

TO: EXECUTIVE  
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**REPORT ON EXAMINATION AND TEST PERFORMANCE IN  
BRACKNELL FOREST SCHOOLS:  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2014 – 2015**

**Director of Children, Young People and Learning**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Executive of the work of the School Improvement Service and schools' end of year results for the academic year 2014-15.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Executive **notes** school results for the academic year 2014-15 and
- 2.2 **endorses** the priorities and direction of travel for the School Improvement Service for the academic year 2015-16. All results quoted in this report and the annex A are provisional and are awaiting validation.

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To ensure the Executive are briefed on the results and priorities for the academic year 2015-16.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 None

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**National developments**

- 5.1 The pace of change in the world of education has not abated over the academic year 2014-15 with the reform programme testing school leaders' capacity to both deliver results at least in line with national benchmarks, whilst managing significant transformation programmes. There continue to be national and local concerns over the schools workforce with many schools experiencing difficulties in recruiting teaching and leadership staff.
- 5.2 A new Ofsted school inspection framework was introduced in July 2014. This was followed by a major reform programme in the Ofsted workforce and the publication of a revised framework in September 2015.
- 5.3 At the end of this academic year, secondary schools will be assessed against new national benchmarks of Progress 8 (subjects) and Achievement 8. Progress scores will be calculated by comparing their pupils' results against those of all pupils

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nationally who had similar starting points. In 2016 a school will be below the floor standard if the Progress 8 score is below -0.5.

- 5.4 Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in May 2016 will be the first to be assessed against a new national curriculum introduced in 2014. Test outcomes will no longer be reported using levels, but scaled scores will be used instead, with schools being held to account for the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of KS2 and whether they make sufficient progress. A school will fall below the floor standard in 2016 where fewer than 65% of pupils achieve the expected standard and pupils do not make sufficient progress.

### **Local developments**

- 5.5 In order to better challenge and support schools locally, the school improvement policy and workforce have been reviewed, data capacity commissioned and communication systems and professional development opportunities improved.
- 5.6 A rolling programme of reviews are undertaken with a cross section of primary schools to provide an independent view of the schools' own self evaluation and planning against the four areas that Ofsted inspections focus on which are Effectiveness of leadership and management, Quality of teaching, learning and assessment, Personal development, behaviour and welfare and Outcomes for pupils.
- 5.7 School improvement monitoring identified a number of schools which were previously judged as Good in inspection by Ofsted as having declining standards and officers have been working with the leadership teams and governors to improve practice in three schools under this category.
- 5.8 Primary phase and the special school were prioritised for school improvement challenge and support in 2014-15. Securing sufficient staff capacity has been difficult, but the most recent recruitment drive was successful with high quality appointments made.
- 5.9 In response to the increasing scrutiny of the work of Governing Bodies by Ofsted the work of the Governor Services team has become more integral to the school improvement strategy and strengthened through additional management capacity and specialist support. The benefits of external reviews of Governing Bodies are promoted as a mechanism for quality assurance, providing an independent baseline measure and priorities for improvement. The professional development programme has been aligned to deliver training and strengthen capacity in key areas of concern using high quality trainers and in addition Governing Bodies have benefited from bespoke training on their own schools' data and circumstances by their School Improvement Adviser.
- 5.10 Equipping governors with the knowledge, skills and confidence to undertake the critical role of holding the school leadership team to account over the standards and progress achieved by pupils will continue into 2015-16.
- 5.11 Over 2014-15 eight schools were inspected by Ofsted. Four schools improved their Ofsted judgement with Sandy Lane moving from Inadequate to Requires Improvement and Wildmoor Heath, St Michael's Sandhurst and The Pines moving from Requires Improvement to Good. College Hall retained its previous judgement of Good and Crown Wood retained its previous overall judgement of Requires Improvement but with a significant number of improvements noted in the report.

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- 5.12 Winkfield St Mary moved from a Good judgement to Requires Improvement and Jennetts Park from Requires Improvement to Inadequate (Special Measures). Robust measures have been taken to both improve the LA intelligence gathering and assessment of schools and to support these schools to improve.
- 5.13 We begin the academic year with a quarter of all headteachers new in post, with particular churn having been experienced in the primary phase where one third of the schools had a headteacher vacancy. Recruitment has been successful in all but two schools where interim arrangements are in place. Officers from the School Improvement and HR teams supported and coached Governing Bodies at every stage of recruitment. This strategy was successful with strong appointments made from both inside and outside the borough. A comprehensive induction and support programme is in place for the new headteachers.

