

# Press release: Education standards continue to rise at GCSE and A level

Educational standards continue to rise across England's secondary schools, as [results](#) published today (Thursday 25 January) show more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving good grades in the core academic subjects.

Following the introduction of more rigorous GCSE and A levels to match the best education systems in the world, the data shows:

- The attainment gap between disadvantaged secondary school pupils and their peers has narrowed by 3.2% since last year and 10% since 2011;
- Results for Multi Academy Trusts, with Harris Federation, The Thinking Schools Academy Trust and The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust among the top MAT performers;
- Schools in London continue to perform strongly, with 12 schools in the top 20 for the government's pupil progress measure (Progress 8); and
- More pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, SEN pupils and pupils on free school meals being entered for EBacc subjects since last year – helping ensure pupils have the knowledge and skills they need for future success.

The data builds on the government's record of 1.9 million more children now in good or outstanding schools than in 2010, nine out of ten schools awarded this rating at their last inspection and England's pupils now amongst the world's best readers.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Academic standards are rising in our schools thanks to our reforms and the hard work of teachers, with 1.9million more children in good or outstanding schools than in 2010. Today's results reinforce this success, with teachers and pupils responding well to the new more rigorous curriculum introduced by this government.

The attainment gap between the most disadvantaged pupils and their peers has narrowed by 10 per cent since 2011, and more disadvantaged pupils are studying the core academic subjects, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills they need to make the most of their lives.

Many free schools and academies are also delivering excellent results for pupils – with Harris Federation and Dixons Academy trusts leading the way.

We will continue to use this evidence to drive up standards even further for all pupils so that they leave school prepared for future success in their education and beyond, helping to build a Britain that is fit for the future.

Other highlights from the statistics show:

- For the first time statistics about disadvantaged students at post-16 (KS5) have been published. This data will help inform future policy decisions so that we can help to focus social mobility policy further at this stage;
- The number of students entering at least four of the five subject areas which are part of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) – maths, English, sciences, humanities and modern foreign languages (MFL) have increased by 4.8 percentage points this year – up to 82.0% in 2017; and
- GCSE (A\*-C) pass rates at 16-18 have increased in English, up from 22.8% to 27.1%, and total entries to English and maths GCSEs by 16-18 students increased by 26.3 percentage points and 13.6 percentage points respectively. This will help ensure pupils leave their education with the knowledge and skills they need for future success.
- Schools across London continue to strong pupil progress. Twelve of the top 20 schools in the government's Progress 8 measure were based in London.

Other regional highlights include:

Confirmation of the top performing schools based on Progress 8 measures, which are as follows:

1. Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School, Blackburn;
2. Wembley High Technology College, London;
3. Taheedul Islam Boys' High School, Blackburn;
4. Harris Academy Battersea, London; and
5. The Steiner Academy Hereford, Herefordshire.

Data on the top five multi-academy trusts on EBacc attainment, which are as follows:

1. Thinking Schools Academy Trust (Medway & Portsmouth);
2. Bright Futures Educational Trust (North West);
3. Tudor Grange Academies Trust (Midlands);

4. Diocese of London; and
5. Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust.

Confirmation of the top performing areas on attainment (Attainment 8) by region, with the top regions as follows:

1. London;
2. South East;
3. East;
4. South West; and
5. North West.

Confirmation of the top performing areas for progressing pupils (Progress 8), with the top local authority areas as follows:

1. Merton;
2. Brent;
3. Barnet;
4. Westminster; and Harrow (joint fourth).