

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
SCHOOLS FORUM**
27 February 2019

AGENDA ITEM

2

STANDARDS AND QUALITY IN HERTFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Author: Simon Newland, Operations Director, Education
Andrew de Csilléry, Herts for Learning

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND LOCALISM CABINET PANEL THURSDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 10:00AM

Agenda Item No.

STANDARDS AND QUALITY IN HERTFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Author: Simon Newland, Operations Director, Education

Executive Member: Terry Douris – Education, Libraries & Localism

1. Purpose of report

To provide Members with an overview of standards and quality in Hertfordshire schools, Children's Centres and Early Years providers for the academic year September 2017 to July 2018. The report presents evidence from inspections, test and examination results and other assessments.

2. Summary

- 2.1 In the academic year 2017/18, Hertfordshire results indicate sustained high standards across all key stages in comparison with national and statistical neighbour outcomes. Performance for the key attainment indicators remains in the top quintile for all local authorities in England for all secondary school indicators except one and in the second quintile for Key Stage 1 and 2 indicators.
- 2.2 For some vulnerable groups, the gap between their achievement and that of all children is closing but for many it remains very wide, particularly for disadvantaged children, those on free school meals (FSM) and Children Looked After (CLA). In 2018, the attainment of disadvantaged groups in Hertfordshire is above the attainment of similar groups nationally at Key stage 4. In Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the attainment of disadvantaged groups in Hertfordshire in 2018 is below the attainment of similar groups nationally. In most cases (except Key Stage 4) the gap between these groups and those deemed not to be disadvantaged has widened in Hertfordshire. Nationally, the gap between disadvantaged groups and those deemed not to be disadvantaged has widened at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 4 and narrowed at Key Stage 2.
- 2.3 At the end of the academic year 2017/18, a higher percentage of Hertfordshire schools were judged good and outstanding in their Ofsted inspections than the national figure. The percentage of schools judged outstanding, was also higher than the national proportion. The percentage of Hertfordshire schools in an Ofsted inadequate category was lower than the national figure.

3. Recommendation

3.1 The Panel is invited to note and comment upon the report.

4. Background

4.1 The creation of Herts for Learning Ltd in September 2013 put in place robust arrangements to ensure that the County Council's statutory duties for school improvement were effectively fulfilled, whilst retaining provision for non-statutory support to schools and settings through a traded offer.

4.2 As Herts for Learning Ltd is owned by Hertfordshire schools and the Local Authority, the company embodies a shared moral purpose and passion for continued improvement in outcomes for all Hertfordshire children and young people.

4.3 In 2013, Ofsted introduced an inspection framework for local authorities to evaluate their arrangements for fulfilling their statutory duties to promote high standards in schools and other providers so that children and young people achieve well and fulfil their potential (as defined by section 13A of the Education Act 1996). This includes support for schools causing concern as set out in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This framework was revised in September 2015, however changes made were minimal.

4.4 Not all local authorities will be inspected to a regular cycle or interval. Where inspections of schools or other providers raise concerns about the effectiveness of a local authority's education functions or where Ofsted become aware of other concerns, an inspection may be carried out. Ofsted has also stated that they may inspect local authorities to gather evidence of good practice.

4.5 A local authority may be inspected where one or more of the following apply:

- where the proportion of children who attend a good or outstanding school is lower than that found nationally,
- where there is a higher than average number of schools in an Ofsted formal category of concern and/or there are indicators that these schools are not improving rapidly enough,
- where there is a higher than average proportion of schools that have not been judged to be good by Ofsted,
- where attainment levels across the local authority are lower than that found nationally and/or where the trend of improvement is weak,
- where rates of progress, relative to starting points, are lower than that found nationally and/or where the trend of improvement is weak,
- where pupils eligible for the pupil premium achieve less well than pupils not eligible for the pupil premium nationally,
- where qualifying complaints to Ofsted about schools in a local authority are a matter of concern,

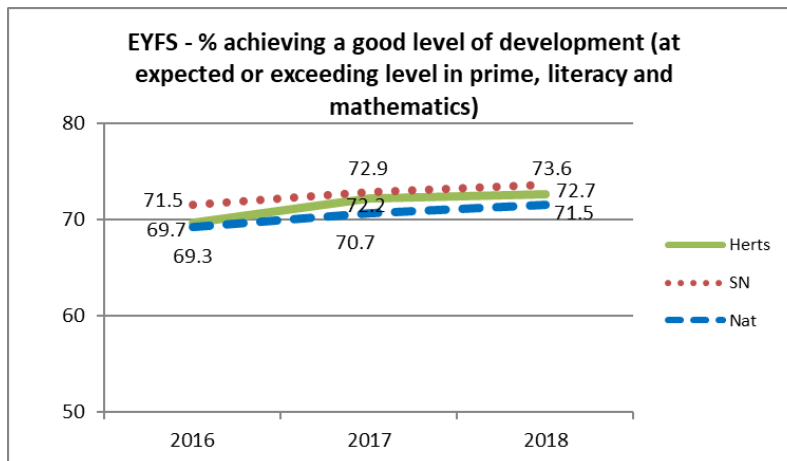
- where the Secretary of State requires an inspection of local authority school improvement functions.
- 4.6 This report includes quintile positions which compare Hertfordshire outcome data to all other local authorities (between 148 to 151 in total, depending on key stage, as some local authorities do not have nursery schools or education support centres). Schools are now measured in this way on Ofsted's school data dashboard giving schools, governors and the public a clear indication of benchmarked performance.
- 4.7 Hertfordshire's performance for many indicators places the authority in the 1st and 2nd quintiles (the top 20% or 40% of all local authorities). The 3rd quintile shows performance at approximately the same as the national average. Those areas where performance is currently in the 4th or 5th quintile are being addressed in Hertfordshire as improvement priorities by Herts for Learning Ltd. For Children Looked After, this is in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Virtual School for Children Looked After.
- 4.8 With effect from June 2018 Ofsted are using a new methodology – if there is a direct 1:1 link between a school with no current judgement and a predecessor school then the last judgement of the predecessor school is now 'carried over' to the new school. The majority of the schools involved are those where the predecessor school was in a category, so the effect has been to lower the percentage of good/outstanding schools across the board. As a result of this change June 2018 data onwards is not comparable with previous months.
- 4.9 The analysis shown in this report for Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 is based upon provisional outcomes provided by the DfE. At the time of writing the report validated data was not available.

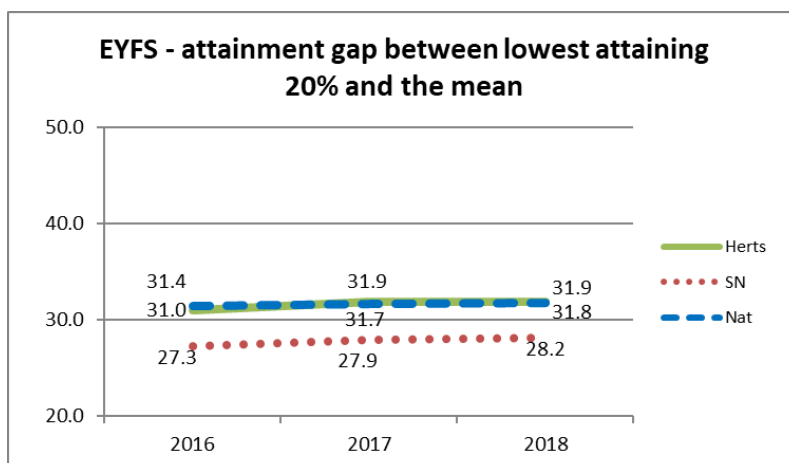
5. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- 5.1 The EYFS Profile was introduced in 2013 along with a new indicator measuring a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). The profile is carried out in the final term of the year in which a child reaches age five. The profile and revised EYFS simplified the learning and development requirements by reducing the number of early learning goals from 69 to 17 and placing a stronger emphasis on the three prime areas which are most essential for children's healthy development: communication and language; physical; and personal, social and emotional development. From 2013, children are defined as having reached a Good Level of Development at the end of the EYFS if they achieve at least the expected level in the early learning goals relating to personal, social and emotional development; physical development; communication and language and mathematics and literacy.
- 5.2 In 2018, 72.7% of children achieved a Good Level of Development, an improvement of 0.5 percentage points (ppts) from 2017 and placing Hertfordshire in the second quintile when ranked against all other local authorities. Hertfordshire is ranked fifth out of the Eastern region local authorities, behind Thurrock, Southend, Essex and Central Bedfordshire. The

attainment gap between the lowest attaining 20% of young children and the mean was 31.9%, no change from 2017 and 0.1ppts higher than the national gap.

