

Press release: Gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers narrows

New [statistics](#) published today (13 December) show that disadvantaged primary school pupils are closing in on their better off peers as the disadvantage gap index falls for the seventh year in a row.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb welcomed the news and praised the impact of academies in supporting this improvement. The figures show the disadvantage gap index has shrunk by 13% since 2011 and 3% in the last year alone.

In addition the statistics show that in multi-academy trusts disadvantaged pupils did significantly better than the national average in writing and maths.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Standards are rising in our schools, with 86% of schools now rated good or outstanding as of August 2018, compared to 68% in 2010 and these statistics show that the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has closed by 13% since 2011.

Every child, regardless of their background, deserves a high quality education and opportunity to fulfil their potential. Headteachers are using the freedoms afforded by academy and free school status to make this a reality, as illustrated by the progress disadvantaged pupils in multi-academy trusts are making in writing and maths.

Statistics released today show:

- The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils is smaller in MATs than the national average in each progress measure (reading, writing and maths);
- 88% of pupils who met the phonics standard in year 1 reached the expected standard in reading at the end of key stage 2; and
- The attainment gap between girls and boys has remained stable with 61% of boys meeting the expected standard compared to 68% of girls

This release follows [statistics](#) published earlier this year that showed 64%

of pupils met the expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths this year.

The data is part of a number of publications from the Department today that show how our primary schools are performing. It includes the performance tables, which help parents make informed choices about schools in their areas, and how individual multi academy trusts are performing.

The tables show that Dilkes Academy Trust (now known as Catalyst Academies Trust), Yorkshire Collaborative Academy Trust and Hull Collaborative Academy Trust all rank in the top ten trusts in the country for attainment in reading, writing and maths.

The department collects and publish more information about MATs than we do about local authority schools – including new information about how we are tackling high pay and late filing of accounts. Publications like today's Key Stage 2 performance measures, which now include around 240 trusts, show the important role MATs play in our improving system.

New [research](#) also published today highlights the approaches trusts take to supporting their schools to succeed.

We continue to strengthen the accountability regime across the academies sector. In recent months, we have strengthened financial accountability, including new rules on related party transactions, which local authority schools do not have to publish at all. Ofsted is today publishing its improved approach to Summary Evaluations which bring together the inspections of individual schools in a MAT to give a picture of its contribution to education quality.

We will continue to make information about trusts more visible. As we do this, we will also consider how this compares to the transparency of local authority schools.