities.
- Support for the Governors to develop their capacity to hold school leadership to account and prepare for Ofsted.
- For RI schools identified as higher risk,
 - an independently chaired Standards Monitoring Board is established, a formal mechanism which provides both support and challenge on a half-termly basis. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors present evidence against identified priorities and they are held to account about their progress. This is also an opportunity to identify the impact of support and bid for any further support that will help the school
 - additional leadership capacity from a headteacher of a good or outstanding school is brokered in.

- 5.23** The two schools which have been identified as *Inadequate* by Ofsted have a bespoke package of challenge and support, which includes significant additional capacity provided by other schools, including the local teaching school, brokered by the LA. The school is held to account through a Management Intervention Board.
- 5.24** Drawing on school improvement research showing the positive impact on developing teachers and leaders effectiveness through participating in high quality, action-based research, discussions are underway with the Institute of Education, University of London on the provision of co-constructed locally based accredited learning opportunities.
- 5.25** Funding for the School Improvement offer comes from a combination of the Council funded base budget that generally funds core challenge and support activities and the grant funded Schools Budget, where budgets managed by the Council are available to support schools in or at risk of entering an Ofsted category and individual school budgets, which governing bodies can use to purchase support from the SLA or bespoke packages from the Council or from other providers, including making internal arrangements. Overall, sufficient resources exist to finance the School Improvement offer.

Conclusion

- 5.26** There are a range of developments and refinements to support and challenge schools to meet current and emerging demands. Following a period when government interest and investment has been focused on developing an alternative 'middle tier' to that provided by the Local Authority. The recent cross-party pledges have identified the importance of the role of LA School Improvement Service. The forthcoming Election will bring new policy initiatives and will provide a timely context to review the existing Bracknell Forest School Improvement Strategy and Policy for Challenge, Support and Intervention in schools.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1** None sought.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2** The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3** All work is carried out in accordance with statutory requirements and guidance on good practice.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4** The risks are managed through having an effective school improvement strategy which through a combination of support and challenge positively influences school performance. The key risks of an ineffective school improvement strategy are that:
- school performance declines adversely impacting on the life chances of children and young people;

Unrestricted

- the LA meets sufficient risk criteria to trigger an Ofsted school improvement service inspection ;
- there is reputational damage to the Council.

Background Papers

Appendix A – Tables of assessment, test and examination results.

Contact for further information

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APPENDIX A

Table 1: Percentage of children attaining expected or exceeding levels at the end of the Foundation Stage as measured by the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile in Bracknell Forest in 2014.

	All BF pupils 2013	All BF pupils 2014
LA % gap between median and bottom 20%	27%	TBC
Pupil Premium gap	26.3	21.8
% achieving a Good Level of Development	58%	63.2%
Average total EYFSP score	34.4	35.4
% achieving expected or exceeding levels in PSED	79	83
% achieving expected or exceeding levels in C&L	77	82
% achieving expected or exceeding levels in Physical D	88	89
% achieving 6+ points in Literacy	68	71
% achieving 6+ points in Mathematics	75	80
% achieving 6+ points in Knowledge of the world	83	86
% achieving 6+ points in Expressive arts and design	88	90

	BF 2013 Statistical First Release	National Statistical First Release 2013	BF 2014 Statistical First Release	National Statistical First Release 2014
Good Level of Development	58%	52%	63%	60%
Average total points for LA	34.5	32.8	35.5	33.8
Pupil Premium gap	26	19		
Inequality gap	27.3	36.6	25.1	33.9
SE ranking	4/19		12/19	
National ranking	21/154		41/154	

* The full data set is not yet available, hence the gaps.

Unrestricted

Table 2: End of Key Stage 1 results

Level 2 or above (2013 data in brackets)

Subject	Year	SE	Bracknell Forest	National
Reading	2014	91%	90% (92%)	90% (87%)
Writing	2014	87%	88% (89%)	86% (83%)
Mathematics	2014	93%	93% (91%)	92% (91%)
<i>Cohort</i>			1399	

Level 2B+ (a key indicator for future performance)

Subject	Year	SE	Bracknell Forest	National
Reading	2014	83%	84% (82%)	81% (76%)
Writing	2014	71%	71% (69%)	70% (64%)
Mathematics	2014	82%	82% (80%)	80% (76%)

Level 3

Subject	Year	SE	Bracknell Forest	National
Reading	2014	35%	35% (33%)	31% (27%)
Writing	2014	17%	18% (14%)	16% (14%)
Mathematics	2014	27%	26% (25%)	24% (22%)

Table 3: End of Key Stage 2 results

Level 4+ (2013 data in brackets)

Subject	Year	Bracknell Forest	National
Reading	2014	89% (88)	89 (86)
Writing – TA (teacher assessed)	2014	86% (83)	85 (83)
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling	2014	75%(74)	76 (74)
Mathematics	2014	85% (85)	86 (85)
Re, Wr + Ma	2014	78% (78)	79 (75)

Level 5+

Subject	Year	Bracknell Forest	National
Reading	2014	50% (48)	50 (45)
Writing – TA (teacher assessed)	2014	28% (29)	33 (30)
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling	2014	50% (47)	52 (48)
Mathematics	2014	39% (41)	42 (41)
R, W + M	2014	19% (20)	24 (21)
<i>Cohort</i>		1227	

Unrestricted

Table 4: End of Key Stage 4 results

	Year	Bracknell Forest	National
5+A*-C	2014	68 %	66%
	(2013)	(90.9%)	(83%)
5+A*-C incl. E & M	2014	56.2%	56.3%
	(2013)	(55%)	(60.6%)
	<i>Cohort</i>	<i>1082</i>	

Table 5: End of Key Stage 5 results

	Year	Bracknell Forest	National
A*-E	2014	98%	98%
	(2013)	(99%)	(98.2%)
A*-B	2014	73.8%	69%