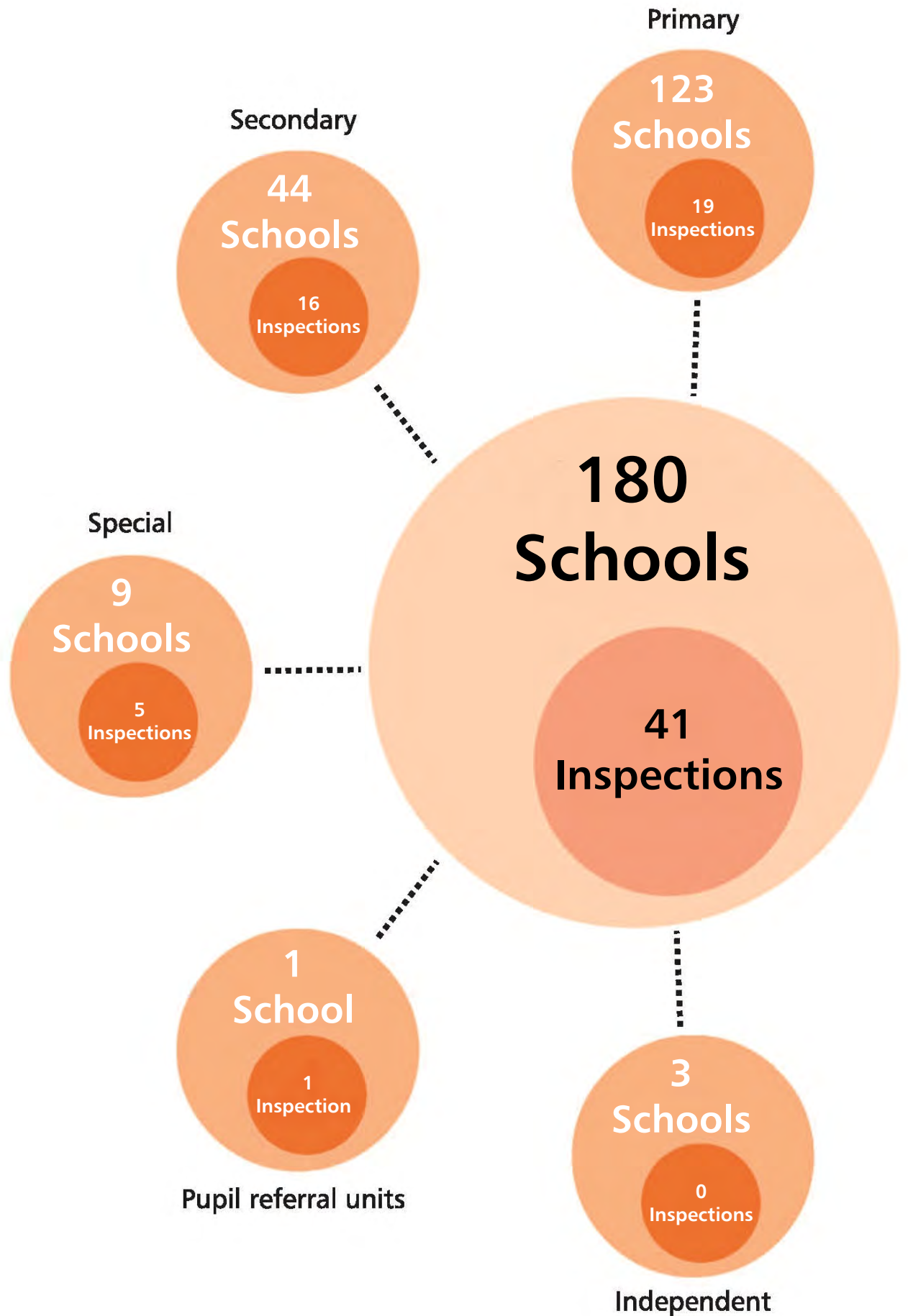


The Report of the Director of Education and Skills



Figure 1: Schools and Inspections 2014/15





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Executive Summary

1. This is my second report as Director of Education and Skills. Improving the quality of education is a central part of the regeneration programme of the council. Elected members recognise the importance of strong outcomes for children and young people in schools, colleges and academies and it is the council's aspiration that all providers will be judged as 'good' within the next five years. There have been some significant improvements in Northumberland in the last year specifically in relation to the recommendations made in the focused inspection of October 2013. Ofsted have continued to monitor progress and although there have been some disappointing individual inspection results in some schools and academies, there have also been many reports containing positive feedback and outcomes. Not only are these schools praised for the improvements they have made, but also the Authority has been congratulated for the changes made to the quality of support and challenge it now offers.
2. This annual report is a self-evaluation of both the position of schools and the impact of the Local Authority. A wide range of evidence is used including achievement data, visits to schools, reports from Ofsted and feedback from parents, children, teachers, headteachers and governors.
3. It needs to be read in conjunction with the service statement that has been written after a wide ranging consultation and which sets out the challenges and strategy of the Authority over the next three years.
4. An annual operational plan, with milestone targets, has also been developed for each of the key areas of our work. Headteachers and governors have appreciated the opportunity to engage in a real consultation on the direction of the strategy.
5. Evidence shows that senior officers and elected members now provide stronger leadership and used the support and challenge from Her Majesty's Inspectors more effectively in 2014/2015. Elected members and the School's Forum are better informed by more accurate briefings regarding outcomes for children and young people.



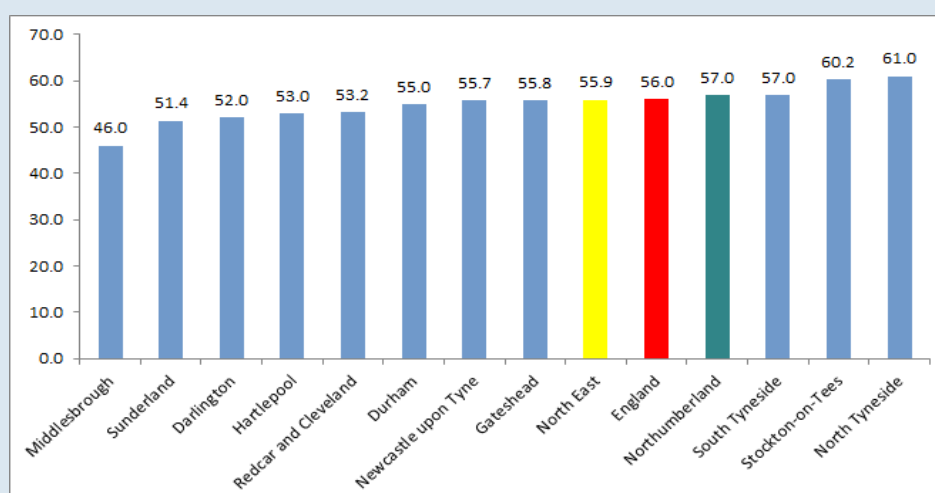
6. Leaders from schools and academies share more accurate evaluations of pupils' outcomes with the local authority. The refreshed school improvement service provides additional intelligence. Local authority officers contribute to a variety of information sharing events including, whole school conferences, partnership meetings, head teachers meetings, governors meetings and parental fora.
7. A key mechanism in this drive for improvement has been the introduction of the Northumberland Learning Partnerships (NLP), which are alliances of schools and academies across geographical areas. Their aim is to improve standards by sharing good practice in teaching and leadership. There is strong support for this approach from schools and recognition that the Local Authority has a key role to play in system leadership in Northumberland.
8. Ultimately it is the responsibility of governing bodies of schools and academies to provide a good quality of education to children and young people. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure this is happening and if not to hold them to account. In the last year the authority has served six warning letters and established two Interim Executive Boards in schools where governance has not worked. In many schools excellent governance is driving forward school leadership but we need to build on this so that it becomes the norm across all schools.

In 2015 GCSE results improved and Northumberland was cited by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector as an example of a Local Authority moving quickly in the right direction

9. The local authority has prioritised improvement work on the weaker outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4. Three school commissioners and a fourth to be appointed in January 2016 lead a team of partnership coordinators and school improvement partners.
10. Despite the action in 2015, the impact of some of this work has yet to be seen. In some schools and academies where there has been a legacy of under achievement and weak leadership it was too late and the school has been judged to require special measures. Far too many secondary schools in Northumberland currently require special measures and it is a top priority of the Council to ensure that action is taken immediately to address the situation. However in 2015 there has been a great improvement in GCSE results and this bodes well for future inspections.