### **School results (see Annex A)**

- 5.14 Pupils outcomes are relatively positive for the academic year 2014-15, with some improvement in most areas, significant improvement in EYFS and A\*-B grades at A-level above the national average. There has been increasing success in closing the gap in achievement for pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding with Bracknell Forest moving closer to the national average; however this remains a key focus.
- 5.15 In the Early Years Foundation Stage 73% of pupils achieved a '*good level of development*', well above the national average.
- 5.16 At Key Stage 1, results have remained steady with a notable improvement in maths at Level 3, reflecting the outcomes of LA investment in this subject area. There was no significant progress in closing the gap for children accessing Pupil Premium funding and this is a cause for concern. Therefore it will be a key focus for the next year, reflected in the reviewed of the LA Statement of Intent on Pupil Premium.
- 5.17 At Key Stage 2, there were improvements in outcomes, however these were exceeded by improvements nationally with Bracknell Forest now 1% below the national average.
- 5.18 Outcomes for pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding showed improvement with the gap in achievement in relation to all pupils closing by 4.4%.
- 5.19 Two schools were below floor standard of 65% of pupils achieving L4+ in Reading, Writing and Maths combined. Both schools are being closely monitored and provided with extensive targeted support.
- 5.20 Schools below or just above the floor standard last year were a focus over 2014-15 and there has been significant improvement as shown by the percentage of pupils achieving L4 or above for reading, writing and maths combined. Three of these schools have new headteachers in post.
- 5.21 At GCSE the results overall showed some improvement from the last year. This is detailed in Annex A.
- 5.22 The performance of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding showed improvement.
- 5.23 At A-level (and equivalent) pass rate remains constant, with 98.8% of entries resulting in a pass grade. The percentage of students achieving A\*-B has fallen, reflecting the national trend; however Bracknell Forest is still 7.6% ahead of the national average.

## Reflections

- 5.24 The focus on primary maths, SEN support and LA brokering school to school support have all shown positive impact in the primary phase over 2014-15. Lack of appropriate school improvement capacity has been a concern; there is clear evidence of impact in the schools where officers have prioritised working, however deployment of staff has had to be targeted at priority areas which has meant emerging concerns are not identified or addressed quickly enough.
- 5.25 Secondary phase schools have had no access to LA school improvement adviser support, although two have had a challenge and support package. As a group the primary phase schools were prioritised last year, but this will need to be addressed if Bracknell Forest is to maintain its current position as broadly in-line with national averages.
- 5.26 The performance of Pupil Premium funded pupils continues as a concern, although there have been some inroads to reducing the gap in their achievement. The GCSE data shows that more vulnerable pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding are meeting the national benchmark of 5 A\*-C including English and maths, having re-sat the examination (best entry results). This is of benefit to them as individuals, however the schools and LA will be judged by the published figures (first entry) which show a much more modest impact on the gap and this is a risk to both individual schools when inspected as well as the LA. Pupil Premium will continue to be a priority area, and targeted schools will be supported to set individual pupils targets for improvement with bespoke strategies put in place. Discussions are at an early stage for a possible partnership with another LA.
- 5.27 A list of priorities is included in Annex A. Schools and the LA will be analysing results in greater depth and looking at the performance of groups of pupils as well as the progress children make across each key stage. This will include a more detailed analysis of the impact of the Pupil Premium on the progress and attainment of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and for Children Looked After. Later in the year, RAISEonline will provide schools with a detailed analysis of this year's results in national curriculum assessments, tests and public examinations.

## 6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

### Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant issues are addressed within the main body of the report.

### Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from this report on actual achievement in 2014-15.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.3 There is a reputational risk to the Council if standards decline.

## Background Papers

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Annex A: Summary of Examination and Test Performance in Bracknell Forest Schools:  
Academic Year 2014 – 2015

Contact for further information

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## ANNEX A

### SUMMARY OF EXAMINATION AND TEST PERFORMANCE IN BRACKNELL FOREST SCHOOLS: ACADEMIC YEAR 2014 – 2015

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the national test and examination results achieved by Bracknell Forest pupils at the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage 1 (KS1), Key Stage 2 (KS2), GCSE and equivalent (GCSE) and A-Level. Data is provisional at this point and comparative national data is included where it is available.
- 1.2 All Bracknell Forest schools completed the statutory assessments at the end of each Key Stage. The Local Authority (LA) completed a statutory audit of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and of KS1 assessments and reported the results to the Department for Education (DfE). Very few levels awarded by teachers were changed as part of the moderation procedures, indicating good levels of teacher expertise in the assessment of pupils.
- 1.3 The LA has a duty to monitor security arrangements at KS 2 and a number of schools were visited during the test period, without prior notice, to observe the tests taking place and the storage of completed and unopened test papers. All schools met the statutory requirements and conformed to published procedures. The LA assisted schools in the submission of data to the DfE with all statutory returns made in good time.
- 1.4 Outcomes are relatively positive for the academic year 2014-15, with modest improvements in most areas, significant improvement in EYFS and A\*-B grades at A-level well above the national average. There has been increasing success in closing the gap in achievement for pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding with Bracknell Forest moving closer to the national average; however this remains a key focus for next year.

