

Report to: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting: 25 September 2017
By: Director of Children's Services
Title: Implementation of the new assessment frameworks and accountability measures at key stages 1, 2 and 4
Purpose: To provide a briefing to elected members of the emerging impact of recent changes to assessment frameworks and accountability measures in primary and secondary schools

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to;

- 1) **Note the 2017 outcomes for Key Stage 1 and 2, and comment on the actions being taken at Key Stage 2.**
 - 2) **Review outcomes at Key Stage 4 at a future meeting once national data is available.**
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1 Background

1.1 At its meeting on 26 June 2016 the Committee considered a report on the Scrutiny Review of Key Stage 1 Educational Attainment. The Review Board's report made it clear at that time that, a detailed review of attainment within Key Stage 1 (KS1) was not practical because of recent changes to the National Curriculum and the introduction of a new assessment framework that replaced national curriculum levels with a process of 'Assessment Without Levels' (AWL). As a result the Review Board agreed to focus its attention on Phonics testing (as for this particular area of assessment it remained possible to compare educational attainment data year on year). However, given the wide-ranging nature of the changes AWL would be introducing the Committee resolved to add to its Scrutiny Work Programme monitoring of the implementation of the AWL assessment framework which would include bringing a report to the Committee by September 2017.

1.2 A report on AWL was also received by the Education Performance Panel (EPP) at its meeting in November 2016. AWL is a fundamental change of assessment approach, which has been implemented across key stages 1 and 2 (KS1 and 2). Previously teachers assessed against a series of levels, each with detailed descriptors and progress was tracked against these, often in very detailed steps. The new system provides descriptors of what pupils need to achieve by the end of KS1 and the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2) against two standards: Expected Standard (EXS)¹ and Greater Depth Standard (GDS)², but it is up to individual schools to decide how to assess and measure attainment and progress as pupils move towards the end of each key stage.

Key information discussed at the EPP meeting included:

- 2016 attainment outcomes at KS's 1 and 2 could not be compared to outcomes in 2015, as test results from previous years came under a different system of assessment.
- In 2016, at KS1, the vast majority of indicators were above national outcomes with the exception of mathematics.
- At KS2, in relation to national outcomes, reading outcomes were stronger across all measures but other measures for writing and maths were weaker at the expected standard.
- The department advised the panel on the work being done to improve outcomes. This included:
 - a thorough data analysis of the outcomes to identify areas for improvement;

¹ The Expected Standard (EXS) is the age related expectation.

² The Greater Depth Standard (GDS) is a much more challenging standard for the minority of pupils who will move beyond age related expectations.

- a targeted programme of training for teachers;
- development of lead teachers for school to school support;
- continuation of the development of Education Improvement Partnership (EIP) moderation managers;

1.3 The purpose of this report is to update members on how schools are managing the implementation of the new arrangements and the emerging impact on performance. The report also sets out the challenges and opportunities presented and how the Local Authority will continue to monitor standards.

2 How are schools coping with the new arrangements?

2.1 Analysis of outcomes in 2017 against schools' predictions shows that there is a mixed picture in terms of school confidence in delivering the more demanding curriculum and the accuracy of their in-school assessment. Some schools have been slower to respond effectively to the changes than others.

2.2 This analysis also shows that there does not appear to be a strong relationship between overall school effectiveness and accuracy of assessment. The schools that made accurate predictions about pupil performance were generally characterised as good or outstanding. However, there are also good schools that did not accurately predict their 2017 outcomes.

3 Has there been / is there an impact upon performance?

3.1 Provisional 2017 outcomes are summarised in the attached document at Appendix 1.

3.2 Key Stage 1:

- East Sussex outcomes at KS1 in relation to national average are strong.
- East Sussex outcomes at the Expected Standard (EXS) in reading, writing and mathematics have remained above national outcomes.
- East Sussex outcomes at the Greater Depth Standard (GDS) in reading and writing have remained above national outcomes.
- East Sussex outcomes at the Greater Depth Standard (GDS) in mathematics have seen a bigger improvement than national and are now in line with national outcomes.

3.3 Key Stage 2:

- East Sussex outcomes for every measure have improved, compared to 2016.
- However, in every case the national rate of improvement was greater than that seen in East Sussex. Therefore outcomes in East Sussex are falling behind the rest of the country

3.4 Key Stage 4: at this time it is not possible to tell how we have done at Key Stage 4 (KS4) this year because national data to enable comparisons to be made will not be available until October, after which an assessment of East Sussex performance will be made.

4 What are the challenges and opportunities?

4.1 Evidence to date would indicate that some primary schools have found it challenging to implement accurate assessment systems during this period of change. It is too early to assess the impact for secondary schools although it is likely that their experience will be similar. This means that the LA faces difficulty in ensuring that the data submitted by schools is reliable. It remains a priority for the service to work with schools in order to obtain an accurate in-year picture of performance and therefore targeting resources effectively.

4.2 There are opportunities for the LA to build on the good practice that exists within East Sussex schools in order to support schools to make accurate assessments. The service no longer directly delivers school improvement and will work with schools to enable them to build capacity and support each other's improvement in the following ways:

- The newly formed Primary Consultant Headteachers team will facilitate a project across primary schools to identify best practice in assessment and curriculum and support schools to ensure robust practice is in place.
- The LA will support primary schools to pilot some early pre-moderation where there are concerns about the accuracy of assessment so that there is time for additional support and intervention to impact on the outcomes for 2018.

- The LA will collate and disseminate further information from secondary schools about how they have implemented the changes to KS4 assessment, in order to understand better where the challenges are and enable schools to work together to address these.
- EIPs and Teaching Schools will further develop the role of lead moderators and assessment practice in primary schools to facilitate school to school support.

5 How will the Department monitor standards?

5.1 At KS's 1 and 2 we already have national comparators that can be used to judge how East Sussex has performed in comparison with the rest of the country. This information is summarised in section 3 above. We will also analyse East Sussex performance against our statistical neighbours when these reports are made available by the Department for Education. This analysis will enable us to target resource in 2017/18 and the service will continue to work with schools, as set out above, to improve the accuracy of in-year data returns.

5.2 The changes to English and Mathematics GCSEs this year have been so significant that we do not have any benchmarks for comparison at KS4 until we see provisional national averages. These are due in mid-October 2017 and a full analysis will be undertaken at this time. Prior to this, the service will work with schools to gather more information about their 2017 outcomes and the strategies that have proved successful; these will be shared across all schools in order to allow schools to learn from each other and develop effective practice that can support standards to rise in the county.

6. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

6.1 It is not possible to judge the impact upon standards in terms of the implementation of new assessment frameworks and accountability measures. The picture of performance in 2017 is still emerging and we are reliant on national data to make a full assessment.

6.2 It is clear that standards at KS2 are in need of improvement and that further work needs to be done by schools to improve outcomes. The service will support schools to work together in order to learn from best practice to understand the new assessment frameworks and improve outcomes at all key stages.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: 2017 provisional outcomes summary

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Link to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Report, 27 June 2016: [Scrutiny Review of Key Stage 1 Educational Attainment](#)

Link to the Education Performance Panel Report, 24 November 2016: [The impact of assessment without levels on standards in primary schools in East Sussex in 2016](#)