

Education Scrutiny Report 2020

April 2020



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A: Aim of report and guidance notes

This scrutiny report presents educational outcomes for children and young people in Essex primary, secondary and special schools for the academic year ending Summer 2019, covering Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1, 2, 4 and 5. It includes an update on absence levels and those young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEETs), as well as an overview of specific cohorts of pupils. It also covers Ofsted inspection outcomes, as at the end of academic year 2018/19.

This report has been redesigned from previous years, and is intended to be more concise, whilst providing a closer look at aspects of concern

Glossary of terms

This report refers to a number of frequently used educational terms:

Term	Description
School Census	Each term every school must report on the pupils on roll at the school on a specified date. The return includes a range of characteristics information about each pupil along with attendance details.
Ofsted	A non-ministerial department of the UK government, reporting to Parliament. Ofsted is responsible for inspecting a range of educational institutions, including state schools and some independent schools. On average schools are inspected every three years but will be more frequently if there are concerns.
Key Stages	Pupils are assessed regularly throughout their time in school. This is by way of Teacher Assessments at ages 5, 6 and 7 and externally marked tests/exams at ages 11, 16 and 18.
Attainment	Each key stage has performance measures attached to it. Typically, these measures report on the percentage of pupils achieving a specified standard.
Progress	This gauges how much improvement pupils have made between one key stage and the next. For example, KS1-2 progress scores indicate how much progress a pupil has made between ages 7 and 11 compared to other similar pupils nationally.
Comparator averages	Essex compares its performance against the average performance of other local authorities in the Eastern region, those that are defined as our Statistical Neighbours and the average of all local authorities across England.
Attendance	The School Census reports on the number of sessions (each day consisting of a morning and afternoon session) that each pupil attended where they should have been present in school.
Exclusions	A school may deem it necessary to exclude a pupil from school for a variety of reasons. This can either be for a fixed term i.e., one or two days, or permanently.

Further Education	Statutory school age is 5-16. Some pupils opt to extend their education by taking A levels, college courses or from age 18, university degrees.
NEET	Pupils who are not in education, employment or training between the ages of 16-18.
Children in Care (CiC)	A child is looked after by a local authority if a court has granted a care order to place a child in care, or a council's children's services department has cared for the child for more than 24 hours.
Disadvantaged	Any pupil who has been eligible for Free School Meals at any point during the previous six years, is looked after by the local authority or has been adopted from care.
BME	Pupils whose ethnicity is from a Black or minority ethnic group
EAL	Pupils who speak English as an additional language.
SEND	Pupils who have Special Educational Needs & Disability
EHC	Education and Health Care Plan
SEMH	Social, Emotional & Mental Health
DfE	Department for Education
CiC	Children in Care

Data Sources

The information shown here comes from a variety of sources, specifically:

Report section	Source
Pupil Context	January 2019 School Census
Ofsted	Ofsted Monthly Management Information
EYFSP	Collected from schools each May – July Published in Statistical First Release (SFR) by Department for Education (DfE), 28 November 2019 Processed in NEXUS
Year1 Phonics	Collected from schools each May – July Published in Statistical First Release (SFR) by Department for Education (DfE), 26 September 2019 Processed in NEXUS
Key Stage 1	
Key Stage 2	Published in Statistical First Release (SFR) by Department for Education (DfE), 13 December 2019 Key Stage 2 Performance Tables (Revised) 13 December 2019
Key Stage 4	Published in Statistical First Release (SFR) by Department for Education (DfE), 06 February 2020 LAIT (Local Authority Interactive Tool) February 2020

Key Stage 5	Published in Statistical First Release (SFR) by Department for Education (DfE), 23 January 2020
Further education and skills participation	FE and skills learner participation by provider, local authority, funding stream, learner and learning characteristics: 2018 to 2019, Department for Education (DfE), December 2019
Achievement rates	National achievement rates tables, Department for Education (DfE) and Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), March 2020
Learner and Employer satisfaction	FE Choices, Education and Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education, October 2019
Level 2 and 3 by age 19	Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT), Department for Education (DfE), April 2020
NEET	National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) March 2020
Attendance and Exclusions	Published in Statistical First Release (SFR) by Department for Education (DfE) Absence: Pupil Absence in Schools, published March 2020 Exclusions: Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2017 to 2018, published 29 August 2019
Children in Care	Published in Statistical First Release (SFR) by Department for Education (DfE) Outcomes for children looked after by LAs: 31 March 2019, April 2020




Statistical Neighbours


















Most measures in this report are presented against Statistical Neighbours and the England average. Statistical Neighbours are based on a number of contextual factors, which have socio-economic similarities to Essex. Some geographical features (such as rurality) will impact closeness, but geographical closeness has little bearing.

Our Statistical Neighbours are:

- Kent
- Worcestershire
- Central Bedfordshire
- Staffordshire
- West Sussex
- South Gloucestershire
- Warwickshire
- Leicestershire
- North Somerset
- East Sussex

B: Executive Summary**Key to symbols**

-  Positive news
-  Positive and negative aspects
-  Areas of focus

	For the third time in four years, Essex is in the top quartile for pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in the early Years Foundation Stage
	Performance is higher than England averages in all subjects at KS1 with Reading performance in the top quartile
	Essex is at or above national performance in all KS2 measures for pupils achieving the expected standard
	At KS5 Essex is in the top quartile for pupils achieving 3 A*-A grades or better
	Essex pupils with an EHC Plan perform at or above their peers nationally in all the main attainment measures
	There are twice as many apprenticeships at a higher-level starting in Essex than there are nationally
	Whilst Essex continues to have more good or outstanding schools than nationally, the percentage has fallen slightly
	Performance in Year 1 Phonics fell from 84% to 82% but remains in line with England
	Attainment 8 scores in Essex remain consistently above England averages but are not improving
	SEND Support pupils are now performing well at EYFS and Year 1 Phonics but there is still work to do at later key stages
	Children in care perform below England averages at KS2 but above at KS4
	The attendance of Essex pupils is in line with that seen for pupils nationally
	Whilst the number of exclusions is rising, the percentage of pupils excluded from Essex schools remains lower than national rates
	The 16-18 NEET/Unknown rate has increased slightly but remains well below the England average
	KS1-2 progress scores in Reading and Maths are negative for the third consecutive year
	Progress 8 scores have again declined and are significantly lower than nationally
	The performance of disadvantaged pupils in Essex is lower than for disadvantaged pupils nationally for most measures

C: Overview of actions taken and those planned for the future

Summary of initiatives and actions

1. Background

Essex County Council has outlined its ambitions for schools and children within the Lifelong Learning Strategy and in the strategic aims within the Education Business Plan 2017-21.

Our vision within Education is to deliver a service to all children 0-25 that live in Essex Whatever their age, stage, unique characteristics, circumstances, strengths, aspiration, we want them to have:

- A positive experience of learning
- Successful progression to where they want to be
- The very best outcomes
- The right to be safe and listened to at all times

Close to their home and supported by their family and friends.

The key outcomes we want to achieve this are:

- All schools to be securely good or outstanding with an increase in the number of outstanding schools in the county
- End of key stage outcomes to be securely in the top quartile nationally
- Progress outcomes for vulnerable* children and young people to be in line with their peers
- Visionary and agile school leadership at the heart of the system
- A coherent and inclusive education system driven by a collective moral purpose and underpinned by mature and formalised school to school support
- A school-led improvement system driven by schools working in tight collaboration that is continuously improving and externally challenged.

**Children in Care, the disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.*

There are 3 themed topics which can be found in Section E. These reports include a 'deep dive' into:

- a) The analysis of Essex high Ofsted gradings compared to more modest performance outcomes
- b) The rising numbers of pupils not on formal education and looking at any outcomes data
- c) The declining Progress 8 performance

2. Summary of progress against targets

Essex has clear areas of both strengths and weaknesses. Whilst some measures have reached the desired top quartile position, most are in the 2nd or 3rd quartiles of local authorities across England. Fuller details about performance can be found within section D.

It is well proven that a pupil's likelihood to achieve well in school is by having a solid start at the Early Years Foundation Stage. Essex has been very successful in making improvements in this area since 2013 and for three of the last four years has achieved a top quartile position.

Essex aims to have all schools graded good or outstanding by Ofsted. Performance in Essex has been higher than England averages for the last few years and this continues to be the case. However, the new inspection framework implemented in September 2019 will inevitably bring some challenges – initial findings are that it is harder for schools to be awarded the higher grades.

Achieving the best outcomes for our most vulnerable pupils remains a key priority. Among pupils with special educational needs, those with an EHC plan continue to perform well when compared to their peers nationally. However, there is more work to do to improve outcomes for pupils with SEND Support as they tend to still perform lower than their peers. Likewise, pupils who are disadvantaged continue to have lower outcomes than their peers nationally although pupils with English as an Additional Language or from ethnic minority backgrounds do well in Essex schools. Further detail around plans to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils are detailed in section 3.7.

3. Overview of strategies to address school improvement

The strategic approach to school improvement in Essex continues to be supported by a core School Effectiveness Team. This is further strengthened by the ongoing principle that schools are responsible for their own improvement and that schools working together in partnership is proven to be the most effective way of securing rapid and sustained improvement.

The Essex School Led Improvement System has continued to be the initiative that is a key driver of school improvement. This year the School Effectiveness Team has continued to place an expectation on all schools that they will monitor and evaluate the quality of education they provide and the standards they achieve for all children, whilst supporting and challenging those schools who are not performing as well.

The School Effectiveness Team has allocated days to work with the partnerships and MATs to support their growing maturity. Days allocated must be used by the school partnerships for core pieces of work linked to accountability and improving standards. This work is non-negotiable in order that the Local Authority can maintain an over-view of all the schools' performance

The School Effectiveness Partners have established clear processes and protocols to assess all schools, enabling a clear prioritisation of intervention and support to be established for any vulnerable or under-performing school and appropriate commissioning for support undertaken either through school-to-school support or via the Teaching School Alliances. Support is prioritised for schools judged by Ofsted as 'requiring improvement' or 'inadequate'.

The School Effectiveness Team continues to support all schools, whilst the allocation of support is differentiated, there is the same core offer for academies and LA maintained schools.

The pressures faced by schools on funding and the challenges of recruitment and retention of high-quality secondary teaching staff and Headteachers in Essex continues especially those in challenging circumstances. The directorate has worked closely with the Recruitment and Retention Board to look at projects to encourage people to Essex to work as well as ways to try to retain them. The board funded a leadership project for aspiring primary school headteachers which attracted a further new 12 potential headteachers. Of this group 7 are now working in a headship role.

3.1 Ofsted outcomes

The School Effectiveness Team continues to work closely with the DfE and Regional Schools Commissioner to share intelligence about the performance and progress of schools within the

academy trusts in Essex, and to support the East of England Region ambition to ensure that Ofsted will judge no academy or free school as less than 'good' at its next inspection.

In schools that have been judged as requiring improvement, the Local Authority recognises the additional capacity and expertise that National Leaders of Education (NLE) and support schools can offer to enhance the School Effectiveness Partner support. Six of the schools that were requiring improvement were targeted for the 'Getting to Good,' programme that is run in conjunction with an HMI. This programme has supported those schools to make rapid improvement through effective action planning and distributive, accountable leadership.

At the end of July 2019, 90.1% of Essex Primary schools, 84.4% of Essex Secondary schools and 85.0% of Essex Special schools are judged to be at least good by Ofsted. Nationally 87.5% of primary schools, 75.9% of secondary schools and 91.6% of special schools are judged to be good or outstanding. Although higher than nationally for the percentage of at least good schools, increasing the number of schools retaining and achieving an outstanding judgement remains a priority

3.2 School Led Improvement System (SLIS)

This year we have continued to develop the maturity of the school-led system to include all school partnerships, Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) and phases of education in Essex by:

- Strengthening the role that partnerships/MATs have on school improvement within and between each other.
- Ensuring that the outcomes of Peer Review impacted on school improvement.
- Introducing the quadrant structure and developing the role of the Chair so that the meetings can be both efficient and effective and lead to quadrant focused monitoring, supporting and improvement of schools.
- Continuing to offer development opportunities to partnership and MAT leads.
- Supporting the quality assuring of the work of partnerships/MATs.
- Linking with the MATs to ensure the strategy was encompassing all types of school partnerships.

A successful Schools Partnership Conference was held In May 2019 as part of the continued implementation of the School-led Improvement System. Keynote speakers were Christine Gilbert former HMCI and Director of Education Tower Hamlets and Maggie Farrar, Lead Associate for the Schools Partnership Programme, having previously worked with the National College for School Leadership for over 10 years, including a period as Interim Chief Executive. Essex's approach to the school led system was congratulated in Christine Gilbert's think piece 'Optimism of the Will'.

One of the aims of the School-Led Improvement Strategy is to ensure that all schools are in a working partnership/MAT and currently most Essex schools are now part of a formal partnership or MAT. There are only 10 primary schools not in a partnership/MAT. The success of the School Led Improvement system is being evidenced in Ofsted reports which are recognising the impact of collaborative working on outcomes.

The Leads of the School Led Improvement Partnerships and MATs have all been assigned a link LA officer from the School Effectiveness Team. The time allocated from the School Effectiveness team has supported the developing maturity of the partnership/MAT and ensured a link between LA priorities and the partnerships/MATs. Termly Leads of partnerships/MATs meetings have been held, where the Leads have been kept up to date with developments of this strategy, heard about

the work of other partnerships and developed further the role of the Lead of a Partnership. This has built a strong network of Partnership Leads that have had access to high quality CPD and as a result are more confident in their role.

Quadrant meetings are established across the county strengthening the culture of schools holding themselves accountable for improvement across a geographical area. These meetings have been successful in beginning to re-orientate local school improvement offers (e.g. from Teaching School Alliances) more towards what the schools in the quadrant need.

The SLIS Project Board, which has an important role in the strategic co-ordination of this strategy, has met termly. The membership of this board now includes the four Headteacher quadrant chairs along with the Essex Headteacher professional associations, Diocese, Local Authority, MATs and has an independent chair so that the Project Board can hear directly about the work of the partnerships and quadrant and scrutinise their effectiveness.

Positive Engagement in Partnership activities such as the conference in May 2019 and Peer Review enabling partnerships in Essex to learn from each other and from other partnerships across the country. There are good examples of school to school support having an impact such as a vulnerable school in which an Improvement Board has been established has utilised the support and capacity from its local school led partnership to offer additional support.

The collaboration with the Education Development Trust whose work in this area is based upon national and international research ensures that the Essex system is having a positive impact on outcomes for the young people of Essex.

Essex are being viewed by other Local Authorities as one to learn from in establishing a school led system. Our lead officer has spoken to Wales Education, Hertfordshire LA, Southampton LA and Peterborough LA about the work in Essex related to this strategy.

3.3 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Our Early Years Advisers continue working within a revised model of intervention including specific delivery for quadrant-based working and to ensure the prioritisation of disadvantaged pupil groups. This continues to provide a clear delineation for schools and early years provider settings around how support is accessed. The Early Years provider webpages are a key resource in directing practitioners to the relevant information to support self-service, quality improvement or contact local team members. Prioritisation of our work is clearly defined with a continued focus on:

- Support for early years provision, including schools and childminders, where EYFS is graded less than 'good' by Ofsted.
- Prioritising our support to ensure that children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds get the best start in life.
- Supporting practitioners to develop their own quality improvement networks, building on the EYFS Learning Communities and clusters.

Termly meetings are held with Ofsted to focus on quality concerns and trends arising from our work and those being identified nationally and locally in inspections of our settings. Ofsted have recognised the support from our advisers in Essex against that offered to settings by other Local Authorities. The Ofsted framework has changed this year and there are a high number of historical settings previously judged as outstanding which are due inspection. These settings have not

received face to face support as an outcome of the current structure however termly focussed cluster meetings across all quadrants has aided to mitigate the impact. These consider a range of analysis to highlight settings and schools at risk of achieving a less than 'Good' inspection outcome, inspections for new registrations and preparing our settings who are due inspection. The clusters have also focussed on Tremendous Two's and Committee Forums and since the inception of these there have been no further inadequate outcomes for Committee Run Settings.

The Essex Transition Passport was created and promoted to schools and PVI providers last year. This year we have seen an increased use of the 'passport' which are showing a positive impact on the transition to Primary School.

EYFS Profile Moderation visits to schools have included a professional dialogue and accompanying questions to assess and focus attention on whether children in the Reception class who were eligible for pupil premium had been identified and had their outcomes monitored. This work identified pupils who were proposing to delay their school start in the North East quadrant.

Our work with the Early Years and Childcare Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS) is still evolving with some areas still struggling to recruit and retain staff. Workshops held has meant there is now a greater understanding of Good Level of Development (GLD) data and communication champions have been recruited and trained across all quadrants.

In addition to this there have been a number of GLD data workshops held across the county to identify key priorities for each district, this has increased outcomes in GLD across all districts to remain above National and regain the Top Quartile position.

Intervention projects aimed at raising school readiness have been driven by locality needs. The Witham and Dengie Partnership focussed on Transition and moving to settings to an Ofsted judgement of exceeding. They have also offered SEND transition workshops and feedback from attendees recognised the need to improve transition for children with SEND. In the North East quadrant there have been a number of transition workshops within geographical areas linking schools and feeder PVI settings. They have also supported Early Literacy Matters for Schools and PVI in areas of disadvantaged. In Uttlesford there was a focus on 'term of birth' writing workshops whilst in Harlow there was a focus on Language and Communication. In Basildon two projects, Early Language and Communication and School Readiness have resulted in improved outcomes.

3.4 Primary

Improving phonics remains a key priority and many school-led improvement partnerships have this as a local priority, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, pooling together effective strategies and using the Pupil Premium Grant to fund effective teaching interventions.

Work across infant and junior schools took place to ensure assessments at Key Stage 1 are externally and internally moderated by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) in order to provide a secure platform for making 'at least expected' progress at Key Stage 2.

