

MEETING:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	10 DECEMBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SECONDARY PHASE
REPORT BY:	GENERAL INSPECTOR AND GENERAL INSPECTOR SECONDARY/SECONDARY STRATEGY MANAGER

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide.

Purpose

To provide the Committee with an overview of attainment and progress in the secondary phase of maintained schools in Herefordshire 2010.

Recommendation

THAT the Committee notes the content of this standards report and reflects on the actions to improve outcomes in the secondary phase of maintained schools in Herefordshire.

Key Points Summary:

- No Herefordshire high school is graded in an inadequate Ofsted category and five schools are graded outstanding.
- In 2010 good GCSE results were maintained with some improvements in a number of key benchmark measures continuing the positive trend at KS4.
- Herefordshire schools are continuing to demonstrate attainment which is generally in line with or higher than the national average.
- The national rate of progress is beginning to improve at a faster rate than in Herefordshire in the key benchmark of 5+A*-C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics.
- The performance of vulnerable groups continues to improve although there is some variability and some notable successes. For example; the achievement/outcomes for looked after children was judged outstanding by Ofsted across Herefordshire schools in September 2010.
- Girls performed better than boys in 2010 in a number of areas and for some schools the gap in performance between boys and girls widened.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Wendy Boulter/Vicky Ward – Herefordshire School Improvement Service

Alternative Options

- 1 No alternative options presented

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The report is presented as an overview of current standards and future actions for comment.

Introduction and Background

- 3 The points below provide a general context for the results analysis:
 - The secondary phase of education is from Year 7 to Year 13 (11-19 year olds). Within the maintained sector in Herefordshire there are 13 high schools four of which have provision for a sixth form (years 12 and 13.) There are currently 2 academies, one of which has post 16 provision. These are directly linked with the Academies Division of the DFE. These are outside the maintained LA group of schools and therefore directly funded and monitored by the DFE. Other Post 16 providers are the Hereford Sixth Form College, Hereford College of Technology, the agricultural college at Holme Lacy and Hereford College of Art and Design. In addition there are work based providers who contribute to the vocational provision, including apprenticeships.
 - All schools have a designated catchment area but there are two faith schools (St Mary's Roman Catholic High School and Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School) who draw students in from all over the county.
 - **The feedback in this report is related to the 13 maintained high schools in the authority which are the settings for which the School Improvement Service has direct responsibility. The figures in this report therefore exclude academy and college data.**
 - **The validated LA statistical figures when they are released will include the performance of both academies who are under the direction of the Academies division of the DFE and not of the LA.**
 - National tests at **Key Stage 3** (14 year olds) were abolished in 2008. National data sets for Key Stage 3 no longer exist in the detailed format of previous years. The 2010 analysis of Key Stage 3 performance is therefore based on teacher assessments. This data set is further complicated by the fact that some schools run their Key Stage 3 over two years and some over three years.
 - A variety of courses exists at KS4 and post 16 and these can be at level 1 (GCSE D-G or equivalent), Level 2 (GCSE Grades A*-C or equivalent) or Level 3 (Advanced level or equivalent). In addition some students attain other qualifications such as basic skills. All these qualifications carry a points score which contributes to the student, school and county results.
 - There were 1956 students contributing to the results outlined below in 2010. Of these 50.4% were boys and 49.6% were girls. Across individual schools, however, there were unbalanced year groups in terms of gender. Nationally boys perform less well than girls at GCSE and so an unbalanced year group for a school in terms of gender is statistically likely to have an impact on results for that school.
 - No high school in Herefordshire is currently in an inadequate Ofsted category and that has been the position for three years. Five of our high schools have outstanding Ofsted

judgements for overall effectiveness and nine of our High Schools have either Good or Outstanding judgements for overall effectiveness. This is better than the national average.