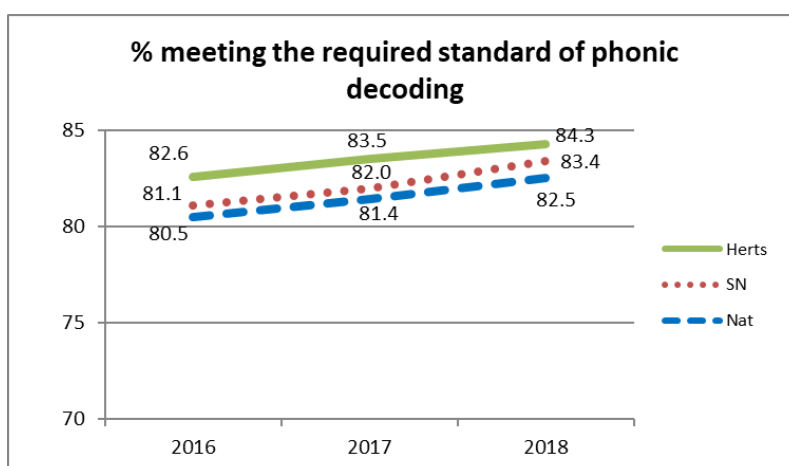
- 5.3 Scrutiny of local assessment data has informed the deployment of resources to target areas in the county where fewer children reached a good level of development in 2016 and 2017. As a result, 74% of the schools that engaged in this programme improved the proportion of children reaching a good level of development and the percentage of good and outstanding early years registered providers increased. Programmes of support and challenge will continue to be delivered to private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers offering free early education places for disadvantaged two year olds and free early education entitlement to three and four years olds. From the 1st April 2019 universal support will more widely disseminate messages and advice that has improved practice in the early years workforce. This will have continued foci on strategies to identify children at risk of not reaching expected levels of attainment at age five years old, in order to narrow the inequality gap between the lowest attaining 20% and their peers.
- 5.4 HfL Early Years team has sought to focus head teachers on monitoring the progress and attainment of children from the earliest opportunity. Initiatives that promote early reading skills, robust assessment practice and strategies for early identification and intervention for children at risk of delay have had positive impact on outcomes at the end of the EYFS. Schools with the lowest proportion of children reaching a good level of development are being closely monitored and settings with high proportions of disadvantaged and vulnerable children are offered pertinent support to improve practice and raise standards.



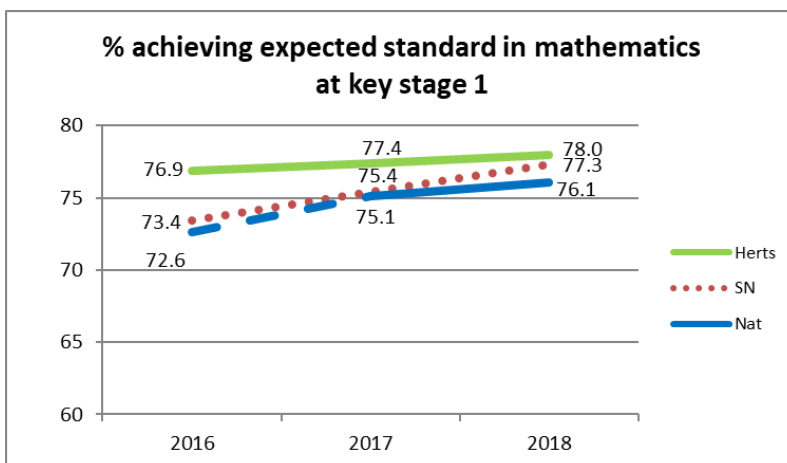
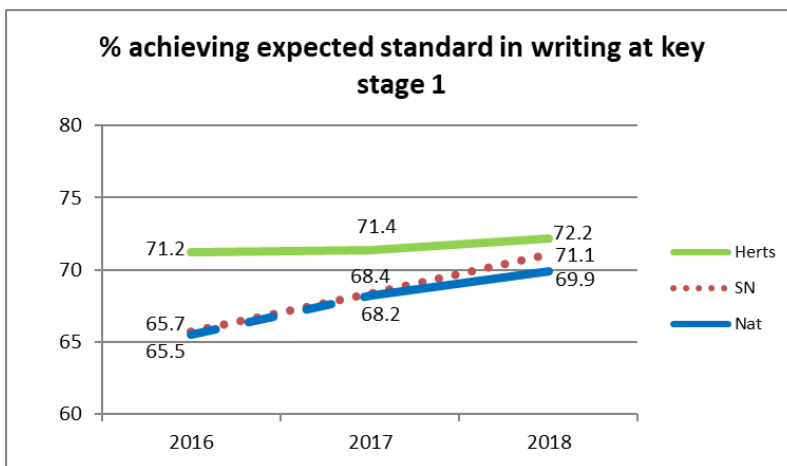
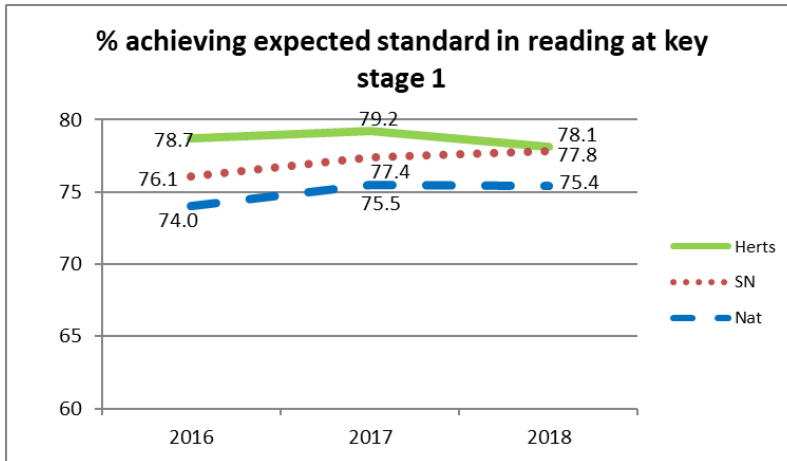


6. Phonics screening check and Key Stage 1

- 6.1 The phonics screening check was introduced in 2012. It is a statutory assessment for all children in year 1 (typically aged 6) to check whether they have reached the expected standard in phonic decoding. 84.3% of Hertfordshire year 1 pupils met the expected standard in 2018, compared with 83.5% in 2017 and 82.6% in 2016. Nationally 82.5% of year 1 pupils met the expected standard in 2018, compared with 81.4% in 2017 and 80.5% in 2016. Hertfordshire is in the second quintile for the phonics screening check. Hertfordshire is ranked first out of the Eastern region local authorities.

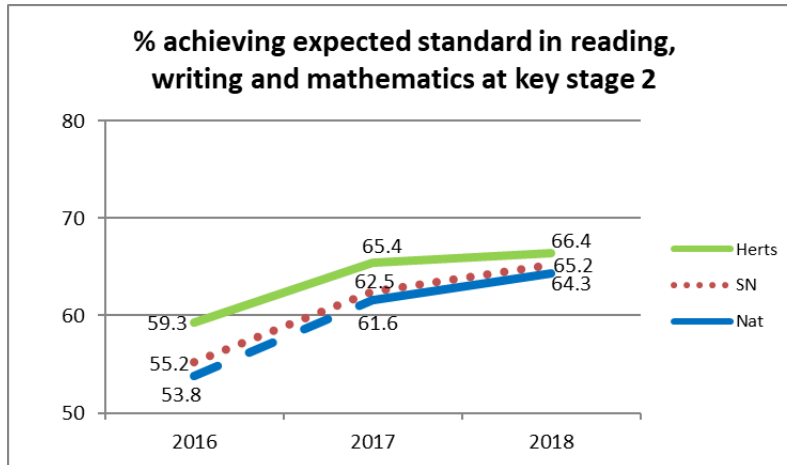


- 6.2 At key stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in Hertfordshire was above national and statistical neighbours for all three indicators: reading, writing and mathematics. Hertfordshire's performance was above national by 2.7ppts for reading, 2.3ppts for writing and 1.9ppts for mathematics. Hertfordshire's performance was above statistical neighbours by 0.3ppts for reading, 1.1ppts for writing and 0.7ppts for mathematics. Hertfordshire is in the second quintile for reading, writing and mathematics. Hertfordshire is ranked second amongst Eastern region local authorities for reading and writing attainment, behind Central Bedfordshire. Hertfordshire is ranked third amongst Eastern region local authorities for mathematics attainment, behind Central Bedfordshire and Thurrock.



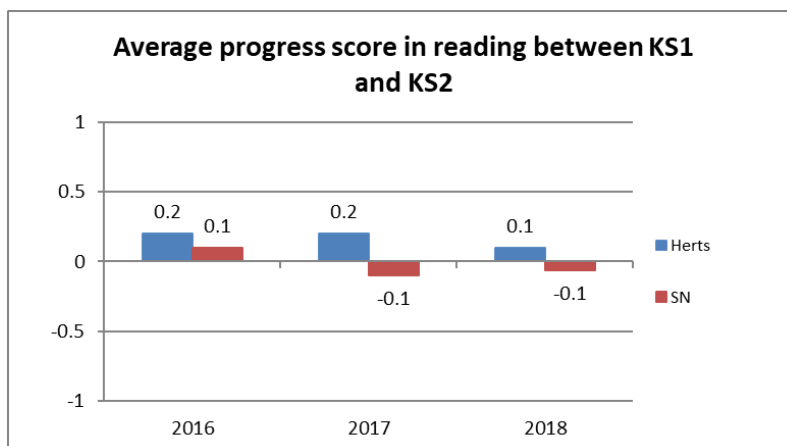
7. Key Stage 2

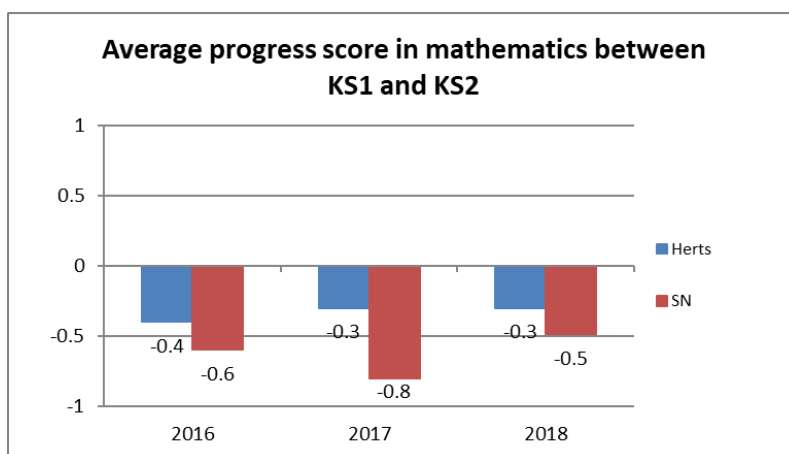
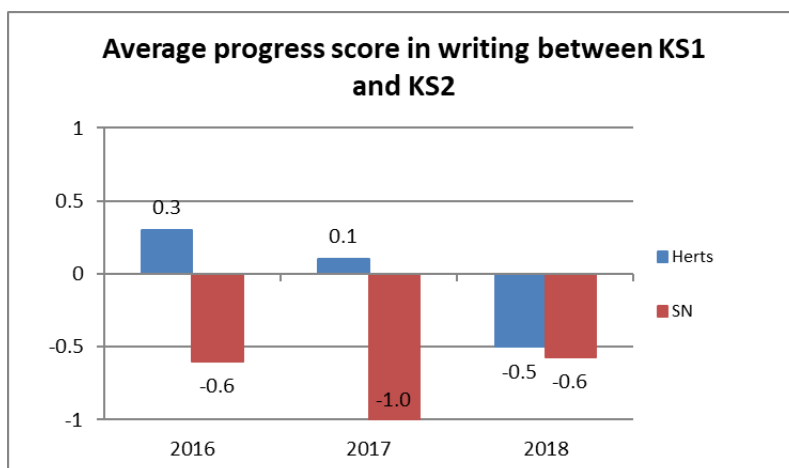
7.1 At key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in combined reading, writing and mathematics in Hertfordshire was 2.1ppts above national, placing Hertfordshire in the second quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second amongst Eastern region local authorities for this measure, behind Southend.