Annually accredited moderators also moderated 25% of schools as part of the statutory requirement. In addition, all SLIS partnerships were strongly advised to use some of the partnership allocation of support to moderate across their schools and all year groups. School Effectiveness Partners were also involved in training local partnerships of schools in moderation. The teacher assessment data for all schools, KS1 and KS2 was quality assured by the School

Effectiveness Team, and where there were any anomalies school leaders were challenged and data resubmitted. The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) have recognised the good practice in Essex to deliver a rigorous and systematic review of the evidence presented, which effectively focused on the framework statements for each standard, a quality professional discussion during which teachers were actively encouraged to articulate their understanding of national standards and the robust processes in place for recruiting, training and supporting moderators.

Data outcomes show there is still work to do in supporting schools to raise the attainment of all pupils across three subjects in order that age related expectations are met in their combined figures to a higher level. Schools need to also become more proficient in the tracking of pupils on target to achieve age related expectations in all three subjects so that swifter intervention can be made with any pupils that are falling behind in an area of the core curriculum.

The School Effectiveness Team have carried out a range of targeted reviews in primary schools to support various aspects of school improvement work. These have included Ofsted ready, subject specific deep dives, leadership, governance, Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) and safeguarding reviews.

Where there is significant underperformance, the team use a level of intervention through the implementation of an Improvement Board, for up to a period of a year, to strengthen governance and provide closer scrutiny or coaching and support the School Effectiveness Partner core visits. Improvement Boards have been recognised strongly in Ofsted inspections as an effective measure of intensive support for schools, most schools are able to evidence a good Ofsted inspection.

The LA in conjunction with Teaching School Alliances utilised the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) to improve teaching and learning of Phonics over two years with 40 schools across Essex. The average improvement in Phonics outcomes was 7%, 80% of the schools improved by at least 5% and approximately 40% made between 10-15% improvement on 2017 outcomes. Disadvantaged pupils in the participating schools performed 3 percentage points higher than disadvantaged pupils in other Essex schools. Although data from those schools involved in the SSIF project in year 1 was highly encouraging not all schools have been able to sustain the impact of this work in year 2.

The second year of the SSIF programme supported a reading project in 60 primary schools where 2017 data was significantly lower than national outcomes. The impact of this initiative over the two years has been evidenced in the improvement of 12 percentage points for reading outcomes for the project schools on 2017 outcomes. Disadvantaged pupils in the participating schools performed 2 percentage points higher than disadvantaged pupils in other Essex schools.

The 'Lifting the Lid on Learning,' programme has been designed to support 12 schools on their journey towards developing and sustaining outstanding provision. It is an opportunity for leaders to learn and share together successful practices across schools, phases and across Essex. Four of the schools participating in this first cohort went on to achieve an outstanding judgement by Ofsted.

The budgets and finances of some schools are particularly challenging in the present climate. The Local Authority Small Schools Strategy has significantly helped to identify and support small primary schools to look at creative ways to secure their future sustainability.

3.5 Secondary

All secondary schools are supported by School Effectiveness Partners (SEPs). All but four of the eighty secondary schools in Essex are Academies. The SEPs have managed to maintain contact, provide positive trusting support and challenge relationships with all secondary schools despite the significant reduction in capacity and new ways of working. They have worked to challenge schools, target additional support to those where there was a concern or where they were considered to be under performing. The SEP team used intelligence, including data, to facilitate discussions with leaders especially concerning the progress and attainment of vulnerable children. In conjunction with leadership, the SEP team quality assured the work of schools, either because standards were low, there is a lack of capacity in leadership or as a traded activity.

The SEPs have actively utilised the strengths of particular schools to provide additional capacity, support and examples of effective practice that all should aspire to in order to meet Essex's goals. This included identifying schools to share practice at the termly secondary headteachers' conferences and facilitated local networks for secondary headteachers collaborating with the Association of Secondary Headteachers in Essex (ASHE) to include clear communications about local and national priorities and opportunities.

There has been a focus on strategies for raising progress for disadvantaged students in direct challenge to schools, sixth forms and through headteacher meetings. The importance of developing clear strategies for supporting the progress of our disadvantaged learners in Essex will be further developed this year.

The 'Year of SEND' for Essex allowed us to focus on the issues we needed to improve for some of our most vulnerable children and helped to engage our secondary academies with the development of the new Essex SEND strategy.

The DFE Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) was targeted to improve boys Reading and English outcomes in eligible schools. The secondary school element of the programme and the transition programme covering Year 6 to Year 7 was delivered through two credible Teaching School Alliances (TSAs). The impact of these programmes will only be known once the pupils undertake their GCSEs.

3.6 Post 16

The School Effectiveness Partners have negotiated school improvement data packages such as Alps to save schools significant amounts of money as well promoting effective monitoring and evaluation (particularly Post 16). A collaborative network of school sixth form providers (Sixth Sense), supported by the School Effectiveness Team, has continued to enable closer working and sharing of good practice. The network has been actively facilitated by Anglia Ruskin University and has had an emphasis on the new Ofsted framework, mental health and well-being as well as supporting student destinations and post 16 teaching and learning. Schools continue to collaborate on sixth form school improvement and there are some innovative practices for widening curriculum choice for students and local collaborative networks in place in Essex. Outcomes for Post 16 results have been very strong once again with Essex schools above national for nearly all measures and in the first or second quartile for all measures.

The move towards linear A levels and funding constraints has continued to cause changes in entry patterns e.g. significantly reduced numbers of students assessed at AS level, together with a reduction of the number of subjects taken by individual Post-16 students. In 2019, a wider range

of schools and colleges followed the new reformed Applied General and Technical qualifications. However, the reformed Applied General and Technical qualifications have still not been followed by all schools and colleges. This has caused significant differences in entry patterns as well as a local and national differences in attainment levels achieved in different providers.

The Education and Industry STEM Programme successfully promoted key industry sectors to circa 4000 young people in secondary schools across the county, through a variety of large-scale, key sector-focused 'Taster Days' (hosted by Essex Colleges and Universities); competition and project activity (e.g. Colchester Zoo Engineering Project, ADS Build a Rocket Competition, Build a Bridge competition, Bloodhound Rocket Car competition; 'Royal Institution' Computer Science/Maths/Engineering Masterclasses and Science Shows, and other in-school activities.

The Enterprise Adviser Network continued to be delivered until August 2019, at which point SELEP/ CEC contracted with TCHC/ Thurrock County Council to deliver the programme for a further year with the aim of engaging all secondary schools across Essex

3.7 Pupil Groups

SEND and Inclusion

All special schools, PRUs and mainstream schools with an enhanced provision are supported by a School Effectiveness Partner (SEP). They also work with mainstream schools where there is an identified need to improve their practice. They ensure that schools are challenged to provide high quality provision, which leads to positive outcomes for their children and young people. The SEPs work as part of the wider SEND workforce, to identify and target support to schools where pupils with SEND are underperforming. The SEPs have actively utilised the strengths of particular schools to provide additional capacity, support and examples of outstanding practice that all should aspire to in order to meet Essex's goals.

We continue working with Essex Special Schools Education Trust (ESSET) to develop an outreach programme, which means that all schools can benefit from the expertise these provisions can offer.

The focus on improving the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Essex schools continues to be given high profile in our work with school led improvement partnerships and individual schools.

Essex School Leaders have been engaged in working in partnership with the Local Authority to develop a shared understanding of inclusion and what it means in practice. This has led to the Essex Inclusion Statement which has been written by headteachers. The publication of this statement has led to a significant rise in engagement with headteachers around inclusion, what it means and what schools should be doing to meet this agenda.

Preparation and consultation of the SEND Strategy and redesign of all SEND Services into the quadrant structure has been undertaken. 1027 responses to the survey on the SEND vision, principles and new ways of working were received, these included 511 parents and carers responses and 358 responses from an education setting. There were twenty-four school and setting face to face engagement sessions held, leading to a successful launch of the new services in January 2020. The embedding in of the structure will take time and is being monitored.

The team have established a Targeted Employment team across social care and SEND Strategy and Innovation to bridge the gap between education and employment by increasing employment pathways and community inclusion

The pressure on special school places continues to be a concern. The investment programme in special needs places includes eight enhanced mainstream schools for children and young people with autism, eight enhanced mainstream schools for CYP with SEMH, two current special schools rebuilt to including boarding provision, and expanding an additional three special schools for more places is underway. Completion of major infrastructure projects to date include both Glenwood and Lexden Springs being rebuilt to include new boarding accommodation has been completed. There have also been four new SEMH provisions opened in West Essex (Cooks Spinney, Magna Carta, White Bridge, Lambourne).

The POET (Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool) survey, which is a national survey that is sent to all families with children on SEND Support and have an EHCP, was completed by 2,471 people across Essex, including 1,844 parents and carers and 384 children and young people. There has been growth of the Multi-Schools Council (MSC) engagement from 90 schools to 242 schools who are now signed up to be part of gathering and sharing pupil voice and breaking down the negative perceptions of children with SEND.

The High Needs Block (HNB) element of the Direct Schools Grant continues to provide financial challenges to both the LA and schools. There has been a continued rise in number of requests for assessment/new plans to be issued. The DfE has responded with an increase in funding for SEND in Essex over two years (2018/19 and 2019/20) and ECC successfully applied for a transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the HNB for 2019/20. However, forecasts show that overspend will continue to grow in an unsustainable way and a recovery plan is required. A High Needs Working Group with representation from mainstream, special and alternative provision schools has been formed and will work on the strategy to deliver the High Needs Block within budget and without the need for further transfers from the Schools Block.

Disadvantaged Pupils

All schools are encouraged to annually review the impact of the Pupil Premium Grant and all SLIS partnerships can access time from the School Effectiveness Partner (SEP), to support a review and dissemination of the strategies which are having the greatest impact. Case studies of good practice were shared at a conference to support leaders and governors address the achievement gap.

We have further analysed our disadvantaged data to identify needs and are developing a new strategy so that we can improve outcomes and diminish the differences for this group of pupils. Training of our workforce to undertake Pupil Premium reviews and the gathering of further dialogue with our schools will be undertaken as part of school improvement visits across school led partnerships.

We have selected fourteen schools who are in the process of having an individual pupil premium review led by Marc Rowlands (DfE/EEF/Unity Research School), following the launch where Marc gave a presentation on Maximising the Impact of the Pupil Premium. Following the reviews, the overarching key themes will be analysed, and the pilot schools will be invited back to a one-day conference in late April where Marc will give his report and facilitate their participation in developing an Essex wide strategy for raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

Tendring District

There have been a number of initiatives piloted in the North East Quadrant. One project involved training from the Educational Psychologist Service to encompass how to use evidence-based intervention to improve reading, writing and maths for targeted pupils. This has resulted in an increase in the number of schools signing up to be part of the Raising Achievement and Reading

project which should see improved outcomes in 2020. There was also a bespoke project with Clacton Coastal Academy involving specialist teachers, educational psychologists and a consultant to support a group of 30 young people experiencing challenges with engagement. This involved support to the SENCO and leadership team on identification of need, behaviour and the curriculum offer. This resulted in an increase in the curriculum offer with more pupils accessing the main school curriculum.

Pupil outcomes in Tendring continue to be a focus of our support. A Tendring Strategic Board has been set up with a working party established to explore a pilot satellite SEND centre linked to one of our special schools.

Trauma Perceptive Practice

Schools have been targeted in the South quadrant and South Tendring in the North East quadrant to be involved in the Trauma Perspective Practice (TPP) pilot project. This project is aimed at supporting schools with pupils who are struggling significantly with mental health and well-being needs. In 2019-2020 this will be rolled out to run across all four quadrants with schools being able to self-nominate for the training on a first come first served basis.

Children in Care

The Essex Virtual School continues to monitor the educational attainment and attendance of Children in Care (CiC). It provides support and training for stakeholders, including foster carers, social workers and designated teachers. Initiatives this year have included encouraging external stakeholders to bid for funding that supports projects for all vulnerable pupils and planning for the implementation of the EPEP.

A Mental Health Virtual School Conference was held to improve attitudes to working with young people displaying such difficulties. This successful conference allowed professionals to be provided with resources and techniques to support young people displaying mental health difficulties.

The Virtual School has also funded numerous projects including the summer music project which was cascaded out to all vulnerable children in schools. The project will be continued throughout the next term.

There are three areas of concern to be addressed next year. The first relates to Early Years progress, to mitigate this the Virtual School will be absorbing data tracking to ensure that all settings are visited, and the progress of pupils are tracked. The second relates to Children Missing in Education (CME), to mitigate this there are plans for two members of the Inclusion team to focus CME and post 16. The third relates to attendance and this will be mitigated by more rigorous tracking with new rewards systems to be used to improve attendance.

3.8 Young People not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET)

Teams worked together to report a combined 3.7% NEET and unknown figure to DfE in the three months stretch target period. This was achieved through robust tracking, rigorous caseload management and effective partnership working in addition to the launch of Opportunity Ready, an ESF funded programme, designed to target those furthest from the labour market.

The Apprenticeship Hub worked in conjunction with partners to deliver a service to year 11,12 and 13 and their families in 36 Secondary Schools in Essex and worked extensively with businesses and Training Providers to identify a range of opportunities for these young people.

In July 2019 Essex was ranked 64th out of 150 Local Authorities for NEET levels and 56th out of 150 for a combined NEET and unknown figure.

At least 205 young people progressed into an Apprenticeship as a direct result of the work of the Apprenticeship Hub, with many more doing so through the receipt of fortnightly Apprenticeship News bulletins and collaborative work with our delivery partners. An online Apprenticeship job search kit was produced and stored on the Essex County Council website. An Apprenticeship recruitment event in Basildon was supported by 64 employers and Training Providers and attended by 185 young people and their parents/ carers.

The Employability and Skills team was reviewed and has now integrated into the youth service with the Education Directorate. This will enable a more joined up approach to supporting Young people not in education, employment or training.

3.9 Absence and Exclusions

Since April 2019 following a restructure there have been two attendance specialists in place in each quadrant working alongside school improvement and SEND colleagues. The team liaise closely with the Attendance Compliance, Education Access and Elective Home Education teams. Published data for absence in schools lags real data by approximately a year therefore the response of teams to absence concerns is limited to local intelligence or that provided by the school on request. The team support schools with advice on a range of attendance strategies, individual casework and target schools who have particular groups of pupils who may not be attending regularly enough. A direct telephone line and email facility is the core of the service, this also supports parents and carers. The support offered has resulted in schools feeling better supported with challenging conversations regarding attendance and schools have reported that innovations suggested by the team have had a positive impact on attendance figures, this particularly the case for pupils with pupil premium.

This year there has been a decrease in the number of penalty notices reflected by the attendance compliance team due to support to schools from the attendance specialists on improving their paperwork before submission. Parents are being successfully fined as a deterrent more efficiently.

There are still some schools who continue to use outside companies to manage their attendance and pay them on a 'per penalty notice' basis. This can sometimes result in children who are anxious refusers not having needs met therefore to mitigate this, the team have delivered a number of workshops in each quadrant focussed on supporting anxious school refusers and children with other bespoke needs. They have also provided advice and guidance on 'off rolling' and correct record keeping.

3.10 Alternative Education

A review of our medical referral policy was started in 2018 /19 to more closely align the policy to the offer by the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS) and the needs of pupils and schools.

Engagement with a number of partners allowed us to focus on rewriting the policy to clarify the local authority duty under section 19 of the Education Act.

The team also explored alternate approaches to educating young people with medical needs and are piloting the use of AV1 telepresence robots and online learning. The team has also worked

with the Education Psychology service to develop an early intervention screening tool to help identify when a young person's health needs may be impacting on school attendance.

A series of conferences to launch the new attendance policy were undertaken and this now needs to embed.

A major review and overhaul of the commissioning of Alternative Education has taken place and this will enable the service to focus on key priorities such as the offer for all students educated through the Pupil Referral Units.

4. Conclusions and Priorities for 2019/20

This report, and detailed annexe reports, sets out the progress achieved by Essex schools this year. The gaps in outcomes that remain include:

- Getting every school to be at least a 'good' school, with more to be judged as 'outstanding' by continuing the improvements already made.
- Achieving top quartile positions in all measures.
- Continuing to focus on the differences between disadvantaged and 'other' pupils and achieving better outcomes for SEND pupils, especially those with SEND (but without a Statement/EHC Plan); and continuing to achieve improved outcomes for Children in Care.

In addition to the above, the key areas of focus for school improvement for 2019/2020 also include:

- 1) Continuing to develop the maturity of school partnerships and upskilling partnership leads to ensure they are impacting on pupil achievement and supporting Ofsted outcomes.
- 2) Clarify the Early Strategy for 'School Readiness' and 'Transition across Childcare and Sufficiency, Health, Education and Social Care
- 3) Implement the Early Years Redesign
- 4) Development of a traded programme of bespoke support for schools to address school improvement and outcomes for pupils. This includes exploring links with China for CPD and recruitment.
- 5) Development of a new disadvantaged strategy to be launched in September 2020. This includes the development of peer review for SEND to support with the work for improving outcome for this group of pupils in 30 identified schools.
- 6) Introduce 'live streaming' of schools' absence data to allow for a more responsive approach
- 7) Continue with the Tendring Education Strategic Board (TESB) established in January 2020 to secure higher outcomes. The aim is to utilise a common data set to aid discussion and agree actions for the core purpose and three priorities for improvement of the board: improving attendance, improving recruitment of quality teachers and the retention of quality teachers in the locality.
- 8) Develop and coproduce a 4 year SEND Strategy
- 9) Build upon the capital programme, including building four new special schools and expanding two existing special schools.
- 10) Respond to the Ofsted CQC SEND Inspection report with a Written Statement of Action and ensure actions are met before the re-inspection in 18months.
- 11) Further embed an Education Sustainability Board to enable lead officers to strategically challenge individual aspects of our Key Performance Indicators in more depth. Examples of this work can be found in the 'deep dive' reports

Case study – Life without Labels

Background

In 2018, work was undertaken to conduct Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) ‘fact-finding’ to help inform strategy development. This included meetings with ECC staff, Family Forum, parents/carers, special school heads, Early Years, Post 16/Targeted Employment, SEND, Multi-schools council, Adult Community Learning (ACL), DfE Regional PfA team.

