

25 February 2020

**STANDARDS AND QUALITY IN HERTFORDSHIRE
SCHOOLS**

Report of the Director of Children's Services

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1. Purpose

To provide Members with an overview of standards and quality in Hertfordshire schools and Early Years providers for the academic year September 2018 to July 2019. The report presents evidence from inspections, test and examination results and other assessments.

2. Summary

- 2.1 In the academic year 2018/19, 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 except one.
- 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 2019, the attainment of disadvantaged groups in Hertfordshire is below the attainment of similar groups nationally. In most cases 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 marginally across all phases.
- 2.3 At the end of the academic year 2018/19, 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.

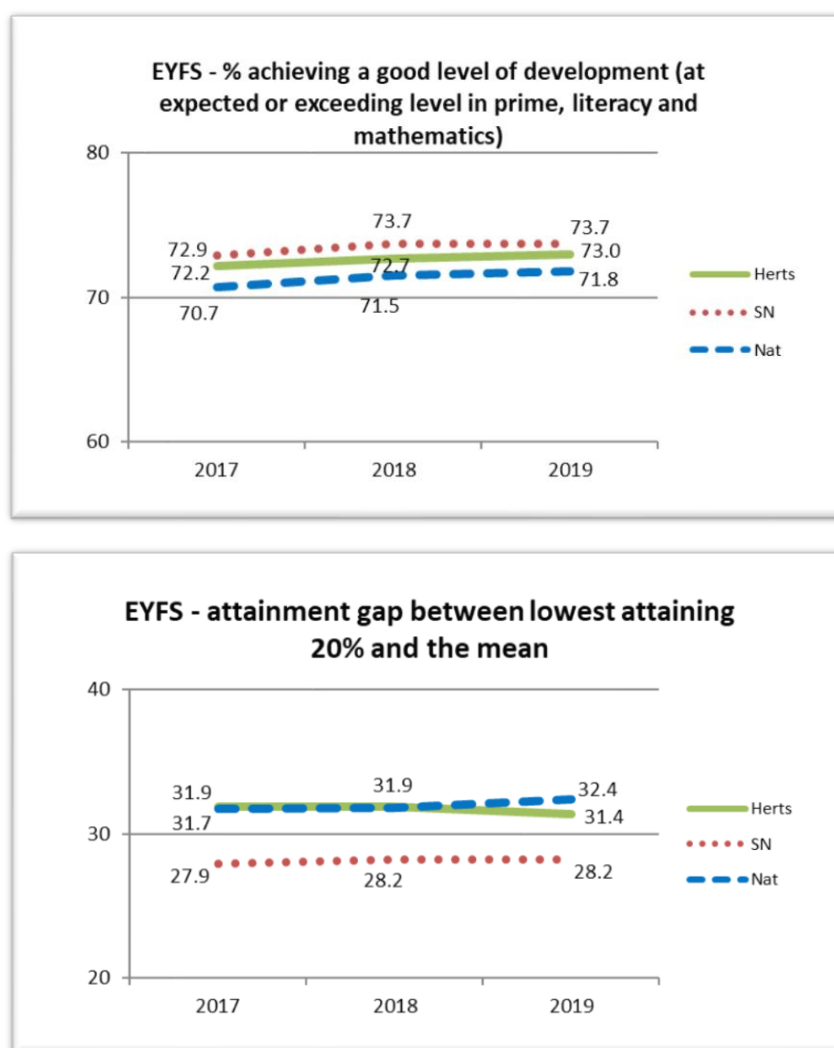
4. Background

- 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 becomes 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 is 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 is 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.

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 development; 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; mathematics and literacy.
- 5.2 In 2019, 73.0% of children achieved a Good Level of Development, an improvement of 0.3 percentage points (ppts) from 2018 and placing Hertfordshire in the second quintile when ranked against all other local authorities. Hertfordshire is ranked fourth out of the Eastern region local authorities, behind Essex, Southend and Thurrock. The attainment gap between the lowest attaining 20% of young children and the mean was 31.4%, 0.5ppts lower than in 2018 and 1ppt lower than the national gap.



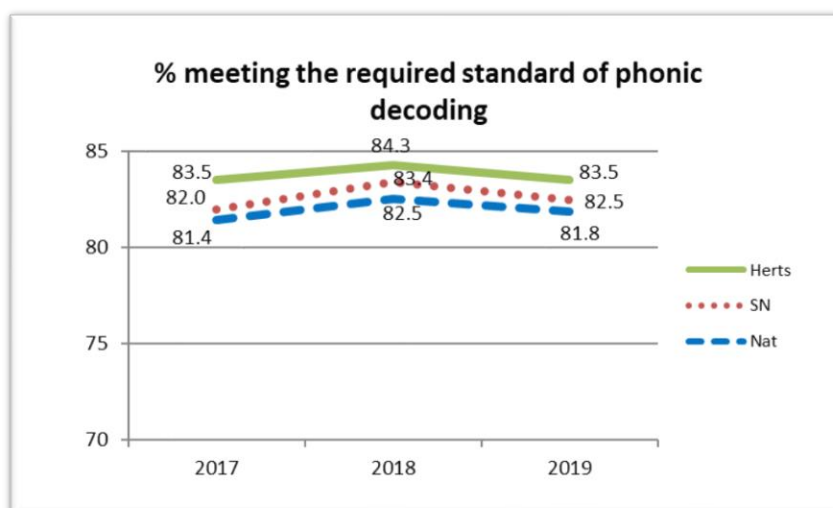
- 5.3 Scrutiny of local assessment data has informed the deployment of the Herts for Learning Early Years advisory service to target areas in the county where fewer children reached a good level of development in 2017 and 2018. Overall, 42% of schools with Early Years cohorts received support from an Early Years Adviser (EYA) and 60% of these maintained or improved their GLD. The average change in GLD for this group is +6.5ppts. Of those schools that received no support, only 50% maintained or improved their GLD. Where schools have sustained engagement with an EYA over a period of more than a year, there is even greater impact. The greatest improvement in schools moving from below to above national GLD is noted in those who received two or more days of EYA support for two years running (improving on average by +4.8ppts). The Early Years Assessment project worked with six schools where GLD had been of particular concern. The impact of this project was demonstrable: an average increase of +14ppts in GLD which reversed the steeply declining trends in these schools. All six schools were in the highest two quintiles of year on year improvement in 2019.
- 5.4 HfL Early Years team has also led early reading and writing projects with notable impact on literacy outcomes. 22 schools took part in the reading project, with 54% sustaining or improving both GLD and reading outcomes (on

average, +2.9ppts increase in percentage of children achieving the Early Learning Goal for reading). 81% (25/31) of schools that took part in the writing project saw an increase in all children achieving expected standards and 61% saw an increase in their GLD.

- 5.5. In 2019, the majority of children assessed for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile were on roll in local authority maintained schools (11245 children). 2840 children were in academies. Of the children in maintained schools, 73.5% achieved the GLD, compared to 72.6% of the children in academies. In the 24 Academies with EYFS that have a GLD below the Hertfordshire figure (73%) and including the 20 where the GLD is below the national figure (72%), there are 1182 pupils eligible for end of EYFSP assessment with only 750 (63%) of these pupils attaining the good level of development (GLD). The average performance of those schools is, by comparison pulling overall GLD down. None of these schools received HfL Early Years advisory support in the preceding academic year 2018-19.

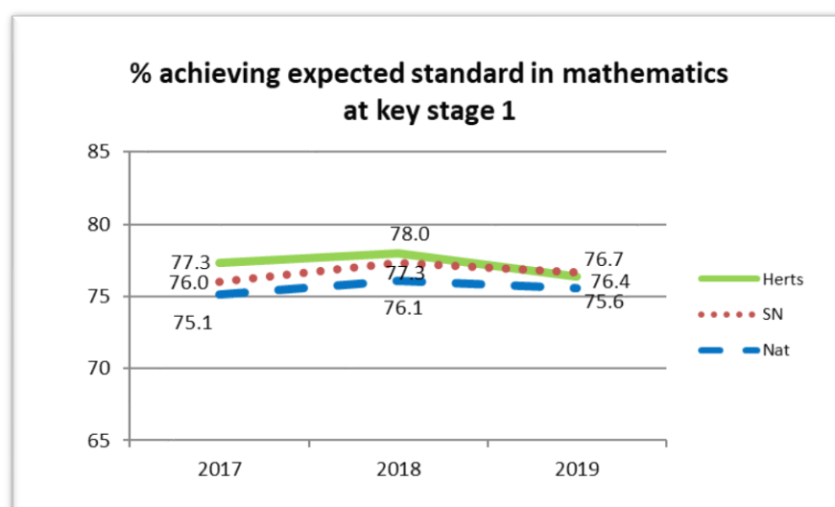
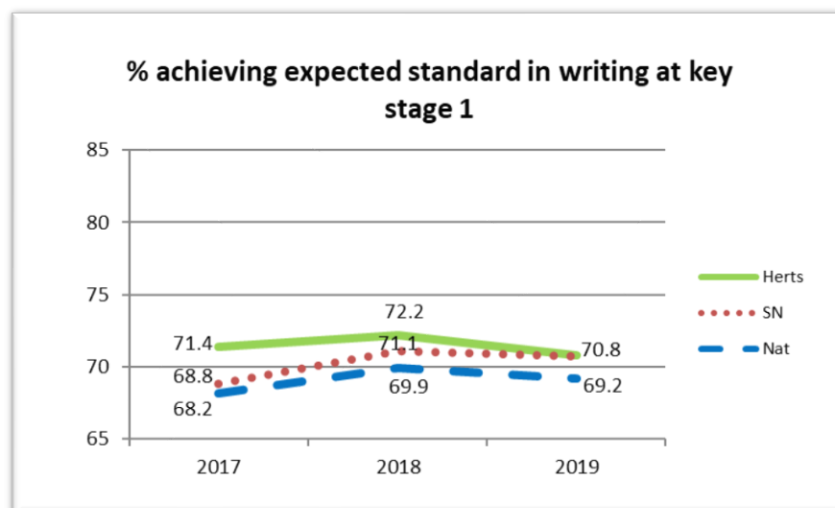
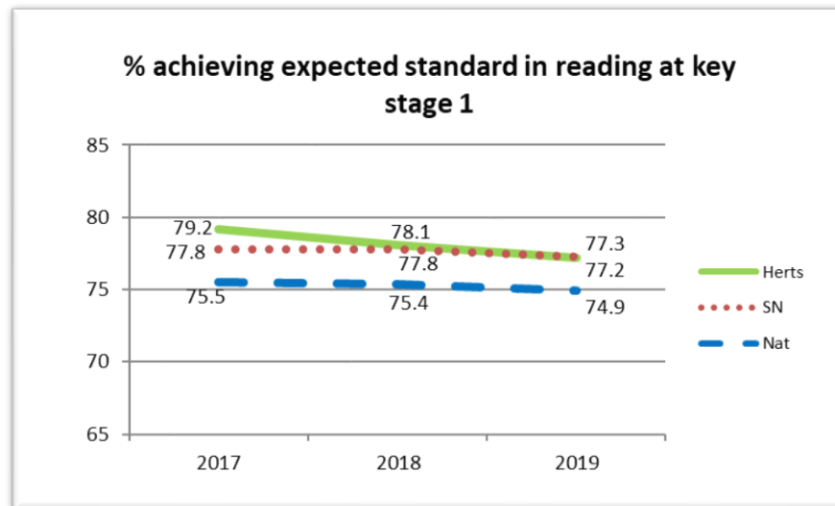
6. Phonics screening check and Key Stage 1