#### 2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

##### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

- 2.1 EYFS data is obtained through teacher assessment. There were 1506 children in the cohort. The LA average for a percentage of pupils achieving the national benchmark of a '*good level of development*' at the end of the EYFS, (pupils achieving or exceeding the expected levels in the prime areas of learning, plus literacy and mathematics) is 73% (National Average, NA, is likely to be in the region of 66%). This is an increase of 10% from 63% in 2014, when the national average was 60%.

**Table 1: EYFS**

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
GLD	58%	63%	73%
Average total points	34.5	35.5	35.8
Pupil Premium gap	- 26%	- 24%	- 20%
Inequality gap	- 27.3%	- 25.1%	Data not available
Gender gap	-21%	-16%	-16%

- 2.2 Data shows that the gender gap has stayed the same as last year and remains in line with the national figure. The gap between the attainment of children who receive Pupil Premium and children who do not receive this additional funding has closed by 4% this year to 20% and is now only 1% above the national figure.
- 2.3 Year 1 phonics improved with 79% of pupils reaching the required level (75% in 2014, 69% in 2013) with the NA likely to be in the region of 77%. Year 2 phonics remained steady at 70%, the NA.

**Key Stage 1**

- 2.4 Bracknell Forest was significantly above the NA in 2014 and there were again some improvements in 2015. There was good improvement in maths at L3, however, performance dipped in reading at L2b+.

**Table 2: Key Stage 1 Achievement**

	<b>Key Stage 1 L2+</b>			<b>Key Stage 1 L2b+</b>			<b>Key Stage 1 L3</b>		
	<b>Rd</b>	<b>Wr</b>	<b>Ma</b>	<b>Rd</b>	<b>Wr</b>	<b>Ma</b>	<b>Rd</b>	<b>Wr</b>	<b>Ma</b>
<b>2014</b>	90	88	93	84	71	82	35	18	26
<b>2015</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Difference</b>	+2	=	+1	-3	=	+2	+1	=	+5
<b>NA 2015</b>	90	88	93	82	72	82	32	18	26

- 2.5 The performance of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding showed some improvement particularly in maths, however the target was not achieved and the pace of improvement will need to be accelerated.

**Table 3: Key Stage 1 Performance of PP pupils**

	<b>Narrowed by</b>	<b>Gap</b>
KS1 Reading L2+	0.5%	-12.7%
KS1 Writing L2+	1.0%	-13.9%
KS1 Maths L2+	1.5%	-9.7%

- 2.6 **Key Stage 2 1227 pupils took the tests and** the results show a continuing improvement trend with a 2% increase in the pupils achieving Level 4+ in the individual tests on reading, writing and maths. The percentage of pupils achieving the national benchmark of L4+ in the three areas combined however improved by 1%, to 79%, just below the new national average of 80%. There were improvements at L4b+ and good improvements in writing at L5+. 20% of pupils achieved L5, compared with 22% nationally, but given the local demographic performance should be higher.

**Table 4: Key stage 2 achievement**

	Key Stage 2 L4+					Key Stage 2 L4b+				Key Stage 2 L5+				
	Rd	Wr	Ma	GPS	R/W/M	Rd	Ma	GPS	R/W/M	Rd	Wr	Ma	GPS	R/W/M
<b>2014</b>	89	86	85	75	78	79	77	67	67	50	26	39	50	19
<b>2015</b>	91	88	87	77	79	82	75	70	67	48	31	38	51	20
<b>NA 2015</b>	89	87	87	80	80	80	77	73	69	48	36	42	56	24
<b>Difference:</b>														
	+2	+2	+2	+2	+1	+3	-2	+3	=	-2	+5	-1	+1	+1

- 2.7 The performance of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding (226 pupils) at KS2 showed improvement, again particularly in maths. For reading, writing and maths combined the gap last year was -26.2% and this has reduced to -21.8% in 2015. We have not met our own ambitious target; however the evidence shows a significant shift in the right direction. Of seven LAC pupils, four achieved L4, with none achieving L5.