Northumberland schools improved their GCSE outcomes in 2015

Figure 2: Proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs, A*-C including English and Mathematics in 2015 (September Figures)

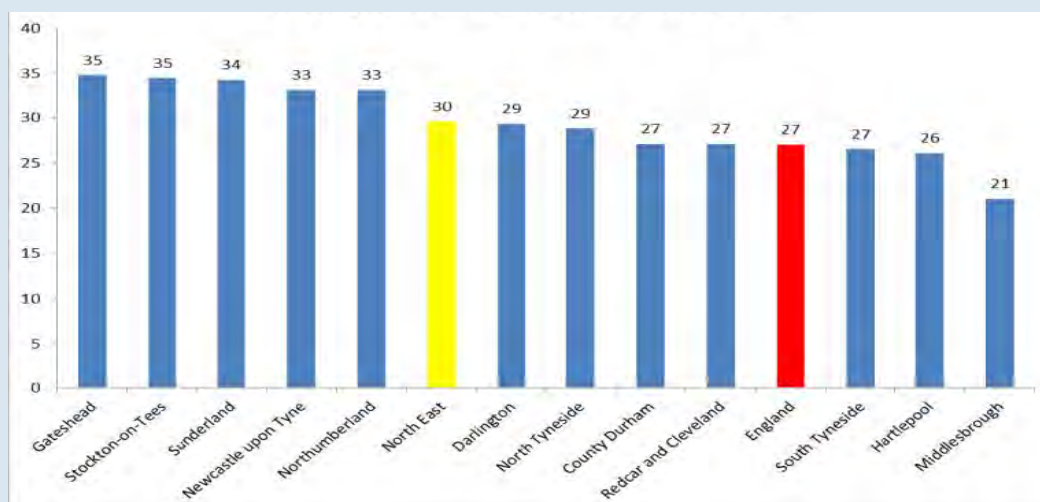




11. We recognise that progress in the early years is vital. The proportion of 2 and 3 year old children taking up childcare opportunities improved in 2015 and is now above the national average. In reception the number of children reaching a good level of development increased by 15% and is now in line with the national average. By the end of Year One the proportion of pupils passing the phonics test improved and is above the national average. This high attainment is continued at the end of Year 2 where children achieve above average levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
12. The results of standard assessment tests (SATs) at the end of Year 6 continued to improve and are now above the national average.
13. 89% of children are in good or better Primary schools, which is a higher proportion than that found nationally
14. Generally, pupils with special educational needs performed well, but a worrying trend of increased exclusions flags up a concern about the support available for children with behaviour difficulties.
15. Despite this positive picture there are still some concerning areas in First and Primary schools. Although the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers is closing, the pace and consistency of improvement is not good enough. The variation in progress that children make between Key Stage 1 and 2 in similar schools varies considerably and in a minority of schools requires improvement. Generally, girls still outperform boys across most stages and subjects.
16. The Free School Meal (FSM) gap for students in Key Stage 4 (KS4) has narrowed but is still too wide in several schools and academies. This is a key priority for improvement.
17. In 2015, only 55% of children were in Secondary schools (includes Middle schools) judged to be good or outstanding. However eleven schools achieved GCSE results above the national average and twelve schools improved on their 2014 performance. This improvement shows that Northumberland is one of the fastest improving authorities across the North-East. We believe this bodes well for the for the next round of inspections.

The FSM gap for pupils at Key Stage 4 is narrowing but is still too wide

Figure 3: Difference between the proportion of FSM and non-FSM pupils securing five or more good GCSEs including English and Mathematics in 2014



Where are we now?

Ofsted Case Study - 2015 (www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/northumberland)

"In October 2013 Ofsted conducted a focused inspection in the local authority. This revealed fundamental weaknesses in the approach to school improvement. Much of this arose from the impact of isolation. For example, the lack of first-hand knowledge of schools leading to a lack of sharp challenge and an over-reliance on published data. Senior leaders of school improvement did not have a coherent school improvement strategy, school to school support, already difficult because of geography was floundering."

"This was a watershed moment for the local authority and a change in the political will of the council. Initially, relationships with Ofsted were strained but there followed substantial changes in local authority personnel and with this a change in philosophy and ambition. The school improvement team are led by an ex-Senior HMI and challenge meetings are candid conversations about schools and local intelligence."

18. Elected members reinforce the vision that an improvement in outcomes for pupils of all ages is central to the council's ambitious plans for economic growth and greater employment. There is a stronger commitment from schools to work with the local authority and collaborate together; collaborative working has improved across Northumberland. We are reviewing resources allocated to schools and the impact they have in supporting and challenging schools. In particular we are looking at the ways we support children with special educational needs and disabilities and those at risk of missing out on education. The education service has improved its communications with head teachers. A good example of this is the development of the www.education-northumberland.com website which links to the new Local Authority website at www.northumberland.gov.uk.
19. On the wider safeguarding, health and well-being agenda, the education service is refocusing its efforts on anti-bullying work through the Show Racism the Red Card programme and its work on challenging homophobia, with Northumberland recently being awarded the most improved Council on the Stonewall Education Index (14th out of 47 compared with 25th out of 40 last year). Child sexual exploitation and the Prevent agenda are both high on the council's list of priorities.
20. The authority is working in partnership with the local further education college, employers, schools and other partners to improve employment and training opportunities. The LA is looking at creative ways to extend apprenticeship provision across the county.
21. The authority needs to further refine the system it has introduced to report on school performance. It is based upon an Ofsted model and uses a range of factors including the most recent inspection, pupils' achievement and the quality of leadership and teaching. Through reports to each school, the local authority makes clear challenge and the support it can provide. School leaders are left in no doubt about the priorities for improvement.



22. The local authority has introduced a new system for sharing secondary pupil achievement data, which has been agreed by high schools. New data collection and analysis systems are under development for primary and middle schools and a conference to discuss life without levels has been held. Each school will be given autonomy regarding choices of assessment systems but partnership working will be encouraged. Secondary head teachers in particular appreciate the closer scrutiny by the local authority, whilst the closer monitoring of data is an integral part of the package of support and challenge developed for schools.
23. During the current academic year, the local authority has deployed its formal powers of intervention promptly and decisively. Several schools have received formal warning notices following a breakdown of leadership and governance. Several letters have been sent to academies, Ofsted and the Secretary of State to express concerns about academy performance. One secondary school has had an IEB established. It will be for the Department of Education to decide if academy sponsors are available for schools in special measures.
24. The brokering and commissioning of support for schools is developing well. This is coordinated by the LA and delivered through local teaching schools. This enables the development of appropriate packages of support. For secondary schools, the newly-appointed commissioners and Director of Education have developed strong relationships with individual schools, making more than 100 visits last year.
25. It is too early to see the impact of the improved systems in better inspection outcomes. However, the authority has a better knowledge of its schools and now makes more realistic judgements about their strengths and weaknesses.
26. The authority is building stronger links across the North East, in particular focusing on the secondary sector. Induction programmes for Head Teachers and newly-qualified teachers are in place but have recently been revised to ensure Head Teachers understand the options available.
27. There are national and local leaders of Education in Northumberland, and the LA is carrying out a survey to understand what work they do and how it can be quantified in terms of impact.
28. Governor support is available but has been recently revised to ensure governors understand more fully their role in school improvement. Additional and updated training for Governors to reinforce their key support and challenge role will begin in the new school year.



Where are we now?

29. The authority is attempting to ensure that the Schools' Forum plays a more important role to improve achievement across Northumberland. Membership is being reviewed and work is underway to ensure members have a good understanding of its strategic purpose. More regular meetings are to be introduced and decisions made more transparent.
30. There has been considerable funding allocated to the programme of support for secondary schools. However, this has not always had the desired impact of guaranteeing that every child attends a good school. This funding strategy is therefore being reviewed. More robust measures are now in place to monitor schools' budgets and further detailed information is sought on any budget carry forward. Head Teachers and Governors are asked specifically to note how any budget carry forward is earmarked to support individual school development plans.
31. Whilst many councils have completely ceased to support post-sixteen student travel Northumberland continues to invest, in recognition of the rural nature of the county.
32. An exciting new combined education and leisure facility development for Morpeth has been proposed which could bring up to £189m into the local economy. A similar proposal has been made for Ponteland.
33. The council is investing more than £4million this year in new high schools in Alnwick, Bedlington and Prudhoe. More than £3.3million has been invested in maintaining schools and a further £3.75 million is being invested in extending Ashington High School.
34. Working with the North East Combined Authority we will seek to drive forward the skills and apprenticeships agenda for the county.