- There are a number of structures and initiatives in place within the Children's Services and School Improvement Service (SIS) in particular, which have helped support the continuing improvement in Herefordshire High Schools:
 - Each school has a nationally accredited School Improvement Partner (SIP) who is employed through the LA to monitor, support and challenge the school they work with. A minimum of five days are routinely allocated for this work throughout the year to cover visits and preparation and report writing. Where a school is identified for additional support the number of SIP days is increased. The School Improvement Service recruits and supports SIPs, moderates the quality of their reports and addresses issues arising for action.
 - Herefordshire secondary SIPs are either current or recently retired head teachers or an LA school improvement officer. In addition all schools have an attached school improvement service advisor who provides day to day support, challenge, monitoring and advice.
 - In 2009 the School Improvement Service supported five high schools' entry into the national Gaining Ground two year project. This has brought substantial additional funding into each of these five schools to further school improvement. This project has also funded ten days support from an outstanding partner school, three within and two outside of the county. Extra SIP days have also been allocated as part of this initiative.
 - From 2009 the School Improvement Service has been jointly funding a two year project with 12 high schools provided through the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust to promote networking and sharing of good practice between schools nationally.
- Each school is obliged to set challenging student performance targets each year. The Local Authority provides statistical estimates of pupil performance based on prior attainment and contextual factors to support this process. Fischer Family Trust (FFT), a nationally recognised agency, provides the main data set. Schools are challenged to set targets in line with the performance of the top 25% of schools nationally. (FFT D)
- For 2010 the statutory targets that schools set were:
 - the percentage of students attaining 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE including English and Mathematics.
 - to reduce the percentage of student absence.
- All schools also set an additional non statutory target for the percentage of students attaining 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE and 5+ A*-G grades at GCSE.
- LA performance is reviewed by the DFE/Ofsted against the outcomes for students achieving 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics, the attendance of students and the performance of different groups including vulnerable groups.
- There is an increasing emphasis on not only the standards students reach but the progress they make through each key stage. For summer 2011 schools have been obliged to set targets for the levels of progress students make in both English and mathematics at GCSE from KS2.



- The effective early intervention by the School Improvement Service and brokering of additional quality support have made a strong contribution to continuing high standards and improvement across secondary education in the county. This is seen particularly in those schools identified by the School Improvement Service as being at risk of underperformance or Ofsted inadequate judgements.
- In 2010 Key Stage 4 (16 year olds) performance in Herefordshire has been maintained or improved, continuing an upward trend from previous years. The 2010 data are awaiting final confirmation and so the validated/final data are expected in January/February 2011. The data therefore that this report is based upon are provisional and we expect final performance to be slightly higher. Schools are already reporting increases in percentage outcomes as a result of examination board remarking.
- Although the headline figures for Herefordshire LA are pleasing there is variation of performance between schools. In response to this variation the School Improvement Service differentially targets its support and challenge. This has been strengthened in line with the new School Improvement Policy introduced from September 2010.