**Table 5: Key stage 2 Performance of PP pupils**

	Narrowed by	Gap
KS2 Reading L4+	4.2%	-11.1%
KS2 Writing L4+	3.5%	-15.2%
KS2 Maths L4+	4.4%	-11.8%
GPS	-0.7%	-22.6%
Combined R,W,M L4+	4.4% (Target 6%)	-21.8%

- 2.8 Overall performance against the national floor standard (benchmark) of 65% of pupils achieving L4 or above in reading, writing and maths combined and the percentage of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and maths is at least in line with the national median. Two schools were below floor standard.
- 2.9 **Key Stage 4** 1112 pupils took GCSE or equivalent examinations this year. Results in Table 6 show that the percentage of young people obtaining 5 or more GCSE grades A\* - C including English and mathematics was 58.9% on first entry rising to 63% for best entry results (includes results for pupils retaking exams). The percentage of young people achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A\* - C is 71.22%.

**Table 6: End of Key Stage 4 results, figures in brackets are the national results**

	2015	2014	2013
5+A*-C incl. E&M first entry results (used in national comparisons)	58.9%	57% (53.4%)	61.4% (60.6%)
5+A*-C incl. E&M best entry results	63%		
5+A*-C	71.22%	68% (63.8%)	90.9% (83%)

- 2.10 The performance of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding (208 pupils) at KS4 showed improvement. For the percentage of young people obtaining 5 or more GCSE grades A\* - C including English and mathematics, best entry, the gap last year was -34%, and has reduced to -27.2% in 2015. We have not met our target of -22%, but this narrowing of 6.8% is a significant improvement. In published figures however, which are for first entry, the gap has narrowed by 3.3%.
- 2.11 There were 12 students in the cohort who were in care and for whom results were recorded. 6 had full statements of special educational needs (SEN) and 6 attended a



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Bracknell Forest setting. 33.3% of children in care achieved at least 5 A\* - C (including English and maths) which represents our best ever results. Continued success of 100% of the cohort securing at least 1 A\* - G grade was also noted. A number of pupils had taken on entry level and college based courses and qualifications which have enabled them to seek an alternative way onto further education. 50% of LAC that were in a mainstream setting made the expected level of progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 and 25% made more than the expected level of progress for the same phase. Officers are currently considering how the learning from form the approaches used to raise the achievement of LAC can be applied more widely to all pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.

**Table 7: Key stage 4 Performance of PP pupils**

	2015			2014			Narrowed by
	PP	Non-PP	Gap	PP	Non-PP	Gap	
5+A*-C incl. E&M first entry results	<b>35.6%</b>	<b>64.3%</b>	<b>-28.7%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>-32%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
5+A*-C incl. E&M best entry results	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>68.5%</b>	<b>-27.2%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>-34%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>

- 2.12 **Post-16: 417 students took A-level examinations.** The A\* - E pass rate at A Level remains constant, with 98.8% of entries resulting in a pass grade, slightly above the national pass rate. The percentage of students achieving A\*-B has fallen significantly, reflecting the national trend; however Bracknell Forest is 7.6% ahead of the national average.

**Table 8: A-level and equivalent results**

	2015	2014	2013
A*-E	<b>98.8% (98.1%)</b>	<b>98% (98%)</b>	<b>99% (98%)</b>
A* - B	<b>60.41% (52.8 %)</b>	<b>73.8% (69%)</b>	

### 2.13 Watchstead update

The Watchstead performance tables provide information on the outcomes of Ofsted inspections nationally. Schools converting to academy status are not included until their first inspection, this means a number of schools which became forced academies as a consequence of being judged Inadequate at inspection are excluded from the figures for approximately two years. Bracknell Forest has a significant proportion of one form entry schools and again this distorts the figures when considering the percentage of pupils attending Good and Outstanding primary schools. Despite these limitations, Watchstead still provides useful benchmarking information.

**Table 9 Watchsted snapshot October 2015**

	%age Good and Outstanding schools	BF rank	%age of pupils attending Good and Outstanding schools	BF rank
Primary	70%	158/162	63.2%	161/162
Secondary	66.7%	118/162	73.5%	103/162

### **3 PRIORITIES**

3.1 The focus on primary maths, SEN support and writing LA brokering school to school have shown positive impact over 2014-15. Schools receiving intensive support from the LA have improved and the strategy of the LA brokering school to school support has also proved effective.

3.2 For 2015-16 the priorities are

- Preparing primary schools for the benchmark of L4b+ in RWM
- Increasing % pupils achieving L5
- Maths and SEN
- Closing the gap, particular focus at KS 1 and KS4
- Preparing for Achievement and Progress 8
- Examinations requirements, grade boundaries, increased literacy and memory demands
- Better alignment of SI and targeted services
- Establishing a culture of higher aspirations and expectations

Contact for further information

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