The findings of this were:

- as highlighted in the Ofsted report, strengths when children and young people have an EHC Plan or are known to Social Care. This is not the case for students on SEND Support – PfA ‘from the earliest years’.
- loss of parental/carer confidence early on leads to a push for ‘diagnosis’ and ‘the EHC Plan’.

There were some surprises centred around a lack of aspiration:

- some parent/carer voice shows that a surprising number of parents’ lack aspiration for their children and young people. This often relates to genuine concerns about financial impact on the family, a lack of education and at times opportunity relating to employment options e.g. supported internships etc.

In the words of two headteachers:

- ‘I can’t think past when they leave here; I wouldn’t sleep at night’ – **Special School Head**
- ‘What is the point of an ‘outstanding’ education if a young person goes on to live a ‘requires improvement’ or an ‘inadequate’ life?’ – **Headteacher**

School Pilot

The work has led to a link with the DfE commissioned Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) team to pilot a PfA framework tool in school settings. This tool is a life planning/character curriculum skills-based tool entitled ‘Life without Labels’. We are at the point where we are beginning to work with a number of schools to establish if and how it could be used to: support/build a strong character curriculum in schools; complement and extend existing CIAG provision; undertake early identification of SEMH issues which may ultimately prevent students engaging in enterprise and employment later in their lives; access appropriate and timely provision and support for young people without the need for a label/EHCP, where appropriate.’

Following a successful pilot in schools the intention is to explore the possibility of extending this tool to early years and day opportunities as whole-life planning tool, to ensure retention and extension of skills for people with SEND.

Five primary schools, three secondary schools and one special school are engaged in the current pilot. Aims of the first phase of the pilot:

- to establish if and how PfA ‘One Planning’ could be undertaken for all students.
- to trial and refine the statements in the framework to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- to explore and identify opportunities for early intervention, utilising the link to the Inclusion Partners in the new SEND structure.

The framework

This consists of four areas, each of which are divided into several sub-areas against which a pupil is assessed. Each sub-area has six statements which are designed to indicate the pupil's level of ability. These statements get progressively more stretching.

Area	Sub-area
Developing resilience and confidence	Creative thinking
	Critical thinking
	Problem solving
Improving well-being	Social
	Emotional
	Physical
Increasing opportunity	Enterprise
	Curriculum and community inclusion
Encouraging independence	Decision-making
	Self-awareness

For example, within 'Critical thinking' the statements range from 'able to describe an idea' through to 'able to keep an open mind in all contexts and formulate opinions and arguments accordingly'. Within 'Enterprise' the statements range from 'able to follow instructions' through to 'actively seeks out opportunities to take on new challenges'.

Questions raised

Work to date has generated a range of questions:

- Can there be more involvement from others in agreeing the statements in the Framework
- Can this be used to explore creative ways of accessing early intervention funding through the HNB without the need for an EHCP?
- Could this be utilised as early as the two-year checks?
- Could EWMHS be commissioned to work with children identified through this Framework?
- Could therapies be commissioned to work with children identified through this Framework?
- Can a cluster of schools be funded differently, if a collective need is identified?
- Can the PfA teamwork with schools pre-14 to support with this?
- How can this be used to aid transition across all points of a person's life?
- How could the voice of children and YP be a bigger part of this?
- How could this support out of county returns?
- Can this fit in with the new Early Years Strategy/School Readiness?
- Have employers been part of creating the framework? Does it meet their needs?
- Can schools access a comprehensive provision map as part of this approach?
- Can schools access support from Social Care below threshold where a need is identified?
- Is there software available to schools to support this?

Areas of concern

- We are working to ensure that we have representation from all sectors working on the Framework.
- Ensuring that any approach reduces rather than increases workload for schools.

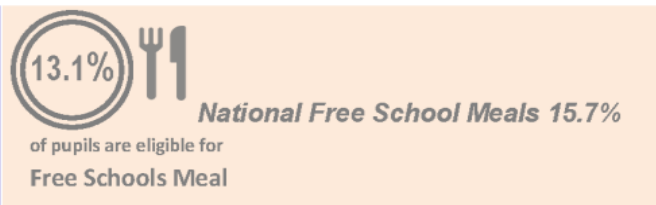
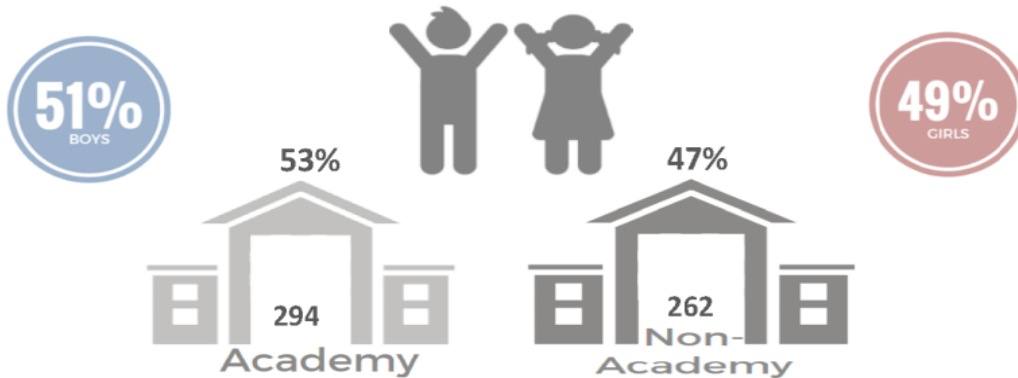
Going forward

For the Life without Labels work to become the foundation of the Outcomes Framework in response to the SEND Ofsted.

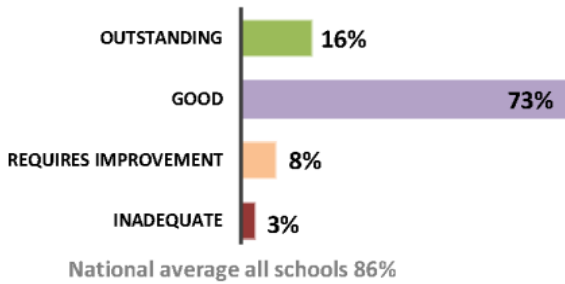
For stage two of the school pilot to be undertaken, exploring: innovative approaches to addressing the needs of students identified as needing early intervention via the Framework tool; innovative approaches to addressing issues in schools by utilising clusters; innovative approaches to funding early intervention required via the Framework tool.

D: Data for the 2018-19 academic year

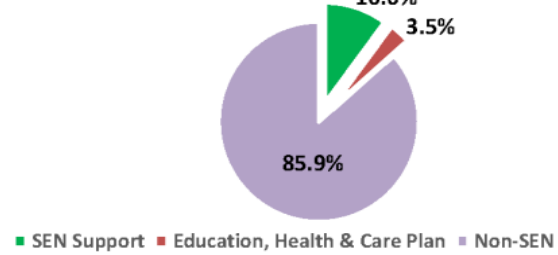
214,488 PUPILS ON ROLL



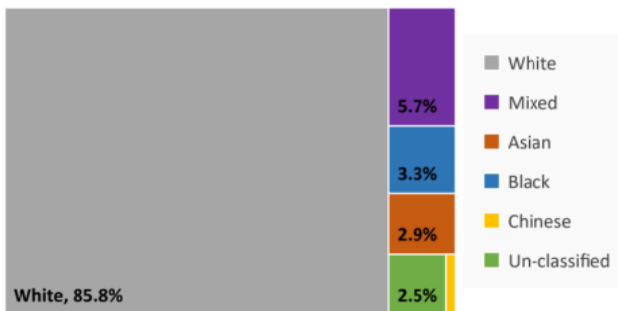
89% of schools Good or Outstanding



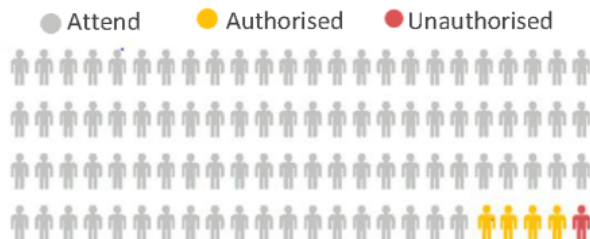
14.1% of pupils have Special Educational Needs
National average 15%



15% of pupils from ethnic minority background, National 33%



95% Attendance for all schools



Top 10 languages spoken (excl. English)



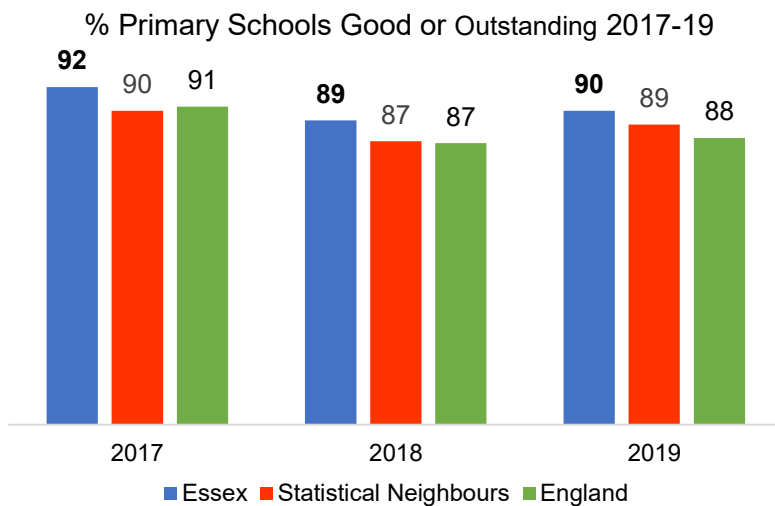
150+ Different languages spoken by Essex pupils

Ofsted

How performance is measured

Data presented below shows the percentage of schools judged to be Good or Outstanding by Ofsted as at August 2019, under the framework in place until August 2019. A new Ofsted framework has been in place since September 2019 for all schools in England. 51 schools have been inspected under the new framework to date (01 09 19 – 28 02 20). 32 of these were full inspections with 19 being Section 8. Of the 32 full inspections, 20 schools were graded good or outstanding (62.5%) compared to 57.6% nationally.

Three-year trend - primary



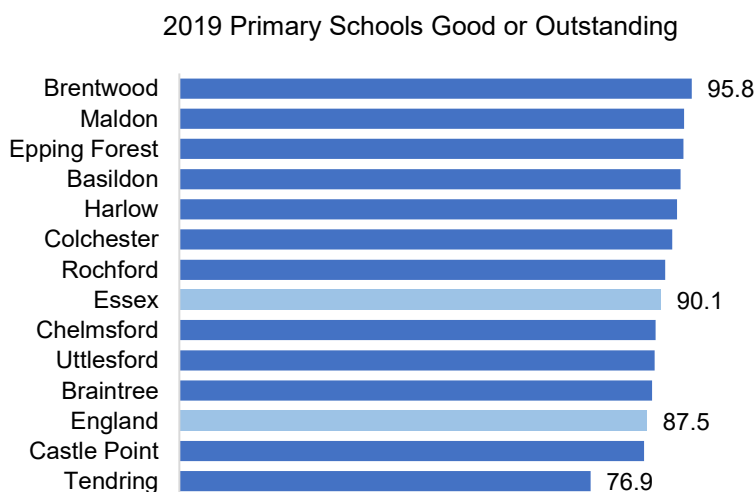
- The percentage of Essex primary schools judged as good or outstanding is above the statistical neighbour and national averages.
- Nationally there has been a decline in the percentage of primary schools judged as Good or Outstanding over the last 3 years. Essex improved between 2018 and 2019 however, is below the 2017 position.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **63rd**

Quartile

3rd

District Headlines

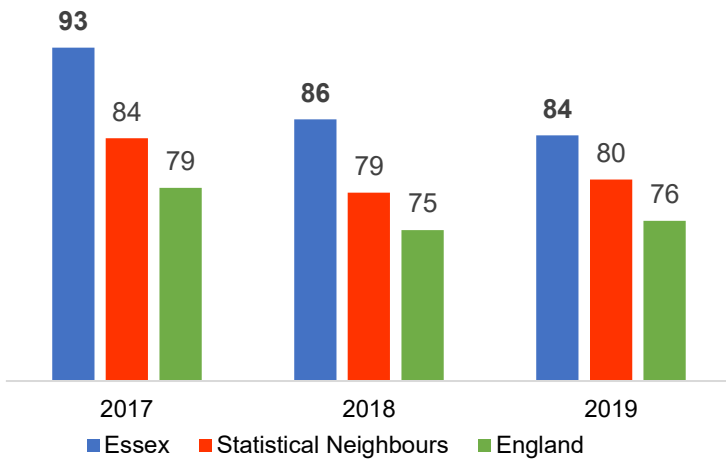


- 7 districts declined over the last 3 years, with Tendring seeing the most noticeable decline (from 95% of Good or Outstanding primary schools in 2017, to 77% in 2019).
- 5 districts improved, with Maldon seeing the greatest improvement (from 83% of Good or Outstanding primary schools in 2017 to 94% in 2019).

Three-year trend - secondary

Quartile

% Secondary Schools Good or Outstanding 2017-19

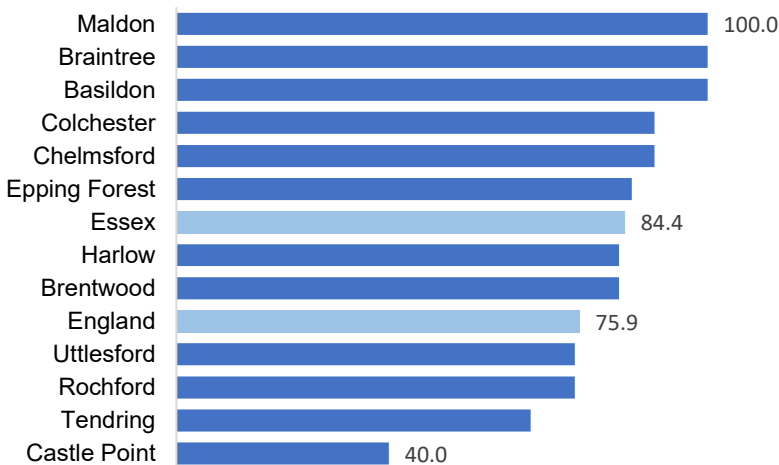


- The percentage of secondary schools judged as Good or Outstanding in Essex remains above the national and statistical neighbour averages
- However, the percentage of secondary schools judged as Good or Outstanding has fallen year of year in Essex.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **41st**

District Headlines

2019 Secondary Schools Good or Outstanding



- 5 districts declined over the last 3 years. The largest decline was in Castle Point (from 100% in 2017 to 40% in 2019 – this is 3 out of 5 secondary schools).
- 5 districts kept the same performance and 2 districts improved (most notably Braintree, from 88% to 100%).
- The national average also declined over the last 3 years from 79% to 76% of secondary schools good or outstanding.

- *Caution should be taken when interpreting district level data, as some districts will only have a small number of secondary schools.*

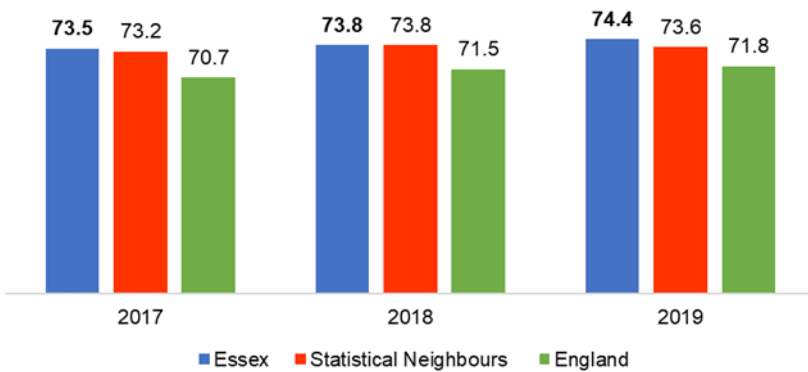
Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) – reception year pupils (age 5)

How performance is measured

Outcomes for pupils aged 5 (Reception class) are assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). The assessments are carried out by the children’s teacher; schools and settings are moderated by the Local Authority. The key measure is the percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development. Pupils are assessed as either ‘emerging’, ‘expected’ or ‘exceeding’ against seventeen Early Learning Goals. A good level of development focuses on achieving at least expected in the following early learning goals - communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development, literacy and maths.

Three-year trend

EYFS - % achieving a good level of development 2017-2019



- 74.4% of children in Essex achieved a good level of development in 2019, a 0.6% point increase since 2018.
- In 2019, Essex performed 2.6% points higher than the national average and has continued to perform above the national average since 2013.
- Between 2018 and 2019, the statistical neighbour average fell whilst Essex performance improved, being 0.8% points higher than the statistical neighbour average in 2019.