7.2 Average progress scores are now used to indicate whether a cohort has made more or less progress between key stages 1 and 2 than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. A positive score indicates higher progress than other pupils nationally and a negative score indicates lower progress than other pupils nationally.

7.3 In 2017 average progress in reading in Hertfordshire was higher than national whilst average progress in writing and mathematics was lower than national. This data places Hertfordshire in the 3rd quintile for reading progress, the 4th quintile for mathematics progress and the 5th quintile for writing progress. Hertfordshire is ranked second amongst Eastern region local authorities for reading progress (behind Southend), fifth for writing and mathematics progress (behind Thurrock, Southend, Essex and Luton).





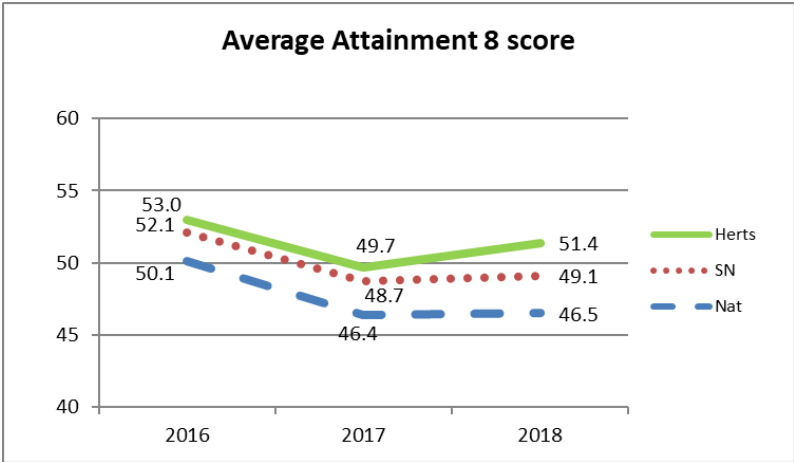
7.4 In 2018, floor standards for primary schools required at least 65% of pupils to reach ‘at least the expected standard’ in all subjects (i.e. reading, writing and mathematics) and to meet minimum progress measures (set by the DfE) across key stage 2 from the end of key stage 1 finishing points in reading, writing and mathematics. Eight Hertfordshire primary schools are below the floor standard in 2018, compared to five in 2017. This figure represents 2.4% of Hertfordshire primary schools, lower than the national figure of 2.6%. All schools below floor will receive at least one additional visit from their HIP specifically looking at their 2019 predictions, with a view to securing improvements in outcomes. Additional teaching and learning support will also be provided as necessary.

7.5 In 2015 the DfE introduced a definition of ‘Coasting schools’. Coasting schools are those which are deemed by the DfE to be performing below a reasonable level of attainment and progress (as shown in three years of data). 17 Hertfordshire primary schools are deemed as coasting in 2018, an increase from 10 in 2017. This figure represents 5.1% of Hertfordshire primary schools, higher than the national figure of 4.6%.

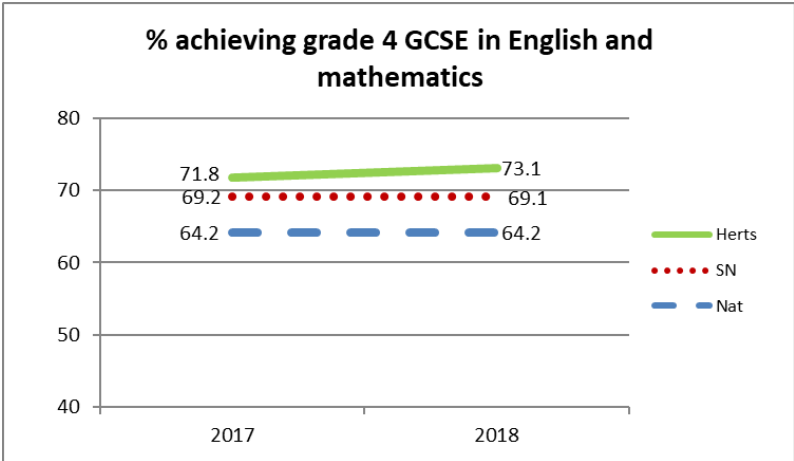
8. Key Stage 4

8.1 Hertfordshire is in the top quintile for five of the six key secondary indicators.

- 8.2 Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications including English (double weighted if the combined English qualification, or both language and literature are taken), maths (double weighted), three further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and three further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list.
- 8.3 The average Attainment 8 score in Hertfordshire was 51.4, higher than the comparable figures nationally and for statistical neighbours of 46.5 and 49.1 respectively. Hertfordshire is ranked 16th out of all local authorities, in the 1st quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities, behind Southend.

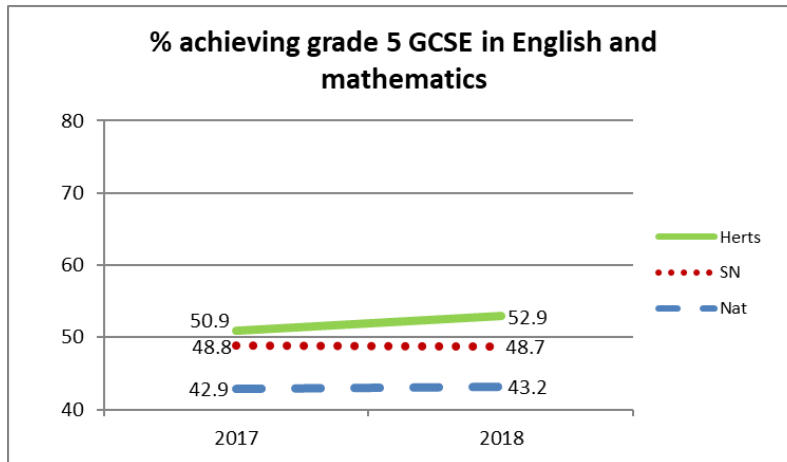


- 8.4 In the standard pass in English and mathematics measure (grade 4), the percentage attaining this benchmark was 73.1%, compared to the national figure of 64.2% and 69.1% for statistical neighbours. Hertfordshire is ranked 17th out of 150 LAs on this measure, and is in the first quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked first out of the Eastern region local authorities on this measure.



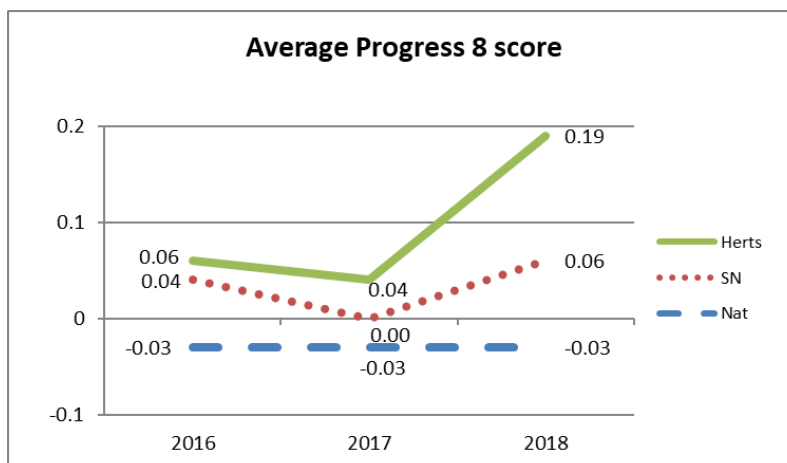
- 8.5 For the good pass in English and mathematics measure (grade 5), the percentage attaining this benchmark was 52.9%, compared to the national figure of 43.2% and 48.7% for statistical neighbours. Hertfordshire is ranked

17th out of 150 LAs on this measure, and is in the first quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities behind Southend.



8.6 Progress 8 aims to capture the progress pupils make from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils' achievement – their Attainment 8 score – with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or 'prior attainment'), calculated using assessment results from the end of primary school. Progress 8 is a **relative measure**; therefore the national average Progress 8 score for mainstream schools is zero. When including pupils at special schools the national average is not zero as Progress 8 scores for special schools are calculated using Attainment 8 estimates based on pupils in mainstream schools.