The Council's Corporate plan links closely to the Education and Skills Strategy -

- Economic Growth
- Places and environment
- Stronger Communities and families
- Health and Well-being
- Developing the Organisation

It is clearly a moral imperative that we do our bit to allow our poorest children the educational opportunities they deserve. The council believes that if we focus on the child poverty issue and the impact of the pupil premium funding then we will have an impact on achievement of all groups.

Broadly we want to focus on three things in 2016:

1. Making sure that isolated communities are in the best position to recruit and retain good teachers and leaders. We hope to work in partnership with schools and academies to achieve this.
2. Help schools to help themselves by supporting teaching school alliances, and national leaders of education to intervene and support where necessary. It is vital that good teachers are shared around the county and the North East and not cherry-picked by the few.
3. We need to help teachers get on with teaching. The biggest issue we have to tackle in retaining teachers is to ensure that they do not have a daily battle with unruly pupils. Exclusions should be the last resort not the only alternative.





Early Years and Primary Education

35. Across England 85% of Primary schools are good or outstanding; in Northumberland 89% are good or outstanding. Early education has never been stronger, but there are still thousands of children not taking up their government-funded places. As a result, too many of the most disadvantaged children are not ready to start formal schooling. Primary schools have continued to improve, by tackling complacency and focusing on teaching the basics. However the new Ofsted framework and short inspections of good schools will provide significant challenges to schools who have not been inspected in the last few years. The bar has been raised several times in the last five years and it is vital that schools across Northumberland respond.
36. The new inspection regime does not make any allowances for rurality, size of school or structure. Rather, it expects the same high educational standards in all schools. This will provide significant challenges for the large number of small rural schools where capacity is limited and creative solutions have to be formulated to ensure consistent leadership and the full delivery of the curriculum.
37. Early Years practitioners increasingly appreciate their prime role is to teach children, not just provide childcare. There is a wide variety of provision available in nurseries, pre-schools and with childminders. Some primary schools include early years provision in Reception classes and for three and four year olds, others are considering expanding to take children as young as two. In their recent Early Years report, Ofsted identified that most disadvantaged children do best in the more structured school environment.



38. The phonics test was introduced in 2012 and an independent evaluation of its impact by the NFER in 2015 has demonstrated that it has influenced the teaching of phonics and the use of synthetic phonics is now part of the teachers' standards. Behaviour in primary schools across Northumberland and in the rest of England is rarely less than good. Out of more than 16,000 primary schools in England, only 53 are currently judged inadequate for behaviour and safety; in Northumberland there are no primary schools where this is the case.
39. Early education can make a fundamental difference to the life chances of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. What children need is high quality teaching from a young age. While some children receive this from their parents, others do not. The current measure of how well they have progressed is the 'good level of development' indicator by the age of five. Whilst attainment at the age of five is rising for the most disadvantaged in line with their peers, there is little sign that the gap is closing significantly. It is vital that primary schools build strong links with nurseries, pre-schools and childminders, other than the schools own provision, especially if children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds are to get off to a flying start.
40. More than any other factor, what leads primary schools to be good is leaders having a strong commitment to improve the quality of teaching and a clear shared self-evaluation and plan on how to achieve this. The headteacher is instrumental in this and therefore stability and capacity is vital. For some small schools in Northumberland this provides real challenges. Therefore it is vital that partnerships and external support play a major role in improvement. Again, it is the role of governors and the headteacher to seek out partnerships or re-invigorate existing ones. Work with other schools to share good practice in teaching is vital.
41. The Local Authority, multi-academy trusts (MATs) and national and local leaders of education (NLE/LLE) all play a vital role in facilitating partnerships and making the system hold together.



Secondary Education

42. In 2014 I highlighted the weaknesses in the quality of outcomes over the previous three years. There has been a significant improvement in GCSE results in 2015; however for many secondary schools this has come too late to head off an Ofsted judgement of inadequate or requires improvement. Despite this improvement there is still a very long way to go if secondary schools are to build upon the success found in primary schools.
43. The lower performance in secondary schools in Northumberland cannot be accounted for either by poverty or differences in school funding, although obviously these are crucial factors. London has higher levels of pupil disadvantage than any region in the country, yet consistently performs above average. Although London is perhaps not a suitable comparator for Northumberland, pupil disadvantage does not appear to have such a significant impact in our primary schools where there are many examples of schools delivering outstanding results for the most disadvantaged. Similarly, an analysis of per pupil funding does not reveal a significant geographic bias that can account for the disparity in outcomes. The average annual allocation per pupil in secondary schools for 2014/15 was £5,216 and in Northumberland it was £4,299. However several of Northumberland's secondary schools are relatively small and therefore cumulatively receive less total funding, which in turn makes economies of scale and flexibility of staffing less easy to achieve. Once again this flags up the importance of partnership working and sharing of resources between schools.
44. The Ofsted report 'Key Stage 3: the wasted years?' found that it is in the first years of secondary school where too many pupils fall behind. Assessment and progress tracking was not well developed at Key Stage 3 and teaching sometimes did not build upon pupils' prior learning. This meant that lessons were not well pitched to challenge the most able. In too many cases secondary schools classes were taught by non-specialist staff, particularly in modern foreign languages. In extreme cases pupils repeated work they had already mastered in primary school. The middle school structure in some parts of Northumberland adds a new dimension to this issue. Often there is low take up of English Baccalaureate (EBACC) subjects that cannot be accounted for by prior attainment at the end of Key stage 2.
45. The achievement of pupils from low-income backgrounds is one of the ongoing weaknesses in our education system, although there were some early signs of improvement in 2015. The gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at KS4 remains wide at 27% nationally but even wider at 33% in Northumberland. Leaders across all sectors must see the achievement of this group as a priority. In particular, governors should be driving improvement and challenging senior leaders where improvement is not happening. Often the impact of pupil premium spend is not understood and there isn't a clear line of sight between spend and academic impact.
46. In particular, within the disadvantaged cohort, the most able students and boys fail to make the progress they should. An Ofsted report identified that often low aspirations seem to be at the root of this issue. The Sutton Trust's report 'Missing Talent' demonstrates very clearly that pupils from low income backgrounds, particularly boys, are the group who, despite achieving well at the end of Key Stage 2, fail to fulfil this potential at GCSE.
47. Poor behaviour is much more prevalent in secondary schools than in primary schools. For behaviour policies to work they must be applied consistently by all teachers across the school. Senior leaders must support teachers to enable them to teach. In too many schools, behaviour outside the classroom is reasonably pleasant and orderly but low level disruption in lessons continues to act as a barrier to learning.
48. There are a number of examples in schools and academies where headteachers clearly lead by example, creating a disciplined environment where both pupils and staff can flourish.



Education and Skills Post 16

49. Nationally, the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) has been falling steadily since 2011. The new requirement that all 16- and 17-year olds participate in some form of education, employment and training has had an impact. However the proportion of young people aged over 18 who remain NEET remains a concern in several parts of the country. In recent years in Northumberland we have developed a much better tracking system and now have far fewer young people whose destinations are 'unknown'.
50. One of the most common reasons that pupils do not sustain their study or employment is because the advice and guidance they received when they chose that route was flawed or insufficient. It is now the responsibility of secondary schools to ensure that good advice is in place. The Local Authority has to concentrate its resources on disadvantaged or at risk groups. Schools that have high success rates concentrate on providing really useful work experience or have well developed links with local business and industry.
51. Performance across school sixth-forms in Northumberland continues to be inconsistent. The geography of the county continues to be a real barrier in some schools. Small sixth forms simply cannot provide the resources or choice of those found in larger schools. Pupils often choose to remain in schools for social and geographic reasons rather than choice based on potential academic outcome. Once again a partnership approach to curriculum delivery will be necessary across Northumberland to ensure that young people are not isolated or disadvantaged by where they live.