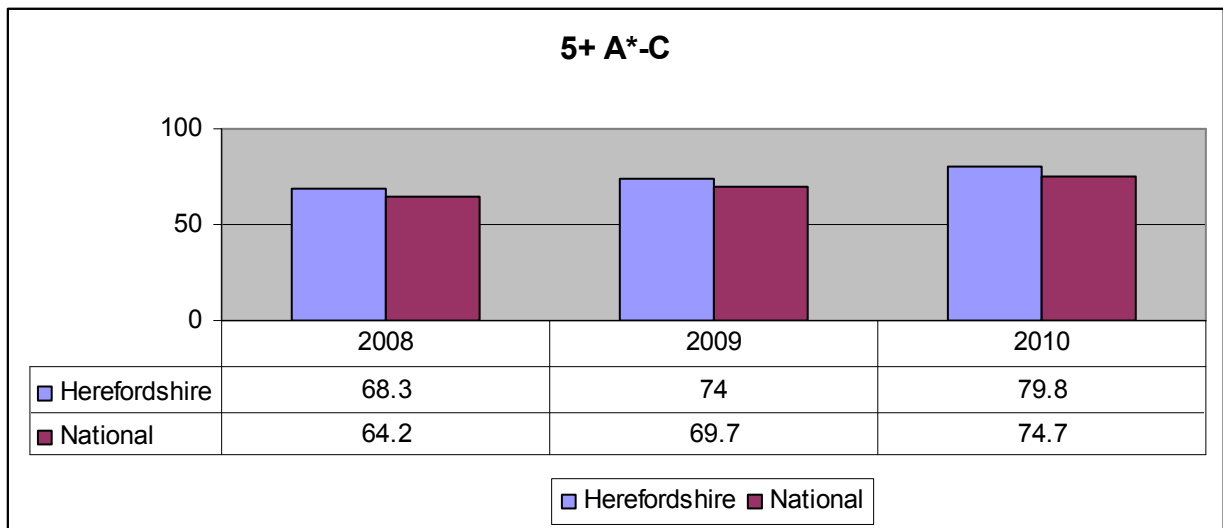
Key Considerations

4 Key outcomes and results are summarised below.

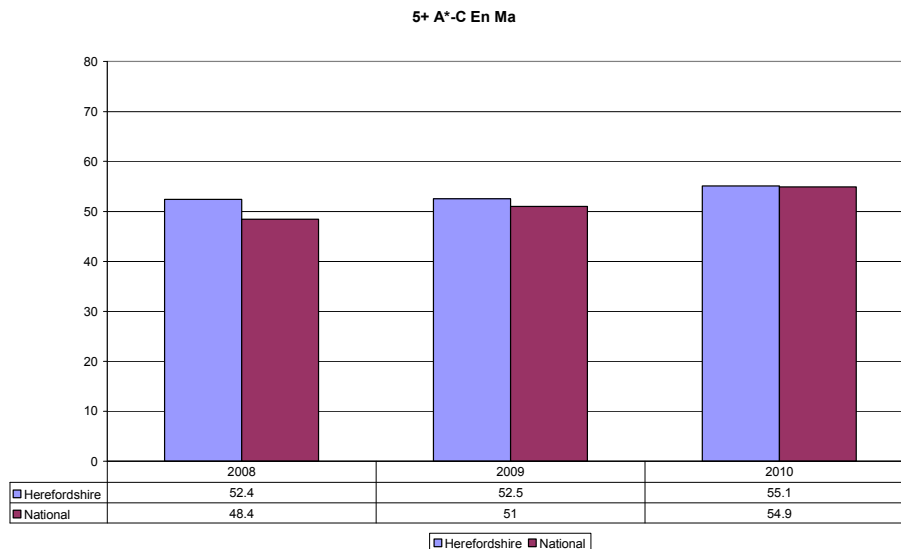
- **KS3 teacher assessments** (See Appendix 1)
 - At level 5 (the nationally expected level) Herefordshire's performance is above the national performance in English by 2% and in mathematics and science by 3%
 - At level 6 English is just below national performance (2%) and mathematics and science are above national performance by 5%.
 - Girls out perform boys in English by 9% at level 5 and at level 6 by 19%. In mathematics there is no difference in gender performance at level 5 and boys marginally outperform girls at L6. (2%) In science boys out perform girls at level 5 (3%) and there is no difference in gender performance at level 6.
- **Teacher Assessments at KS3 are not nationally validated so drawing conclusions from these figures must be with caution.**
- **Priorities for improvement at KS3** are to ensure that students make the expected progress to allow them to meet at least national expectations at KS4. With the demise of national tests at KS3 (SATS) as a benchmark for this, schools are strengthening and reviewing their internal tracking and assessment systems to identify students for early interventions.
- In 2009-10 a national programme of One to One tuition has supported interventions at KS3 to ensure appropriate progress for those students who are falling behind expectations in mathematics and English. A DFE externally funded, dedicated member of staff working in the School Improvement Service leads this programme across primary and secondary phases. All schools have had additional funding from the DFE for One to One interventions. This programme is at early stage of evaluation but initial indicators suggest that the majority of students receiving One to One tuition have made improved progress (Appendix 3)

Key Stage 4 examination outcomes. (See Appendix 2)

- The percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C at GCSE in 2010 is 79.8% and continues the strong upward trend in performance in this measure.** Herefordshire local authority averages from 2008-10 exceeded the national averages and indicate that the rate of improvement in Herefordshire 2008-10 was greater than nationally. This measure is no longer a government required target for schools but gives an indication of performance across the full range of subjects.
- There has been some significant improvement in performance in this measure reflecting for many schools a broadening of their curriculum provision to better meet the needs of different students. Schools are increasingly entering candidates for vocational accreditation principally through the BTEC awards. Increased collaborative working between schools has also assisted in providing wider opportunities for students.



- The percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C at GCSE including English and Mathematics** has also continued to rise. (2006 50.9% and 2010 55.1%) This is a key attainment indicator for Ofsted and general school performance. (Note again that this figure does not take into account appeals and re-marks underway).



- Reviewing individual school performance against individual targets set, most schools surpassed, reached or nearly reached their challenging FFTD targets. (In line with the performance of the top 25% of schools nationally)
- Provisional data suggest that nationally performance in this measure is improving at a faster rate than in Herefordshire.
- **Performance in the core subjects** makes a significant contribution to the benchmark measure of 5+ A*-C En Ma.

Mathematics GCSE results in the county in 2010 reached the highest level ever, now standing at 65.2% A*-C grades, (based on provisional data). This reversed a slight decline from 2009, and maintains the steady upward long-term trend – e.g. in 2005 the figure was 57%. In 2009 there were some concerns about the performance of girls compared to boys (2009 Boys 62.9%, Girls 58.3% A*-C), but the girls have performed well this year (now at 67.7%).

English – There has been a rising trend of performance at 5+ A*-C in English and the county performance is now in line with national. (2010 68.4%) In many Herefordshire schools, English results at A*-C are above the national provisional figure of 68.4%. The majority of schools had an increased percentage of grades A*-C in 2010 from 2009.