- 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. 83.5% of Hertfordshire year 1 pupils met the expected standard in 2019, compared with 84.3% in 2018 and 83.5% in 2017. Nationally 81.8% of year 1 pupils met the expected standard in 2019, compared with 82.5% in 2018 and 81.4% in 2017. 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 for all three indicators: reading, writing and mathematics. Hertfordshire's performance was above national by 2.3ppts for reading, 1.6ppts for writing and 0.8ppts for mathematics. Hertfordshire's performance was below statistical neighbours by 0.1ppts for reading and 0.3ppts for mathematics and above statistical neighbours by 0.1ppts for

writing. Hertfordshire is in the second quintile for reading and writing and the third quintile for mathematics. Amongst Eastern region local authorities Hertfordshire is ranked third for reading attainment, second for writing attainment and fourth for mathematics attainment.



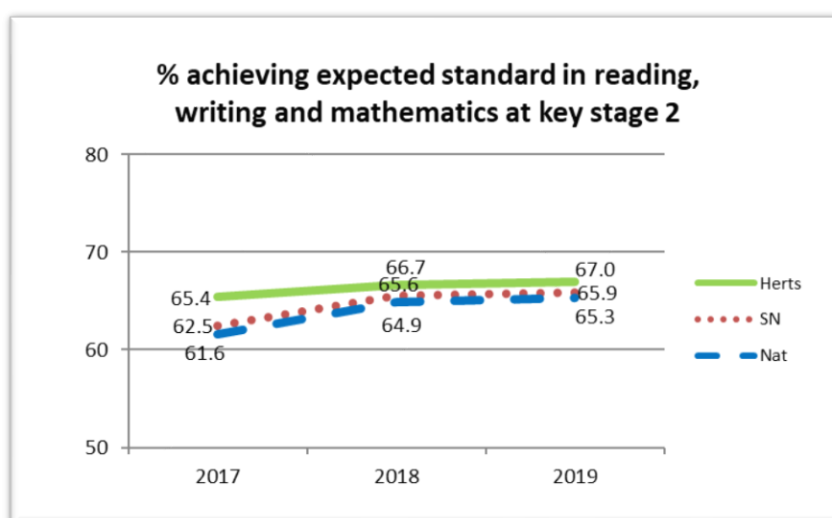
- 6.3 Attainment at the end of KS1 has remained a focus for HIP (Hertfordshire Improvement Partner) and TLA (Teaching and Learning Adviser) visits this academic year. Where the end of KS1 attainment or progress was identified as a key priority area, this was a focus for each of the HIP visits and for TLA visits/projects.

In schools where TLA support was specifically focused on improving end of key stage 1 outcomes:

- proportions of children achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check increased by +5ppts compared to 2017-18
- KS1 reading results increased by +3.1ppts at the expected standard (EXS) and by +2.8ppts at greater depth (GDS)
- KS1 writing results increased by +3.9ppts at EXS and by +0.4ppts at GDS
- KS1 maths results increased by +4.6ppts at EXS and by + 8.5ppts at GDS

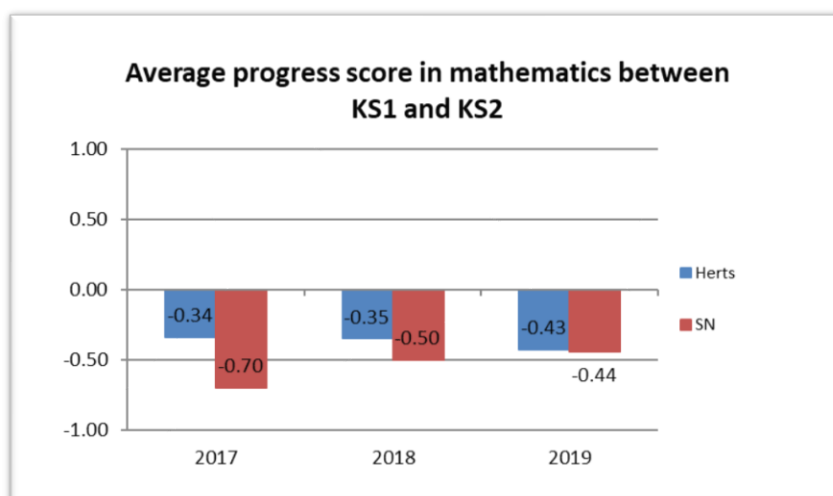
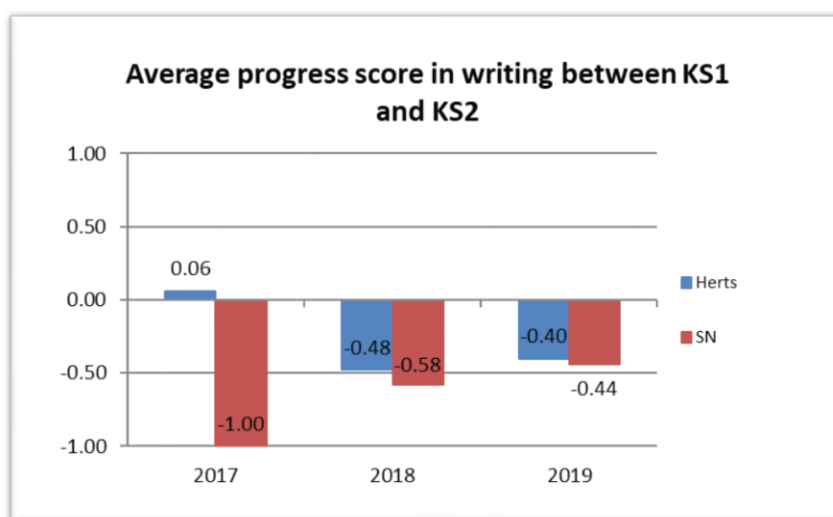
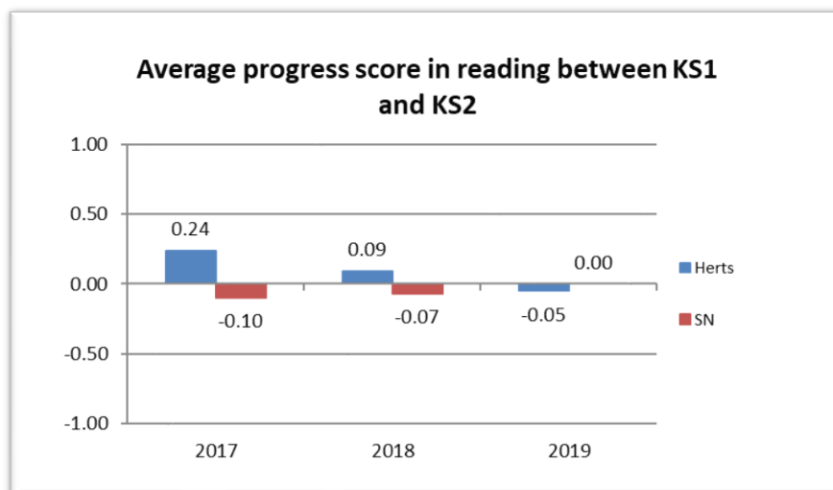
7. Key Stage 2

- 7.1 At key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in combined reading, writing and mathematics in Hertfordshire was 1.7ppts above national, placing Hertfordshire in the second quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked third amongst Eastern region local authorities for this measure, behind Thurrock and 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. The progress scores are a **relative measure**; therefore the national average progress score for mainstream schools in each subject is zero.

- 7.3 In 2019 average progress for all three measures was lower than national in Hertfordshire. The data places Hertfordshire in the 4th quintile for each measure. Hertfordshire is ranked fourth amongst Eastern region local authorities for reading progress, fifth for writing progress and sixth for mathematics progress.



- 7.4 Comparing the outcomes of children in local authority maintained schools with those of children in academies at the end of key stage 2, both attainment and progress are higher in the maintained schools. Attainment at the expected standard or above in reading, writing and mathematics combined was 68.3% in maintained schools, 3.5ppts above the proportion of children achieving this standard in academies. Average progress scores of children in maintained schools were 0.09, -0.12 and -0.28 in reading, writing and mathematics respectively, compared to -0.25, -0.94 and -0.67 in academies.

		Cohort	Attainment (RWM combined)		Progress		
			% EXS+	% GDS / High score	Reading	Writing	Maths
2018	Maintained	10830	68.2	13.3	0.13	-0.37	-0.37
	Academy	2625	64.7	12.0	0.21	-0.63	0.01
2019	Maintained	11003	68.3	13.7	0.09	-0.12	-0.28
	Academy	3145	64.8	11.7	-0.25	-0.94	-0.67

- 7.5 Herts for Learning primary HIPs and TLAs have supported schools where performance was a concern. Key stage 2 attainment at the expected standard (EXS) in reading, writing and maths combined improved at an accelerated rate when schools received HIP support (+0.7ppts vs -0.2ppts). This effect is magnified for those who made this investment year on year (+1.2ppts). Schools who have received additional funded support saw significant increases in this indicator over two years (+6.2ppts since 2017 vs +1.3ppts) from very low starting points (average 52.1% achieving the standard). Similarly, this group of schools improved attainment at the greater depth standard (GDS) at an accelerated rate (+1.4ppts since 2017) compared to a decline in this indicator for non-funded schools over the same period (-0.2ppts).