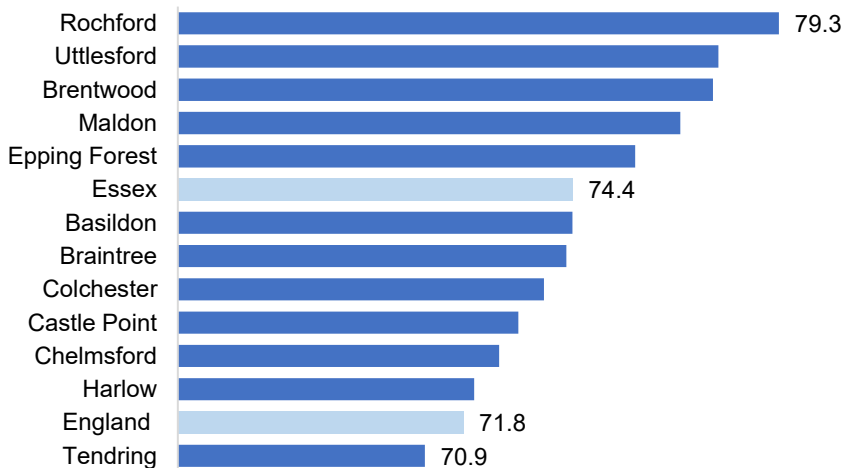
Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **31st**

Quartile

Top

District Headlines

2019 Performance



- In 2019, 79.3% of children in Rochford achieved a good level of development, making it the highest achieving district.
- The district with the lowest achievement levels in 2019 was Tendring (70.8%), a 0.7% point increase on 2018 performance.
- Chelmsford saw the largest fall in achievement levels out of all districts, falling by 2% points since 2018. Epping Forest saw the largest improvement by 1.9% points.

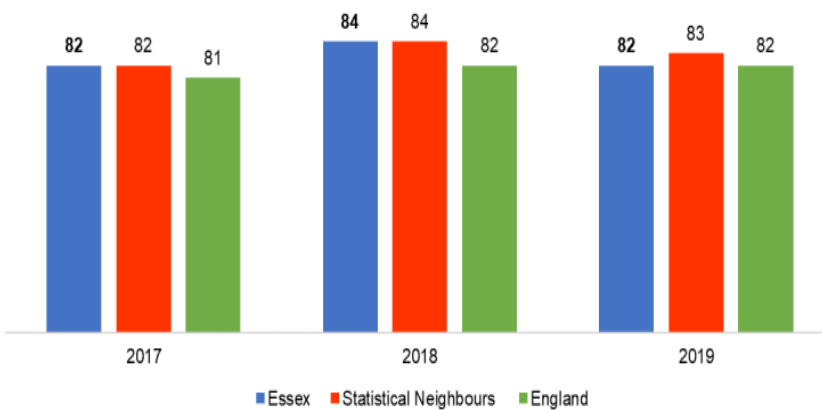
Phonics – Year 1 (age 6)

How performance is measured

The phonics screening check indicates whether children have achieved a basic proficiency in identifying essential word structures; it was introduced in 2012 as a statutory assessment for all children in Year 1 (typically aged 6). Those pupils who do not meet the standard in Year 1 or who were not tested are re-checked at the end of Year 2 (typically aged 7). Pupils meet the required standard of phonic decoding if they score 32 or more out of a possible 40 in the test.

Three-year trend

Year 1 Phonics - Percentage of children achieving the expected level 2017-2019



- 82% of Year 1 pupils in Essex achieved the expected standard of phonic decoding, this is a 2% points reduction from 2018. However, this is in line with the national average, and 1% point below Essex’s Statistical Neighbours.
- Nationally Essex’s rank position has dropped from 41st in 2018 to 63rd in 2019 out of 151 local authorities.

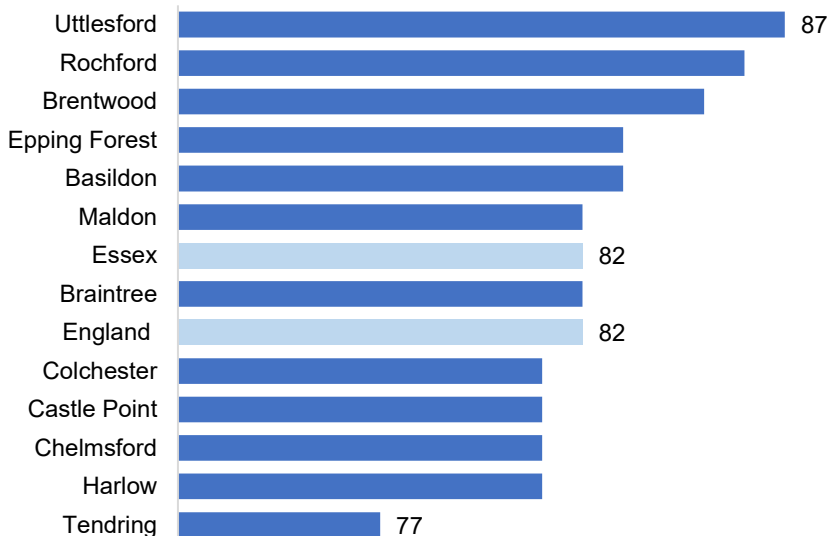
Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **63rd**

Quartile

3rd

District Headlines

2019 performance



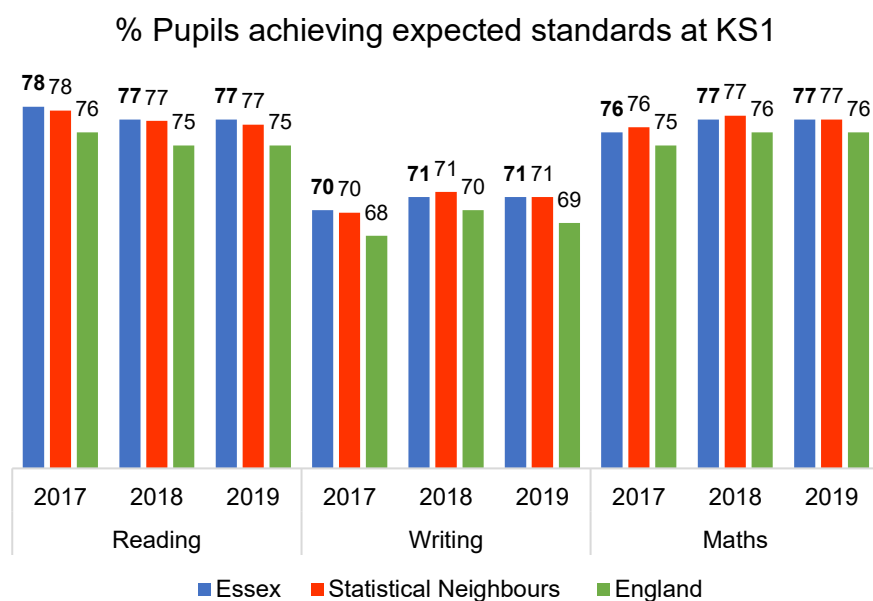
- Between 2018 and 2019 the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard of phonics decoding remained the same in Basildon (83%). All other districts saw a decrease, with Braintree experiencing the largest decrease (-4% points).
- Between 2018 and 2019 the percentage points difference between the highest and lowest performing districts increased from 9% to 10% points.
- 86% of girls meet the expected standard in Essex (in line with 2018), which is above the national average. The difference between boys and girls is 8% points (78% boys – which is in line with the national average).

Key Stage 1 – Year 2 (age 7)

How performance is measured

To measure pupil attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are assessed to determine whether they have reached at least the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths.

Three-year trend



- Essex is above the national average in all KS1 subjects.
- Essex and its statistical neighbours maintained stable performance between 2018 and 2019, above the national average.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) for **Reading 36th** Quartile

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) for **Writing 43rd** Quartile

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) for **Maths 42nd** Quartile

Top

2nd

2nd

District Headlines

Districts	2019		
	Reading	Writing	Maths
Tendring	73%	66%	73%
Harlow	73%	67%	76%
Castle Point	74%	68%	74%
Colchester	74%	68%	73%
England	75%	69%	76%
Epping Forest	76%	69%	77%
Essex	77%	71%	77%
Braintree	77%	71%	77%
Basildon	77%	72%	78%
Chelmsford	77%	71%	77%
Maldon	78%	74%	78%
Rochford	81%	77%	80%
Uttlesford	81%	75%	81%
Brentwood	82%	77%	81%
District span	9%	11%	8%

- Brentwood remains the top performing district in all subjects, with Tendring the lowest.
- Harlow and Castle Point have seen a decrease in all KS1 subjects since 2017.
- Reading has improved in Braintree by 8% points, taking Braintree from the worst performing district in 2017 to above the Essex and National average in 2019.

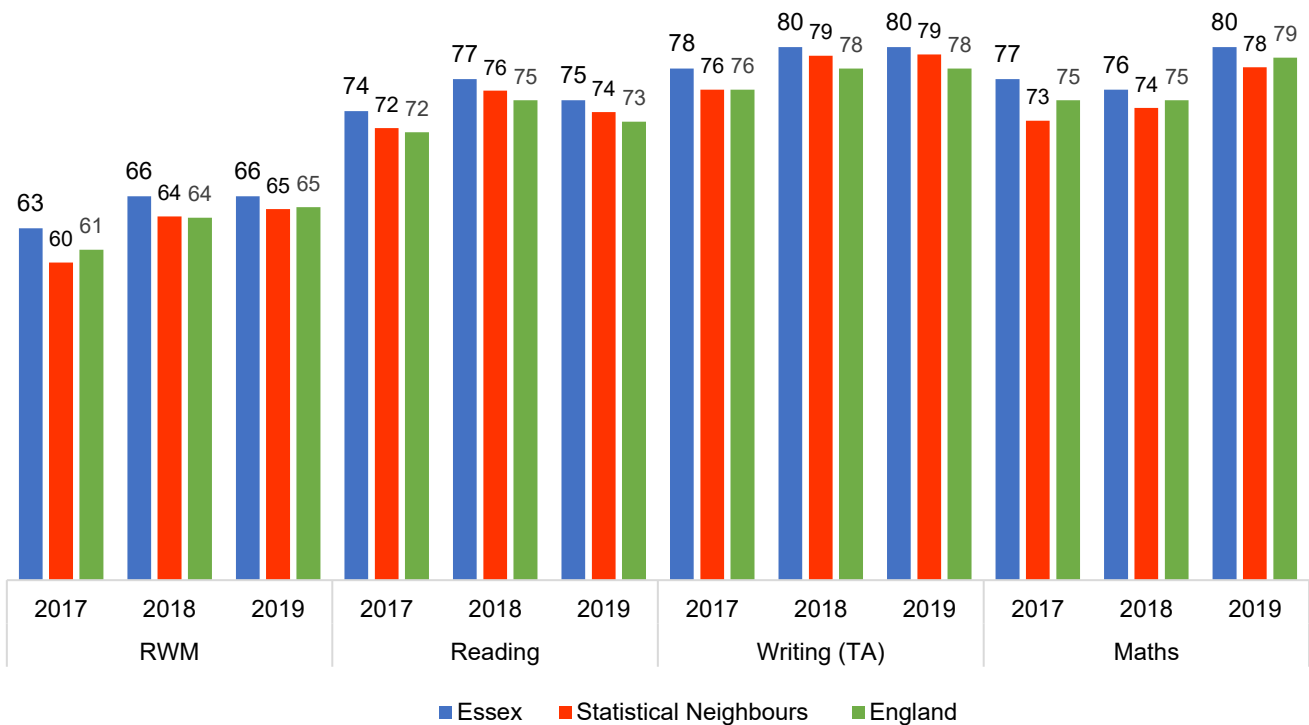
Key Stage 2 – Year 6 (age 11)

How performance is measured

Pupils are assessed via tests for Reading and Maths and assigned a scaled score, which is aligned to a series of standards set out in the Interim Teacher Assessment Frameworks. For Writing and Science, pupils are assessed via Teacher Assessments as there are no tests for these subjects. The expectation is that pupils achieve at least the expected standard for their age. Progress is measured from each pupil's end of KS1 outcome for each of Reading, Writing and Maths.

Three-year trend

KS2 - % achieving expected standard or higher 2017-2019

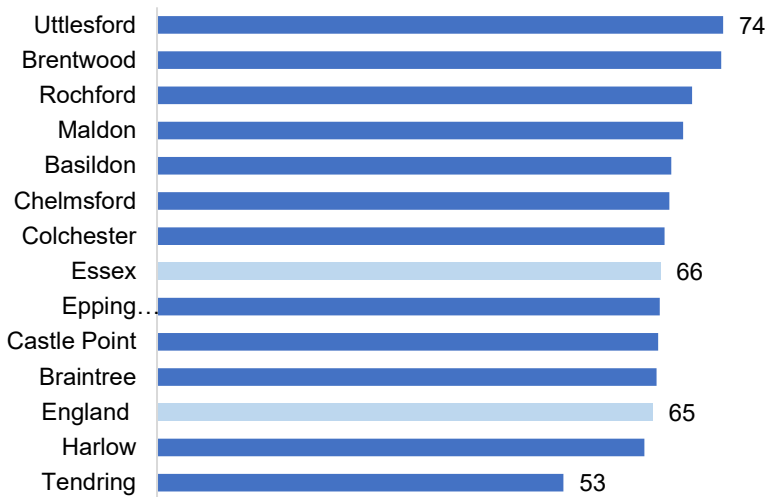


- For all pupils, Essex remains above the England and Statistical Neighbours average for all expected standard measures for the fourth year running.
- Historically Essex has improved at the same rate as its comparators for RWM combined. In 2019 Essex saw an improvement from 65.5% to 66.3%, in keeping with Statistical Neighbours and England improvements.
- At an individual subject level, Essex only saw an improvement in Maths, with a 4% points increase between 2018 and 2019.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) for RWM 60th	Quartile	3rd
Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) for Reading 56th	Quartile	2nd
Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) for Writing 54th	Quartile	2nd
Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) for Maths 52nd	Quartile	2nd

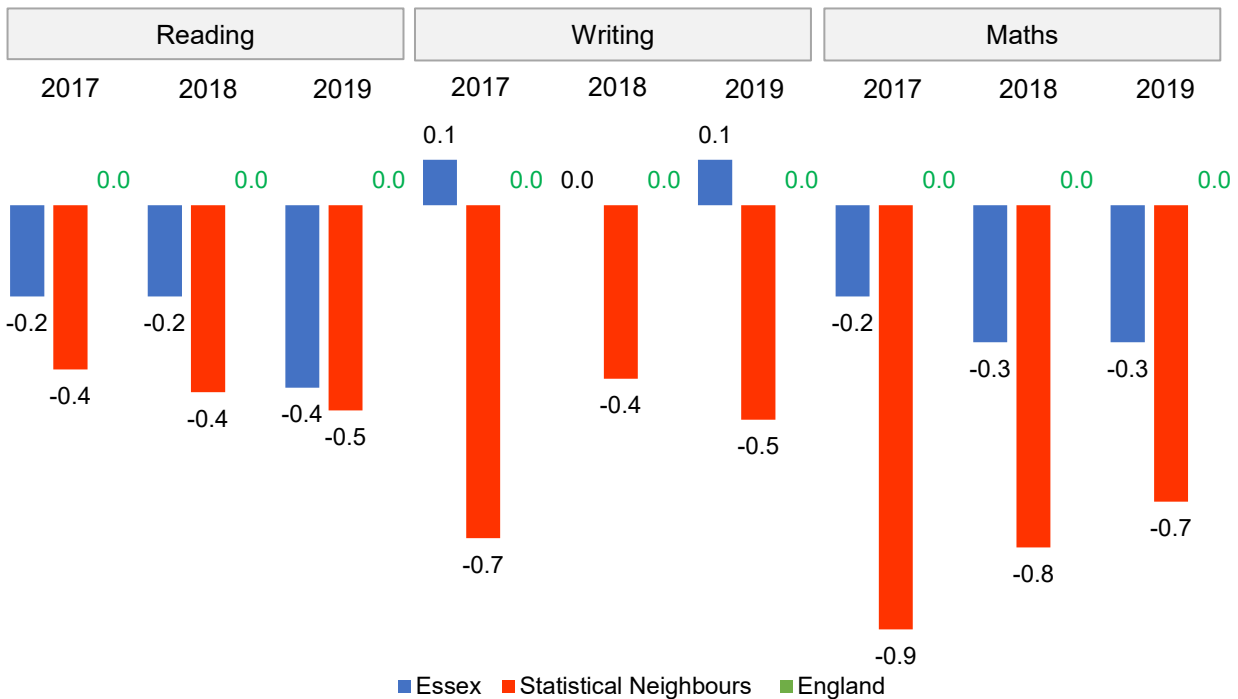
District Headlines (RWM)

2019 Performance



- Uttlesford remains the highest performing district, with 74% of all pupils achieving the expected level in RWM, with improvement seen in each year of the last 3 years.
- Harlow and Braintree have seen a year on year fall in rank amongst the districts between 2017 and 2019. Harlow has fallen from 3rd to 11th between while Braintree fell from 5th to 10th.
- There has been continued improvement in rank in Basildon and Rochford between 2017 and 2019. Basildon has improved from 9th to 5th and Rochford 6th to 3rd.

Average progress scores in Reading, Writing and Maths, KS1 to KS2, 2017-2019



- Progress scores in reading fell between 2018 and 2019 by 0.2 points but remained above statistical neighbours.
- Progress scores for Maths remained stable (-0.3) and above statistical neighbours.
- Improvement was seen in writing, increasing by 0.1, keeping Essex above statistical neighbours and the national baseline.

Key Stage 4 – Year 11 (age 16)

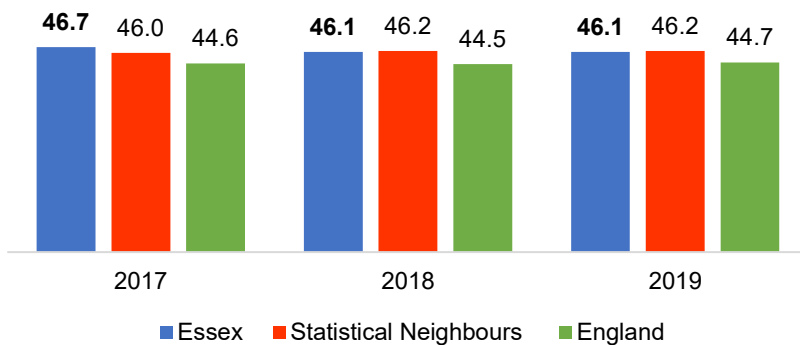
Attainment 8

How performance is measured

Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications including English and Maths (which are both 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 that have DfE approval.