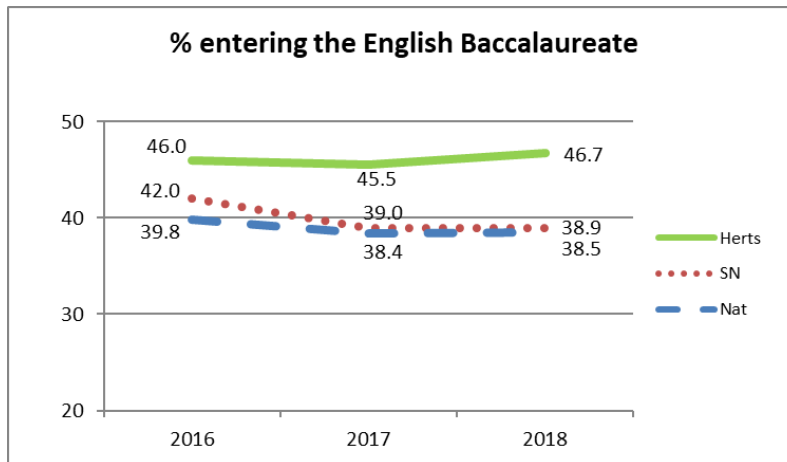
8.7 The average Progress 8 score in Hertfordshire was 0.19, higher than the comparable figures nationally and for statistical neighbours of -0.03 and 0.06 respectively. Hertfordshire is ranked 25th out of all local authorities and is in the first quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked first out of the Eastern region local authorities.



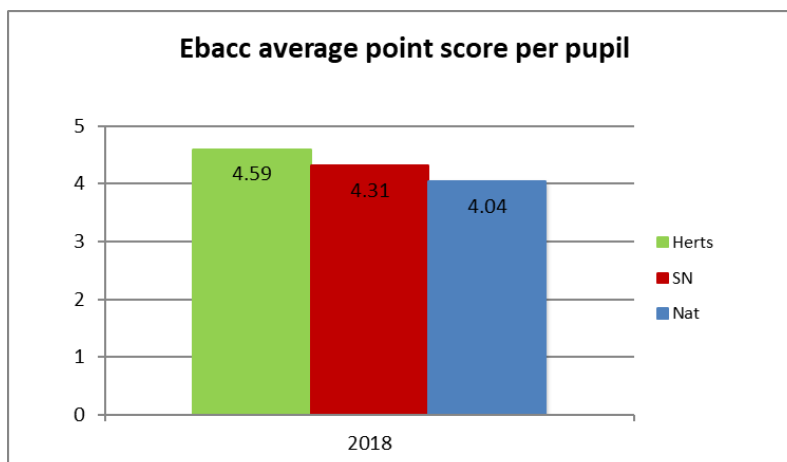
8.8 The English Baccalaureate was introduced as a performance measure in 2010. It is not a qualification in itself; the measure recognises where pupils

have secured a grade 5 or better across a core group of academic subjects – English, mathematics, history or geography, two sciences and a language.

- 8.9 In 2018 46.7% of pupils in Hertfordshire entered the EBacc, 8.2ppts higher than the national figure and 7.8ppts higher than statistical neighbours. Hertfordshire is ranked first out of the Eastern region local authorities.



- 8.10 In 2018 the DfE introduced a new headline performance measure – the EBacc average point score per pupil. EBacc APS measures pupils’ point scores across the five pillars of the EBacc. This ensures the attainment of all pupils is recognised, encouraging schools to enter pupils of all attainment levels. In Hertfordshire the EBacc APS in 2018 was 4.59, above the national figure of 4.04 and the statistical neighbour figure of 4.31. Hertfordshire is ranked 16th out of all local authorities, in the 1st quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities, behind Southend.



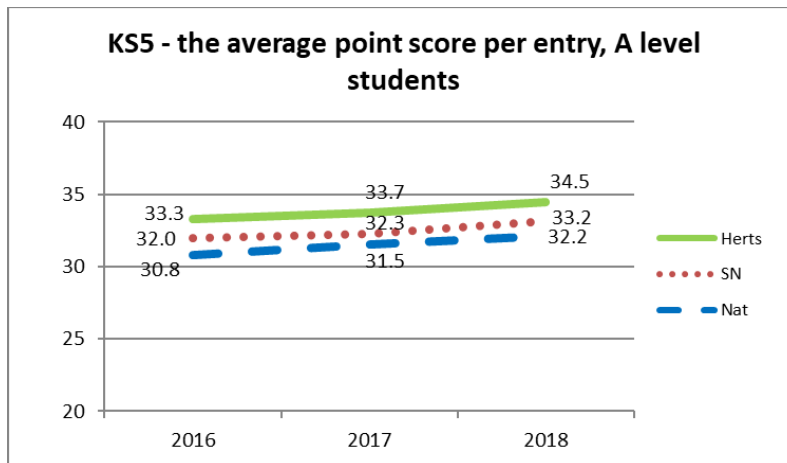
- 8.11 To be below the floor standard in 2018 secondary schools must have a Progress 8 score below -0.5. Based upon provisional data, three Hertfordshire maintained secondary schools and one academy are below floor standard this year.
- 8.12 In 2015 the DfE introduced a definition of ‘Coasting schools’. Coasting schools are those which are deemed by the DfE to be performing below a reasonable

level of attainment and progress (as shown in three years of data). In 2018, the threshold at key stage 4 was a Progress 8 score below -0.25. Based upon provisional data, three Hertfordshire maintained secondary schools, two academies and one university technical college are deemed to be coasting in 2018.

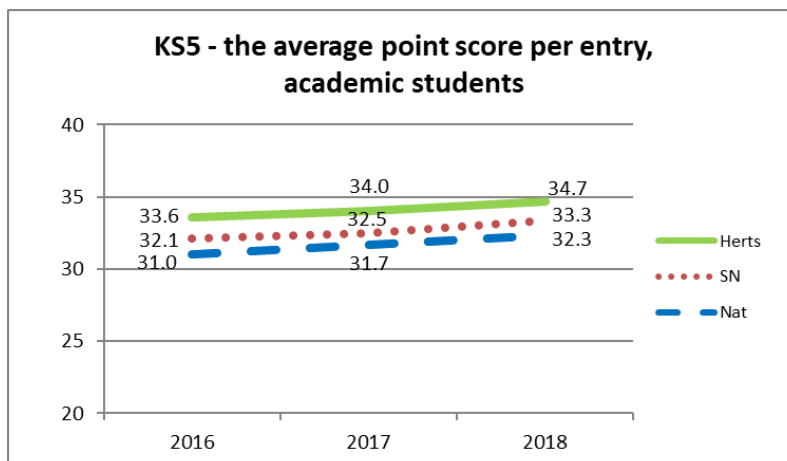
9. Key stage 5

9.1 Average attainment is reported separately for students studying different types of qualifications - A level, academic, tech level (level 3 qualifications for students wishing to specialise in a technical occupation or occupational group) and applied general (level 3 qualifications that provide broad study of a vocational subject area).

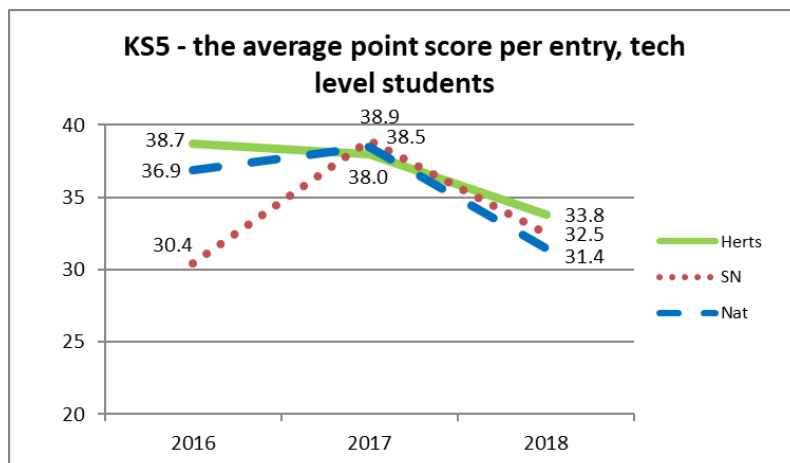
9.2 At key stage 5, grades for A level and equivalent qualifications are converted into point scores. In 2018 the average point score per examination entry for A level students in Hertfordshire schools was 34.5, compared to 32.2 nationally (both equivalent to a C+ grade). The score places Hertfordshire 23rd out of all LAs, in the 1st quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities behind Southend.



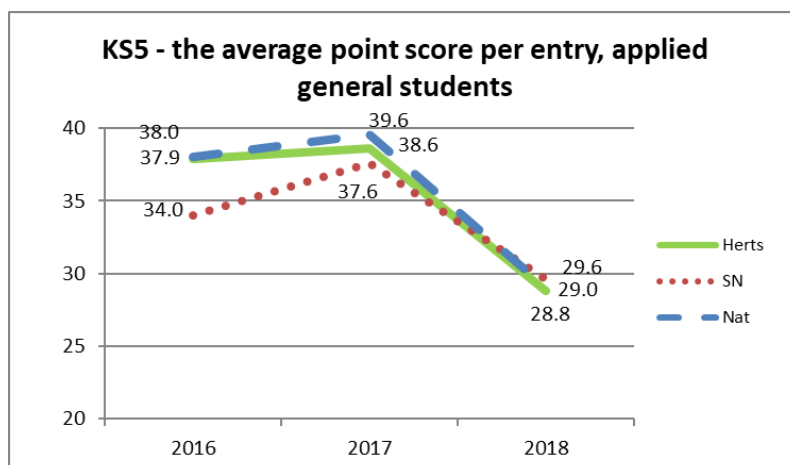
9.3 The average point score per examination entry for academic students was 34.7 compared to 32.3 nationally.



- 9.4 Smaller numbers of students in Hertfordshire complete tech level and applied general programmes, so outcomes are subject to greater variation from one year to the next. The average point score per examination entry for tech level students was 33.8 compared to 31.4 nationally.