52. Northumberland College is the only further education college based in the county. It does not offer A-level programmes but concentrates on Level 3 vocational programmes. In addition, it offers a second chance to learners who wish to complete Level 2 qualifications and adult learners. The prior attainment of learners in the college is in most cases much lower than pupils in school sixth forms. The college was judged to be good by Ofsted in 2013.
53. It remains the case that A-level study and progression to university is regarded by many parents and pupils as the gold standard. All of the secondary schools offer A-levels, and some have a significant vocational level 3 offer. If the county is to succeed there must be a greater focus on a joined up approach to post 16 education and skills development and in 2016 there may be an opportunity for a North East Combined Authority (NECA) to play a greater role in this process.
54. Independent learning providers such as the Northumberland Adult Learning Service (NALS) continue to play an important part in providing apprenticeship opportunities across the county. Despite funding pressures, NALS continues to perform strongly and the Authority is keen to develop its influence and potential in 2016.
55. Apprenticeships have, over time, provided employees with the training and hands-on experience required to succeed in highly regarded, skilled occupations. Traditionally, these have been in crafts such as masonry and carpentry and, more recently in engineering and technological industries. Since 2010, an increase in funding has seen more than two million apprenticeships taken up. In Northumberland at 7% our take up rate is relatively high. Unfortunately, too often the apprenticeship offer has not been sufficiently well matched to employer need. The CBI's recent survey of employers found that almost a third had difficulty recruiting to science, technology, engineering and mathematical (STEM) areas.



Ofsted Inspections

Figure 4: State of Northumberland: most recent inspection judgements for overall effectiveness of all maintained schools as 31st August 2015.

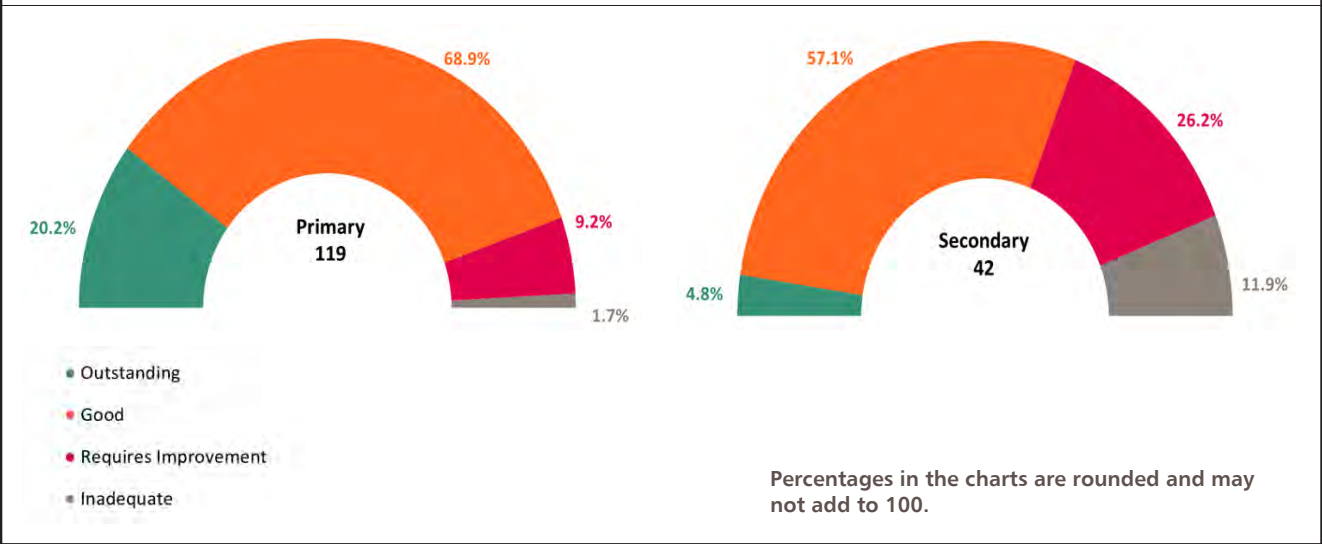
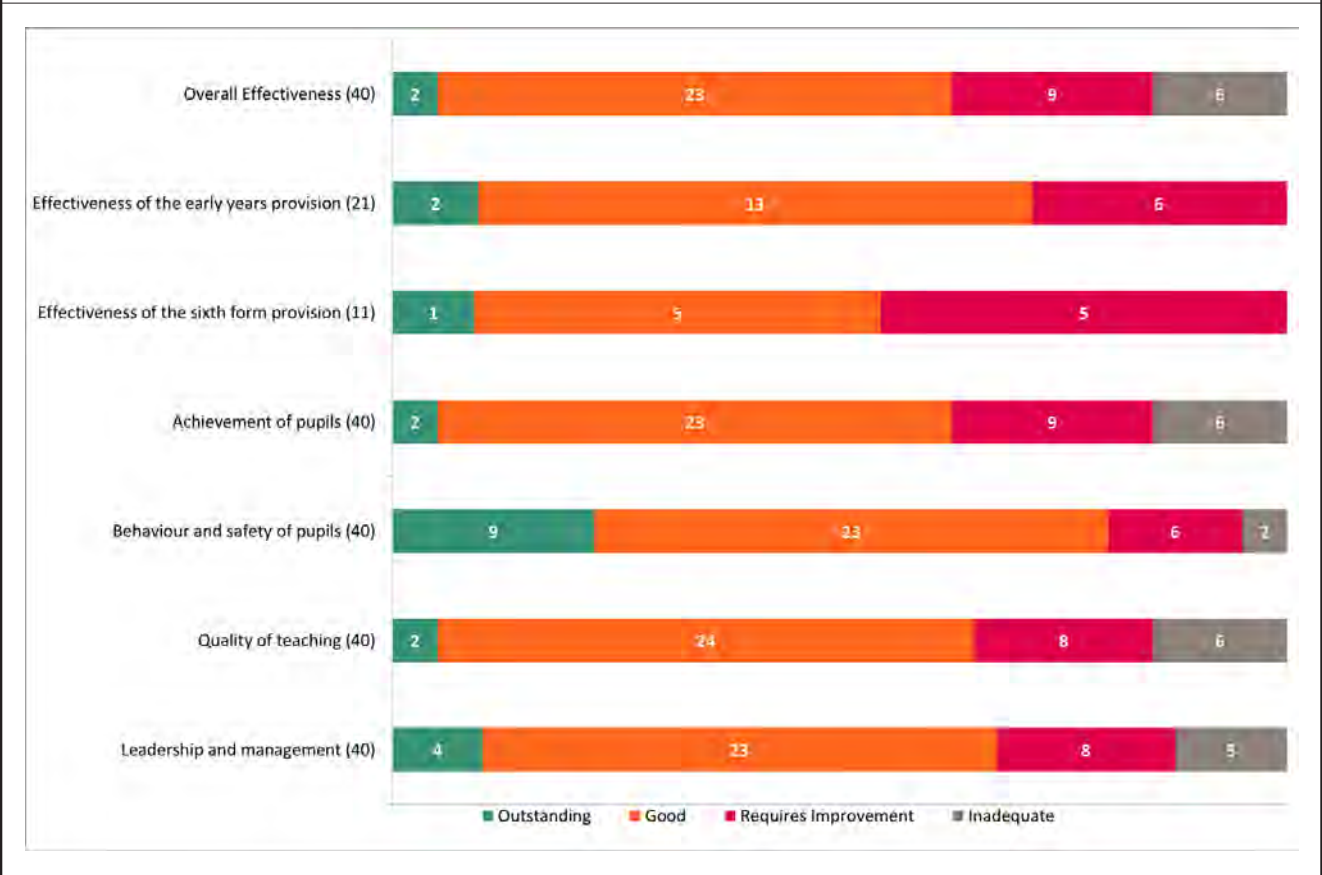