Three-year trend

Average Attainment 8 Score per Pupil

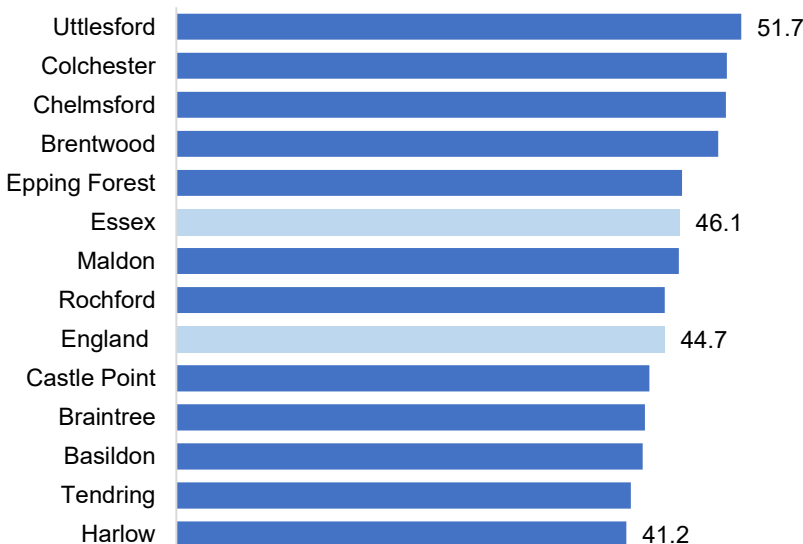


- Essex has seen no change in attainment 8 score between 2018 and 2019.
- Essex remains consistently above the national average and 0.1 point below statistical neighbours.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **80th** Quartile **3rd**

District Data

2019 Performance



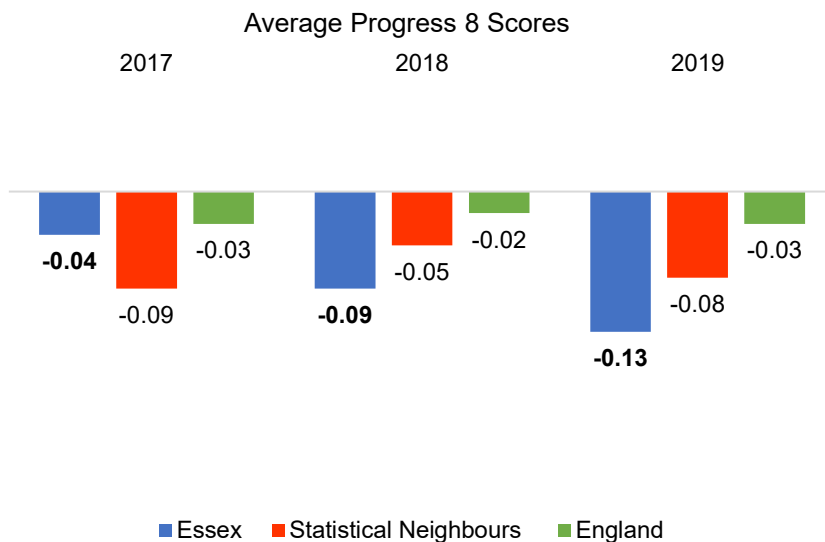
- Chelmsford was the highest performing district in 2017 and 2018, but declined in 2019, whilst Uttlesford saw an improvement to highest performing district, improving by 1.5 points.
- Harlow and Tendring have consistently been the lowest performing districts for the last 3 years, however Tendring made the largest improvement in 2019 by 1.7 points.

Progress 8

How performance is measured

Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes 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 very close to zero.

Three-year trend



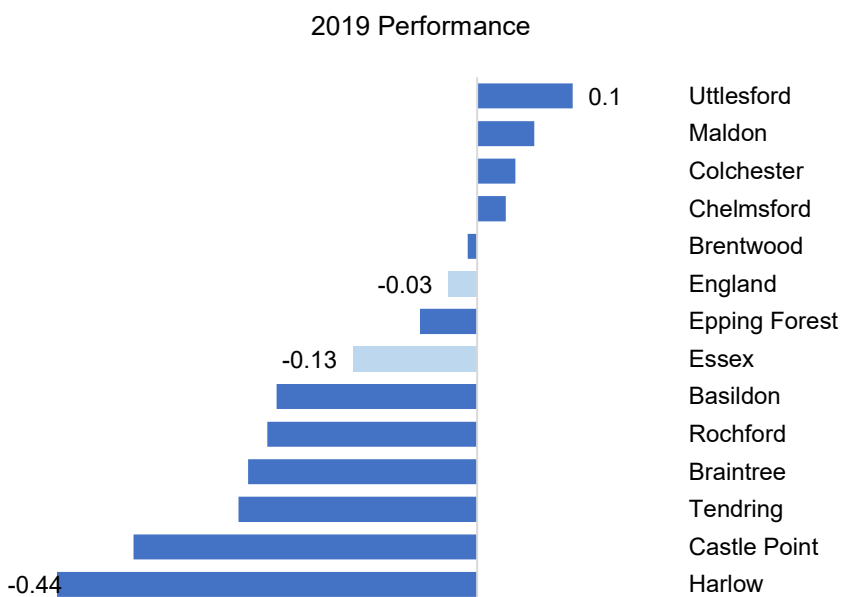
- Essex performance has declined over the last 3 years, from above the statistical neighbour average in 2017, to below in 2018 and 2019.
- Essex has also been below the national average (of 0) for the last 3 years, showing that progress from key stage 2 to key stage 4 is not as great in Essex as it is nationally, or among our statistical neighbours.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **100th**

Quartile

3rd

District Data



- Uttlesford has had the highest Progress 8 performance for the last 2 years.
- Harlow had the lowest performance in 2019 and has seen the greatest decline between 2018 and 2019 (falling by 0.25 points)
- 4 districts made greater progress than the national average – Chelmsford, Colchester, Maldon and Uttlesford.

Percentage of Pupils Achieving Grades 9-4 in English and Maths

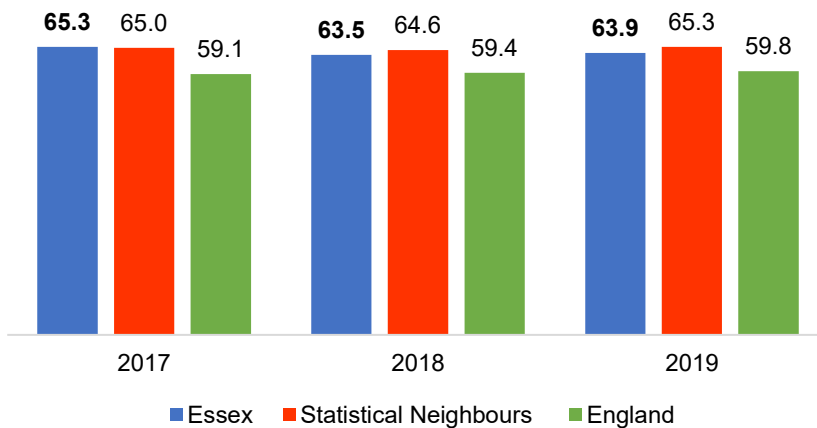
How performance is measured

A new scoring system was introduced in 2017 for reformed exams in English and Maths using a scoring system of 9 - 1. The 9 - 1 grading was then introduced across other GCSE subjects 2018.

From 2017 a new accountability measure was introduced which looks at the percentage of pupils achieving a grade 4 or above in both English and Maths. Pupils can achieve the English component of this in English language or literature.

Three-year trend

% Pupils achieving 9-4 in English and Maths



- The percentage of pupils achieving grades 9-4 in English and Maths improved by 0.4% points in 2019.
- Essex has maintained performance above the national average but has moved from above the statistical neighbour average in 2017 to below in 2018 and 2019.

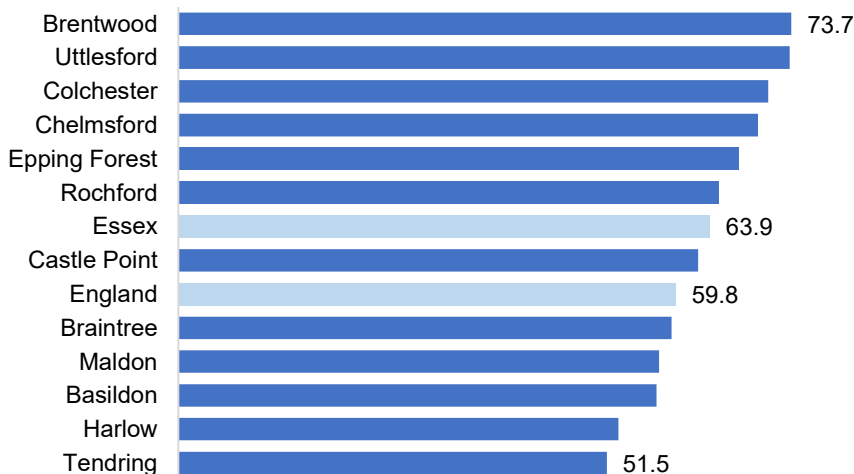
Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **77th**

Quartile

3rd

District Data

2019 Performance



- Harlow saw the largest decline in performance between 2018 and 2019, by 5.4% points.
- Colchester saw the greatest improvement between 2018 and 2019, by 4.9% points.
- Tendring has been the lowest performing district over the last 3 years, and Brentwood the highest performing.

Key Stage 5 – Year 13 (age 18)

How performance is measured

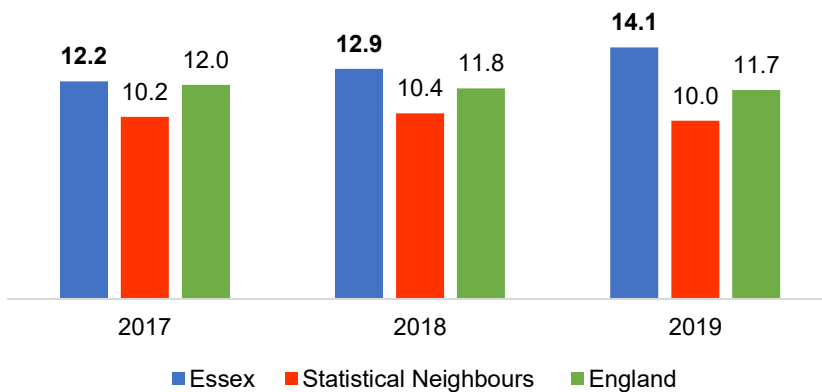
These 2 measures show performance of state funded schools at Key Stage 5. The percentage of students achieving 3 A*-A grades or better primarily includes students taking A level qualifications.

The average point score (APS) is calculated by dividing the total point score by the number of entries. The Essex score of 33.6 is equivalent to an average grade of C+ at A level.

District data is not made available

Three-year trend

% Achieving 3 A* to A grades or better

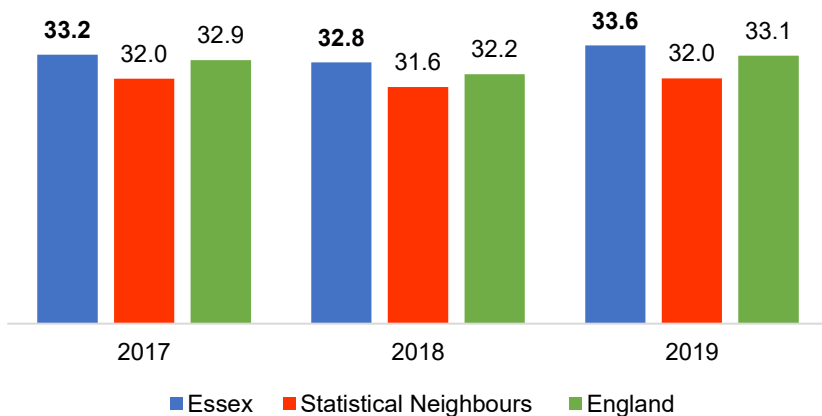


- Essex has consistently performed above its statistical neighbours and national average for the last 3 years
- Comparator groups saw a marginal decline between 2018 and 2019, whereas achievement continued to improve for Essex, meaning that Essex is in the top quartile nationally.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **28th**

Quartile **Top**

Key Stage 5 Average Points



- Essex has consistently been above the national and statistical neighbour averages over the last 3 years
- Essex improved by 0.8 average point scores in 2019 and sits in the second quartile nationally.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **44th**

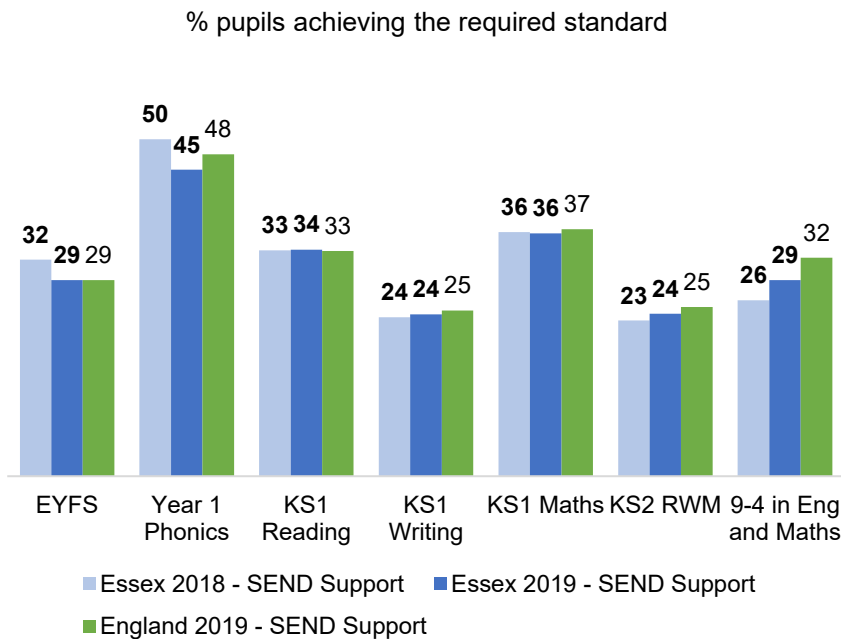
Quartile **2nd**

Special Educational Needs & Disability pupils (SEND)

How performance is measured

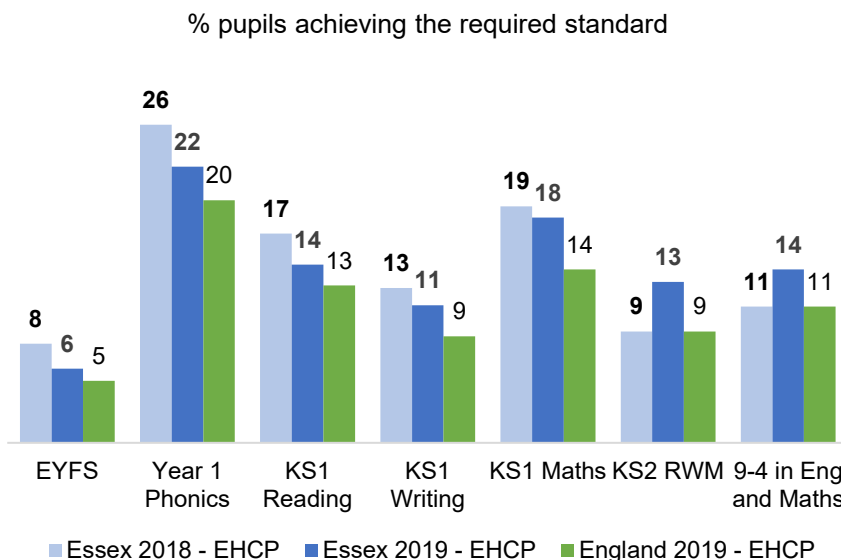
Pupils with special education needs are currently classified as needing SEN Support, or have an Education Health Care Plan. These pupils are compared with those pupils with no SEND needs identified.

Pupils with SEND Support



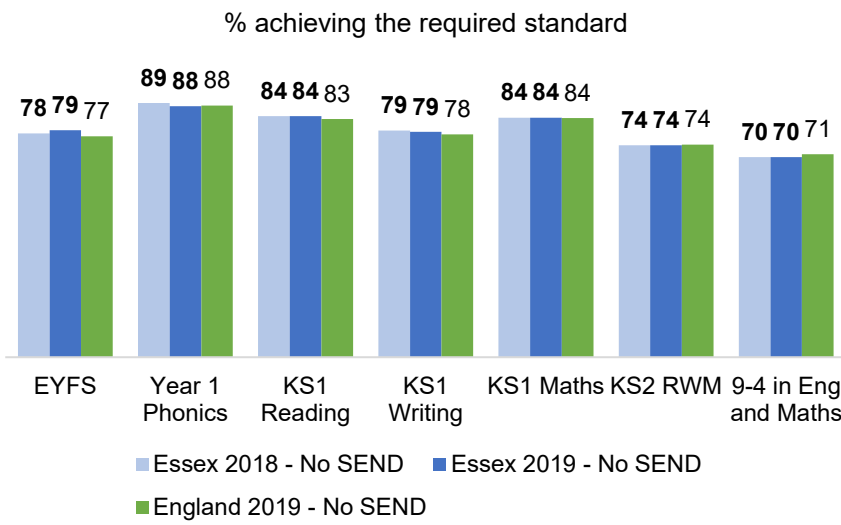
- Essex performance declined in 2019 for pupils with SEND Support in Early Years and Phonics. It improved by 1% point in KS1 Reading, and KS2 RWM.
- This decline at EYFS and Phonics has widened the gap between Essex children with SEN Support and those with No SEND needs.
- Essex SEND Support pupils performed 1% point below their national peers in KS1 writing and maths, and KS2 RWM, but 3% lower in Phonics.