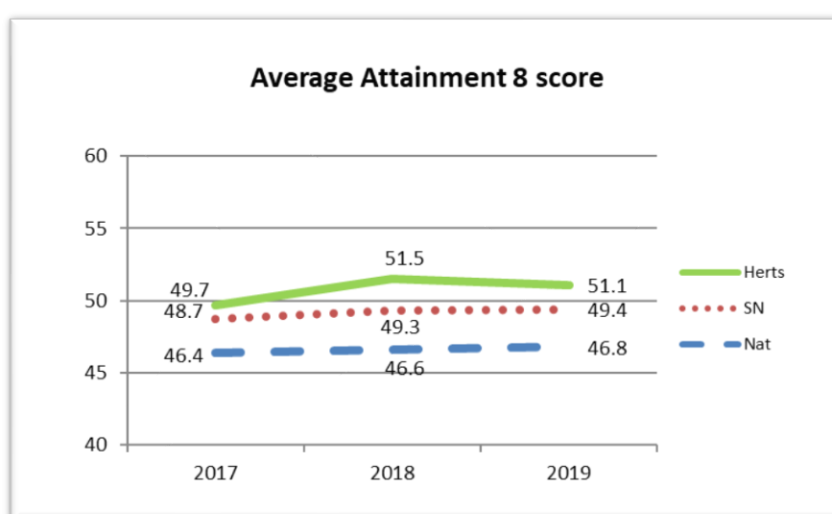
In schools that received 2 days or more of TLA support for writing, the improvement of pupils achieving the expected standard was between 1.4ppts and 2.3ppts higher than those without support.

In schools that received 2 days or more of TLA support for mathematics, the improvement of pupils achieving the expected standard was between 1.5ppts and 3.9ppts higher than those without support. The improvement at the higher standard in supported schools was between 0.3ppts and 3.6ppts higher than those without support.

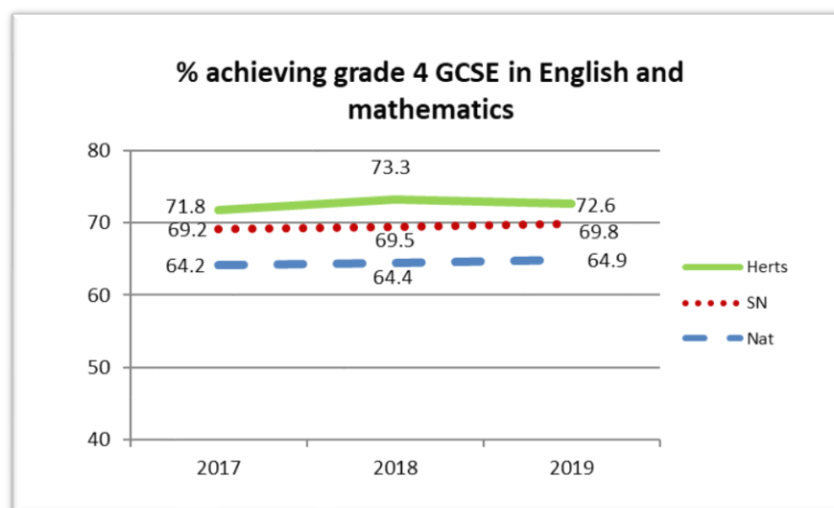
8. Key Stage 4

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

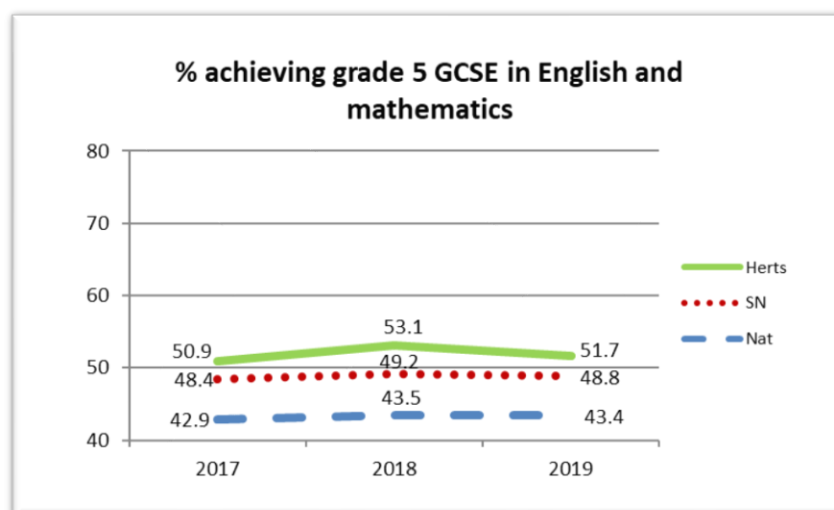
- 8.2 Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications including English (double weighted if the combined English qualification, or both language and literature are taken), maths (double weighted), three further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) 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 51.1, higher than the comparable figures nationally and for statistical neighbours of 46.8 and 49.4 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 72.6%, compared to the national figure of 64.9% and 69.8% for statistical neighbours. Hertfordshire is ranked 18th out of 150 LAs on this measure and is in the first quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities on this measure, behind Southend.

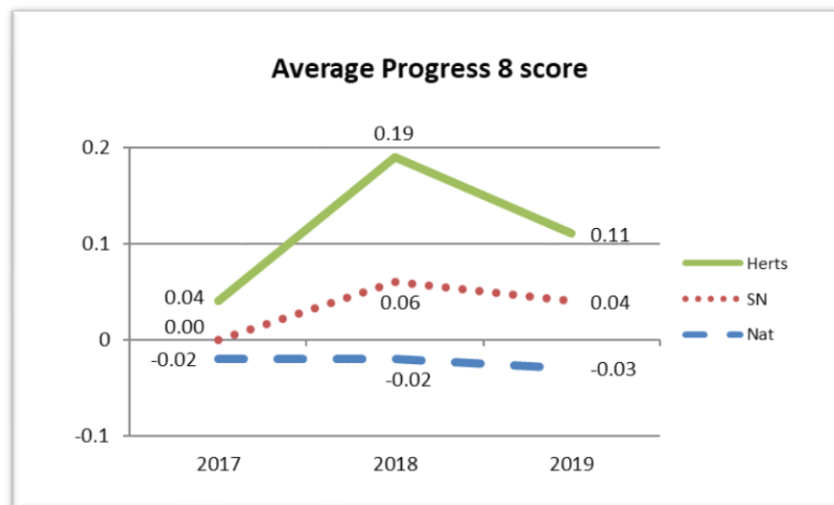


- 8.5 For the good pass in English and mathematics measure (grade 5), the percentage attaining this benchmark was 51.7%, compared to the national figure of 43.4% and 48.8% for statistical neighbours. Hertfordshire is ranked 17th out of 150 LAs on this measure and is in the first quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities behind Southend.

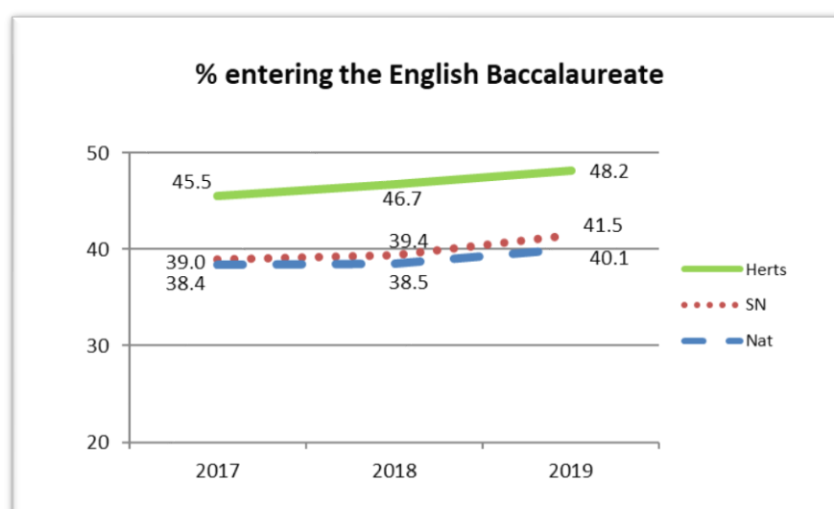


- 8.6 Progress 8 aims to capture the progress pupils make from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils' achievement – their Attainment 8 score – with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or 'prior attainment'), calculated 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 slightly 'off' 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 0.11, higher than the comparable figures nationally and for statistical neighbours of -0.03* and 0.04

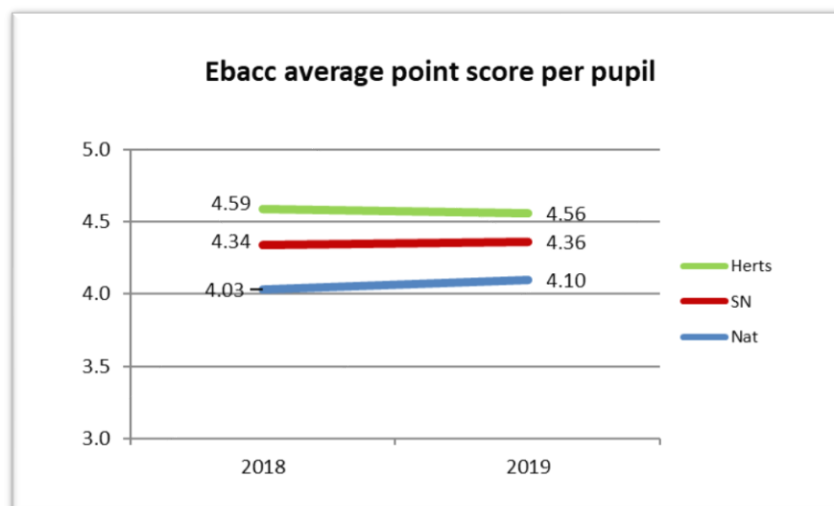
respectively. Hertfordshire is ranked 34th out of all local authorities and is in the second quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities, behind Cambridgeshire.