- 9.5 The average point score per examination entry for applied general students was 28.8 compared to 29.0 nationally.



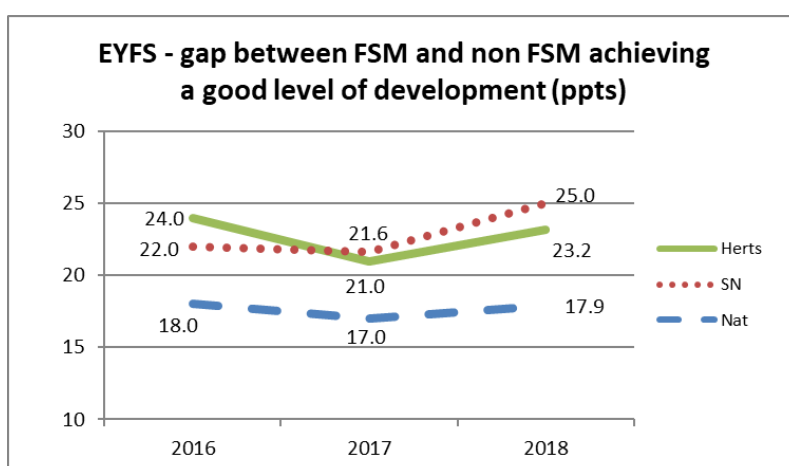
10. Performance of pupils in receipt of free school meals (FSM)

- 10.1 There are currently two measures used by the DfE to measure performance of children from lower socio-economic groups
- FSM pupils - pupils eligible for and receiving free school meals in the year of the test/assessment
 - FSM Ever 6 pupils - pupils eligible for and receiving a free school meal at any time over the previous six years

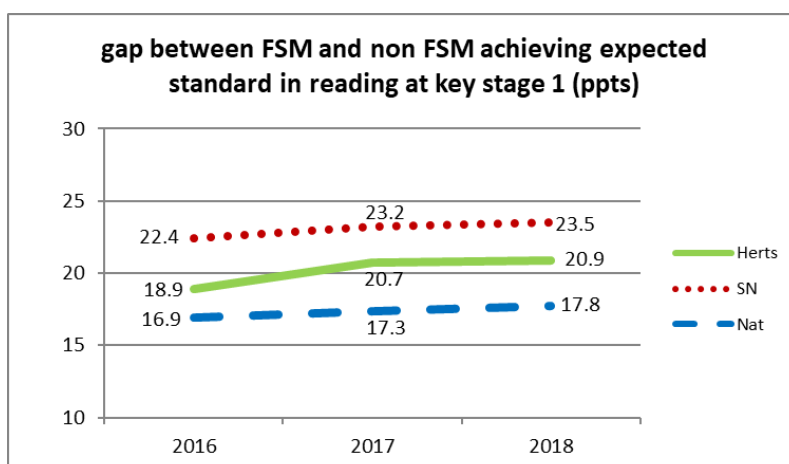
The term 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to pupils who are:

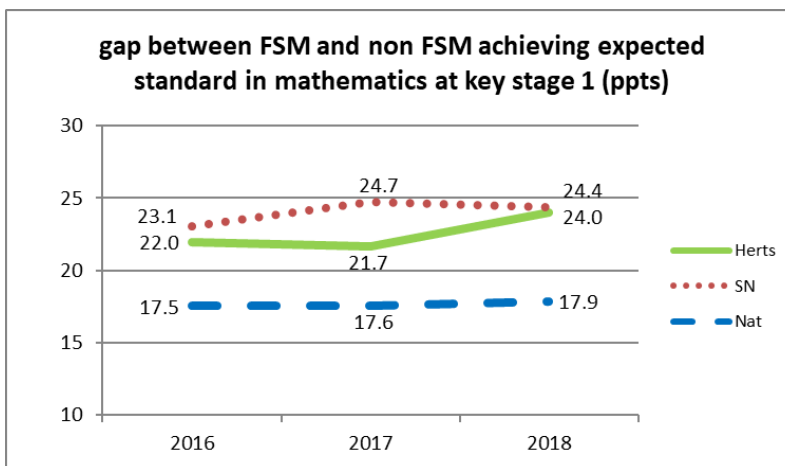
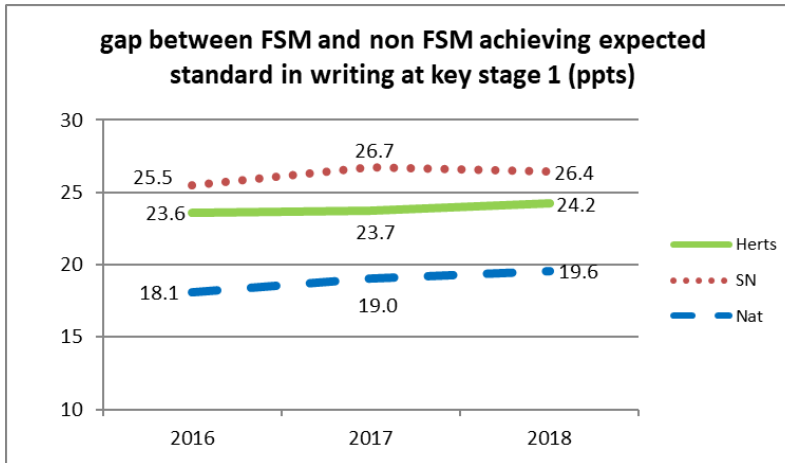
- Eligible for free schools meals (FSM) in the last six years; or
- Looked after continuously for 1 day or more; or
- Adopted from care on or after 30 December 2005, or left in care under a special guardianship order or a residence order

- 10.2 Disadvantaged pupils are supported by Government funding called the Pupil Premium Grant. Children who are looked after in the care of the Local Authority receive an additional amount of funding called Pupil Premium Plus. Children in the early years in receipt of additional funding receive a smaller amount called the Early Years Pupil Premium.
- 10.3 Since January 2015, children from service families are not included in the definition of disadvantaged pupils in the DfE performance tables. They do however receive an element of the Pupil Premium Grant.
- 10.4 At the early years foundation stage in 2018 the gap between FSM and non FSM children in Hertfordshire was 23.2ppts, an increase on the 2017 figure of 21.0ppts. This gap is 5.3ppts wider than national, placing Hertfordshire in the 5th quintile. 51.8% of FSM children in Hertfordshire achieved a Good Level of Development compared to 56.5% nationally.

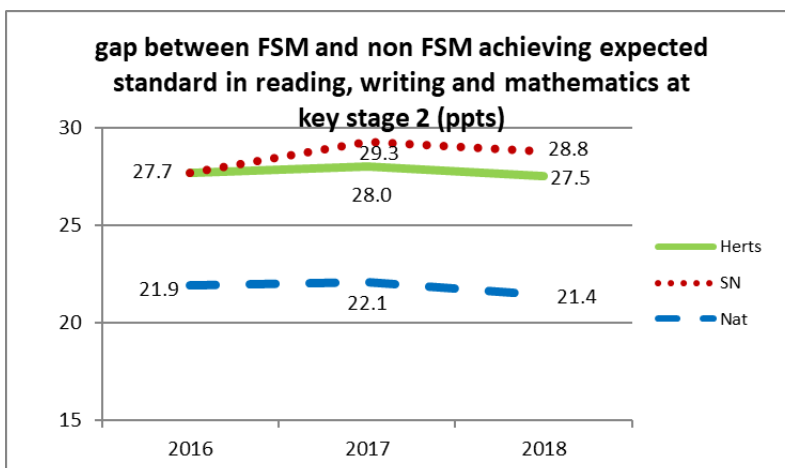


- 10.5 At key stage 1 in 2017 the gap between FSM and non FSM children in Hertfordshire was larger than national in reading, writing and mathematics, but lower than our statistical neighbours for all three indicators. The Hertfordshire gaps were 3.4ppts, 4.7ppts and 4.1ppts greater than the national gaps in reading, writing and mathematics respectively. Hertfordshire is placed in the 4th quintile for reading and mathematics and the 5th quintile for writing.

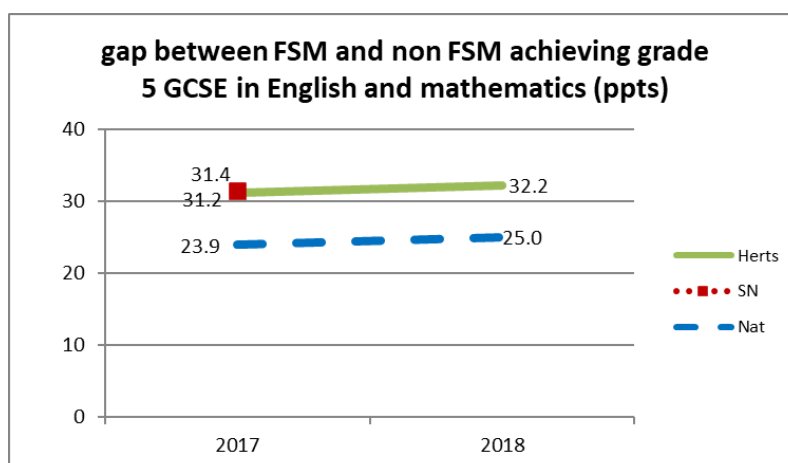
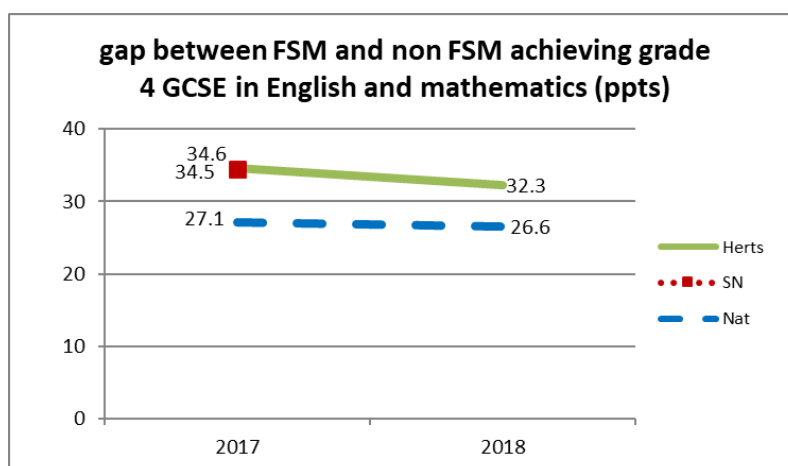




10.6 The FSM gap for pupils in Hertfordshire at key stage 2 was 27.5ppts and Hertfordshire is placed in the 5th quintile. This gap is larger than national but lower than our statistical neighbours. However 41.4% of Hertfordshire FSM pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics compared to 46.1% of FSM pupils nationally. The focus on improving performance for this group of pupils will continue to be a priority in 2018/19.