The provisional gender gap in English for 2010 is 3% greater in Herefordshire than nationally. This gap has increased from 2009 due to an improvement in the performance of girls. Raising boys' performance in English therefore, for some schools, remains a priority.

Science – Science results improved from a good baseline for the third year running. The Herefordshire figure of 70.3% for two good (A* to C) Science GCSEs (the national indicator for Science) remains well above the regional and national averages.

In 2010 both boys and girls achieved a higher percentage of 2 good GCSE grades in two sciences in Herefordshire than the national average percentages. (Boys achieved 5.2% and girls achieved 13.9 % above the national average for two good GCSEs)

The gap between boys' and girls' performance has widened from 2009 and is wider currently than the national gap. This is not a continuing trend however as the gender gap figure for two good GCSEs has fluctuated over the last 4 years between 1.7% and 8.7%.

- In line with the national picture some schools have faced difficulties in recruiting specialist teachers of English and mathematics.
- **The trend in performance for boys and girls at 5+ A*-C including English and Mathematics** is one of improvement over the last five years with a dip in performance by girls in 2009 and a peak in performance by boys in 2009.
 - In 2010 boys' performance is lower than in 2009 but higher than in each of the three previous years so the overall trend in boys' performance is rising.
 - In 2010 girls' performance is the highest for five years and overall is a rising trend.
 - The gap between the performance of boys and girls in 2010 is 14.00% in favour of the girls. The national gender in gap for 2010 is 7.9% in favour of the girls.

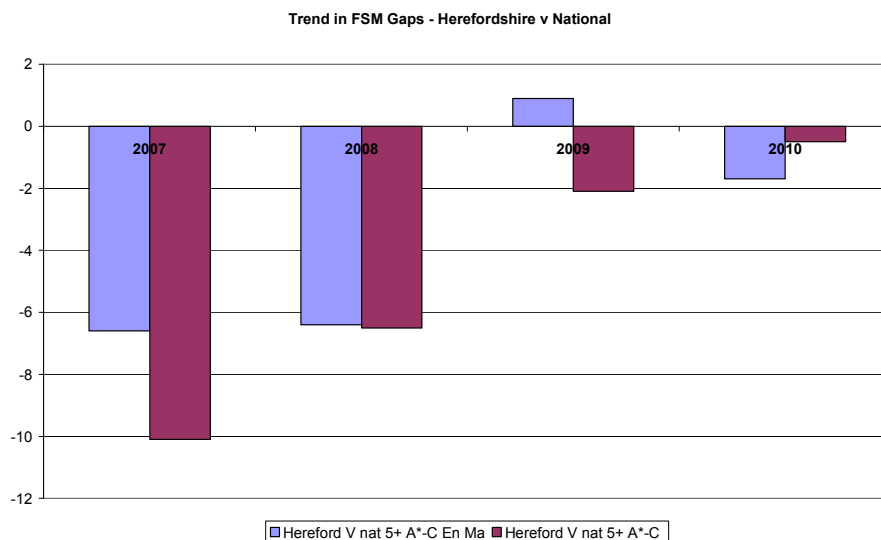
- There is no consistent county pattern but there are high schools in 2010 whose gap in gender performance is greater than the national gap. Schools are aware of this through their internal data analysis process and with their SIP and School Improvement Advisor are assessing how significant this is and what actions, if any, need to be taken.

- The percentage of pupils with **SEND** gaining 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics has fallen slightly from 2009 whilst the percentage of students without SEND gaining 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics has increased from 2009. This represents a widening of this attainment gap.

Caution must be exercised in drawing firm conclusions from SEND data until individual schools have further analysed the outcomes for their students.

In 2009 Contextual Value Added data indicated that most students with SEND in Herefordshire made expected progress in line with national expectations.

- The performance of students in receipt of **FSM** improved significantly in Herefordshire in 2009 when the national gap between those achieving 5+ A*-C En MA on FSM and those not on FSM was 28%. The Herefordshire gap in 2009 narrowed significantly from 34.5% in 2008 to 27.1% in 2009 which brought it into line with the national gap.
- In 2010 the difference between the national gap in this measure and the Herefordshire gap is less than 2%. The provisional Herefordshire figure for this gap measure is 30.0% and the provisional national figure is 28.3%.