- 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 2019 48.2% of pupils in Hertfordshire entered the EBacc, 8.1ppts higher than the national figure and 6.7ppts 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 (APS) 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 2019 was 4.56, above the national figure of 4.08 and the statistical neighbour figure of 4.36. Hertfordshire is ranked 19th out of all local authorities, in the 1st quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities, behind Southend.



- 8.11 At the end of key stage 4, the majority of Hertfordshire students are in academies: 10612 students compared to 2050 in local authority maintained schools. Comparing their performance, key indicators of both attainment and progress show stronger performance in academies than in maintained schools. 74.9% of students in academies achieved a Grade 4 or above in both English and maths GCSE, 8.8ppts above the proportion of students in maintained schools. The average Progress 8 score of students in academies was 0.16, compared to 0.05 for maintained.

		Cohort	% Grade 4+ in E&M	% Grade 5+ in E&M	Attainment 8	Progress 8
2018	Maintained	2603	65.4	43.8	47.3	0.03
	Academy	9578	76.7	56.4	53.4	0.27
2019	Maintained	2050	66.1	43.2	47.9	0.05
	Academy	10612	74.9	54.0	52.5	0.16

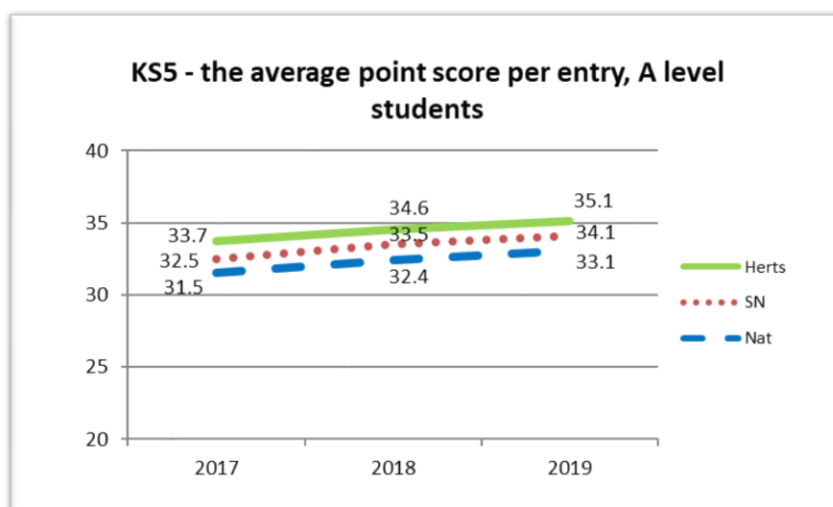
- 8.12 64 of the 79 secondary schools now engage with the Herts for Learning Secondary school effectiveness advisers (SEAs). In total across Hertfordshire, nine schools increased their Progress 8 score in 2019 by a quarter of a GCSE grade or more (0.25+); eight of those nine schools (89%) were schools which SEAs supported. In total, 15 schools increased their Attainment 8 score in 2019 by a fifth of a GCSE grade or more (2.0+); 12 of the 15 (80%) were schools which SEAs supported.

The secondary subject team provided up to three core days of support in each of English, Maths and Science to all 14 maintained secondary schools, irrespective of Ofsted grading. In addition, some schools benefited from additional intervention support in specified subjects. In English, half of these

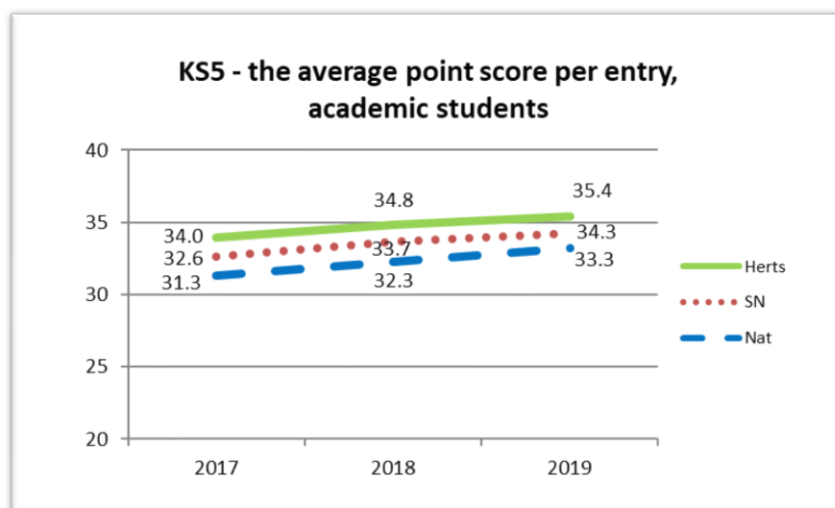
schools increased their GCSE standard pass rate by 2ppts or more, with two intensive support schools increasing their standard pass rate by 7.9ppts and 20.6ppts. In Maths, nine of the schools increased their GCSE standard pass rate, with the largest increase being 12.4ppts in an intensive support school. In Science, eight of these schools increased the percentage of students achieving two sciences at grade 4+.

9. Key stage 5

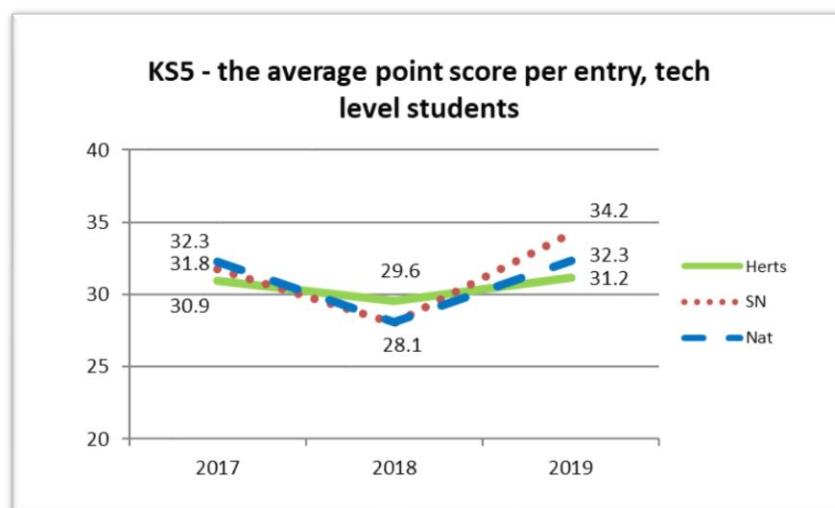
- 9.1 Average attainment is reported separately for students studying different types of qualifications - A level, academic, tech level (level 3 qualifications for students wishing to specialise in a technical occupation or occupational group) and applied general (level 3 qualifications that provide 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 2019 the average point score per examination entry for A level students in Hertfordshire schools was 35.1 (equivalent to a B- grade), compared to 33.1 nationally (equivalent to a C+ grade). The score places Hertfordshire 24th out of all LAs, in the 1st quintile. Hertfordshire is ranked second out of the Eastern region local authorities behind Southend.



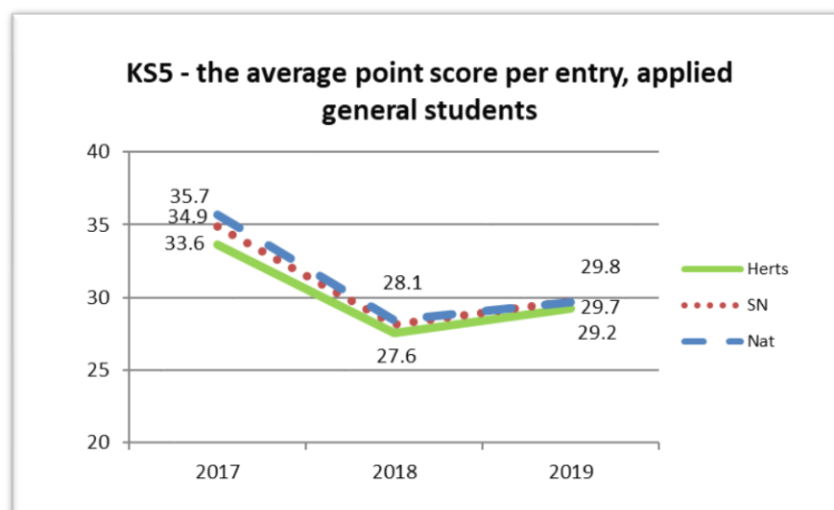
- 9.3 The average point score per examination entry for academic students was 35.4 compared to 33.3 nationally.



- 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 31.2 compared to 32.3 nationally.



- 9.5 The average point score per examination entry for applied general students was 29.2 compared to 29.7 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:

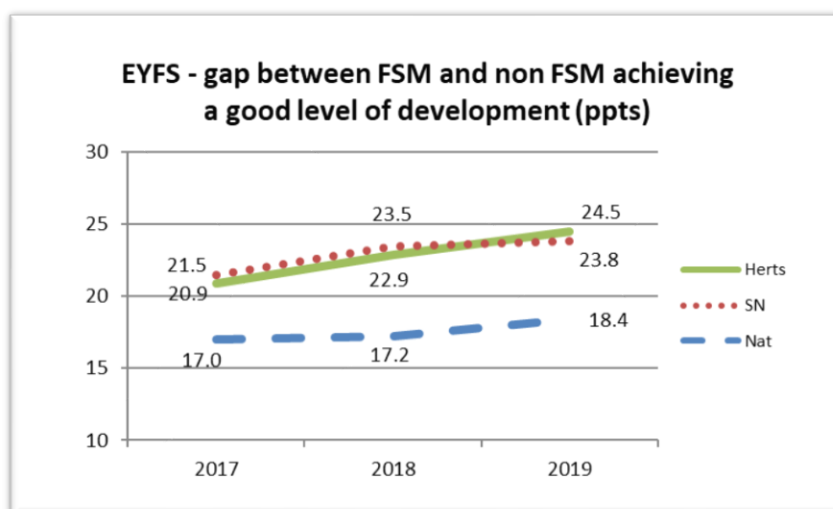
- Eligible for free schools meals (FSM) in the last six years; or
- Looked after continuously for 1 day or more; or
- Adopted from care on or after 30 December 2005, or left in care under a special guardianship order or a residence order

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.

