



Children & Education Select Committee  
10 July 2014

**Key Stage 5: Participation, Progression and Attainment**

**Purpose of the report:** Performance Management

To inform the Education Select Committee of performance against key measures at key stage 5.

**Introduction:**

1. Surrey County Council retains a wide range of responsibilities regarding the education and training of young people aged 16-19, and to age 25 for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This includes new duties under the raising of the participation age (RPA) to:
  - Ensure that sufficient education and training provision is available;
  - Promote the requirement to participate in education or training to young people; and
  - Identify those young people who are not participating in education, employment or training.
2. The attached report details outcomes for Surrey's young people in light of these responsibilities for participation and progression and the aims of the Young People's Employability Plan as well as the continuing support and challenge provided by Surrey County Council to the county's schools, colleges and training providers.

**Key Stage 5 Participation, Progression and Attainment - Highlights**

3. Raising of the participation age (RPA) to 17 came into effect in September 2013. Surrey has made great progress towards full participation. Surrey now has the lowest level of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) in the whole of England. On 27 February 2014, of over 10,000 residents in Year 12 107 were known to be Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET), less than half the number NEET at the same time last year. This reflects particularly well on the hard work of Surrey schools, the impact of the Leader's Ready for Work Programme and the wider work of Services for Young People.

4. During 2013/14 tracking of young people's participation in education training and employment has improved. At the end of February 2014 only 1.9% of young people in school years 12 and 13 had an unknown current activity, the lowest level ever achieved in Surrey.
5. Surrey's post-16 education and training offer is comprised of a wide variety of providers including schools, colleges and independent training providers as well as training and engagement options provided by the Youth Support Service (YSS) and partner organisations in the voluntary, community and faith sector.
6. About 60% of Surrey learners study an A Level programme. The remaining 40% choose from a wide range of options including vocationally-related qualifications such as BTEC, apprenticeships, vocational training course and engagement programmes.
7. There is a 5-year trend of improvement in attainment by the age of 19 which remains above national averages at both Level 2 and Level 3. However, there was a slight decrease in performance at Level 3 in 2012.
8. In 2013, Surrey's schools and colleges continued their above average performance for A Level points per entry. Pass rates have decreased slightly since 2012, in line with the national picture. A Level results in Surrey remain some distance from our highest performing statistical neighbours.
9. There is evidence to suggest that some high-achieving young people completing GCSEs in Surrey's maintained schools and academies choose to follow A Level programmes at independent schools.
10. Surrey's success rates for vocational courses below Level 3 (A level or equivalent) are improving and are now above national averages. This includes both Apprenticeships and programmes followed in schools & colleges. There is noticeable variation in success between subject areas.
11. The number of young people aged 16-18 starting apprenticeships since 2011 has increased by 4%. This is in contrast to an overall decrease of 14% in England during the same period.
12. Early indications from DfE progression data suggest that progression from Surrey's schools to Higher Education may not be as strong as might be expected given schools' above average results. This suggests that patterns of progression to Higher Education should be investigated further.
13. There is a substantial gap in achievement by 19 between pupils claiming Free School Meals and other pupils, which is wider than the national average. At Level 3 this gap has remained at a similar level over the past 5 years. The gap at Level 2 improved to narrower than the regional average in 2012.

14. Surrey County Council has been funding free meals for students attending colleges and training providers, where they would have been able to access Free School Meals were they in a school Sixth Form. Since September 2012 over 600 young people have received this support to address financial hardship as a barrier to participation. This has ensured parity of support for young people who chose to attend different learning providers. Surrey has influenced national policy in this area, with central government deciding to introduce this scheme across the country for the next two years.
15. Surrey County Council has worked with partners to develop the closer to home strategy. Through this strategy more integrated working has been developed, earlier assessment has been established and more local provision has been developed. This has prevented the increase in out of county placements which were previously growing at 12 % per year and that has now declined by 30 and from 116 to 86.
16. Surrey County Council has made significant progress in reducing the number of looked after children for whom Surrey is the corporate parent and are placed in Surrey who are NEET, with none NEET at the end of January 2014. This is the first time 100% of this group have not been NEET and compares to 10 looked after young people who were NEET in January 2013.
17. These successes have been achieved at a time of increasing financial challenge for the sector as a whole. Most recently, the Education Funding Agency has informed providers that learners will not be funded after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, which has significant implications for young people requiring 3 years of further education.
18. Services for Young People is in the process planning for re-commissioning of its services from April 2015. The changes proposed are outlined in the 'Creating Opportunities for Young People' report included in this agenda pack. Particular vulnerable groups for whom participation, progression and achievement tend to be lower than their peers have also been identified, these include young people:
  - with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND);
  - who are looked after or care leavers;
  - who are on child protection plans or are children in need;
  - who are identified as at risk of becoming NEET;
  - who are parents;
  - who have caring responsibilities;
  - from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities; or
  - who have offended.

## Conclusions

19. Surrey has made strong progress towards achieving full participation in education and training for young people and has achieved the lowest level nationally of young people who are NEET.
20. Colleagues and partners across Surrey are involved in a wide range of education and training activity at Key Stage 5. Some of Surrey's initiatives are influencing national policy (for example, Free College Meals).
21. 'A' Level results are above national averages but some distance from our statistical neighbours. Experimental DfE progression data suggests that progression to Higher Education may not be as strong as expected given Surrey's relatively high performance at A Level.
22. Surrey continues to perform strongly against 'Attainment by 19' measures, however the attainment gap between Free School Meal claimants and other pupils at Level 3 is wider than most comparators.

## Recommendations:

23. That the select committee note:
  - a) the participation, progression and attainment outcomes listed above and detailed in the attached report, and in particular the strong progress towards full participation.
  - b) that a holistic approach considering a range of outcomes for all young people should be adopted for the next commissioning cycle for services for young people (from 2015).
  - c) that further investigation is required to understand patterns of progression to Higher Education for young people in Surrey.

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**Sources/background papers:** Key Stage 5: Participation, Progression and Attainment (attached)