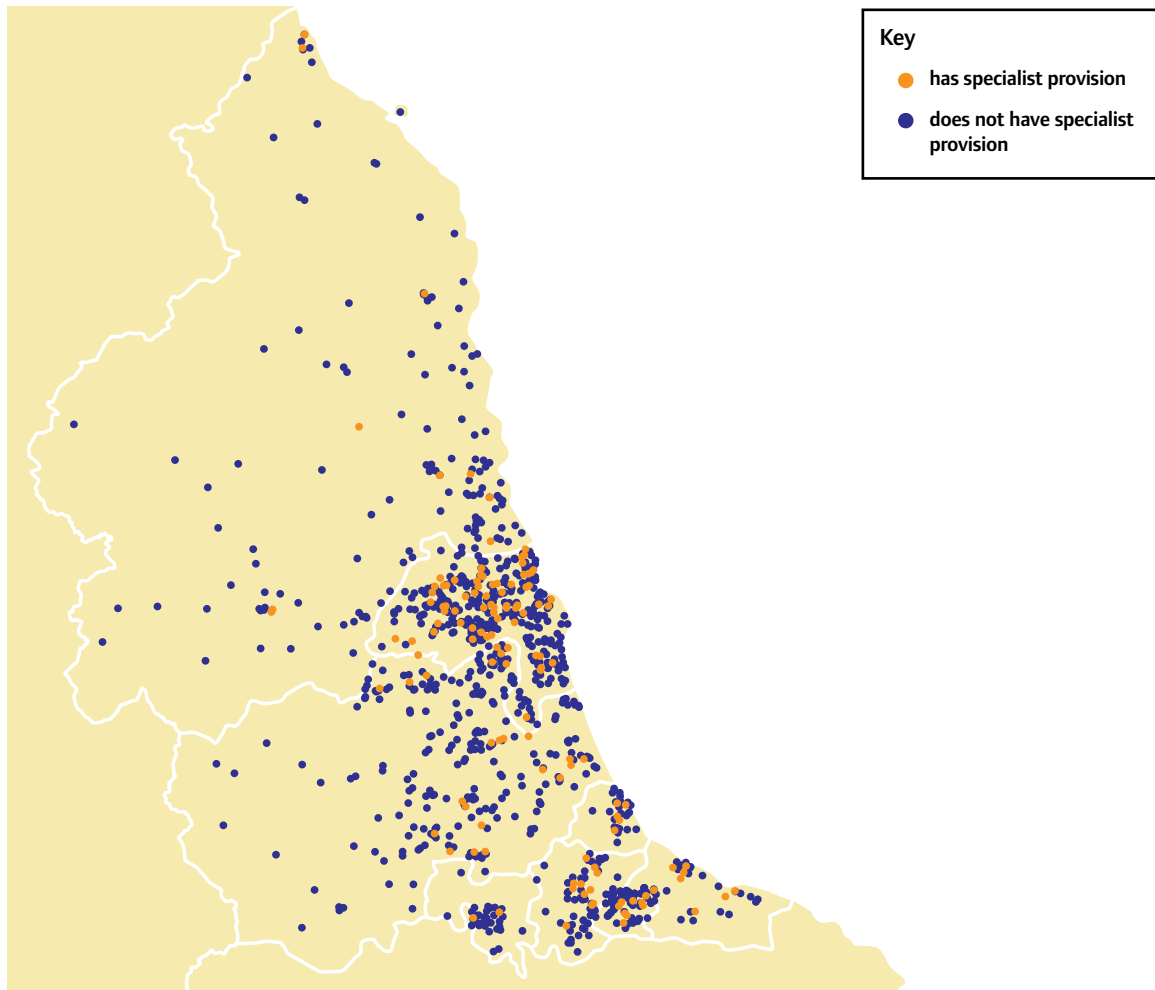
Figure 5: State of Northumberland: Key inspection judgements for schools inspected between 1st September 2014 to 31st August 2015



Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEN/D)

56. All schools and providers of training have significant responsibilities to ensure children with special educational needs and disabilities are taught well, supported effectively and are enabled to reach their full potential. Whether or not these children and young people are able to attain at age related expectations, it is crucial that schools have high expectations of them. Pupils who have been supported by 'School action' or 'School action plus' resources are more than twice as likely to become NEET as their peers at the end of Key Stage 4. Nationally only 7% of pupils with statement of educational needs achieved 5 good GCSEs; in 2015 in Northumberland the figure was 9%.
57. Just under half of pupils with statements - now being replaced with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) - attend a special school. There are 1,043 state funded special schools in England and 9 in Northumberland, plus a pupil referral unit (PRU). All but one of these schools has been rated good or outstanding at their last inspection. Other children are educated other than at school (EOTAS) and the quality of their education is monitored by the Authority's Virtual Headteacher.
58. The Children and Families Act 2014 is intended to ensure that special educational needs are identified effectively, that these needs are met and, in doing so, learners outcomes improve. From May 2016, Ofsted will begin a new form of inspection jointly with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) that will examine the effectiveness of local areas and how they fulfil their duties.
59. One of the key drivers behind these legislative reforms has been parental concern about inconsistency and variation in the identification of their children's needs and the availability of provision. The map shown below in Figure 6 shows the good and outstanding state funded special schools and mainstream schools with resourced provision compared with other good and outstanding mainstream schools without specialist provision. You can see there are large areas of Northumberland where pupils may have to travel long distances to access specialist provision, particularly if the provision nearby does not cater for their particular need. It is important that the Local Authority has a clear curriculum and needs map of provision and this is closely linked to transport options and a development plan.
60. Pupils eligible for free school meals are more likely to have been identified as having SEN/D. There is a concern about the identification process and whether in fact the real need is for better teaching, different approaches, alternative education and assessment rather than a confused process of SEN/D. Nearly 6% of pupils eligible for free school meals were identified as having emotional and behavioural special needs compared with only 1.5% of their peers.
61. Special Educational needs do not end at age 16. In 2014/15 nearly £5.2 billion was spent nationally via the Dedicated Schools grant (DSG) on investment in learners with High Needs. In Northumberland this amounts to £30.4 million. The authority is focusing the work of the schools forum and officers on linking this spend to educational outcomes.
62. The growth in the identification of children who have autistic spectrum disorders and those with profound and multiple disabilities will provide significant challenges for future planning of schools place across Northumberland.
63. Between 2010 and 2015 there has been a large national increase in the number of children who need SEND specialist provision. The number of learners aged 4-16 years increased by more than 13,000 in that time, which is an unprecedented rate of change. This is true of Northumberland too, where the 4-16 years population in our maintained special schools rose from 460 to 630, with additional rises in the post-16 population and those who travel to specialist schools in other local authorities. However, the annual government funding levels for this population do not increase each year, which is a significant challenge for Northumberland.
64. A review of alternative curriculum provision has been commissioned in 2016 linking it to literacy and numeracy outcomes.
65. The Pupil Referral Unit which is intended as a short stay facility for pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 has also begun to have increasing referrals for younger and older children, and its capacity to support these children is under review.

Figure 6: Good and outstanding schools in the North East, by whether the school has specialist provision for those with special educational needs



Good and outstanding schools that provide specialist provision includes both special schools and mainstream schools that provide specialist provision for those with special educational needs. Non-maintained special schools (which are inspected under section 5 alongside maintained schools) are included, but all independent schools are excluded from this analysis, including all 14 non-association independent schools. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2015 and published by 5 October 2015.

School details taken from Edubase at 2 September 2015. Schools included where open on this date.

Source: Ofsted and Department for Education



Priorities for 2015/16

1. Leadership Capacity and Teacher Supply

66. The Authority and school leaders have expressed concerns about the supply of high-calibre teachers and the retention of expert practitioners in Northumberland. It is clear that a number of negative factors across England in terms of recruitment are particularly difficult to tackle in Northumberland. We have jointly commissioned a project to examine local issues and formulate a strategy to tackle this issue.
67. There is particular concern about staff shortages in some subjects at secondary level, including mathematics, English and science. In small schools the recruitment of leaders is particularly problematic. There has been a steady rise in vacancies and temporary appointments.
68. Geographic isolation poses a very significant recruitment challenge for schools. There are three key factors that count against schools in the recruitment stakes; location, performance and intake. Too few initial teacher education partnerships (ITE) include schools with requires improvement judgements. Almost three quarters of secondary schools and a third of primary schools nationally are part of the Schools Direct partnership but this is not as well established in Northumberland. The high proportion of secondary schools in special measures in Northumberland makes recruitment particularly difficult.
69. The current situation is that some schools - often the ones in most need - are finding themselves increasingly isolated. Because of their circumstances, they are cut off from the flow of trainees, new teachers and aspiring leaders. Northumberland schools need a joined up strategy to tackle this problem and in particular enhance the prospects for Middle leaders.

2. School Structures and Academies

70. In Northumberland the debate continues about the two tier or three tier structure of educational provision. The Authority continues to support partnerships who want to consult on structural change but has no preference regarding a model structure across the county. This freedom of individual schools to decide age ranges and structures places a significant responsibility on the Authority to ensure change is managed and does not have unintended negative impact on communities. We continue to support small rural schools wherever and however we can, but the new pressures placed upon them by changes to inspection and funding means it is increasingly difficult for them to provide a good standard of education.
71. The national landscape that schools operate within continues to change. The proportion of schools that are now academies continues to grow. It is the governments' wish that all schools become academies by 2020 and the process is accelerated. Regardless of structure, improvement depends upon oversight and challenge and this now comes from many sources. Before the advent of academies, formal oversight powers sat solely with the Local Authority. Academy Trusts are now accountable to the Regional Academies Commissioner. But the situation remains complex with Ofsted holding the Authority to account for all schools, including Academies in its area.