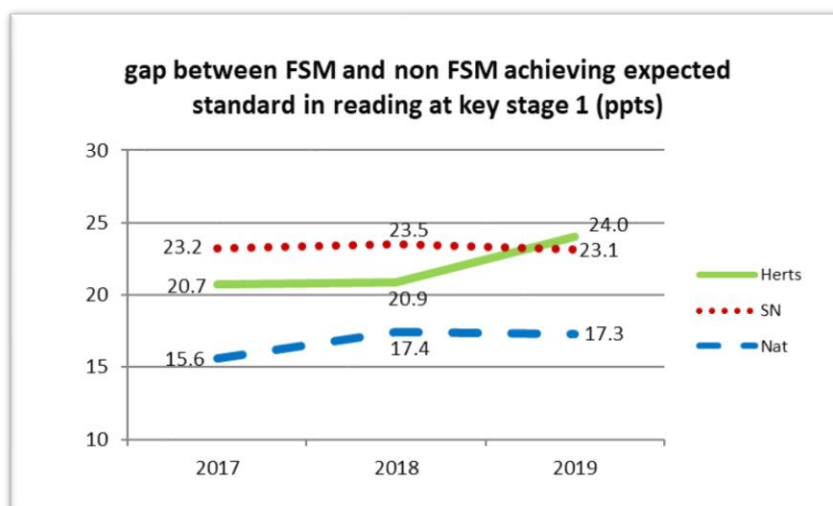
10.3 Since January 2015, children from service families are not included in the definition of disadvantaged pupils in the DfE performance tables. They do however receive an element of the Pupil Premium Grant.

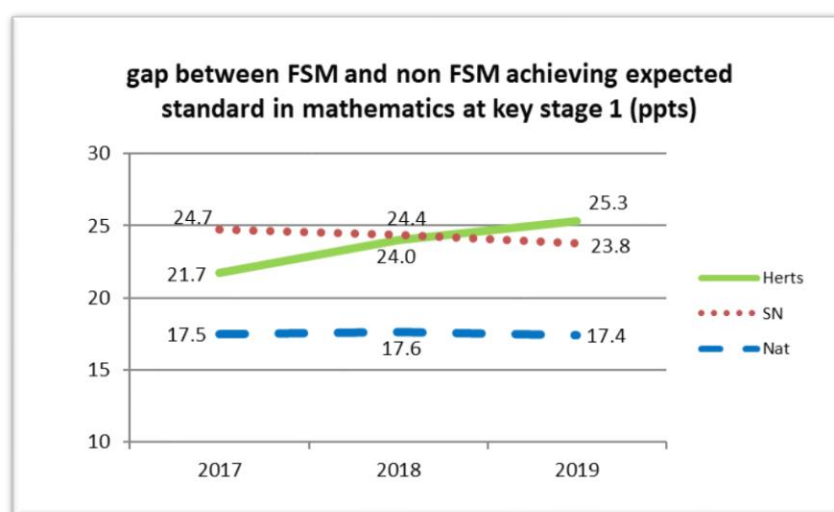
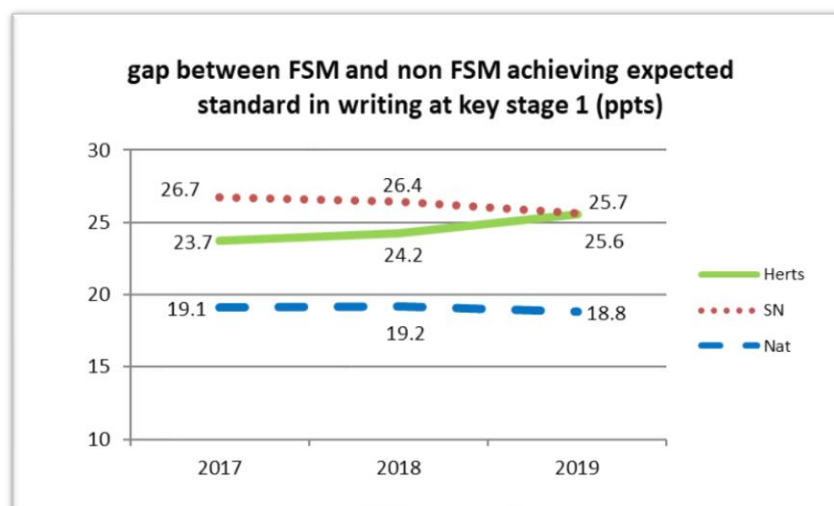
10.4 At the early years foundation stage in 2019 the gap between FSM and non FSM children in Hertfordshire was 24.5ppts, an increase on the 2018 figure of 22.9ppts. This gap is 6.1ppts wider than national, placing Hertfordshire in the 5th quintile. 51.1% of FSM children in Hertfordshire achieved a Good Level of Development compared to 56.3% nationally. 156 schools have accessed support from HfL, either as consultancy or through participation in a project. When the FSM gap of these schools is reviewed, it indicates that the gap

across these schools has reduced on average by 1ppt. 43% of schools receiving support both reduced gaps and improved attainment of FSM eligible pupils GLD% compared to 36% of those that did not engage.

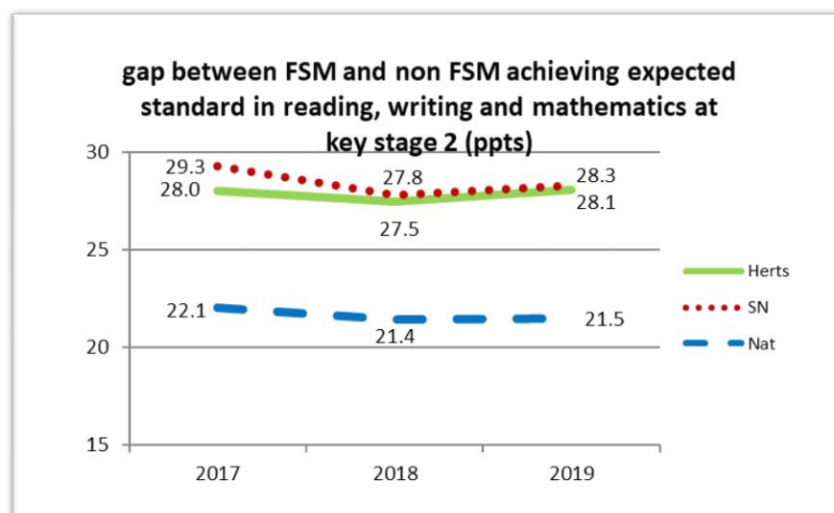


- 10.5 At key stage 1 in 2019 the gap between FSM and non FSM children in Hertfordshire was larger than national in reading, writing and mathematics. The Hertfordshire gaps were 6.7ppts, 6.8ppts and 7.9ppts greater than the national gaps in reading, writing and mathematics respectively. Hertfordshire is placed in the 5th quintile for all three indicators.

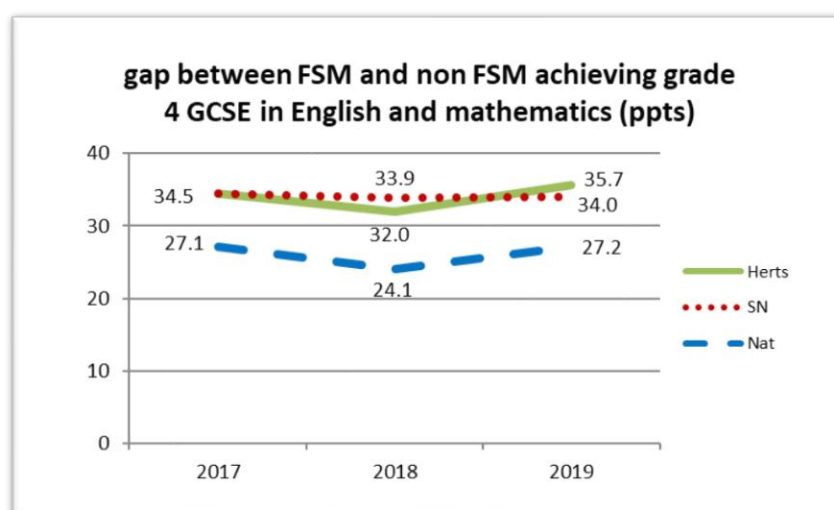


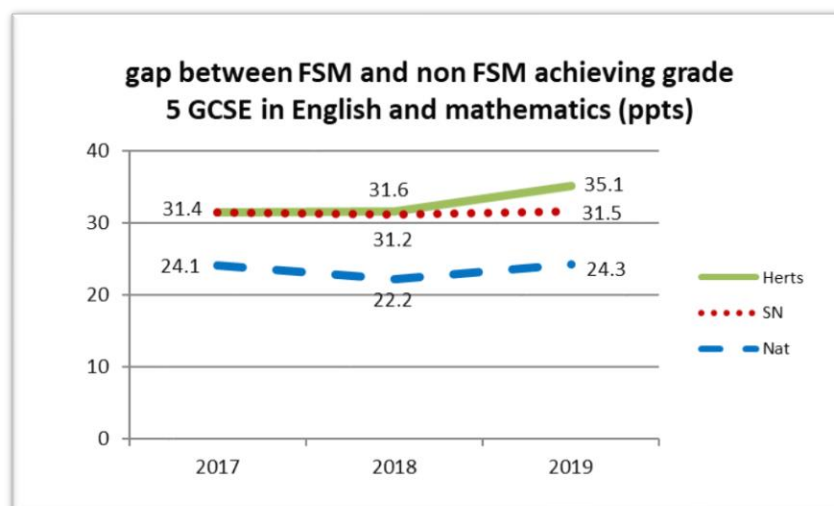


- 10.6 The FSM gap for pupils in Hertfordshire at key stage 2 was 28.1ppts and Hertfordshire is placed in the 5th quintile. This gap is larger than national but lower than our statistical neighbours. 41.7% of Hertfordshire FSM pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics compared to 47.4% of FSM pupils nationally. The focus on improving performance for this group of pupils continues to be a priority in 2019/20.



