

ITEM 7: DATA OVERVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF SPELTHORNE

Annex 6- KS4 Changes to Performance Reporting 2013/14

There are two major reforms that have an impact on the 2013/14 GCSE and equivalent results. These should be taken in to consideration when looking at the latest results alongside previous years. These changes only apply to figures shown for 2013/14. The new methodology has not been applied to previous years.

Reform of vocational qualifications

The recommendations adopted from Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education take effect for the first time in the calculation of the data underpinning this SFR:

- 1)** Only include qualifications in performance measures which meet the new quality criteria. This has led to the removal of around 3,000 unique qualifications from the performance measures between 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- 2)** Adjust the associated point scores for non-GCSEs so that no qualification will count as larger than one GCSE in size. For example, where a BTEC may have previously counted as four GCSEs it will now be reduced to the equivalence of a single GCSE in its contribution to performance measures.
- 3)** Restrict the number of non-GCSE qualifications that count in performance measures at two per pupil.

Introduction of early entry policy

In the past, school performance measures have been calculated using the best result that a pupil achieved in a subject, regardless of the number of times they may have been entered for it. In September 2013, the DfE announced that only the first result a pupil achieved would count in performance measures from 2013/14. This new rule came into effect immediately with regard to English Baccalaureate subjects and will be expanded to apply to all subjects in 2014/15. This new rule only affects a school's performance measure calculations; pupils will still be accredited with every grade achieved, regardless of the number of entries.

Performance measures using the 'new 2014 methodology'

The 2014 performance measures will be published on the basis of only including qualifications which were identified as part of the Wolf review and also applying the rules regarding the changes in early entry policy.

Other changes from last year's results

In addition to the major reforms outlined above there are a number of other changes that have been made in the 2013/14 academic year. Again these do not apply to 2012/13 or earlier years.

Discounting across qualification type

Qualification discounting ensures that, where a pupil has taken two or more qualifications with an overlap in curriculum, the performance measures only give credit once to the school for teaching a single course of study (qualification discounting does not impact on the individual results achieved by pupils). For the first time this year, discounting will be applied across qualification types. For example, where there is an overlap in curriculum, a GCSE can now discount against a BTEC and vice versa. This may reduce the total number of qualifications a pupil is shown as achieving or entered for on the performance measures.

Move to linear GCSE formats

In 2010 the Government set out its education policy aims in the White Paper, The Importance of Teaching. One of these was to reform GCSE qualifications and, in particular, course structures so that examinations are taken at the end of the course, as opposed to a modularised approach. Ofqual consulted upon and implemented this reform. For two-year GCSE courses starting in September 2012 all examinations had to be sat at the end of the course, in summer 2014. This affects the cohort of pupils that this SFR is based upon and may have had an impact on the grades they achieved.

Removal of the speaking and listening component from English examinations

Ofqual also reformed the constitution of GCSE English and GCSE English language results. From summer 2014, performance in speaking and listening no longer contributes to the overall grade achieved by a pupil but is separately reported. The GCSE grade is now calculated from the other component parts of the qualification. Ofqual considered the impact, noting that overall results in these qualifications would fall because pupils generally do better in speaking and listening than in the rest of the qualification. To mitigate for this, Ofqual have used a comparable outcomes approach to setting standards. This means that where the group of pupils is basically the same from one year to the next, their results should look broadly the same. However, individual schools and pupils may have been affected.