72. Approximately 10% of schools in Northumberland are academies but this figure rises to nearly 50% when looking at secondary schools. Nationally there are now three secondary academies for every two maintained schools. While many individual schools have gained energy and focus from becoming academies, others have not. This year, nationally, 75% of good local authority maintained schools remained good compared with 74% of academies. In Northumberland however this has not been the pattern and many local authority secondary schools are set to become sponsored academies after being judged to require special measures.
73. Sponsor-led academies were initially created to raise attainment in schools with long-standing poor performance, often in deprived areas. Attainment has slowly improved in most of these academies over time, but the picture remains mixed.
74. Academy converters were initially high-performing schools that were given the option to become academies. The option to become an academy has been opened up to schools with lower performance. Forty-five percent of converter academies are part of multi-academy trusts (MATs). The picture of how becoming part of a MAT affects the quality of education remains unclear, although it is certain that it often improves capacity.
75. The government wants to establish a further 500 free schools in England in the next four years. It is unclear how many of these will be in Northumberland. Often free schools will be all-through schools; sometimes they are set up by faith groups and generally will have a specialised curriculum offer. For example it might concentrate on a vocational offer, academic curriculum or links to a belief system. Only a small minority of the free schools established so far have pupils in Year 6 or Year 11, which makes comparison of outcomes difficult.

3. The Role of the Local Authority in School Improvement

76. Where Local Authorities are effective in school improvement they provide a clear vision, purpose and direction regarding school improvement based upon consensus of all schools and academies. Elected members and officers act as champions for children, young people and parents. Funding decisions are robust and transparent and based upon an independent view of what an area needs. In Northumberland we are determined to continue to fulfil a useful role as the 'third tier' between national government and the local community.
77. We have shifted the role of the school improvement team so that it can provide an accurate and robust evaluation of the quality of schools using a detailed analysis of data and local knowledge. Officers can also ensure that there is good coordination and cooperation with the work of external partners. For example, we share on a routine basis our evaluation of schools and academies with the Regional Schools Commissioner and Ofsted. It is important that where schools are failing, Local Authorities take swift and robust action. We commission school to school support rather than provide it directly. Encouraging schools to work together in partnership is the cornerstone of our strategy.
78. The Education and Adoption Bill may well revise again the statutory powers of the authority, and it is important that we remain agile enough to quickly respond to these changes, to benefit schools, communities, parents and children.

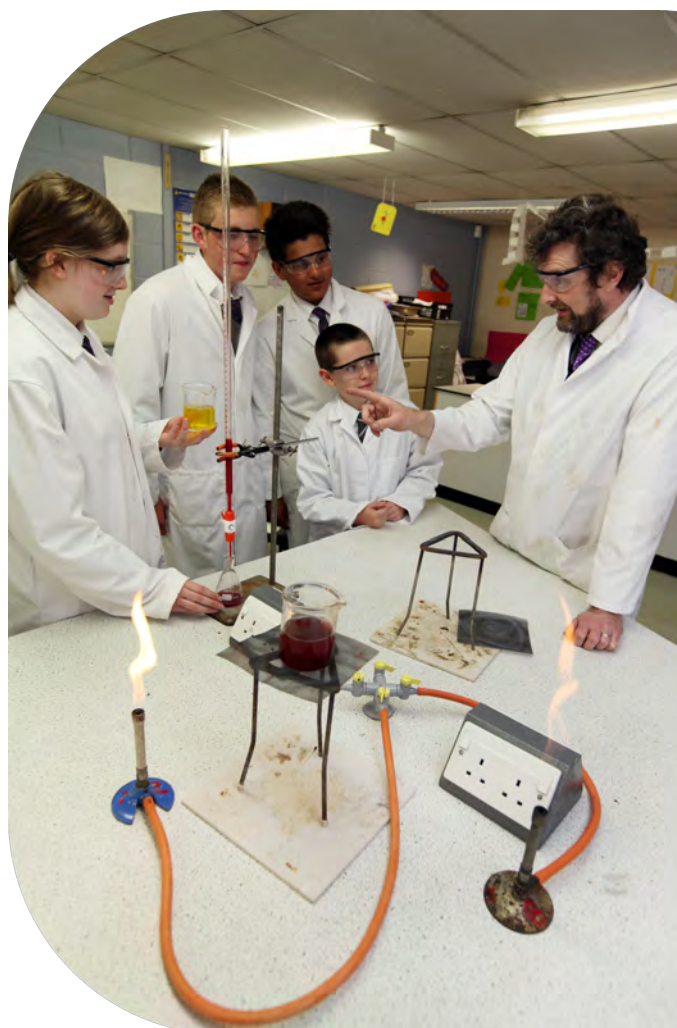


4. Supporting the Most Vulnerable

79. The disadvantaged gap between the achievement of children from low income backgrounds and their peers is closing but is still too wide. It is a focus for the Authority and all its partners. Of particular concern are white British boys who under-perform very significantly in the mastery of literacy and in achieving a basic level qualification at the end of key stage 4.
80. There are around 70,000 children looked after by Local Authorities in England. In Northumberland there are 352. The most common reasons that children and young people are taken into care are abuse and neglect. The largest group of children looked after are 10 to 15 year olds. Creating the right context for children looked after to flourish, requires a partnership between social care professionals and schools. In 2014 in England just 12% of children at the end of Key Stage 4 who had been looked after achieved 5 good GCSEs; in Northumberland it was 36.4%. The context is important; many children and young people living in care have been traumatised before entering the care system; around two thirds have special educational needs, but they are not a homogenous group and can vary widely from year to year. There are some common factors however in academic success. Those pupils who were continuously looked after, had placement stability and did not move school during Key Stage 4 are more than six times more likely to leave schools with good GCSEs.
81. Robust oversight and challenge from the Virtual Headteacher for Northumberland has ensured that educational achievement in 2014 was higher than in many comparable areas. The cohort of young people in 2015 was very different with many young people having significant additional needs.
82. Every child looked after has a personal education plan (PEP) and the school is responsible alongside the Local Authority to ensure it is appropriate and challenging and contains SMART targets. The virtual headteacher plays an important role in improving attendance, preventing exclusions, monitoring the destinations of care leavers and driving improvement. Pupil premium spend is monitored closely and looked after children with a statement of SEND are being fast tracked towards an EHCP.

5. Keeping Children Safe

83. In all aspects of our work runs the common thread of keeping children safe. Our officers and school improvement partners consider how well teaching and the curriculum promotes the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils. Our schools do this well, and help pupils develop an understanding and belief in the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance. In a predominantly white British county it would be easy to over-look the threat of far-right extremism but this is something that is emphasized to schools. The PREVENT strategy is something that is highlighted to schools at every opportunity and officers will continue to monitor schools preparedness to counter any such risk.
84. Equally schools work closely with the Northumberland Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure children at risk of neglect or abuse, including Child Sexual exploitation are kept safe from harm.





Conclusion

85. Northumberland's education and skills landscape is a very complex and presents a very varied pattern. The quality of education for children up to the age of 11 has always been judged to be very high, but there is a risk that, due to isolation and relatively small rural schools, this picture is put under threat. At secondary level far too many schools have been judged to be inadequate, but there are signs of recovery. The gap between the most disadvantaged and their peers is beginning to close. Although NEET figures have risen in 2015 this is to some extent due to our much better tracking of pupils who were previously unknown.
86. There are a lot of national initiatives aimed at improving teaching and leadership, but given the complexity of the system and Northumberland's isolation there is a danger that the county will not benefit as much as other parts of the country.
87. There will undoubtedly be a growth in the number of Academies in the next year, particularly at secondary level. There will be an increasingly blurred picture between education and skills and where the 14-18 or 16-18 curriculum offer begins and ends.
88. It is in this context that the Local Authority is very important. It is not a simple task to bring about improvement on a county wide scale. Local authority officers are one of the few elements that are common to almost every part of the system. As a result we can provide a county wide view that aligns with a partnership approach.
89. We have revitalised our workforce by recruiting more recent practitioners, ex-HMI and inspectors to give a more accurate and honest view of the quality of education and skills. Schools will benefit from having this expertise and first-hand insight into the challenges they face. We believe the Local Authority is in a much better position than it was a year ago to drive forward improvement.



