

Why is it important?

Education is one of the most important wider determinants of health. Engagement in learning impacts on a range of outcomes and research has confirmed that people who are well educated and achieve high level qualifications generally enjoy better health, live longer, are happier and have greater economic prosperity. They are also better able to adapt to changes in economic circumstances.

The Marmot Review 2010 highlighted the influence of families on educational attainment and emphasised the need for strong links between schools, families and other services to ensure that children achieve the best start in life.

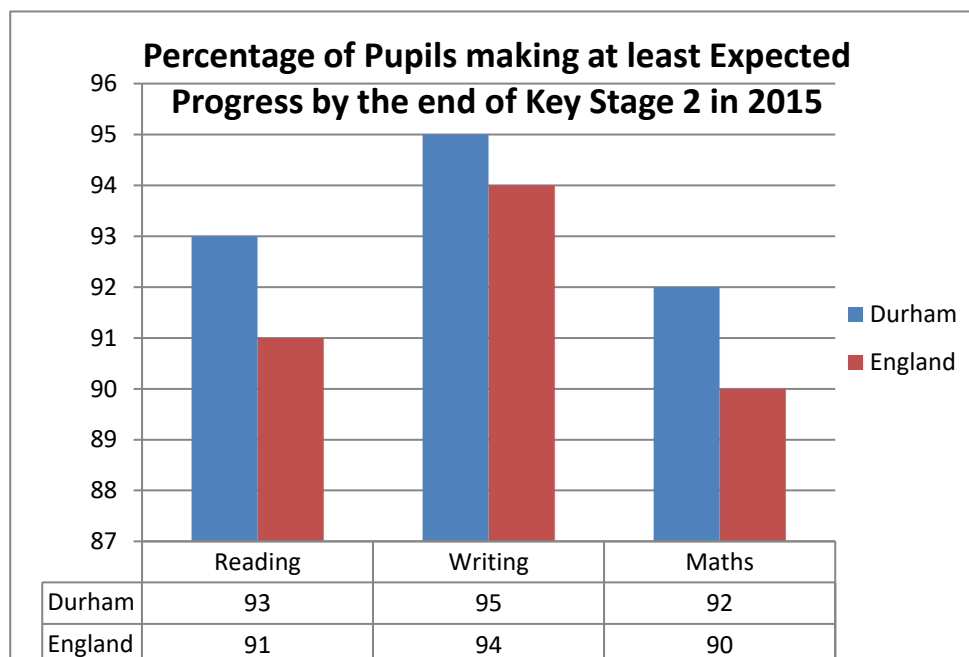
Education and skills across the life course are crucial to ensure that individuals continue to be able to access employment, be socially included and can access essential information to be better informed about healthy behaviours.

Durham data – the local picture and how we compare

Since September 2014, councils have received funding from the government to provide 15 hours a week of free childcare for the most disadvantaged 2-year olds. This has increased the number of children eligible for free early learning to around 52% of 2-year olds.

At the end of reception class in 2015, 64% of pupils in County Durham achieved a Good Level of Development. Across the North East, the percentage was 63%. County Durham and the North East are below the England average, which was 66%.

For Key Stage 2 (children aged 7-11yrs) 82% of County Durham pupils achieved Level 4 or more in Reading, Writing and Maths in 2015, compared to 80% nationally and 81% in the North East. Children made more progress in each of these subjects across Key Stage 2 than the national average.



As a result of an increase in the birth rate, it is expected that there will be in the region of 1,700 more primary aged pupils by 2024/25 than there were in 2014/15 and 2,700 more secondary aged pupils by 2024/25 than there were in 2014/15. However, these increases do not take account of future housing developments which are likely to be built to respond to the council's aspirations to make County Durham a prime location for business, which will enable a thriving economy for the county. This will have a significant impact on the future pattern and provision of school places, particularly in the primary sector. For more information, click on this link to [Pupil-Place-Planning-in-Durham-Schools-2015](#).

For Key Stage 4 (children aged 14-16 yrs) it is not possible to compare 2014 results with previous years due to two educational reforms introduced. The first restricted the qualifications which counted as a GCSE and the second was to restrict qualifications to the first attempt only. Performance across the country has shown a fall due to these changes.

In 2015, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grade GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths was 55.1%. The national average based on all state-funded schools is 57.3% and the North East average is 55.4%. Progress in Maths across secondary education is lower than national and regional, with only 61% of pupils in County Durham schools making expected progress, compared to 67% in England state-funded schools and 62.8% in the North East.

In January 2015, 36% of County Durham's pupils attracted the Pupil Premium, compared to 35.5% in the North East and 29% of England as a whole. (The pupil premium is a fund given by the government to schools in England and Wales to decrease the attainment gap for the most statistically disadvantaged children, whether by income or by family upheaval.)