Pupils with an Education Health Care Plan



- Essex pupils with an EHC plan are above the national average of pupils with an EHC plan across all key stages.
- Essex performance has declined in 2019 in all key stages except KS2 RWM and KS4 9-4 including English and Maths.
- This means the gap between Essex pupils with an EHCP and those with no SEND needs has increased across EYFS, Phonics and KS1, only narrowing at KS2 & KS4.

Pupils with no SEND

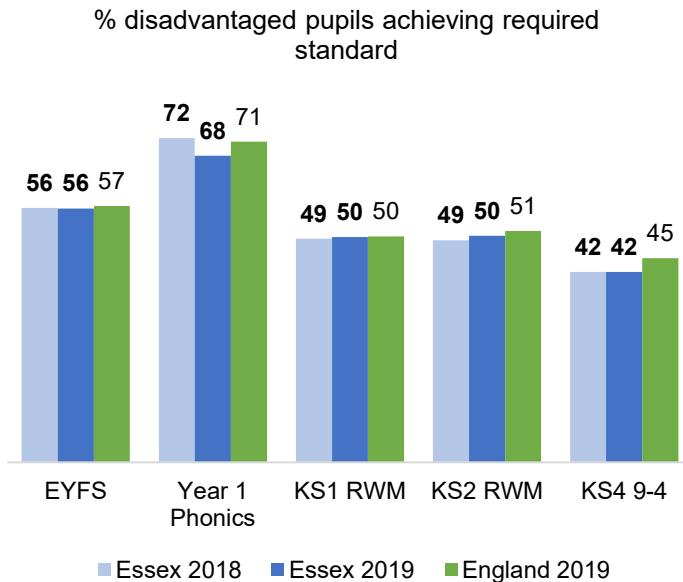


- Essex pupils with no SEND needs identified are achieving above the national average, or in line with the national average, except for Key stage 1 Writing and KS4 9-4 including English and Maths.

Disadvantaged pupils

How performance is measured

A pupil is deemed disadvantaged if they; are eligible for free school meals (of have been in the last 6 years); are a looked after child or were previously looked after and are now adopted or subject to special guardianship order, a child arrangement order or residence order. Pupil Premium funding is made available to help close the gap between these children and their peers.



- Year 1 Phonics saw the largest fall in achievement levels from 2018 was from 71.5% to 67.6% of disadvantaged pupils achieving the required level in 2019.

- Performance improved since 2018 for KS2 RWM by 1% point and KS4 (9-4 and Attainment 8) by 0.1.

- Essex is performing below the national average in all measures except for KS1 Writing which is 0.2% points higher than the national average in 2019.

- Essex Progress 8 score has fallen by 0.05 since 2018, from a score of -0.51 to -0.56 in 2019. This is below the national average score of -0.45 which fell by 0.01.

- Essex Attainment 8 score has increased by 0.1 since 2018, from 35.2 to 35.3. This is also below the national average of 36.8 which also increased by 0.1.

- The performance of non-disadvantaged pupils in England was 30.5% points higher than Essex disadvantaged pupils for KS4 9-4.

- Year 1 Phonics and KS1 Reading had the smallest difference with a gap of 16.8% points between groups.

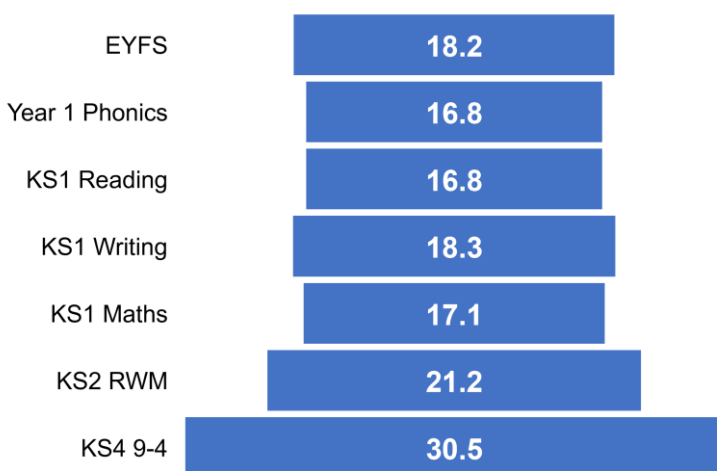
- Year 1 Phonics had the largest change in the gap, increasing by 3% points since 2018. Other gaps have remained stable.

- The national KS4 9-4 measure for Non-disadvantaged is 30.5% points higher than Essex disadvantaged pupils in 2019.

- The national Progress 8 score for Non-Disadvantaged is 0.7 higher than Essex Disadvantaged. The national Attainment 8 score for Non-disadvantaged is 15.2 higher than Essex disadvantaged.

KS4	Essex 2019	Essex Change (since 2018)	National 2019	National Change (since 2018)
Progress 8	-0.56	-0.05	-0.45	-0.01
Attainment 8	35.3	+0.1	36.8	+0.1

Gap in 2019 performance between Disadvantaged pupils in Essex and Non-Disadvantaged pupils in England (% points)



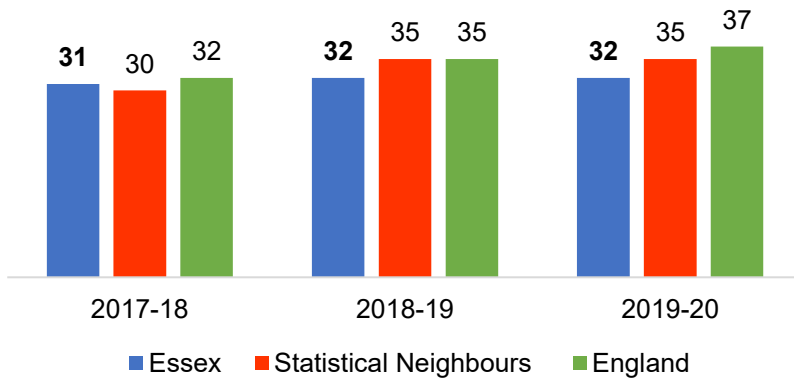
Children in Care

How performance is measured

When DfE report the performance of Children in Care, they refer to the qualifying cohort. These are children or young people who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months to 31st March 2019.

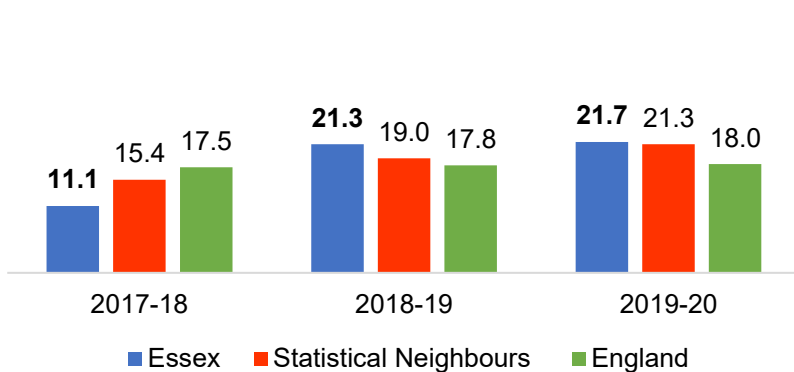
Three-year trend

KS2 RWM - % achieving expected standard or higher



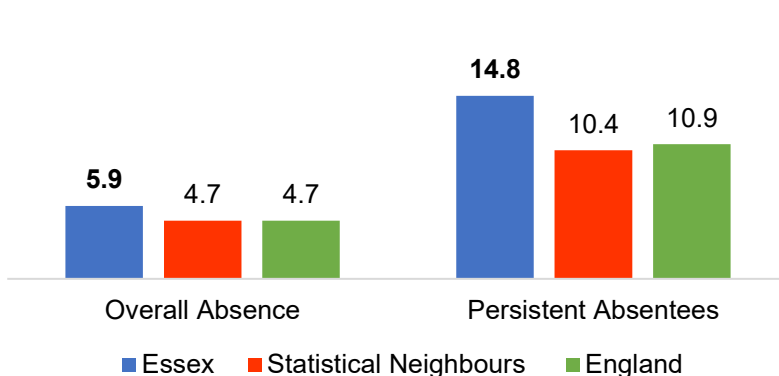
- Essex performance has remained static over the last three years which contrasts with the steady improvement in the England average.

KS4 - % achieving 9-4 in English & Maths



- Performance continued to improve in 2019 with more Essex children in care again achieving grades 9-4 in English & Maths than among children in care nationally.

Absence rates (%) in 2018-19



- The overall absence rate has been steadily increasing year on year from 3.5% in 2015-16 to 5.9% in 2018-19. Whilst the England average has also increased it is by a lower rate.
- The persistent absentee rate shows a similar pattern with the Essex rate doubling from 7.2% since 2015-16. In contrast the England average has increased from 9.1% to 10.9% over the same period.

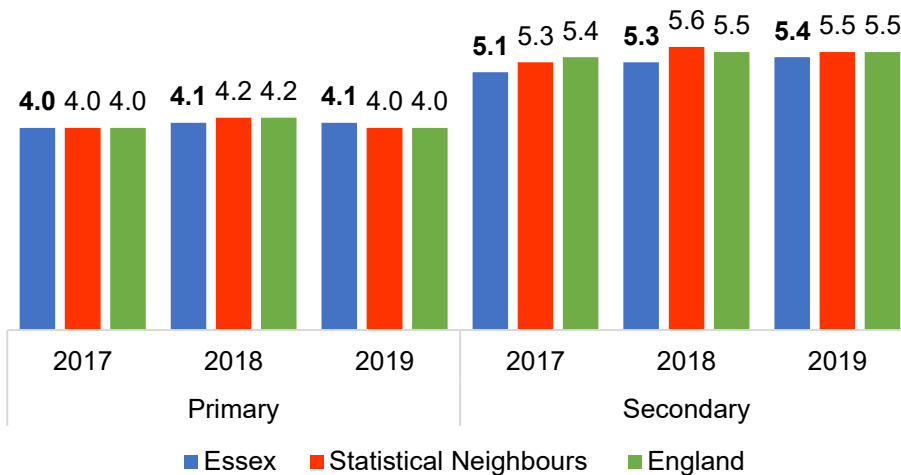
Absence

How performance is measured

Data is collected a term in arrears through the School Census. The overall absence measure reports the percentage of sessions during the academic year that were missed by pupils. The persistent absentee measure shows the percentage of pupils who missed at least 10% of possible sessions during the academic year. For both measures, good performance is a low percentage figure.

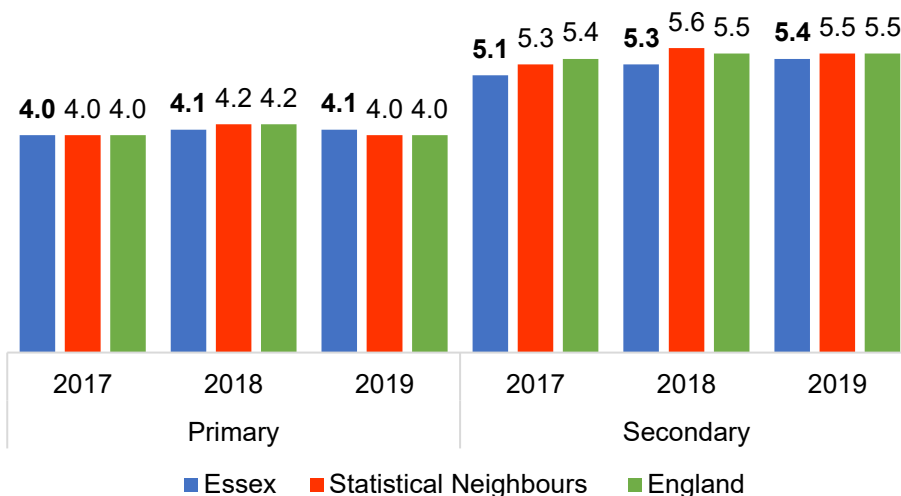
Three-year trend

% Overall School Absences for Primary and Secondary Schools



- Primary school overall absence has remained stable since 2018 at 4.1%. Essex is now above the statistical neighbour and national averages, both at 4%.
- Secondary school overall absence has increased over the period to 5.4% in 2019. Essex is still below the statistical neighbour and national averages, both at 5.5%.

% Persistent Absentees for Primary and Secondary Schools



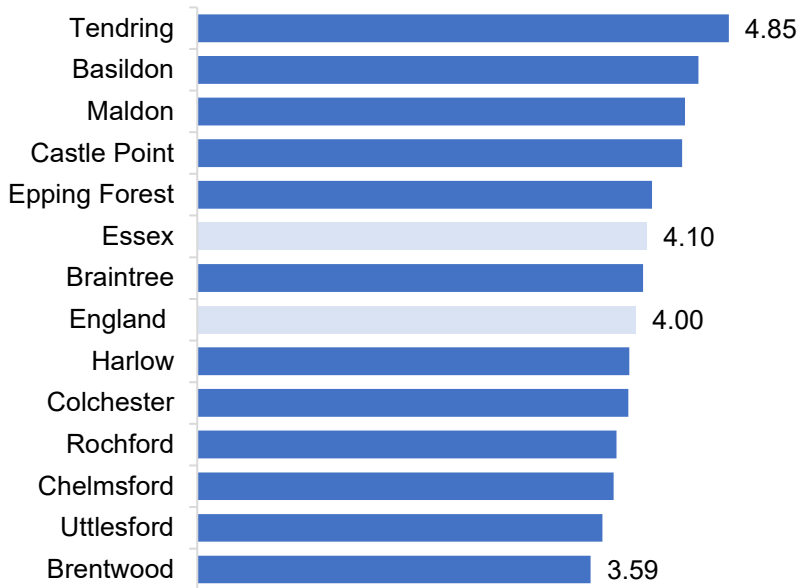
- Primary school persistent absence has increased over the three-year period to 8.5% in 2019. Essex is higher than the statistical neighbour and national averages at 7.8% and 8.2%.
- Secondary school persistent absence has also increased over the period to 13.3% in 2019. Essex remains below the statistical neighbour and national averages, at 13.5% and 13.7%.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities)

% overall absence - primary	95th	Quartile	3rd
% overall absence - secondary	69th	Quartile	2nd
% persistent absentees - primary	85th	Quartile	3rd
% persistent absentees - secondary	61st	Quartile	2nd

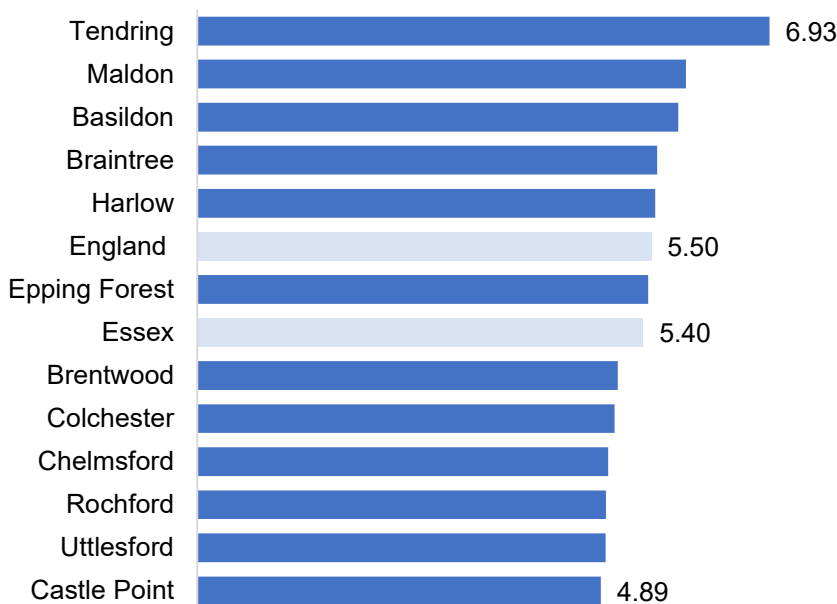
District Performance

Overall Primary School Absence rate by district (%)



- Tendring has the highest Primary absence rate in Essex of 4.85%, 0.75% points higher than the national average.
- Brentwood has the lowest Primary absence rate in Essex of 3.56%, 0.5% points lower than the national average.

Overall Secondary School Absence rate by District (%)



- Tendring has the highest Secondary absence rate in Essex of 6.93%, 1.4% points higher than the national average.
- Castle Point has the lowest Secondary absence rate in Essex of 4.89%, 0.61% points lower than national average.

Exclusions

How performance is measured

Data is collected at least a term in arrears through the School Census. An exclusion may be permanent or fixed term (for a specified number of days only). The number of exclusions is expressed as a rate by calculating as a percentage of the school population. Comparative data for the 2018-19 academic year is not scheduled to be published by DfE until July 2020. The data shown below relates to Essex only and has been generated from our own internal systems.