Annex 1.

Facts and Figures - about Northumberland

Northumberland is geographically the sixth largest county (5013 km²) in England but with a population of approximately 313,000 people, is the least densely populated (63 per km² compared with 302 in the NE and 406 in the rest of England).

Children and young people aged 0-19 constitute 21.5% of the total population and 4.7% of school age children are from a minority ethnic group.

The 7 largest towns are Ashington, Bedlington, Blyth, Cramlington, Hexham, Morpeth and Alnwick which are set within extensive rural areas and uplands; 16 areas of the county are ranked amongst the 10% most deprived in England with 18.6% children aged below 16 years defined as living in poverty. Although this level is similar to the national average it masks the high level of poverty and deprivation in some defined areas of the county where almost two out of every three children live in households that are dependent on worklessness benefits.

The latest local child poverty measure 2011 (defined as the proportion of children living in families in receipt of out of work benefits or in receipt of tax credits where their income is less than 60% of median income) for Northumberland is 17.4%, which is the lowest rate in the NE. Over the same period the rate in NE was 23.7% and in England 20.1%. As at May 2012 Northumberland had 11,070 children living in 6,040 out-of-work benefits households. Of these, 34% were aged 0-4, 32% aged 5-10, 24% aged 11-15 and 11% aged 16-18. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is 12.7% (national: 15.2%, Source; school census 2015).

At the last census in 2011 it was estimated that 99% of the total population were of white British origin. However, there has been subsequent inward migration from the European Union Accession countries to areas such as Berwick and Alnwick and children from BME groups now constitute 3.7% (School Census 2015) of the entire pupil population. There are 62 heritage languages spoken by children in all schools. Gypsy Roma pupils constitute 0.12% of the population.

The health and wellbeing of children in Northumberland is mixed compared with the England average. Infant and child mortality rates are similar to the average.

Of children aged 4-5 years 9.1% are classified as obese with 17.7% of children aged 10-11 years. The teenage pregnancy rate is similar to the England average, in 2012/13, 38 teenage girls gave birth, which is 1.4% against an average of 1.1%. The rate at which young people are admitted to hospital with an alcohol related condition was slightly above average in 2013/14. The admission rate for young people self-harming reduced in 2013/14 and is slightly lower than average.

The number of children looked after has historically been lower than the national average but has risen in recent years and is now equal. There were 372 children and young people looked after at the end of November 2015, which represents 60 per 10,000, which is average. 81% of LAC live with foster carers, 8% are in residential placements and 8% with adoptive placements.

Over 45,000 pupils attend 180 schools, 123 First and Primary schools, 28 Middle schools, 14 High schools, 2 all age academies, 9 special schools, 3 independent schools, and a pupil referral unit. There is one Further Education college and a small number of private training providers and independent schools. Many schools are small; 64 schools have less than 105 pupils on role (October 2015).

There are a number of different childcare options, 248 registered childminders, 55 full day care settings, 68 sessional day care settings, 71 out of school settings and 6 Crèches.

Annex 2.

The Education and Skills Service

The new national context emphasizes the need to focus public resources on the most vulnerable children and young people and it looks likely that the role of the Local Authority in terms of school improvement will change radically in the next five years. Northumberland Local Authority has responded to this by developing services which are targeted at meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged and providing a service to schools that attempts to support them to intervene early to prevent children's life chances being affected.

We set out our strategy in a number of documents including a strategic statement and measure impact against a range of local and national performance indicators.

The key functions of the education and skills service are summarised below:

- Provision of school improvement services: including, support to schools to meet legal and Ofsted requirements, application of early intervention strategies in those schools causing concern, monitoring performance, promoting strong school leadership, inducting newly qualified teachers and headteachers and promoting the RE curriculum with SACRE.
- Provision of inclusion support services: including, sensory support services, education other than at school (EOTAS), locality inclusion support teams (LIST- under review), parent partnership services, development of inclusive schools, promoting equalities in schools, promoting health and wellbeing including drug and sex education, Portage, providing for special educational needs and disabilities by coordinating education health care plans (previously Statements), providing a Virtual School for looked after children, promoting educational play.
- Promotion of E-learning; including supporting curriculum development and safe use of e-learning.
- Promoting Early Education; including encouraging schools to improve the life chances of 2 -3 year olds from the most vulnerable groups.
- Co-ordinating school organisation; including school place planning and organisation to narrow the gap in achievement between different socio-economic groups, raise standards and tackle surplus places.
- Provide School Business support; including the allocation of the schools budget, management of supply schemes, provision of service level agreements, working with the Schools Forum to allocate the Designated schools grant (DSG).
- Providing support for the development of new school buildings and the maintenance of existing stock.
- Providing support and challenge to school governors; including strategic advice and guidance and a governor support and development service.
- Providing a performance management framework to schools; including the identification of strengths and weaknesses, monitoring progress towards agreed goals and measuring success/impact.
- Promoting partnership working at all levels.
- Northumberland also provides extensive post 16 services to young people and adults.

Annex 3.

Attainment and Progress

2014/15

| School | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness | % 5+ A*-C inc. English & Maths (Full Cohort) | % Pupil** Premium Gap | % 3 Levels of Progress English | % 3 Levels of Progress Maths |
|--|------------------------------|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Alnwick the Duchess's | Good | 51 | -19 | 62 | 69 |
| Ashington High | Inadequate | 43 | -14 | 57 | 58 |
| Astley Community High | Requires Improvement | 60 | -28 | 77 | 79 |
| Bede Academy | Good | 66 | -28 | 76 | 88 |
| Bedlingtonshire High | Inadequate | 53 | -39 | 69 | 70 |
| Berwick Academy | Requires Improvement | 47 | -29 | 57 | 73 |
| Blyth Academy | Requires Improvement | 28 | -28 | 66 | 45 |
| Cramlington Learning Village | Inadequate | 57 | -42 | 65 | 66 |
| Haydon Bridge High | Inadequate | 43 | -24 | 69 | 60 |
| Hexham Queen Elizabeth High | Good | 78 | -37 | 86 | 86 |
| James Calvert Spence College | Requires Improvement | 49 | -15 | 76 | 62 |
| King Edward VI School | Outstanding | 70 | -35 | 72 | 85 |
| Northumberland Church of England Academy | Requires Improvement | 47 | -24 | 58 | 57 |
| Ponteland High | Good | 64 | -16 | 58 | 79 |
| Prudhoe High | Requires Improvement | 61 | -48 | 69 | 78 |
| St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy | N/A | 58 | -33 | 66 | 69 |
| LA Average* | | 55 | -33 | 66 | 70 |
| National Average | | 56 | -27 | 69 | 66 |

2013/14

| School | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness | % 5+ A*-C inc. English & Maths (Full Cohort) | % Pupil** Premium Gap | % 3 Levels of Progress English | % 3 Levels of Progress Maths |
|--|------------------------------|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Alnwick the Duchess's | Good | 55 | -28 | 81 | 63 |
| Ashington High | Good | 37 | -26 | 49 | 58 |
| Astley Community High | Requires Improvement | 50 | -35 | 66 | 66 |
| Bede Academy | Good | 51 | -23 | 66 | 73 |
| Bedlingtonshire High | Requires Improvement | 39 | -31 | 59 | 67 |
| Berwick Academy | Requires Improvement | 43 | -15 | 57 | 65 |
| Blyth Academy | N/A | 29 | -27 | 52 | 51 |
| Cramlington Learning Village | Outstanding | 53 | -32 | 68 | 61 |
| Haydon Bridge High | Good | 53 | -18 | 54 | 67 |
| Hexham Queen Elizabeth High | Good | 71 | -34 | 76 | 84 |
| James Calvert Spence College | Requires Improvement | 45 | -16 | 58 | 65 |
| King Edward VI School | Outstanding | 70 | -30 | 80 | 83 |
| Northumberland Church of England Academy | Requires Improvement | 34 | -33 | 63 | 53 |
| Ponteland High | Good | 69 | -19 | 68 | 79 |
| Prudhoe High | Good | 59 | -15 | 63 | 70 |
| St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy | Good | 52 | -38 | 75 | 50 |
| LA Average* | | 52 | -34 | 65 | 66 |
| National Average | | 55 | -26 | 70 | 65 |

* LA Averages include special schools;

** % Pupil Premium Gap is the difference in achievement between the disadvantaged (FSMevr6/LAC) group and the non disadvantaged group.