10.7 In 2018, at Key Stage 4, the gap between the attainment of FSM pupils attaining a standard pass at GCSE in English and mathematics (grade 4) and non FSM pupils was 32.3ppts in Hertfordshire. The comparable figure nationally was 26.6ppts. The gap in Hertfordshire has reduced from 34.6ppts in 2017. For the strong pass in English and mathematics measure (grade 5), the gap between the attainment of FSM pupils and non FSM pupils was 32.2ppts in Hertfordshire, compared to 25.0ppts nationally. The gap in Hertfordshire has increased from 31.2ppts in 2017. Comparable figures for statistical neighbours are not available in the provisional data set.



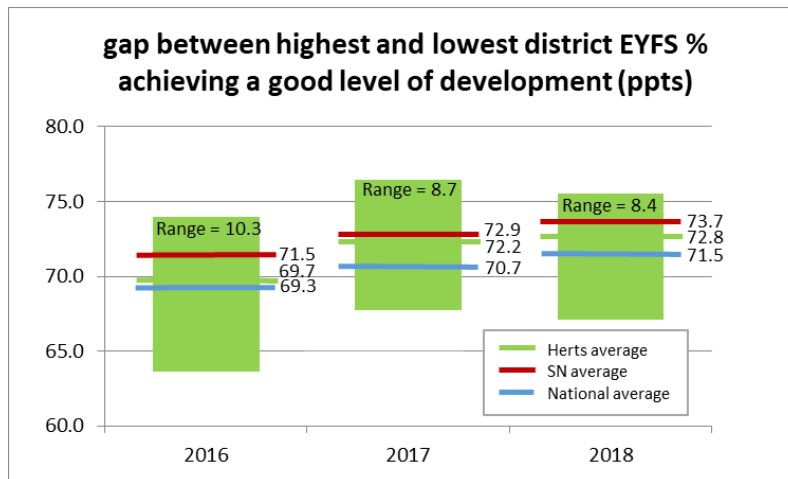
11. Performance of Children Looked After

11.1 The Department for Education has now introduced a requirement that NCER (National Consortium for Examination Results) and its member authorities shall not reproduce data related to Children Looked After within any publication before the Statistical First Release due at the end of March 2018.

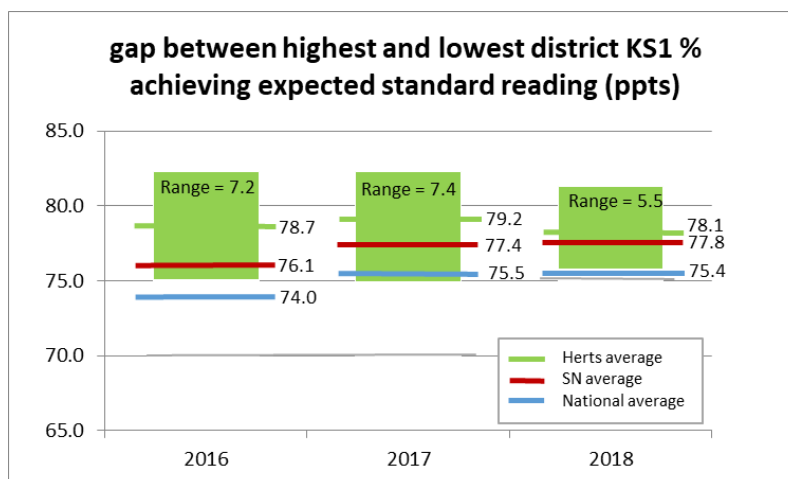
12. District variation

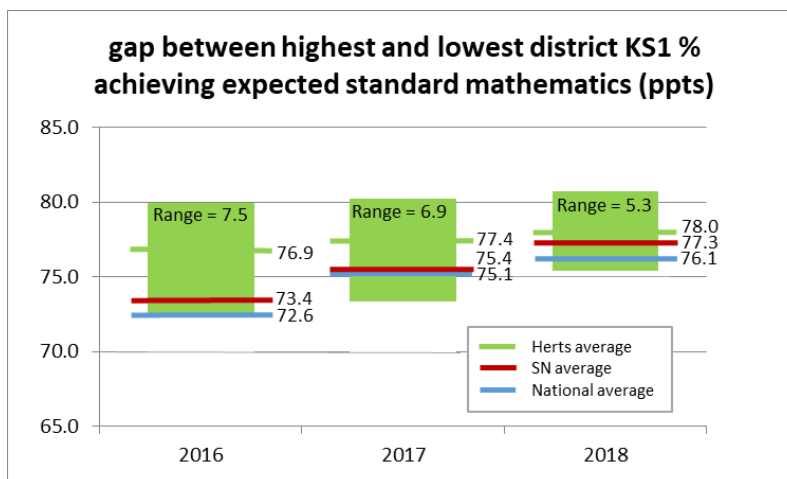
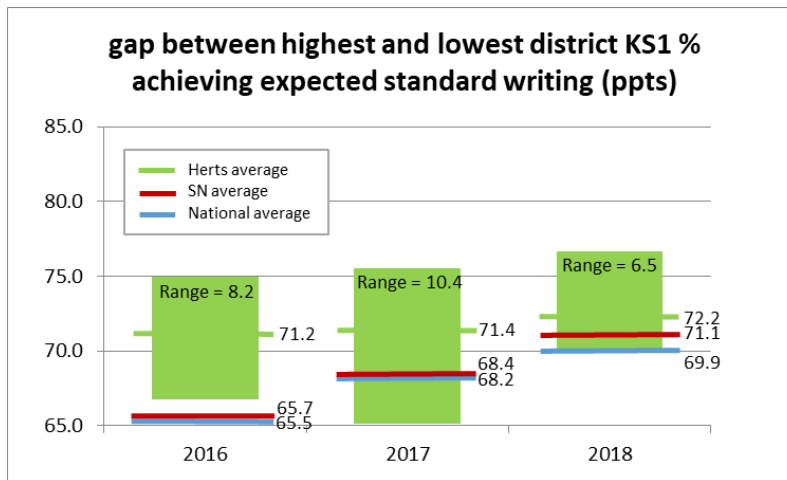
12.1 In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the gap between the highest and lowest performing districts for the percentage of children reaching a Good Level of Development has decreased by 0.3ppts from 8.7ppts in 2017 to 8.4ppts in 2018. Watford was the lowest performing district at this key stage and Three

Rivers was the highest. The most improved districts in 2017 were Three Rivers, Stevenage and Hertsmere.

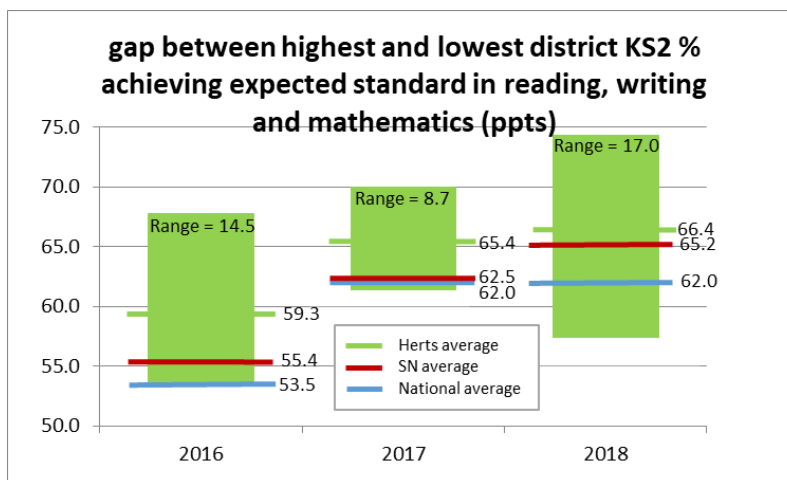


12.2 At Key Stage 1 the gap between the highest and lowest performing districts for the percentage of children achieving the expected standard has decreased by 1.8ppts in reading, by 3.9ppts in writing and by 1.8ppts in mathematics. In reading and writing all districts achieved an expected standard above the national average; in mathematics all districts except Broxbourne and North Herts achieved an expected standard above the national average. For mathematics, Broxbourne was below the national average by 0.6ppts and North Herts was below the national average by 0.7ppts. St Albans was the highest performing district for reading and mathematics, Three Rivers was the highest performing district for writing.