- 10.7 In 2019, 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 35.7ppts in Hertfordshire. The comparable figure nationally was 27.2ppts. The gap in Hertfordshire has risen since 2018. For the strong pass in English and mathematics measure (grade 5), the gap between the attainment of FSM pupils and non FSM pupils was 35.1ppts in Hertfordshire, compared to 24.3ppts nationally. The gap in Hertfordshire has increased from 31.6ppts in 2018. Where schools engaged with HfL school improvement services around the Pupil Premium agenda, a reduction in gaps was seen in 2018-19. Of the 13 secondary schools on the Great Expectations programme, the Attainment 8 gap between FSM and non FSM reduced in 2019 in 10 and stayed the same in the other three and the Progress 8 gap reduced in 10, stayed the same in 2 and increased in 1.



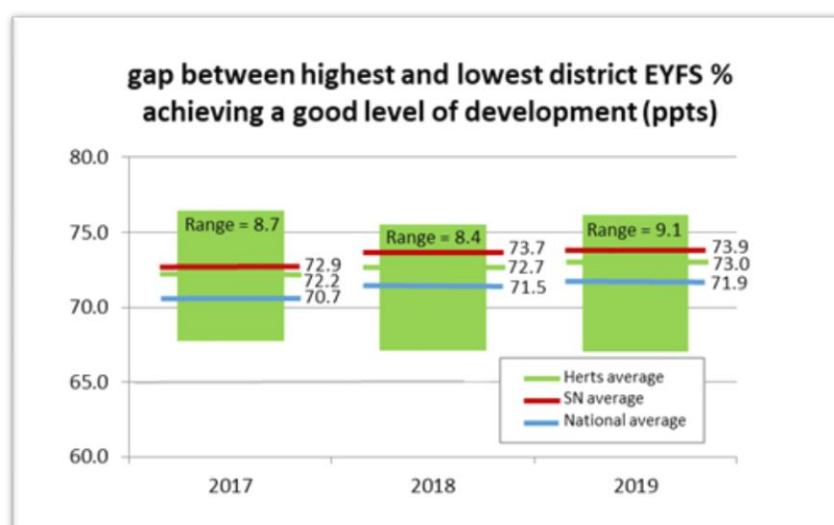


11. Performance of Children Looked After

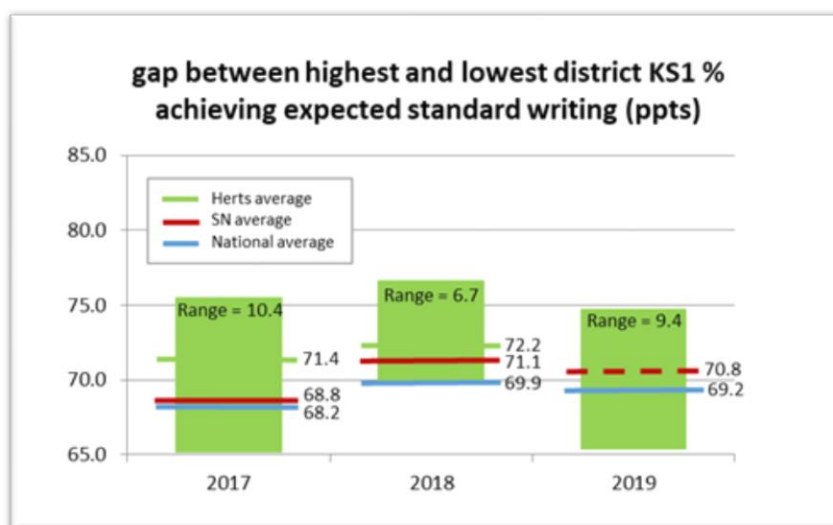
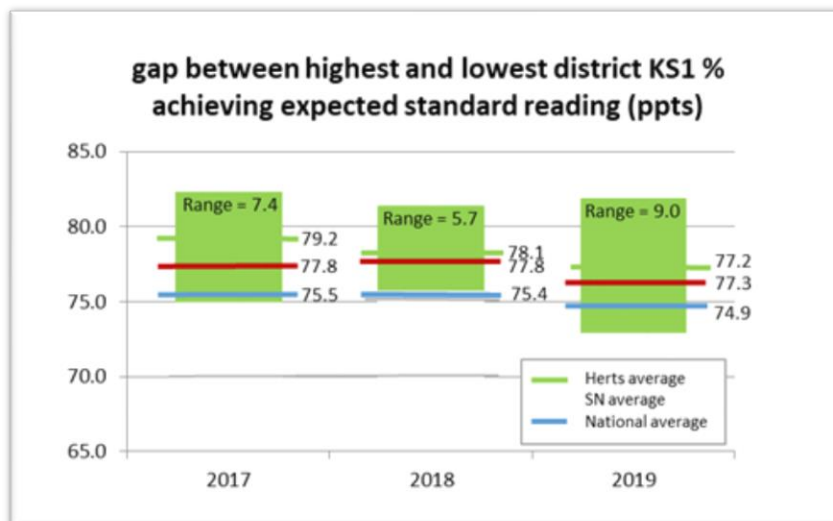
- 11.1 The Department for Education requires that the NCER (National Consortium for Examination Results) and its member authorities must not reproduce data related to Children Looked After within any publication before the Statistical First Release, due at the end of March 2020.

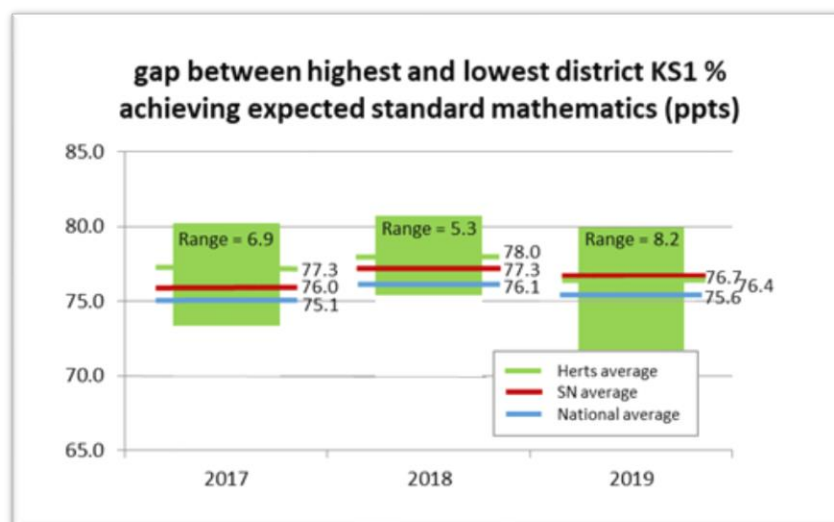
12. District variation

- 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 increased by 0.7ppts from 8.4ppts in 2018 to 9.1ppts in 2019. Watford was the lowest performing district at this key stage and St Albans was the highest. The most improved districts in 2019 were North Herts, St Albans and Stevenage.

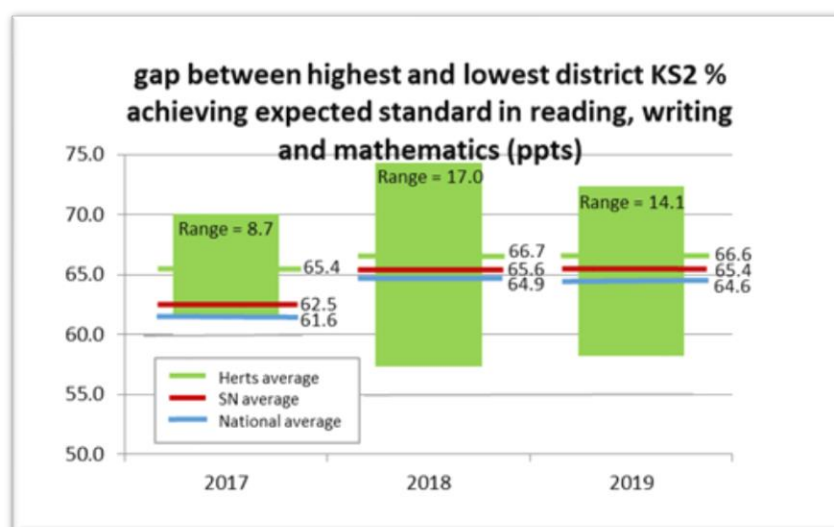


- 12.2 At Key Stage 1 the gap between the highest and lowest performing districts for the percentage of children achieving the expected standard has increased by 3.3ppts in reading, by 2.7ppts in writing and by 2.9ppts in mathematics. In reading all districts achieved an expected standard above the national average; in writing all districts except Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield achieved an expected standard above the national average; in mathematics all districts except Broxbourne, Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield achieved an expected standard above the national average. St Albans was the highest performing district for all three indicators.

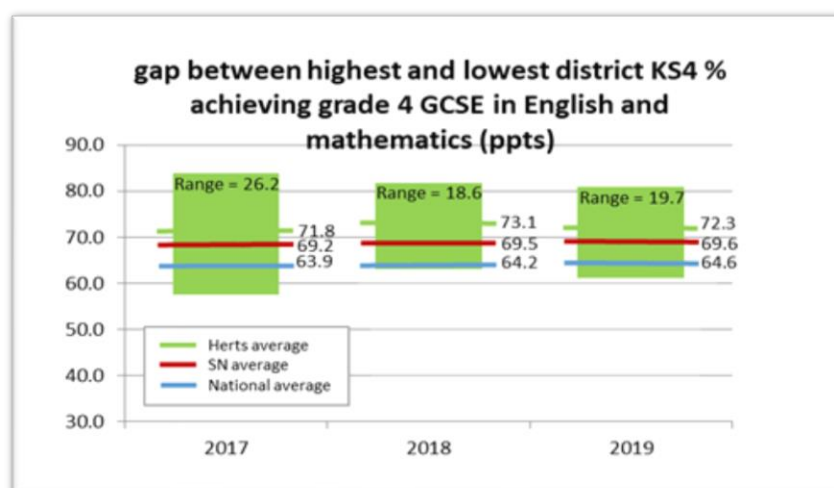




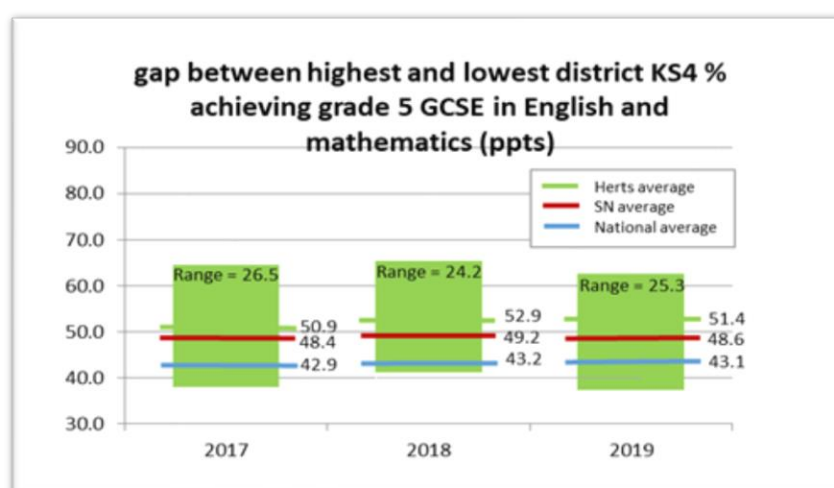
- 12.3 At Key Stage 2 the gap between the highest and lowest performing districts for the percentage of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has decreased by 2.9ppts. Three districts achieved an expected standard below the national average: Broxbourne, Stevenage 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 19.7ppts, 1.1ppts higher than in 2018. All districts except Broxbourne and Stevenage achieved a level above the national average. Three Rivers was the highest performing district.