2013/14 figures taken from 2014 validated RAISEonline; 2014/15 figures taken from unvalidated 2015 RAISEonline.

Middle Schools

| School | % Achieving Level 4 or above in Reading, Writing & Maths 2015 | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2015 | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2014 |
|---|---|--|--|
| Alnwick Lindisfarne Middle | 87 | Good | Inadequate |
| Alnwick St Paul's Middle | 71 | Good | Good |
| Alnwick the Dukes Middle | 85 | Good | Requires Improvement |
| Ashington Bothal Middle | Not Available | Good | Good |
| Ashington Hirst Park Middle | 88 | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Ashington St Benedict's Middle | 72 | Good | Requires Improvement |
| Bedlington Meadowdale Academy | 83 | Good | Good |
| Bellingham Middle | 50 | Good | Good |
| Berwick Middle | 81 | Good | Good |
| Chantry Middle | 70 | Good | Good |
| Corbridge Middle | 94 | Good | Requires Improvement |
| Cramlington St Peter's Catholic Academy | 87 | N/A | Requires Improvement |
| Glendale Middle | 76 | Good | Good |
| Haltwhistle Upper School | 70 | Inadequate | N/A |
| Hexham Middle | 96 | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Hexham St Josephs Middle | 87 | Good | Good |
| James Calvert Spence College - South Avenue | 64 | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Newminster Middle | 91 | Good | Good |
| Ovingham Middle | 91 | Good | Good |
| Ponteland County Middle | 88 | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Ponteland Richard Coates Middle | 86 | Good | Good |
| Prudhoe Highfield Middle | 79 | Good | Good |
| Rothbury Dr Thomlinson | 92 | Good | Good |
| Seahouses Middle | 71 | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Seaton Delaval Whytrig Middle | 91 | Good | Requires Improvement |
| Seaton Sluice Middle | 98 | Good | Good |
| St Mary's CoE Middle, Belford | 63 | Good | Good |
| Tweedmouth Middle | 90 | Requires Improvement | Good |
| LA Average* | 82 | | |
| National Average | 80 | | |

* LA Averages include special schools; 2015 figures taken from unvalidated 2015 RAISEonline.

Primary Schools

| School | % Achieving Level 4 or above in Reading, Writing & Maths 2015 | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2015 | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2014 |
|--|---|--|--|
| Allendale Primary | 100 | Good | Outstanding |
| Beaconhill Primary | 97 | Good | Good |
| Bede Academy | 85 | Good | Good |
| Bedlington Station Primary | 83 | Good | Good |
| Bedlington Stead Lane Primary | 81 | Good | Good |
| Blyth Horton Grange Primary | 66 | Good | Good |
| Blyth Malvin's Close Primary | 60 | N/A | N/A |
| Blyth Morpeth Road Primary | 62 | Good | N/A |
| Blyth New Delaval Primary | 74 | Good | Good |
| Blyth Newsham Primary | 79 | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Blyth St Wilfrid's RC Primary | 84 | Good | Good |
| Burnside Primary | 90 | Good | Good |
| Cambois Primary | 75 | Good | Good |
| Choppington Primary | - | Good | Good |
| Cragside Primary | 98 | Good | Good |
| Cramlington Eastlea Primary | 93 | Good | Good |
| Cramlington Village Primary | - | Good | Good |
| Croftway Primary | 69 | Requires Improvement | N/A |
| Greenhead Primary | - | Requires Improvement | Good |
| Guide Post Mowbray Primary | 70 | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Guide Post Ringway Primary | - | Good | Good |
| Hareside Primary | 92 | Good | Good |
| Haydon Bridge Shaftoe Trust Primary | 43 | Good | Good |
| Henshaw Primary | - | Good | Good |
| Herdley Bank CoE Primary | - | Good | Good |
| Newbrough Primary | - | Good | Good |
| Northburn Primary | 82 | Good | Good |
| Northumberland Church of England Academy | 83 | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Shanklea Primary | 89 | Good | Good |
| Stakeford Primary | - | Good | Good |
| St Bede's Primary | 67 | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| St Matthew's Primary | 94 | N/A | Good |
| Whitfield | 33 | Inadequate | Inadequate |
| LA Average* | 82 | | |
| National Average | 80 | | |

* LA Averages include special schools; 2015 figures taken from unvalidated 2015 RAISEonline. Some newly established primary schools do not yet have a year 6.

Annex 4.

Individual School Inspections

First Schools

| School | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2015 | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2014 |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Abbeyfields First | Outstanding | Good |
| Acklington First | Good | Good |
| Acomb First | Good | Good |
| Adderlane First | Inadequate | Requires Improvement |
| Alnwick Swansfield Park First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Amble First | Good | Good |
| Amble Links First | Good | Good |
| Ashington Central First | Good | Good |
| Ashington Wansbeck First | Good | Good |
| Beaufront First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Bedlington West End First | Good | Good |
| Bedlington Whitley Memorial First | Good | Requires Improvement |
| Belford First | Good | Good |
| Bellingham First | Good | Good |
| Belsay First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Berwick St Mary's First | Requires Improvement | Good |
| Branton First | Good | Good |
| Broomhaugh First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Broomhill First | Good | Good |
| Broomley First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Cambo First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Chollerton First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Corbridge CoE First | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Darras Hall First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Ellingham First | Good | Good |
| Ellington First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Embleton Vincent Edwards First | Good | Good |
| Felton First | Good | Good |
| Grange View First | Good | Good |
| Greenhaugh First | Good | Good |
| Haltwhistle Lower School | N/A | N/A |
| Harbottle First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Heddon St Andrew's First | Good | Good |
| Hexham East First | Good | Good |
| Hexham St Mary's RC First | Good | Good |
| Hexham The Sele First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Hipsburn First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Holy Island First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Holy Trinity First | Good | Good |
| Holywell First | Good | Good |
| Hugh Joicey Ford First | Good | Good |
| Humshaugh First | Good | Good |
| Kielder First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Linton First | Good | Good |
| Longhorsley First | Good | Good |
| Longhoughton First | Good | Good |

| School | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2015 | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2014 |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Lowick CoE First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Mickley First | Good | Good |
| Morpeth All Saints First | Good | Good |
| Morpeth First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Morpeth Stobhillgate First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Netherton Northside First | Good | Good |
| New Hartley First | Good | Good |
| Norham St Ceolwulf's First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Otterburn First | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Ovingham First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Pegswood First | Good | Good |
| Ponteland First | Good | Good |
| Prudhoe Castle First | Good | Good |
| Prudhoe West First | Good | Outstanding |
| Red Row First | Good | Good |
| Rothbury First | Good | Good |
| Scremerston First | Good | Good |
| Seahouses First | Requires Improvement | Good |
| Seaton Delaval First | Good | Good |
| Seaton Sluice First | Good | Good |
| Seghill First | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| Shilbottle First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Slaley First | Good | Good |
| Spittal First | Good | Good |
| St Aidan's First | Good | Good |
| St Cuthbert's RC First, Berwick | Requires Improvement | Requires Improvement |
| St Michael's First, Alnwick | Good | Good |
| St Paul's RC First, Alnwick | Good | Good |
| St Paul's Catholic Academy | N/A | Good |
| St Robert's First, Morpeth | Good | Good |
| Stamfordham First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Stannington First | Good | Good |
| Swarland First | Good | Good |
| Thropton First | Good | Good |
| Tritlington First | Good | Good |
| Tweedmouth Prior Park First | Good | Good |
| Tweedmouth West First | Good | Good |
| Wark First | Good | Good |
| Warkworth First | Good | Good |
| West Woodburn First | Good | Good |
| Whalton First | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Whitley Chapel First | Good | Good |
| Whittingham First | Good | Good |
| Whittonstall First | Good | Good |
| Wooler First | Good | Good |
| Wylam First | Outstanding | Outstanding |

Special Schools

| School | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2015 | Ofsted Overall Effectiveness at 31/08/2014 |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Atkinson House School | Good | Requires Improvement |
| Barndale House School | Good | Good |
| Cleaswell Hill School | Good | Good |
| Cramlington Hillcrest School | Requires Improvement | Good |
| Hexham Priory School | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Morpeth Collingwood School | Good | Outstanding |
| Nunykirk Centre for Dyslexia | Good | Good |
| The Dales School | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| The Grove Special School | Outstanding | Good |