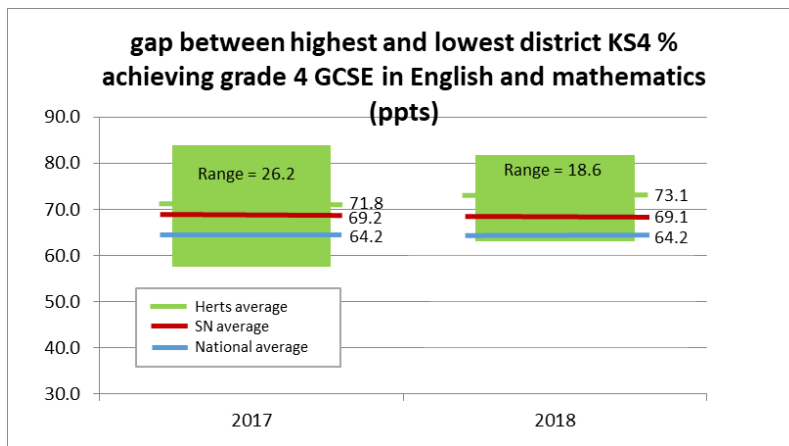


12.3 At Key Stage 2 the gap between the highest and lowest performing districts for the percentage of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has increased by 8.3ppts. Four districts achieved an expected standard below the national average: Broxbourne, North Herts, Stevenage and Welwyn Hatfield. St Albans was the highest performing district.

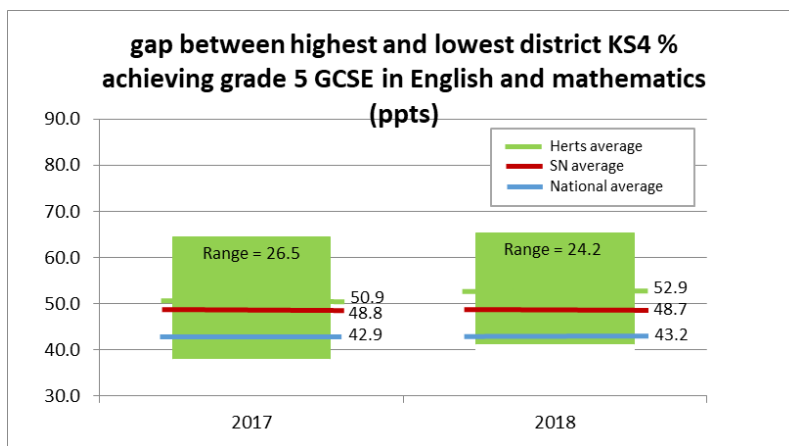


12.4 At Key Stage 4 provisional data shows that the gap between the highest and lowest performing districts for the percentage of pupils attaining a standard

pass at GCSE in English and mathematics (grade 4) was 18.6ppts, 7.6ppts lower than in 2017. All districts except Stevenage achieved a level above the national average. St Albans was the highest performing district.

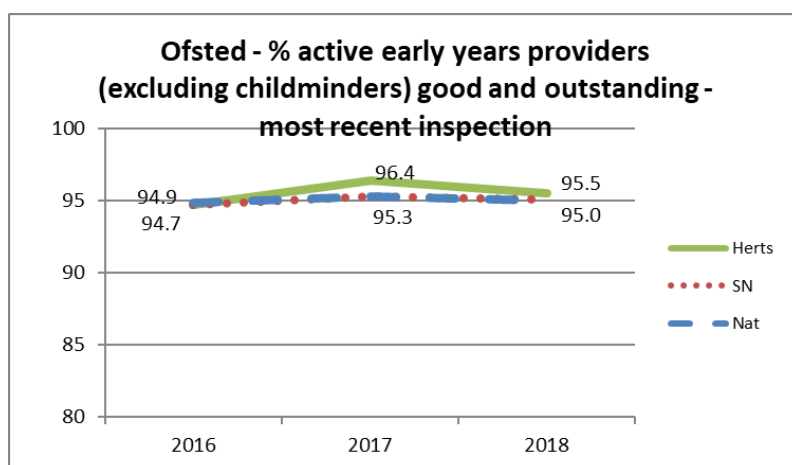
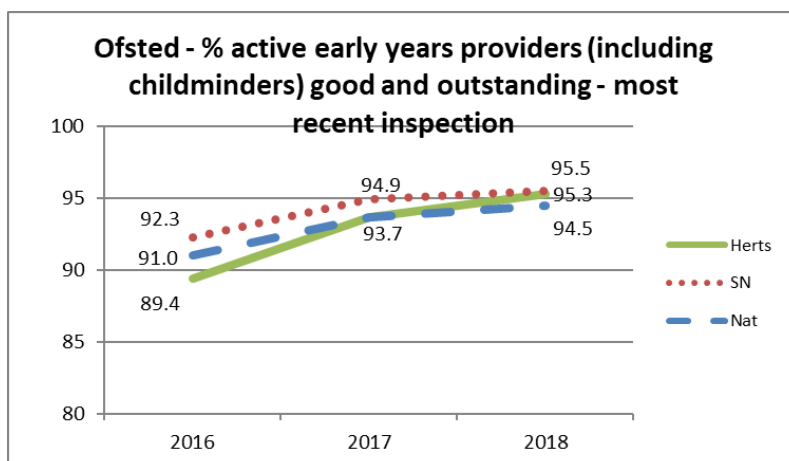


- 12.5 For the strong pass in English and mathematics measure (grade 5), the gap between the highest and lowest performing districts was 24.2ppts, 2.3ppts lower than in 2017. All districts except Broxbourne, Stevenage and Welwyn Hatfield achieved a level above the national average. St Albans was the highest performing district.



13. School quality – based on Hertfordshire schools’ most recent Ofsted inspections

- 13.1 At the end of the academic year, 95.3% of all Early Years providers were judged good or outstanding. This was above the national figure by 0.8ppts and 1.6ppts higher than the comparable figure for 2017. If childminders are excluded from the analysis 95.5% of providers were judged good or outstanding, 0.5ppts higher than the national figure and 0.4ppts higher than that for statistical neighbours.



- 13.2 Of Hertfordshire's 82 Children's Centres, 61 had been inspected and reports published by the end of August 2015, when the inspection programme was paused. The percentage of centres judged good or outstanding was 75.4%, 9.5ppts above the national average of 65.9% and 14.4ppts above the average of our statistical neighbours (61%).
- 13.3 At the end of the academic year 2017/18, the percentage of all schools judged good or outstanding, the recognised benchmark, was 87.9%, higher than the national figure of 85.6%. At the end of August 2018 Hertfordshire was ranked 56th in comparison to other LAs and is in the 2nd quintile. The percentage of all Hertfordshire schools judged outstanding by Ofsted at their most recent inspection remained higher than the national proportion at 24.7% (national 20.6%).
- 13.4 The percentage of schools judged requiring improvement was lower than the national figure at all phases (9.1%, national 10.8%). In Hertfordshire 3.02% of all schools were in an Ofsted inadequate category which is below the national figure of 3.63%.
- 13.5 The picture varies by phase with a higher percentage of nursery schools achieving a good or outstanding grading which reflects the national picture. At the end of the academic year 2017/18, Hertfordshire was slightly above the

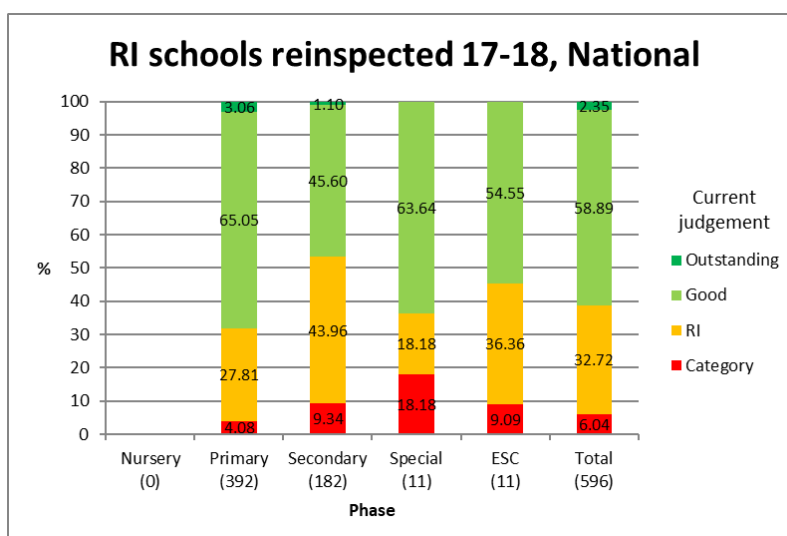
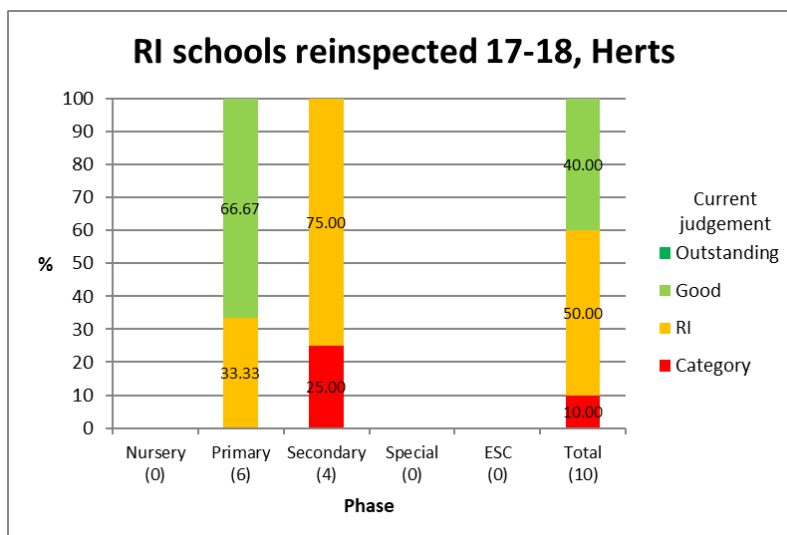
national figure for nursery schools with every Hertfordshire nursery school judged good or better.