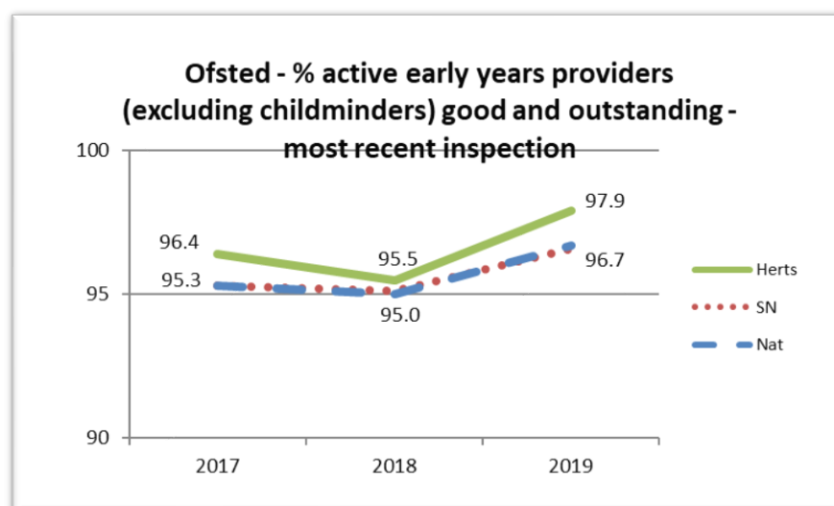
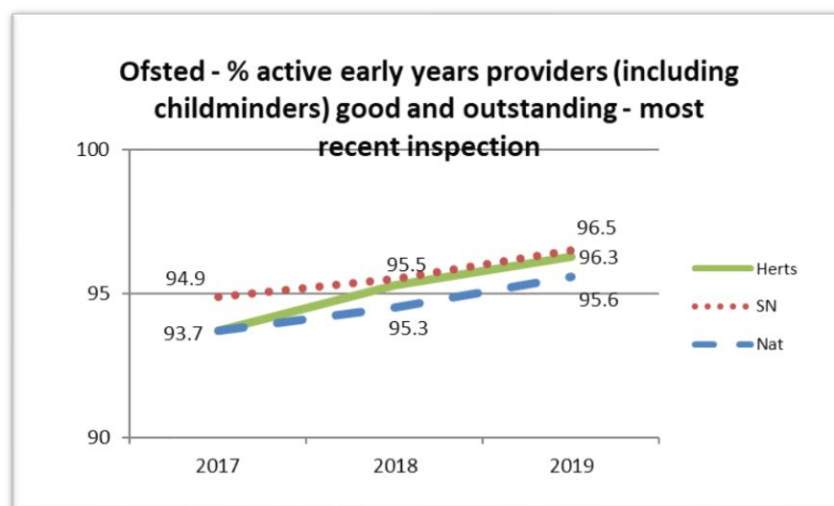


- 12.5 For the strong pass in English and mathematics measure (grade 5), the gap between the highest and lowest performing districts was 25.3ppts, 1.1ppts higher than in 2018. All districts except Broxbourne and Stevenage achieved a level above the national average. St Albans was the highest performing district.



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

- 13.1 At the end of the academic year, 96.3% of all Early Years providers were judged good or outstanding. This was above the national figure by 0.7ppts and 1ppt higher than the comparable figure for 2018. If childminders are excluded from the analysis 97.9% of providers were judged good or outstanding, 1.2ppts higher than the national figure and 1.3ppts higher than that for statistical neighbours.



- 13.2 At the end of the academic year 2018/19, the percentage of all schools judged good or outstanding, the recognised benchmark, was 88.2%, higher than the national figure of 86.0% and higher than the Hertfordshire figure at the end of August 2018 (87.9%). At the end of August 2019 Hertfordshire was ranked 61st in comparison to other LAs and is in the 3rd quintile. The percentage of all Hertfordshire schools judged outstanding by Ofsted at their most recent inspection remained higher than the national proportion at 25.6% (national 19.9%).
- 13.3 The percentage of schools judged requiring improvement was lower than the national figure at all phases (9.4%, national 10.4%). In Hertfordshire 2.44% of all schools were in an Ofsted inadequate category which is below the national figure of 3.59%.
- 13.4 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 2018/19, Hertfordshire was slightly above the national figure for nursery schools with every Hertfordshire nursery school judged good or better.

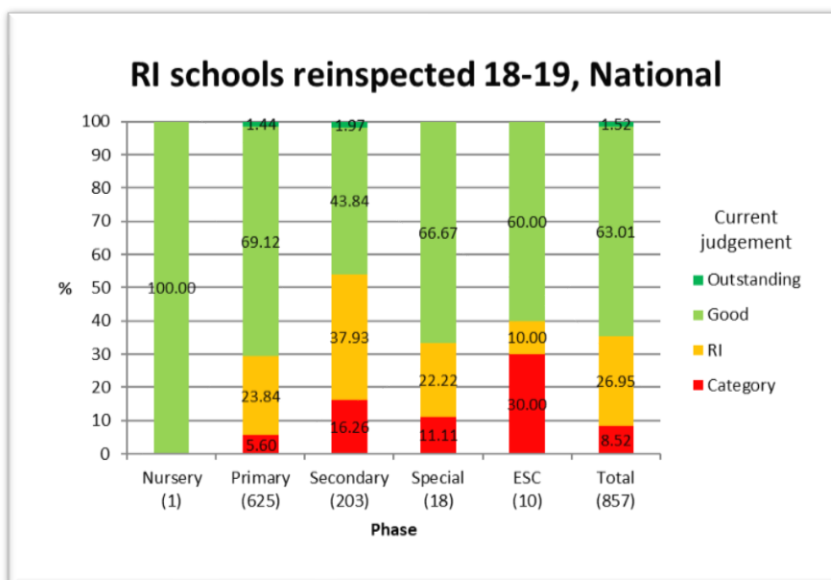
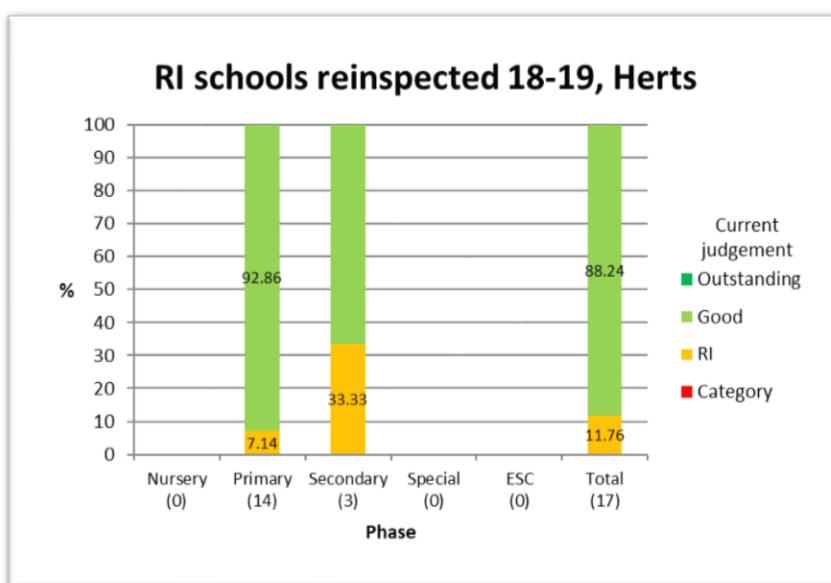
- 13.5 For primary schools Hertfordshire was above both the national (87.5%) and statistical neighbour (88.6%) averages at 90.1%. For secondary schools Hertfordshire was significantly above national (75.9%) but below statistical neighbour (86.6%) figures at 79.3%.
- 13.6 The percentage of Hertfordshire special schools judged good or outstanding was 80.0%, 11.7ppts lower than the national figure. The percentage of Education Support Centres which were graded good or outstanding was 87.5%, 4.5ppts 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.
- 13.7 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 2019 was 21.8ppts (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 73.8% of all schools were good and outstanding. The highest performing district was St Albans, where 95.7% of all schools were good and outstanding.