District Performance

Numbers of exclusions during 2018-19 academic year:

District	Permanent	Fixed
Basildon	14	1747
Braintree	12	1152
Brentwood	13	910
Castle Point	8	317
Chelmsford	24	1176
Colchester	21	2176
Epping Forest	20	875
Harlow	20	1514
Maldon	9	965
Rochford	7	502
Tendring	26	3169
Uttlesford	7	430
Out of county/unspecified	22	0
Total	203	14933

- The number of permanent exclusions in Essex has risen from 185 in 2017/18. However, the rate of permanent exclusions has always been around half of the national average (0.05% in Essex compared to 0.10% nationally in 2017/18).
- Likewise, the rate of fixed term exclusions has always been lower in Essex – 4.19% compared to 5.07% nationally in 2017/18.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) – 2017/18 performance

Permanent exclusions rate **29th** Quartile

Fixed term exclusions rate **55th** Quartile

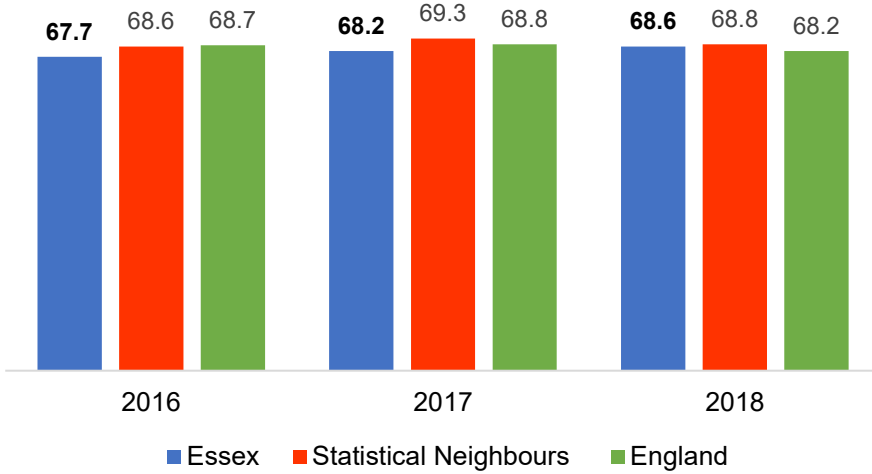
Top

2nd

Post 16

Qualifications achieved by age 19

% young people achieving level 2 qualifications (incl. English & Maths) by age 19

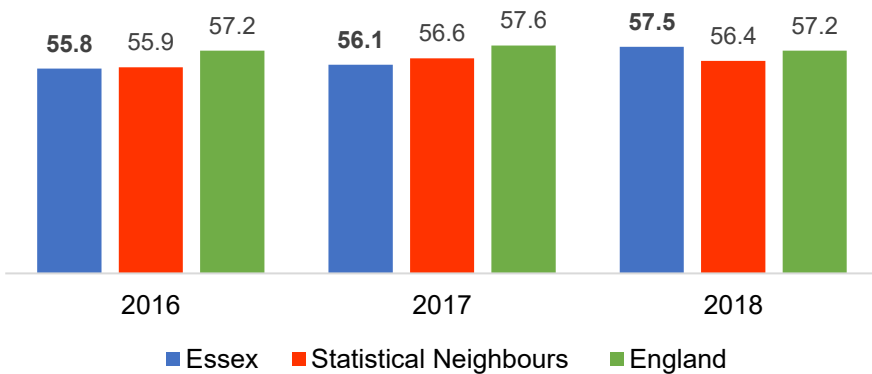


- Due to COVID-19 the release of 2019 has been delayed by DfE until 29th April.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **70th**

Quartile **2nd**

% young people achieving level 3 qualifications by age 19



- Due to COVID-19 the release of 2019 has been delayed by DfE until 29th April.

Essex ranking (of 151 local authorities) **75th**

Quartile **2nd**

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in 2018-19		
Districts	Starts	Achievements*
Basildon	1300	650
Colchester	1150	510
Chelmsford	1140	450
Braintree	1050	470
Tendring	950	510
Epping Forest	670	310
Castle Point	630	340
Harlow	590	230
Rochford	550	290
Uttlesford	480	200
Brentwood	450	200
Maldon	420	210
Essex	9380	4370

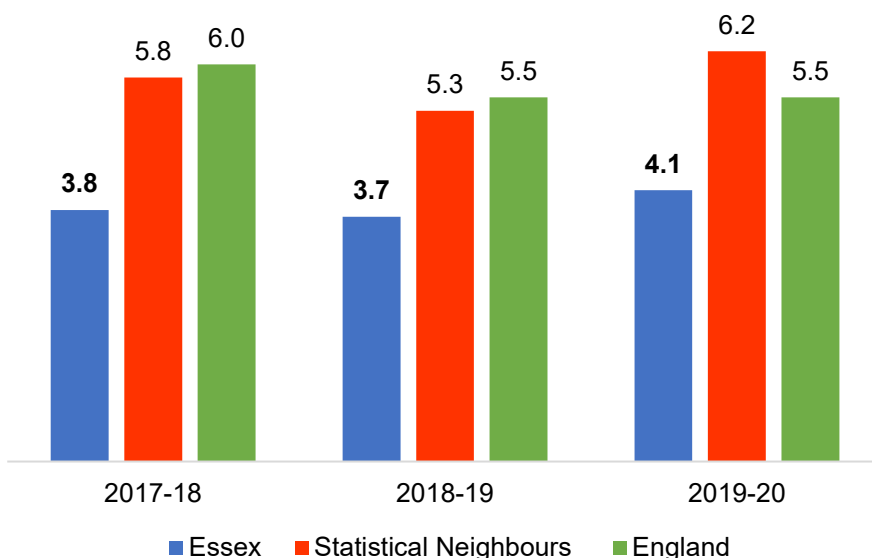
*learners that started a qualification and went on to successfully complete it

The Starts and Achievements statistics should NOT be used to measure percentage progress within a year. They are independent performance metrics.

- Starts increased from 9130 in 2017/18 to 9360 in 2018/19
- The number of higher-level apprenticeships starts was 1900 (up from 530 in 2014/15). One in five (20%) starts are now for higher apprenticeships – double the national rate of 10%.

NEET

% 16-18 year olds who are NEET/Unknown



- Whilst the rate increased in Essex to 4.1% in 2019/20, young people not in education, employment or training remains significantly below that of Statistical Neighbours and England.
- Tendring has the highest rate at 6.1% compared to Brentwood with the lowest at 2.6%.

E: Deep dive summaries

Children and young people not on full-time timetables

Background

The number of children and young people not on full-time timetables has been increasing at a rapid rate over recent years. This issue was addressed at Education Sustainability Board meetings during Autumn 2019 and the following key points made:

- we need better comparative data to understand why certain areas are having more exclusions
- we need to positively challenge schools ahead of every permanent exclusion
- fixed term exclusions are an issue
- we need to think about communications and marketing around this
- some schools are pro-actively encouraging elective home education
- we need to know and understand which groups of children are under-performing the most in Essex
- we need an annual performance card for schools each year
- we must lead Behaviour Attendance Partnerships (BAP) and be sure of their remit to ensure children and young people stay in school
- we need to have a strategy for working with the Association of Secondary Headteachers in Essex (ASHE) and Essex Primary Headteachers Association (EPHA)

Action proposed: total approach re. school exclusions – one overall paper document/strategy to the Children’s Partnership Board, outlining what everyone must do in response to this and what the overall approach is and including the role of BAPs within this.

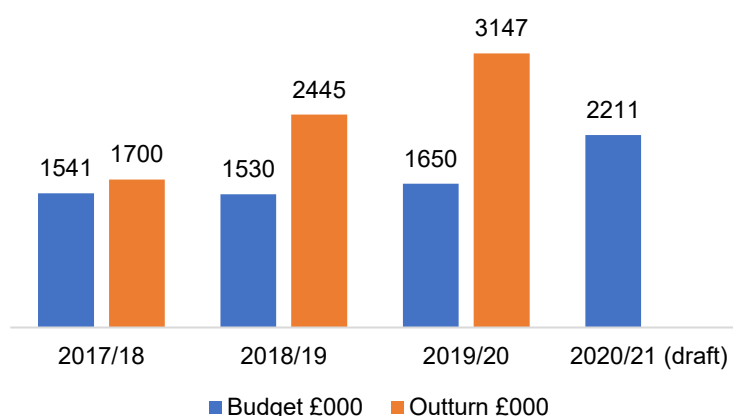
Who are the children and young people not on a full-time timetable?

Group	Barriers to full-time education
Children Missing Education	We cannot be certain how many there are. These can be people arriving in Essex, that for a plethora of reasons do not register for a school place. This group could include those escaping domestic violence or trying to avoid professional conduct.
Elective Home Educated	These are children whose parents choose to educate out of school. This can again be for many reasons including avoiding professionals, avoiding bullying, no suitable offer or parents’ ideals.
Medical/Emotional including Anxious School Refusers	Anxiety or emotional issues may be a barrier to young people preventing access to full-time education. There is evidence that schools are treating as attendance issues until the issue has accelerated.

Permanently excluded	Exclusions are for persistent disruptive behaviour or for a one-off isolated incident.
Those on part-time timetable in school, Pupil referral Unit or Alternative Provision	Schools do not have to share this information. We suspect that the actual number of affected pupils is higher. Information is shared with quadrant teams, but no formal process has been agreed.
Off rolling	The practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without using a permanent exclusion, when the removal is primarily in the best interests of the school, rather than the pupil. This includes pressuring a parent to remove their child from the school roll.
No suitable offer	Often children refuse what is offered – the variety of what can be offered is limited. Safeguarding responsibility for this cohort of children is a major risk to the local authority – recently also taken on the welfare check responsibility for those children in SEND. A secure process on what to do with the outcomes of the Welfare call need to be implemented as a matter of urgency.
Travellers	Often do not take up offer for cultural reasons.
Truants	Pupils who get their school mark and leave the site without permission or fake authorised absence.
Fixed term exclusions	Limited capacity to deal with this given the numbers involved.

Funding implications

Alternative Education: budget v outturn



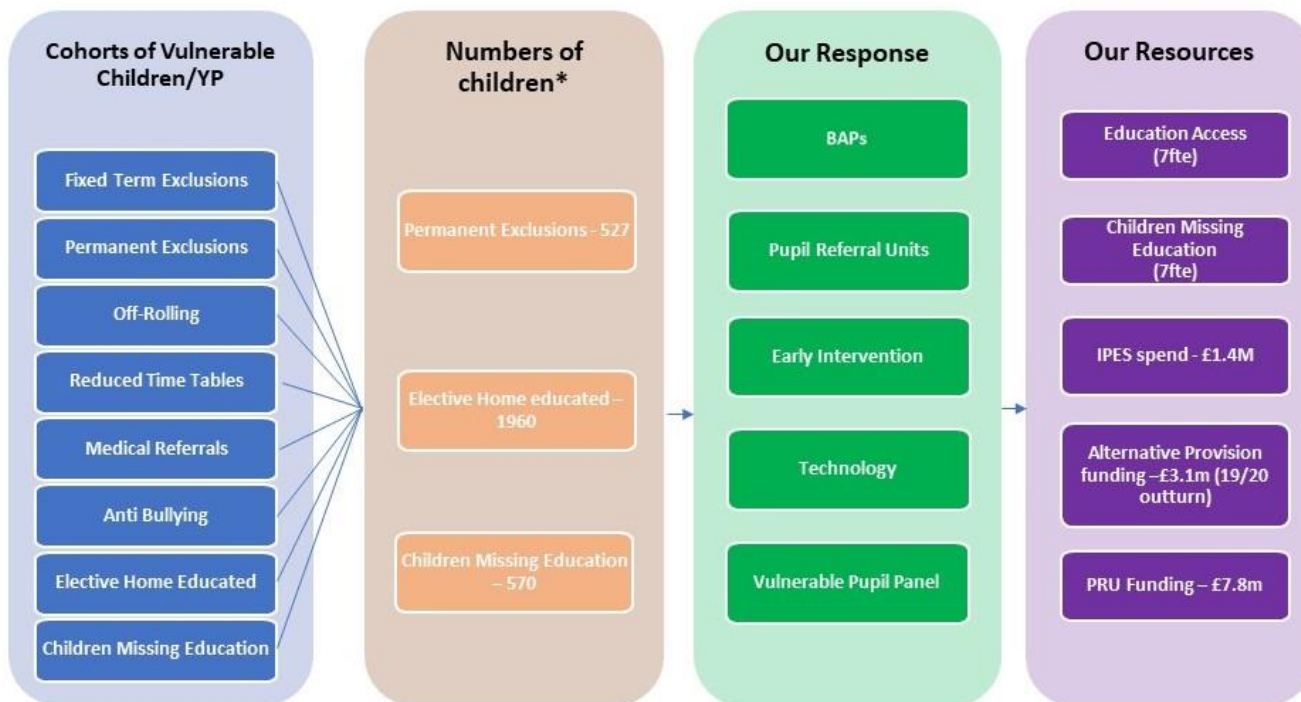
The budget for Alternative Education has been overspending each financial year from 2017/18 to 2019/20.

The variance has increased from £159,000 in 2017/18 to nearly £1.5 million in 2019/20.

As at December 2019, the expenditure on Individual Packages of Educational Support (IPES) was £1.4 million. Spread across 251 placements, this gives an average spend per placement of £5578.

The provision of funding to Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and Adolescent Units has remained static over the past two years at £906,000.

Our current offer



** Not including an estimated 600 children electively home educated on Convey, or 240 on PR1's and other types of absence*

The current position and issues for each response

Response	Current position	Issues
BAPs	<p>Currently eight in operation. All secondary schools at present but primaries interested.</p> <p>Working on principles for BAPs.</p>	<p>Previous BAPs budget of £600,000 no longer available.</p> <p>Limited ability to monitor and challenge BAPs.</p> <p>Transporting children issues.</p> <p>BAP intervention may affect PRU ability to deal with new levels of need.</p>
PRUs	<p>£7.8 million current spend.</p> <p>Various complexities prevent some children receiving full-time education.</p> <p>Increased commissioning through IPES.</p> <p>Capital programme underway to improve the PRU estate.</p>	<p>Increased PRU demand as schools struggle with behaviour and mental health needs.</p> <p>Mixed confidence in PRUs.</p> <p>No formal contract with PRUs.</p> <p>Increased IPES placements as PRUs can't cope with high levels of need.</p>

Early Intervention	<p>25% of Education Access team's time used giving advice to headteachers on pupils on brink of exclusion.</p> <p>Attendance difficulties toolkit being produced.</p>	<p>No apparent strategy. Tend to respond to crises rather than prevent.</p> <p>Interventions are not recorded adequately limiting analysis.</p>
Technology	<p>Specialist Education services have purchased a number of 'robots' (through Gavin's Den) which help children with medical needs access education.</p>	<p>Further investment needed.</p> <p>Effectiveness of 'robots' ongoing with business case to follow.</p> <p>Demand outstrips supply for the 16 robots. Procurement issues delaying more.</p>
Vulnerable Pupil Panel	<p>Focusses on Youth Justice young people and tends to meet monthly.</p> <p>High success rate in enabling access to appropriate education.</p>	<p>Expanding to other pupil groups.</p> <p>Sustainability as only deals a child at a time.</p>

The way forward

- This group of children is all our responsibility
- This is obviously a complex multi layered whole system problem and even though we are doing a lot our offer is fragmented and possibly not agile enough to respond to the varied types of need.
- To work over the next 6-12 months to develop a strategy and 5-year plan using 'contextual safeguarding' as an approach to ensure all children within this cohort achieve positive education outcomes.
- We will develop this strategy and plan to ensure:
 - A whole system transformation to support this cohort of young people
 - ECC skills and resources (structures, processes and systems) are fit for purpose
 - Experiences and the voice of children and young people to be at the heart of our decision making
 - A clearly defined definition of 'full time Education' for this cohort of young people
 - Sound commercial practices (specifications and contracts for all PRU's) are in place, which will help manage the market and ensure funded places are quality assured and outcomes monitored

Progress 8 scores

Background

Why is it that Essex Progress 8 has fallen over the last three years compared to Statistical Neighbours and national?

Context: In 2019 the overall Progress 8 score for Essex was -0.13 compared to a national figure of -0.03 (for state schools).

A drop of -0.10 is equivalent to every year 11 student in Essex achieving one grade lower in one and only one subject in their 'package' of qualifications that went into their Progress 8 score.

The following four hypotheses are explored:

- Key Stage 4 curriculum
- Recruitment and Retention
- Changing context in Essex
- Underperformance of groups of pupils

Why might there be a difference?

Hypothesis	Essex specific factors
Key Stage 4 curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of national changes: There has been significant change in accountability and assessment measures in recent years. All GCSE courses are now 100% exam based with no coursework. Some GCSEs are split into two tiers of entry – if students take the higher tier and don't achieve the threshold mark, they are unclassified – this has a big effect on progress scores and was a significant factor in mathematics in 2018 and science in 2019 for several Essex schools. • Impact on changing which qualifications count towards the Progress 8 measure: In the past many Essex schools were influenced to maximise Progress 8 measures through some 'quick wins' e.g. use of the iGCSEs in English and entering students for qualifications such as the ECDL. These provided a performance table 'win' in 2016 and 2017, but they are now not valid for the performance tables. Many schools believe that these qualifications remain relevant for certain groups of learners and are continuing to use them. It has taken time for the curriculum offer for some schools to catch up. One effect is that some Essex schools have reduced the number of qualifications many of their students enter at the end of year 11 (which does not help a positive Progress 8 score – but can help a student achieve their desired Post 16 pathway.) • Legacy GCSEs: A number of schools have opted for learners to undertake GCSE qualifications in one year, over years 9, 10 and 11. Because the change to the new expectations happened over a two year period these schools have fewer subjects that count as there is no number grade equivalent or point score for these legacy qualifications. 2019 was the last year where this will be an issue.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum fit, learners being entered for qualifications that meet their needs as well as those of Progress 8: In some schools, key groups of learners were entered for qualifications that were very much more demanding than was expected. For example, middle prior attaining boys may chose GCSE PE or Computer Science believing them to be mainly practical when they are both now highly academic. There has also been a political emphasis placed on the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) suite of qualifications. In 2019 more students in Essex took GCSEs that counted as covering Ebacc entry (English, mathematics, science, Geography or History, and a modern foreign language). In particular more middle prior attaining students took this suite of qualifications (without taking any additional options) and the progress of middle prior attaining students in Essex fell in 2019 compared to 2018. • Long term curriculum and teaching and learning development: With an emphasis on chasing moving accountability measures in the context of challenges in recruitment, retention and development of staff (see below) schools over recent years have often had to prioritise GCSE and A level courses for staffing and development. This may have resulted in some deficiencies in the development of fundamental knowledge and skills (including literacy and engagement) during KS3 in some schools. The lower priority given to KS3 has been seen by a number of schools reducing KS3 to just two years to provide more time for their KS4 options.
Recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially in mathematics, sciences, languages and humanities which cover 60% of progress 8. The cost of living in Essex is reported to be a key issue with only a few schools qualifying for the London fringe allowance. Over the past 5 years the real terms reduction in funding, the shortage in national and local initial teacher training candidates in shortage subjects, together with disadvantageous competition with surrounding local authorities has made securing a high-quality teaching staff to cover all areas of the curriculum an increasing challenge. • Staffing turbulence and recruitment and retention issues are often the largest factors in within school (and between school) variations. For example, Suffolk has an opportunity area that has resulted in extra investment and overstaffing in many Suffolk schools (compared to Essex); higher funding and teacher salaries in London and London boroughs can temp teachers away from Essex schools; Other neighbouring local authorities are some of the most popular areas of the country to live and work (e.g. Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire). In particular, this may have had an impact on the quality of teaching for KS3 classes in many schools at a time when adapting to changing expectations in KS2, accompanied by significant changes to GCSE and Post 16 exams have caused many teachers, subject leaders and senior leaders to prioritise development of the curriculum and teaching and learning at KS4 and Post 16 (including many schools reducing KS3 to just 2 years and reducing the number of options available to students.