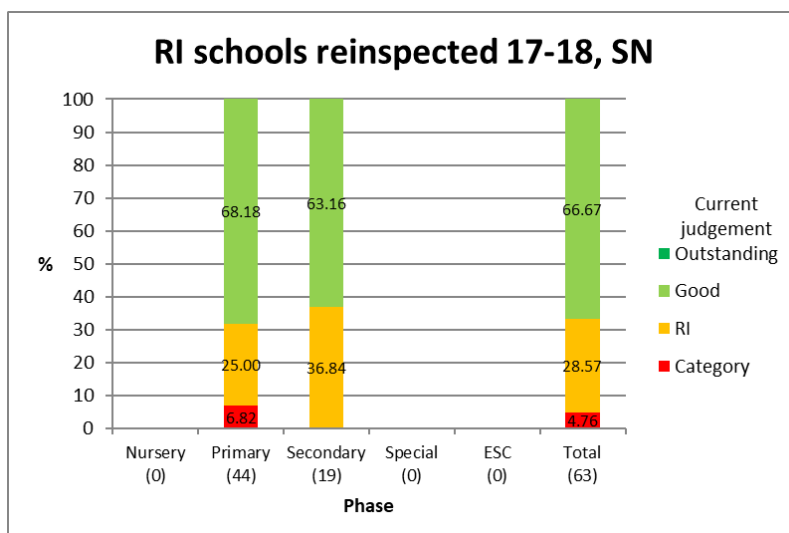
- 13.6 For primary schools Hertfordshire was above both the national (87.0%) and statistical neighbour (87.7%) averages at 89.0%. For secondary schools Hertfordshire was significantly above national (75.4%) but below statistical neighbour (82.3%) figures at 80.5%.
- 13.7 The percentage of Hertfordshire special schools judged good or outstanding was 88.0%, 3.9ppts lower than the national figure. The percentage of Education Support Centres which were graded good or outstanding was 87.5%, 5.5ppts higher than the national percentage. However the small numbers in each of these school groups means that the outcome of just one inspection makes a significant difference to the overall percentage.
- 13.8 There is a variation in quality amongst districts in Ofsted outcomes as there is in attainment. The gap between the highest and lowest performing district for the percentage of all schools judged good and outstanding at their latest inspection at 31 August 2018 was 18.7ppts (not comparable with prior years due to the change in Ofsted methodology outlined in 4.8 above). The lowest performing district at the end of August 2018 was Broxbourne, where 78.6% of all schools were good and outstanding. The highest performing district was Three Rivers, where 97.2% of all schools were good and outstanding.

14. School quality – Ofsted inspections during the academic year 2017/18

- 14.1 From September 2015, a new Ofsted framework was introduced known as the “Common Inspection Framework”. The expectations of schools are higher and inspectors are required to focus more intensively on the quality of teaching and learning. There has also been the introduction of short inspections of good schools which are for one day only. Ofsted no longer routinely inspects outstanding schools and identifies schools for inspection through regular risk assessments based on performance. As a result the sample inspected each year is not representative of all schools.
- 14.2 During the academic year 2017/18, 180 Hertfordshire schools were selected by Ofsted to receive section 5 inspections or short section 8 inspections. The proportion of schools judged outstanding was 8.3% (15 schools), good 75.6% (136 schools), requiring improvement 12.8% (23 schools) and 3.3% (6 schools) judged inadequate. A higher proportion of all schools inspected were judged as good or outstanding than in the previous year, 83.9% up from 77.9% in 2016/17 (102 schools), whereas the national figure for this measure remained steady at 53%.
- 14.3 The proportion of secondary schools judged good or outstanding in Hertfordshire (68%) increased by 1ppt in 2017/18 from 67% in 2016/2017; the proportion of primary/nursery schools judged good or outstanding increased by 8ppts from 79% to 87% over the same period.

- 14.4 Nine of the eleven special schools and four of the five Education Support Centres (ESC) inspected in 2017/18 were judged to be outstanding or good.
- 14.5 Two maintained secondary schools, one maintained special school and one maintained ESC were judged inadequate in 2017/18. They will be expected to become sponsored academies and will no longer be maintained by the County Council. Two secondary academies were judged inadequate in 2017/18, the Regional Schools' Commissioner (RSC) will endeavour to broker new sponsors for those schools.
- 14.6 Of the schools which were inspected, 87% improved or remained at the same grade (primary/nursery 88%, secondary 83%, special 82%, ESC 80%). This is an increase from the previous year when 81% of schools improved or remained at the same grade.
- 14.7 Ten Hertfordshire schools previously judged requiring improvement (RI) were re-inspected in 2017/18. 40% of these schools improved to good or outstanding. This is comparable to the national figure of 61% and the statistical neighbour figure of 67%.





15. Progress in priorities identified for 2017/18

15.1 Progress was not achieved in the areas identified for improvement in 2017/18:

- (i) Increase the number of good or better schools or settings as judged by Ofsted,
- (ii) Close the gap for vulnerable groups whilst maintaining at least expected progress for all,

15.2 A lower number of schools and settings are judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding.

15.3 Work will continue with those schools currently judged as requiring improvement to support them to become good. Inadequate schools will be supported during their transition to become sponsored academies. Support will be offered to good and outstanding schools to retain/improve their judgement at their next inspection.

15.4 The biggest challenge for Hertfordshire is to improve the educational performance of disadvantaged children. The gap between children receiving free school meals and other Hertfordshire children is increasing at Key Stage 1; at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 the gaps are reducing but not at a fast enough rate. The gaps remain larger than national at all key stages. The focus on improving performance for disadvantaged pupils will continue to be strengthened in 2018/19.

16. Priorities for 2018/19

16.1 Following the review of 2017/18 performance, the priorities identified for 2018/19 are as stated in priorities (i) and (ii) of Hertfordshire's Strategy for School Improvement 2014-17, with priority (iii) (eliminating discrepancies at district level) incorporated into all methodologies:

- (i) a) Increase the number of good or better schools and settings, as judged by Ofsted, through section 5 inspections
- b) Increase the number of schools who receive a section 8 inspection letter indicating that they are well on the way to outstanding
- (ii) Increase the pace of closing the gap for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups

16.2 Officers are working closely with the Herts for Learning Ltd executive team on their 2018/19 improvement plan. Strategies include:

Increase impact of Hertfordshire Improvement Partners (HIPs)/School Effectiveness Advisers (SEAs) working with maintained schools by ensuring that:

- visits are timely and contact is maintained between visits
- reports are sharp and well quality assured and good practice shared
- a culture of honest and direct feedback is fostered: with Heads, governors and back to line managers at HfL
- robust and honest conversations are routine around RAYG rating and that HIPs/SEAs apply criteria confidently and consistently
- capacity is sufficient in HIP/SEA teams to cover for absences
- they consistently role model the highest expectations of the attainment and progress of all, use language of Growth Mindset relentlessly and challenge fixed mindset attitudes when they encounter them
- communication between all school improvement teams is strong at all times
- they have regular and developmental line management and training
- they are aware of the full range of HfL programmes and resources and publicise materials/support effectively
- they tailor their support to make it bespoke to the school and its development needs
- they are adept at getting reluctant engagers on-board
- they are skilled-up on the implications of the new OfSTED framework

Ensure that HIPs/SEAs have razor-sharp insight into the state of their maintained schools by:

- fashioning the visits to achieve the optimal balance of time in class, on learning walks, conducting book looks, hearing pupil and staff voice, examining data and meeting with senior leadership team/head teacher/Chair of Governors
- collecting predictive outcomes data
- ensuring robust and regular moderation and standardisation
- analysing summative outcomes data more speedily in summer

Ensure maintained schools on cusp are ready to convert through:

- impactful support through Keys To Success process
- smart and timely use of Intervention Fund and other financial support

- developing impactful links between education services and governance services to improve robustness of leadership of schools
- thorough readiness for OfSTED checks: single central record, website, self evaluation form etc.

Ensure great leadership of our maintained schools through:

- Phase Education Director involvement in all head teacher appointments – careful vetting and screening
- high quality training of new heads
- carefully chosen professional partners and smart partnering
- continual refinement and improvement of leadership development programmes: middle and senior leaders, Exec Heads etc.
- leadership support for new OfSTED framework, including curriculum symposium

Address the Pupil Premium gaps and barriers smartly by:

- auditing schools and settings across the county to identify the specific issues in particular districts, settings and types of schools
- using the findings to support leaders of maintained schools to identify specific strategies that will tackle and overcome particular barriers
- providing external stimulus through speakers and reading at conferences and updates, annual Closing the Gap conference etc.
- supporting the writing and dissemination of case studies of impactful practice

Increase impact of HIPs/SEAs working with maintained schools by:

- training more to conduct Pupil Premium reviews
- supporting them to assist school leaders to set audacious goals and design effective plans for reaching these goals
- ensuring they support the implementation of high quality teaching and smart interventions (with pupils and parents)
- using brokerage grants to focus on Pupil Premium gaps in schools with biggest gaps/least secure practice
- targeting maintained schools with biggest gaps to engage in annual programmes

Share good practice more effectively by:

- facilitating, supporting the establishment of, and at times leading networks for sharing practice, including Great Expectations Programme, KS2 Pupil Premium Project, informal twilight head teacher discussions
- working more closely with the Teaching School Alliances to ensure that a maximum number of maintained schools receive support on this issue
- promoting tools such as Parent 2 Parent
- designing and delivering bespoke CPD for individual schools or groups of schools e.g. Defeating Disadvantage EY training, Early Reading project

17. Financial implications

17.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

18. Equality Implications

- 18.1 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered, the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.
- 18.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council's statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.
- 18.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 18.4 An EqIA has not been undertaken in relation to this report. The Panel are not requested to make a decision in respect of the reports contents.

Background Information

- *Hertfordshire Strategy for School Improvement 2014-17*
http://www.thegrid.org.uk/leadership/improvement/documents/herts_strategy_school_improvement.pdf