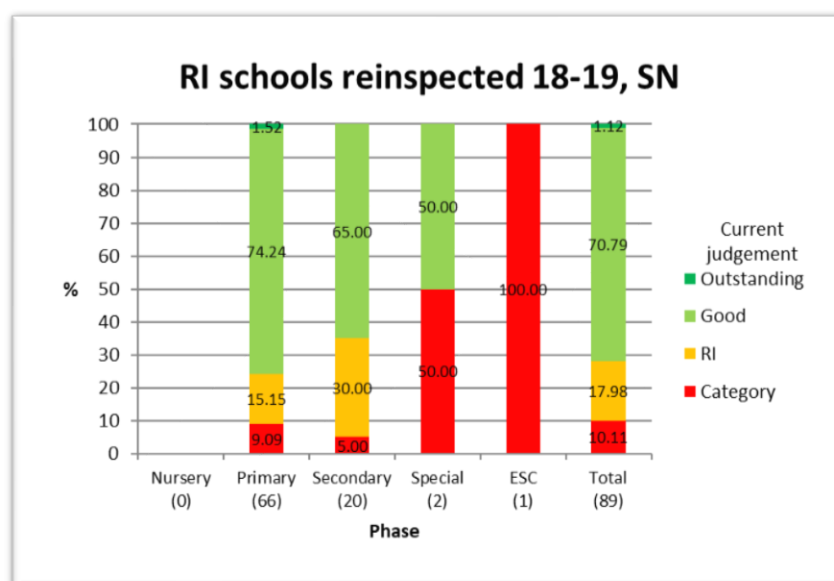
14. School quality – Ofsted inspections during the academic year 2018/19

- 14.1 In September 2015, an Ofsted framework known as the “Common Inspection Framework” (CIF) was introduced. The expectations of schools were higher and inspectors were required to focus more intensively on the quality of teaching and learning. This framework also introduced short inspections of good schools which were for one day only. From September 2019 the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) has been introduced, but the results shown in this paper relate to the CIF only.
- 14.2 During the academic year 2018/19, 94 Hertfordshire schools were selected by Ofsted to receive section 5 inspections or short section 8 inspections. The proportion of schools judged outstanding was 9.6% (9 schools), good 70.2% (66 schools), requiring improvement 18.1% (17 schools) and 2.1% (2 schools) judged inadequate. A lower proportion of all schools inspected were judged as good or outstanding than in the previous year, 79.8% down from 83.9% in 2017/18, compared to an improvement in the national figure from 53% to 62%.
- 14.3 The proportion of secondary schools judged good or outstanding in Hertfordshire (53%) decreased by 15ppts in 2018/19 from 68% in 2017/2018; the proportion of primary/nursery schools judged good or outstanding decreased by 1ppt from 87% to 86% over the same period.
- 14.4 Four of the six special schools and the one Education Support Centre (ESC) inspected in 2018/19 were judged to be outstanding or good.
- 14.5 Two maintained primary schools were judged inadequate in 2018/19. One of them has now become a sponsored academy and will no longer be

maintained by the County Council; a sponsor is currently being sought for the other.

- 14.6 Of the schools which were inspected, 81% improved or remained at the same grade (primary/nursery 83%, secondary 73%, special 67%, ESC 100%). This is a decrease from the previous year when 87% of schools improved or remained at the same grade.
- 14.7 Seventeen Hertfordshire schools previously judged requiring improvement (RI) were re-inspected in 2018/19. 88% of these schools improved to good or outstanding. This is comparable to the national figure of 65% and the statistical neighbour figure of 72%.





15. Progress in priorities identified for 2018/19

15.1 The priorities identified for 2018/19 were as follows:

- (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

Progress was achieved for priority (i) parts a) and b), but not for priority (ii).

15.2 Regarding priority (i) part a), at September 2019, 88.2% of all Hertfordshire schools were good or outstanding. This was an increase on September 2018 when the figure was 87.7%, and is above the national figure of 86%. The proportion of schools graded outstanding (25%) was well above national. At September 2019, 97.9% of all PVI were good or outstanding. This was an increase on September 2018 when the figure was 95.5%, and is above the national figure of 96.6%. There are now 28% of PVI providers judged outstanding, an increase of 2ppts since 2017-18. In September 2019, 67% of primary schools previously judged as Requires Improvement had improved to be judged as good or outstanding. By September 2019, 92.9% of primary schools previously judged as RI had improved to good or outstanding; 21.2% higher than national and 16.4% higher than statistical neighbours.

15.3 Regarding priority (i) part b), excluding section 8 inspections which converted to section 5 or were for outstanding non-exempt schools (i.e. nursery, special, ESCs), in the academic year 2017-18 there were 90 eligible Section 8 inspections, of which 12 schools (13% of inspections) were indicated by

Ofsted to be on the way to outstanding. In 2018-19, there were 27 eligible inspections, of which seven schools (26%) were indicated by Ofsted to be on the way to outstanding.

- 15.3 Regarding priority (ii), the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners stayed the same or widened in all key stages. This remains a key priority for improvement. In schools and settings where HfL work, the Pupil Premium gap is closing. There is a clear correlation between the number of days of HfL support/intervention received and the performance of disadvantaged pupils. In Early Years, in total, 156 schools have accessed either consultancy or been part of a project. When the PP gap of these schools is reviewed, it indicates that the gap across these schools has reduced on average by 1ppt. Where Primary HIPs supported schools, fewer schools evidenced negative PP gaps in 2019 than in 2018. In schools receiving at least four traded visits in both the current and previous year, 5% fewer schools had negative PP gaps in 2019. For those without this support 3% more schools had negative PP gaps in 2019 than 2018. 47% of these schools reduced their PP RWM EXS gap and improved their PP EXS outcomes, compared to 44% of schools who received no support. In secondary, the gap between the performance of PP students and non PP students remains greater than the national gap for all measures at KS4. However, the Attainment 8 gap and the Progress 8 gap narrowed slightly in 2019. In 42 Hertfordshire secondary schools, the A8 gap reduced in 2019, compared to 29 where it expanded. The gap remained the same in the other 8 schools. In 39 Hertfordshire secondary schools, the P8 gap reduced in 2019, compared to 27 where it expanded. It remained the same in the other 13 schools.

16. Priorities for 2019/20

- 16.1 Following the review of 2018/19 performance, the priorities identified for 2019/20 are to:
- A. Increase the number of good and outstanding schools and settings
 - B. Increase the pace of closing the gap for vulnerable groups, whilst maintaining current high levels of attainment.
- 16.2 Officers are working closely with the Herts for Learning Ltd executive team on their improvement plan. Strategies include:

Ensure that all maintained school and setting senior and middle leaders are familiar with all elements of the new EIF and that all those in the Ofsted window (and outstanding schools which will no longer be exempt from inspection) are fully prepared:

- Ongoing training of HIPs/SEAs/SAs/TLAs/EYCs/EYAs
- Sharing of experiences of and lessons learnt from inspections to date with leaders (e.g. via HT seminars and conferences) and HIPs/SEAs (via termly training)

- Continual adaptation of HfL SEA/HIP practice, reports, pro formas and visit procedures in light of the above
- Regular, targeted INSET/CPD for school leaders on the new framework, methodology etc.
- Advice and guidance around SIPs, SEFs etc. in light of new EIF
- Swiftly support & challenge leadership capacity in settings RAYG rated red or amber

Ensure that our RAYG rating, in-school activities and school QA processes are aligned with new EIF and smartly identify schools vulnerable to downgrading at next inspection*:

- Revise RAYG rating criteria, share with HIPs/SEAs/EYAs and disseminate into schools
- Revise RAYG rating for PVI settings and share with HCC for EY handbook
- Review and evaluate new style autumn visits and build on feedback when reviewing JARV and other services
- Continue to adapt services and training to meet the needs of the new EIF, support with curriculum design and Ofsted methodology
- Consider KTS and pre KTS schools and settings through the EIF lens
- Use EIF grade criteria when assessing request for support through the Intervention Fund

* where the term school is used in this context, this also applies to PVI group setting

Ensure that HfL school improvement services reach and impact on more schools and more deeply:

- Working with BDMs where appropriate, implement a win-back strategy to re-engage with schools who no longer use HfL's education services, including outstanding schools
- Proactively reach out to schools who have not engaged with HfL before
- Ensure the effective communication between all those engaged with each school to build a holistic picture of strengths and needs
- Continue to tailor services and consultancy support to ensure it is bespoke to the school's/setting's needs
- Build on autumn visits, SA/TLA visits and BG visits to agree further curriculum explorations and deep dives
- Ensure that all SEAs/HIPs/SAs/ and TLAs and members of the Assessment team are aware of all the services available from all HfL teams that could benefit each of the schools they work with

Ensure that the Great School Framework (GSF) is being used by schools to support school improvement:

- Promote GSF digital portal at every opportunity: at HT conferences & updates, when in schools, with HIPs/SEAs
- Respond to HT feedback about suggested adaptations & improvements
- Refresh GSF termly

- Upload and publicise case studies
- Promote various examples of schools using the GSF for SEF design, SIP prioritisation, governor/SLT strategic planning, peer to peer school reviews etc.

Continue to communicate the moral imperative and urgency of closing the disadvantaged gap:

- Promote this agenda at every opportunity, linking to expectations of EIF: at HT conferences, HT seminars, company updates, team meetings, HIP/SEA training, governor training etc.
- Promote PP plan with Education Services Team at January training meeting
- Work closely with PP champions from Business Services teams to develop a company-wide strategy to closing the gap
- Seek opportunities to use case studies from Great Expectations programme and their authors at training events
- Ensure maximum number of schools represented at Pupil Premium conference in June/July 2020
- Promote High Performance For All training
- Celebrate good practice in PVI settings at the Quality Improvement Forum
- Complete PVI 'closing the gap' visits using learning to disseminate exemplary work and inform CPD programmes

Support school leaders to better understand the barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils in their school/setting and learn from proven strategies to overcome specific barriers:

- Encourage more leaders to complete the HfL PP audit (80+ completed to date)
- Support leaders to action plan from the audit
- Ensure all HIPs/SEAs/EYAs are familiar with the Great Expectations volume 1 case studies
- Engage leaders in dialogue re lessons learnt from Great Expectations volume 1
- Share PP reading lists at HT seminars, HT conferences etc.
- Promote PP case studies on GSF
- Engage PVIs and schools in using the transition level of need criteria to share relevant & pertinent information about individual children

Prioritise schools with biggest gaps for intensive support in closing the gap:

- Identify schools with biggest gaps in past three years and communicate with them, offering support
- Identify schools with most success in closing gaps, learn from them and enlist their support for schools with significant gaps
- Offer peer to peer support, HfL PP reviews and SEA/HIP support
- Identify schools for PP Brokerage Grant visits/Intervention Fund support
- Design INSET on effective use of PP funding

- Support schools in evaluating the impact of their PP strategies and in writing new strategies that are compliant and will be effective
- Use individual setting achievement data to identify and support settings where there are significant proportions of children below expected stage of learning and development or that make little progress
- Provide support to up to 60 nursery classes with high proportions of children with vulnerable characteristics that pose barriers to learning

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 report contents.

Background Information

- *Hertfordshire Strategy for School Improvement 2014-17*

http://www.thegrid.org.uk/leadership/improvement/documents/herts_strategy_school_improvement.pdf