- 71% of disadvantaged pupils in County Durham achieved Level 4 or more in Reading, Writing and Maths compared to 72% regionally and 70% nationally. There is a gap of -17 percentage points between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in County Durham. The national and regional gap is -15 percentage points.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSE grades including English and Maths is 35.3%, which is higher than the regional average of 34.8% but below the national percentage of 36.8%. In County Durham, there is an achievement gap of -19.8 percentage points between disadvantaged pupils and others. The regional gap is -20.6 and the national gap is -20.5.

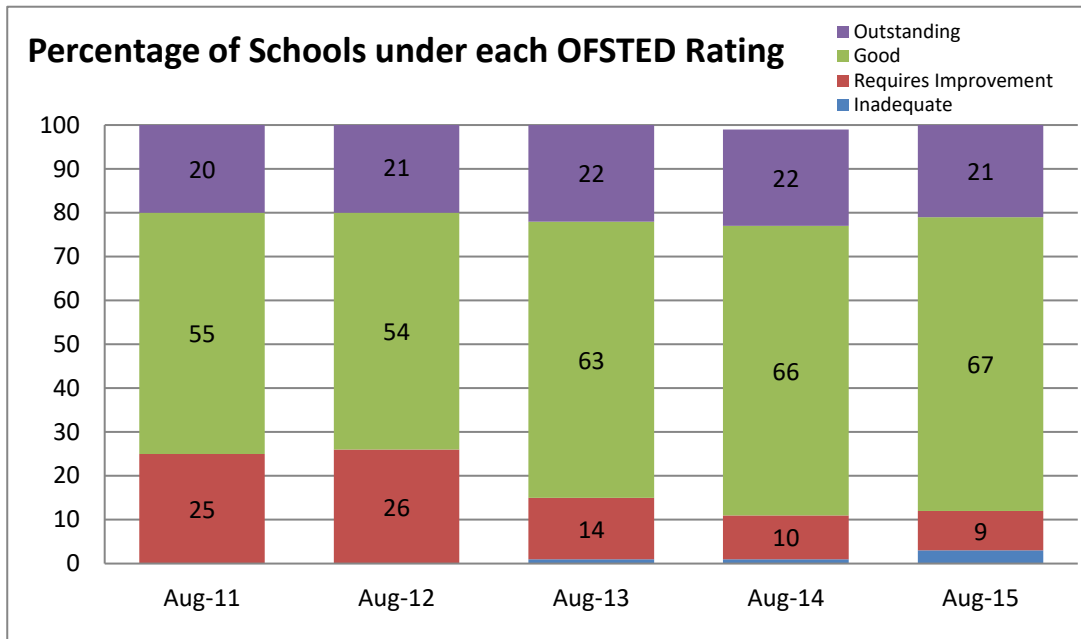
There were 13,026 pupils (17.7%) with a Special Educational Need (SEN) in County Durham schools in January 2015. This compares to 15.4% for England and 16.9% for the North East.

- In 2015, a lower percentage of these children (12%) achieved Level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Maths at the end of Key Stage 2 than similar children nationally (16%) and in the North East (13%).
- In 2015, the percentage of children in County Durham with a statement of SEN who achieved 5+ GCSEs including English and Maths was 6.3%, compared to 8.8% of similar children in the rest of England and 7.9% in the North East.

Looked After Children (LAC) are known to have high rates of SEN. In 2014, nearly three quarters had some level of SEN provision, slightly higher than the national rate of two thirds.

- In 2014, at Key Stage 4, 13% of pupils who have been looked after for 12 months or more achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs (including English and Maths) compared to 55.1% of the general school population. National attainment rates were 14.2% for LAC and 57.3% for the general school population. The North East rate was 15.3% and 55.4% respectively.
- The percentage of pupils who were LAC for 12 months or more, achieving at least Level 4 in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2, was 56% and for the general school population it was 82%. This compares to national figures of 48% and 80% and regional averages of 56% and 82% respectively.

The percentage of schools in the county rated as Good or Outstanding has increased since 2011 and now stands at 88%. The national rate is 84%.



The proportion of young people in County Durham who attained a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 in 2015 was 51.7%, compared to 57.4% nationally. The proportion of young people in County Durham who were in receipt of free school meals at 15 and attained a level 3 qualification by the age of 19 was 29.9%, compared to 36.4% nationally. Therefore, the attainment gap in County Durham was 25.5 percentage points, compared to 24.6 percentage points nationally.

Data show that a greater proportion of residents in County Durham have no qualifications and a lower proportion have higher level qualifications at NVQ 4 and above, compared to the rest of the country.

