

**Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday, 25 January 2018**

REPORT TITLE:	Summary of Standards, Provisional Outcomes for Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5
REPORT OF:	Director for Children's Services

REPORT SUMMARY

The GCSE and GCE Standards 2017 report provides an executive summary followed by a more in depth analysis for the pupil outcomes at the age of 16 (GCSEs) and the age of 18 (GCEs).

GCSEs

There have been significant changes to the content and grading system of GCSEs. The changes have been designed to make subject content and exams more challenging. Most exams will be taken at the end of the two-year course rather than on completion of modules. In 2017 grading of outcomes in English and mathematics moved to a 9-1 scale, with grade nine being roughly equivalent to a top A* grade and a grade four equivalent to a low to mid grade C. Comparisons have been made with the results nationally wherever possible. However many of the national results have not been published yet. When the statistical first releases are published the report will be amended.

The percentage of Wirral pupils achieving a grade 4 or above in English (77.1%) or mathematics (71.7%) was above the national average. Outcomes in English were higher than in mathematics. The percentage of Wirral pupils attaining a Grade 4+ in English and Mathematics was above the national average by 7.9%.

The percentage of Wirral pupils attaining a grade 5 or higher in English was significantly above the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining a level 5 or higher in mathematics was just above the national average. Overall the percentage of Wirral pupils attaining a grade 5 or higher in English and mathematics is higher than the national average by 4.6%.

GCEs

GCE A levels have been reformed. The main features of these new qualifications are that assessment will be mainly by exam, with other types of assessment used only where they are needed to test essential skills. A levels are assessed at the end of the two year course. The courses are no longer divided into modules and there are no external examinations in January. AS and A levels have been decoupled. This means that AS results will no longer count towards an A level, in the way they have done previously.

To date there is no comparative data with statistical neighbours for the provisional 2017 results. Initial results show that the average points per A level entry has increased. The average points per academic entry, applied general entry and technical level entry have increased. The average point score for a student's best 3 A levels has decreased slightly though the average grade remains at B-.

More Wirral students achieved two A levels than the national average. Both boys and girls achieved better than the national average.

The percentage of students achieving 3A*- A was significantly higher than the national average. The percentage of Wirral girls achieving three A*-A was higher than the national average whereas the percentage of Wirral boys was lower than the national average.

This report provides a detailed analysis of pupil outcomes which can be used to measure the impact of work undertaken in the following pledges:

1. Children are ready for school

The Wirral plan indicator scrutinises the percentage of children attaining a good level of development. A supporting measure is the narrowing of the gap between the attainment of children in receipt of free schools meals and those children who are not. Another supporting measure looks at the percentage of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development

2. Young people are ready for work and adulthood

The supporting measures in this pledge are: - to reduce the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2; to narrow the gap in progress between pupils with a SEN statement/EHCP and their peers at the end of Key Stage 2 and to increase the percentage of children looked after who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

3. Vulnerable children reach their full potential

One of the supporting measures in this pledge is the same as the one in Children are ready for school pledge e.g. at the end of the Foundation Stage the percentage of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development increases.

This report provides the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee with a very detailed analysis of outcomes for all pupil groups at the end of Key Stage 4 in the secondary phase of education.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough and is therefore a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to approve the GCSE & GCE Standards 2017 report which is appended to this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

The Key Stage 4 Standards 2017 report has been produced to evaluate some of the Wirral Plan pledges, in particular Children are Ready for School; Young People are Ready for Work and Adulthood and Vulnerable Children Reach their Full Potential. The report will be shared with headteachers and used as an essential tool to challenge underperformance as well as celebrate successes/improvements in Wirral schools.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

No other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The pupil outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4 are scrutinised by school improvement officers when the data is initially received in August and September each year. At this point the data is provisional with national averages confirmed. The provisional data is used to determine where there have been improvements and where standards have declined. The data is analysed at a local authority level, then further scrutiny takes place using pupil characteristics such as gender, disadvantage, SEN, children looked after (as and when the data becomes available) to determine underachievement and key areas for development.

Further scrutiny has taken place this year to benchmark attainment (Attainment 8) and progress (Progress 8) with similar schools nationally. For example, the Department for Education published recently the national averages for Attainment 8 and Progress 8 measures for selective schools and non-selective schools in selective areas. These comparisons are detailed in the report.

A more detailed scrutiny is undertaken by each of the four localities to determine which schools have underperformed in particular subjects. Conversely school faculties/departments are identified where performance is good so that best practice can be shared.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

The Key Stage 4 Standards 2017 report will be a key document used to implement the Wirral Schools strategy. The necessary challenge to underperforming schools will be co-ordinated in partnership by existing staff resource. However the ESG funding of this staff resource ceases in March 2018.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

The Corporate Risk Register will be refreshed in line with the new Wirral Plan developments to ensure that any risks to delivery are understood and mitigating actions are put in place as appropriate.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

The report has been shared with all secondary headteachers in November 2017. The School to School Partnership Board will hold the locality boards to account for any work commissioned to improve standards in schools identified as underperforming. The locality boards will scrutinise the data and determine key areas for development. Improvement work will be commissioned and evaluated on a regular basis.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

(a) Yes and impact review can be found via the following link:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017-1>

REPORT AUTHOR: Sue Talbot
(Lead School Commissioner)
telephone: (0151 666 4335)
email: suetalbot@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES Key Stage 4 Standards 2017 Report
A Level Outcomes 2017 Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date