Changing context in Essex over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of mental health: Schools report an increasing number of students with mental health concerns, often leading to poor attendance and a failure to complete many (if any) qualifications at the end of year 11. These 'outlying' students have a significant impact on the Progress 8 measure. Schools also report difficulties in accessing suitable mental health diagnosis and support in a timely manner. • Loss of senior leadership experience: A great deal of experience has been lost to Essex over the last few years. 40% of Essex secondary schools have had a new Headteacher over the period since the learners taking their qualifications in 2019 started year 10. In schools that have a three-year KS4 this rises considerably. The impact of the new leadership on curriculum and outcomes will not be seen until after 2020. • The level and nature of LA support for school improvement: Since 2017 the secondary team has significantly reduced in size and capacity has been directed towards traded activity as well as strategic school improvement with senior leaders. This has reduced the opportunity to work proactively with middle leaders in schools identified as low and medium level of need.
Underperformance of groups of pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underperformance of disadvantaged learners, boys, SEND and low prior attaining learners especially in areas of deprivation should be noted. Many learners in these groups have found accessing the Ebacc subjects a challenge. • The factors influencing the underperformance as outlined above often has a greater impact upon these groups due to lack of support, motivation or an inability to access content.

Conclusion

Although there are many and varied reasons for the fall in Progress 8 in Essex (linked to the school and pupil contexts) we must robustly challenge schools to improve this measure over time.

Many schools have changed their curriculum models which will better meet the needs of learners and should, therefore, have a positive impact on their Progress 8 scores in future years.

However, some groups consistently perform lower and remain a priority for Essex. The new SEND and disadvantaged strategy and alignment of education and SEND teams will provide the additional capacity to challenge provision and outcomes.

Collectively we need to improve the quality of education through improving recruitment and retention, teaching and learning, the curriculum and inclusion.

Actions we are taking to improve outcomes – strategic

- Test the hypotheses and clarify issues with progress at KS4 and provide developmental solutions that are within our and schools' control.
- Identify effective curriculum and teaching and learning practice within Essex schools and share via ASHE and other appropriate networks.

- Work with selected schools and Teaching Schools Alliances (TSAs) to develop toolkits/advice for key areas identified for development e.g. best practice for recruitment and retention and supporting reading development.
- Development of a new disadvantaged strategy to be launched in September 2020. This includes the development of effective support for improving outcomes for this group of pupils in identified schools.
- Support the development and production of the 4 year SEND Strategy to include KS4 outcomes and destinations.
- Development of a traded programme of bespoke support for schools to address school improvement and outcomes for pupils.
- Work with ASHE on the development and dissemination of these strategies.
- Further develop the Essex recruitment and retention strategies.
- Work with Multi Academy Trusts to identify Trust-wide priorities for teaching and learning and ensure that they broker appropriate support.
- The Tendring Education Strategic Board work on recruitment, retention and attendance will have a positive impact on Progress 8.

Actions we are taking to improve outcomes – individual schools

- Supporting Success, Enabling Excellence –Levels of need will be revised in the light of ongoing intelligence. These levels of need will continue to be agreed with schools and support will be offered to target specific areas. The SEPs will work with other teams within the LA within the quadrant group to facilitate support and challenge progress over time. This will include attendance and inclusion colleagues.
- Use of strategic data sets to identify and prioritise visits to secondary schools, to celebrate and share success and offer challenge in areas that are shown to be weaker.
- SEPs to work in identified schools with all levels of leadership to challenge and facilitate the development of curriculum intent and implementation.
- SEPs will work with schools on the disadvantaged project with 4 secondary schools – These schools will become beacon hubs for the project, sharing good practice across the County.
- Identify and share effective curriculum transition from primary schools to secondary settings to facilitate challenge and progress.

Work with schools to ensure stretch and challenge and appropriate academic reading for all learners especially at KS3.

Comparing high Ofsted grades with more modest attainment

Background

Why is it that Essex attainment outcomes do seemingly not mirror the high proportion of schools graded good or outstanding by Ofsted? Typically, Essex out-performs national averages for Ofsted outcomes but is broadly in line with those for attainment outcomes (and lower for progress outcomes)?

The following three hypotheses are explored:

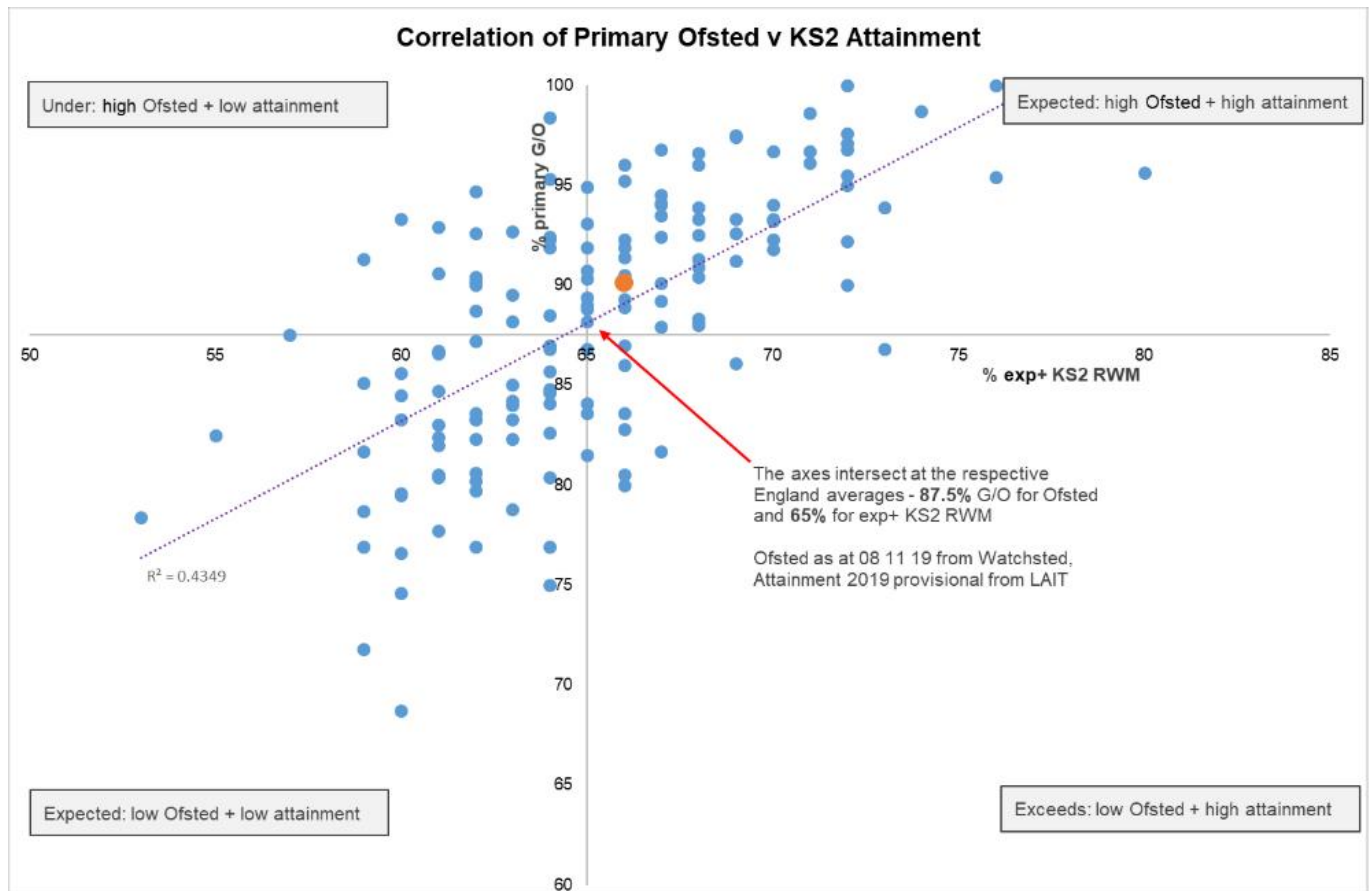
- Change in Ofsted frameworks
- Changing context in Essex
- Underperformance of groups of pupils

Why might there be a difference?

Why?	Why in Essex?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in Ofsted frameworks and key judgements • Ofsted pattern of inspections v timing of KS2 or KS4 results • Overall National and Essex Ofsted performance data includes Infant and Special schools • Since 2016, there have been substantial changes to school types. The proportion of LA maintained schools decreased from 82% to 68% in 2019 – this has reduced the level of intervention from the LA • Whilst converter academies and LA maintained schools broadly achieve outcomes in line with the expected standard, outcomes in sponsored academies are approx. 8 percent lower at KS2 • Context: underperformance of significant groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the largest Local Authorities in terms of schools: Essex has 46 Infant schools and 400 Primary and Junior Schools, 79 Secondary and 19 Special schools • 1 percentage point improvement in primary schools requires approx. 160 more pupils to improve at RWM • Nearly half of primary schools are academies and, all but 4 secondary schools are academies • 160 sponsored primary academies which is higher than national • Challenges around recruitment and retention in areas of greatest deprivation • Increasingly diverse population, EAL, disadvantaged and SEND population.

Change in Ofsted frameworks

The chart below correlates the percentage of good or outstanding primary schools in each local authority against their respective % pupils achieving at least the expected standard in KS2 RWM in 2019. Whilst this suggests that Essex performance is around 1% lower than the trendline suggests it should be, the statistical significance of the correlation is not strong.



This analysis of course only looks at a point in time, but were we to look at patterns over the period of Ofsted frameworks changing these show:

KS2 – Ofsted v KS2 RWM performance

- 7% of Essex primary/ junior schools have had a lesser grade awarded from Ofsted in the last 4 years and RWM combined has declined.
- 9% of Essex primary/ junior schools have had a lesser grade awarded from Ofsted and RWM combined has an upward trend over the last 4 years.
- 41% of Essex primary/ junior schools have had an improved grade from Ofsted in last 4 years and had an upward trend in RWM combined.
- 43% of Essex primary/ junior had an improved grade from Ofsted in the past 4 years but have had declining or fluctuating RWM combined data.

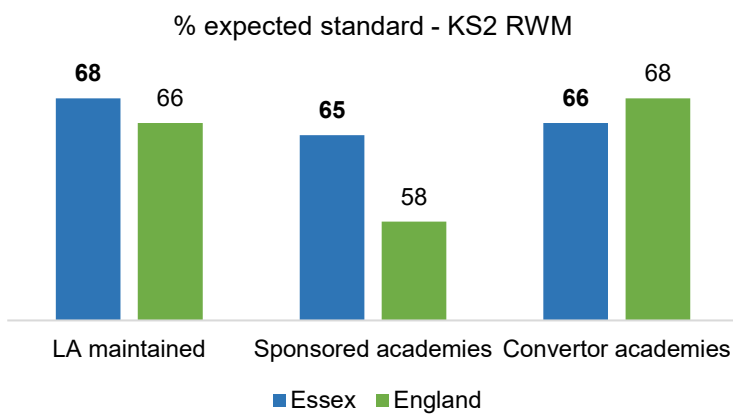
KS4 – Ofsted v KS4 Progress 8 performance

- 8% of Essex secondary schools have had a lesser grade awarded from Ofsted in the last 4 years and Progress 8 has declined.
- 4% Of Essex secondary schools have had a lesser grade awarded from Ofsted and Progress 8 has an upward trend over the last 4 years.

- 1% Of Essex secondary schools have had an improved grade from Ofsted in last 4 years and had an upward trend in Progress 8.
- 5% Of Essex secondary schools had an improved grade from Ofsted in the past 4 years but have had declining or fluctuating Progress 8 data.

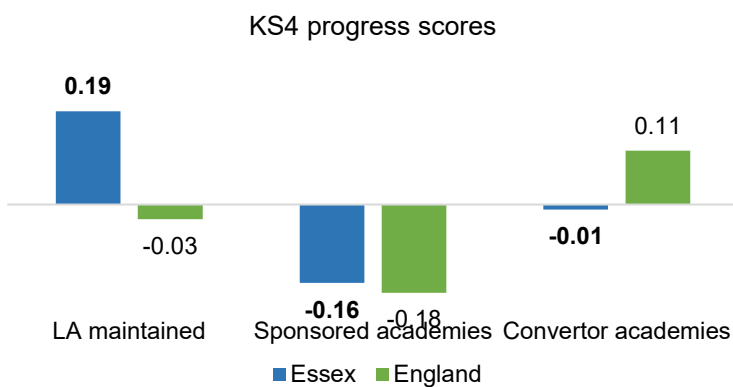
Conclusion – Sean Harford (Ofsted, National Director, Education) was quoted as saying ‘data is a signpost, not a destination’. There are a range of factors that are considered in inspection which are wider than attainment. Ofsted and achievement outcomes do not necessarily correlate and there are no clear patterns.

Changing context in Essex County Council



The performance of sponsored academies is lower than that of converter academies and LA maintained schools at KS2. Those in Essex though are performing higher than those nationally.

Essex does have a much higher proportion of academies – close to 50% of all primary schools compared to around 30% nationally.



Again, the sponsored academies performance is lower but better among those in Essex. However, 65% of Essex pupils attended a sponsored academy – much higher than the 20% nationally.

Only 5% of Essex pupils attended an LA maintained school so the result of 0.19 is limited to a few schools.

Conclusion – the increased number of academies reduces our powers to challenge where there is significant underperformance. We have evidence where we issue a Warning Notice, put in interventions such as Improvement Board, Strategic Intervention Boards and IEBs that school’s performance improves as we are tenacious about aspiration, expectations and accountability of leaders to deliver improved performance at Ofsted and with outcomes for all.

Underperformance of groups of pupils

Pupils achieving the expected standard in:			
Reading	Writing	Maths	Pupils
✓	✓	✓	11023
✓	✓	✗	617
✓	✗	✓	497
✗	✓	✓	1168
✓	✗	✗	300
✗	✓	✗	506
✗	✗	✓	560
✗	✗	✗	1967
Total			16638

2282 pupils achieved in two of the three KS2 subjects. Of these, 474 missed out on achieving in all three subjects by missing the required Reading and Maths mark by the narrowest of margins. Were these 474 pupils have achieved, this would have boosted Essex performance from 66% to 69%.

Taking a closer look at the 1967 pupils who did not achieve in any subject shows that this cohort is predominantly made up by particular pupil groups:

Pupil group	Pupils in group	How many did not achieve in any subject	
		Number	Percentage
All	16638	1967	11.8%
Disadvantaged	4201	917	21.8%
Mobile	1207	269	22.3%
Low prior attainment	1219	879	72.1%
SEND Support	1916	811	42.3%
EHC Plan	620	445	71.8%

Conclusion – some groups consistently perform lower and remain a priority for Essex. New SEND strategy and alignment of education and SEND teams will provide the additional capacity to challenge provision and outcomes. Equally we have children performing well for individual subjects at KS2 but too many do not meet the expected standard in all three subjects.

Actions we are taking to improve outcomes – strategic

- Strong relationships with EPHA and ASHE - clear challenge of both KS2 outcomes and KS4
- School-led Improvement Strategy – school to school clusters
- SEND clusters and redesign
- EWMHS Strategic work and roll out of Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) in schools
- Establishment of the Tending Education Strategic Board – recruitment, retention and attendance

- Early Years Strategy – focus on the 26% of children not achieving a Good Level of Development (age 5)
- Development of an outcomes framework – Life Without Labels
- Education Sustainability Board looking at children not accessing a full-time school offer

Actions we are taking to improve outcomes – individual schools

- Supporting Success, Enabling Excellence - revised allocations of support, prioritised to address areas of underperformance: Levels of Support - Very High / High / Medium / Low. Introduced into Secondary 2019. Strong intervention system for underperforming maintained schools.
- Increased support for schools regarding attendance
- DfE funding focussed on Phonics and Reading
- Disadvantaged project with 14 schools – roll out of this programme for targeted schools and across partnerships in Essex, raising aspiration for all - Essex wide strategy for raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Targeted use and alignment of the available LA SEND support, as a result of the re-design in schools where outcomes over time for pupils with SEND remain a concern
- Use of 'near misses' analysis to identify and prioritise visits to primary schools where there are higher outcomes in 2 of the 3 subjects overtime but not all three, to review the curriculum on offer
- Focus on curriculum transition between primary and secondary schools, twinning higher performing schools with lower attaining schools
- Analysis of the appropriateness of the curriculum offer for disadvantaged and/or SEND in secondary to enable more pupils to achieve well
- Active collaboration with MATs (Multi Academy Trusts) in Essex to support school improvement and with the new Teaching Hubs