- **Ethnic groups** are composed of very small numbers in Herefordshire so percentages should be treated with great caution. The largest ethnic groups are Gypsy Roma Travellers and east Europeans. There are wide achievement gaps historically between ethnic groups nationally and locally. Significantly, however, the percentage of Gypsy Roma Traveller students with 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics has risen from 0% in previous years to 7.7% in 2010. Gypsy Roma Traveller students attaining 5+ A*-C has risen to 38.5% in 2010 from 11.1% in 2009 and 0% in 2008. (reported to Scrutiny in October 2008)

- **Looked after Children.** In 2010 17.2% gained 5+ A*-C including English and Mathematics a slight increase from 2009. The gap between the performance of those students who are LAC and those who are not remains smaller than the gap nationally for the second year running. A recent Ofsted Inspection (September 2010) recognised that provision and outcomes for LAC in Herefordshire are outstanding.
- **Capped average point** score gives an indication of performance across the whole ability range and the score per pupil in Herefordshire has risen again in 2010 and remains higher than the national. The current rate of improvement in Herefordshire is marginally slower than the rate of improvement nationally.
- **The Performance of Herefordshire's most able students** has improved year on year for the last five years. The percentage gaining 3+ A*/A grades at GCSE or equivalent has risen from 19.6% in 2006 to 32.3% in 2010. This improvement trend has been more pronounced in the performance of girls.
- **Performance in Modern Foreign Languages (A*-C) in 2010** has remained consistent over the last three years. The percentage of students gaining grades A*-C at GCSE in a MFL was 31.1%, a slightly higher figure than the national average of 28.8%.
- Analysis of data relating to MFL should be cautious since both in Herefordshire and nationally there is a variety of provision. Some schools insist that all students learn at least one MFL at GCSE whilst in other schools it is an optional subject at KS4. Data therefore are not comparable.
- **2010's Contextual Value Added (CVA) data for Herefordshire are not released until the spring term in 2011.** The Key Stage two to four CVA indicator for Herefordshire in 2009 was 1007.4 which is above the national average of 1000. This suggests that students in Herefordshire make better than average progress from primary to the end of compulsory secondary schooling. The equivalent indicators for English and mathematics in 2009 were in line with national averages.

Improving and maintaining attainment and progress in mathematics and English remains a high priority for all schools and there are a number of collaborative projects underway in the county to support this.

Although validated CVA information is not available yet for 2010 some initial data suggest that progress may well be similarly pleasing for this year across the county.

- **Post 16 performance** – (including the sixth form college) Published and verified data will not be available for benchmarking performance post 16 until the spring term 2011.
 - Indicative figures suggest that the average UCAS (university entrance) point score per examination entry for 2010 at 84.7 is higher than the national at 80.5. Herefordshire performance in this measure is slightly lower than in 2009 (88.3) and similar to performance in 2008 (85)
 - Indicative figures suggest that the average UCAS point score per pupil for 2010 is 352.4 which is higher than the national at 292.2. Herefordshire performance in this measure is slightly lower than in 2009 (336.6) and similar to 2008 (354.3)
 - The percentage of students gaining grades A*/B in Herefordshire is higher than the comparable percentage nationally.

- When considering the percentage of students gaining grades in 3 or more A levels or equivalent girls generally outperformed boys.

▪ **Priorities for the School Improvement Service at key stages 4 and 5 in 2010/2011.**

- Implement the new and revised school improvement policy and ensure that appropriate support is allocated for schools to ensure that they continue to improve.

- Ensure that any decline in school performance is addressed early so that all Herefordshire high schools remain in a positive Ofsted category.

- Work in partnership with schools to consolidate the advances made in improving the performance of disadvantaged groups of students.

- Focus challenge and support on key areas such as continuing improvement in mathematics and English. In particular share effective practice and strategies to improve the outcomes of boys and narrow the performance gaps between boys and girls.

- Appoint a specialist English consultant to complete the team of core subject consultants.

- Continue to work with the Herefordshire LA data team to further develop the systems for benchmarking school performance at key stages four and five.

- Work closely with the 11-19 Integrated Service to develop the recently established school sixth form heads' network.

- Continue to work with school sixth forms to support their further improvement.

- Work in partnership with schools, supporting head teachers and governing bodies in responding to national initiatives such as the academies programme and local imperatives such as the increasing development of alternative school models.

- Commission external expertise to advise SACRE on the statutory revision of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. Support its implementation.

Community Impact

5 Falling rolls in many school catchments mean that some schools in 2009-10 have had to make staff redundancies and there is increasing competition between schools to attract admissions.

Financial Implications

6 None

Legal Implications

7 None have been identified.

Risk Management

8 The ability to maintain a high quality school improvement service ensuring no Herefordshire school is in a negative Ofsted category.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Key Stage 3 teacher assessments

Appendix 2 – Key Stage 4 Outcomes

Appendix 3 – Initial impact data relating to the One to One tuition programme in 2009/2010

Background Papers

School Improvement Policy 2010