	No qualification	NVQ 1 and above	NVQ 2 and above	NVQ 3 and above	NVQ 4 and above	Other qualification
Durham	13.1%	82.2%	68.4%	51.7%	29.1%	4.7%
England	8.4%	85.0%	73.4%	57.4%	36.7%	6.6%

NEETs are defined as 16-18 year olds who are Not participating in Education, Employment or Training.

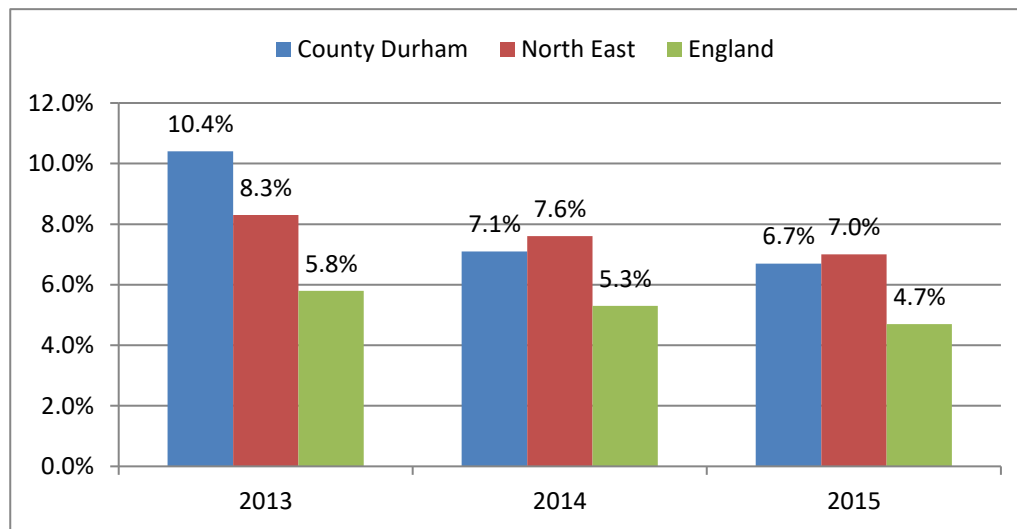
The percentage of 16-18 year olds reported as NEET has fallen by 17.25%. Easington and Sedgefield have the highest number of NEET's in the county. Overall participation of 16-18 year olds in learning is increasing. For example, 93.9% of 16-18 year olds were participating in 2013/14 and this has increased to 95.0% in 2015/16. However, participation in learning of young people in vulnerable categories is significantly lower.

16-18 year olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) by Clinical Commissioning Group Locality / Constituency, 31st March each year

CCG Locality / Constituency	2013	2014	2015	% difference 2011 - 2015
Chester-le-Street	134	101	112	-16.42%
Derwentside	186	232	198	6.45%
Durham	162	110	114	-29.63%
Durham Dales	214	196	196	-8.41%
Easington	387	295	274	-29.20%
Sedgefield	309	229	262	-15.21%
Not Matched / Out Of County	5	15	0	
County Durham	1,397	1,178	1,156	-17.25%

Despite the reduction in NEET's in County Durham, the rate (6.7%) remains above the England average (4.7%) but below the regional rate (7.0%).

Percentage of 16-18 year olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training, 2013 – 2015 (November – January averages)



Groups most at risk

Children who are eligible for the “Pupil Premium“ funding from the Department for Education are known to be at risk of underachieving at all stages of their education.

Children who have a statement of SEN or an Education Health and Care Plan attain at a lower rate than their peers in County Durham.

Looked After Children have historically had very low rates of achievement, both locally and nationally.

Pupils from a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) community background have in the past achieved less well than other students. In 2015, Key Stage 2 results for this group are now similar to County Durham’s overall outcomes. However,

at Key Stage 4, there remains a gap of 15 percentage points between their rate of achievement and that of their peers. The number of pupils known to have GRT heritage is very small. As a result, overall results for the group, and also the gap between their overall results and other pupils', are likely to vary greatly from year to year.

NEETS (16-18 year olds who are not participating in education, employment or training) are at risk of later unemployment, low income, depression, involvement in crime and poor mental health.

How does this topic link to our strategies and plans?

Further information can be found in the following strategies and plans:

- [County Durham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2019](#)
- [Children, Young People and Families Plan 2016-19](#)
- [Durham County Council CAS Service Plan 2016-19](#)
- Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disability 0-25, 2016-18
- Believe, Achieve and Succeed Participation Plan

Author:

Approver:

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Data sources:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-early-years-foundation-stage-profile>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-key-stage-2>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-gcses-key-stage-4>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-attainment-at-19-years>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/outcomes-for-children-looked-after-by-local-authorities>

[2015 ONS Annual Population Survey](#)

[Local authority Client Caseload Information System Department for Education](#)