

## **A/AS LEVEL ACHIEVEMENT**

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. To inform members about A/AS level achievement in the context of the County Strategy for 16-19 which aims to increase participation, retention and achievement.

### **2. Summary**

- 2.1. Details of the examination results for Summer 2003 will not be published until January 2004 and the available data therefore is limited to cohorts up to Summer 2002.
- 2.2. The data indicates a steady improvement in the points per entry score from 5.3 in 1997 to 5.9 in 2002.
- 2.3. The data also shows a significant improvement in the percentage of students passing at A level/AVCE as a percentage of the Year 13 cohort from 80.8% passing in 1997 to 91.0% passing in 2002.
- 2.4. The staying-on rate has also improved from 81.9% in 1997 to 84.1% in 2002.
- 2.5. The first students to enter the Sixth Form following the introduction of the 16-19 Strategy did so in September 2001 and completed their courses in July 2003. The intention at the launch of the Strategy was to review its impact in 2003/04. A detailed analysis of the participation, retention and achievements of this cohort will be undertaken once the results of the 2003 examinations are published in January 2004 and curriculum analysis data has been collected from schools.
- 2.6. A key part of the Strategy is collaborative working and progress has been made with an increasing number of schools developing shared timetabling. A significant number of schools are planning more detailed work with their local FE College from September 2004. School-College links to date have been weak.

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1. Performance and curriculum data for the 2002-2003 cohort will be available in January 2004. We will then be in a position to review the impact of the 16-19 Strategy on this cohort and examine the extent to which the Strategy is impacting on participation, retention and achievement.
- 3.2. It is proposed that a detailed analysis of the performance data is presented to the Committee in the Spring Term.

#### **4. The development of the 16-19 Strategy**

- 4.1. The key aims of the 16-19 Strategy are, through schools working together, to raise achievement, improve participation and retention and to provide value for money.
- 4.2. The Strategy, which was introduced in 2000-2001, has been supported by additional funding to all the schools which signed collaborative agreements. In many instances the funding has been used to support collaborative arrangements which included common timetabling. In other cases the funding has been used to extend provision in individual schools and to support activities such as shared in-service days across a collaborative group.
- 4.3. In 2001-2002, 27 schools in 10 collaborative groups had integrated post-16 timetabling which allowed students to access courses in another institution – in most instances in another school, rather than a local further education college.
- 4.4. In the same year nine further schools had limited alignment of their post-16 timetables which, in the main, gave students access to a range of minority subjects which schools would not otherwise have been able to offer economically.
- 4.5. As a result of these arrangements, some 2000 students in 2001-02 were able to access courses in another institution. These arrangements offered students a much wider range of opportunities than would have been available in their own school, and also delivered wider benefits, captured well in the evaluation of one collaborative group by the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education:

“The Headteachers referred to the opportunities for students to study alongside students from other schools and how this contributes to their personal and social development. Parents also mentioned this added advantage of the consortium arrangements. None of the parents interviewed for this study was concerned that their child was now attending for part of the week a school that they had not opted for at age 11, and for several this was seen as a positive move, particularly in terms of fostering social development.”

- 4.6. There is evidence from the same research that students too understand and appreciate the benefits of collaborative working:

“Students who are taking classes in the other schools are positive about the consortium and appreciative of the increased choice that the arrangements offer. They see major benefits in an increased exposure to different teaching styles”.

- 4.7. Headteachers in well-established collaboration groups report that opening up access to a wide range of courses through well planned collaborative working has a positive impact on participation and achievement. The arrangements encourage a number of young people to remain in education and to achieve qualifications which they otherwise would miss out on.
- 4.8. In September 2002, a further 3 schools introduced collaborative timetabling for post-16 students.
- 4.9. In September 2003 the number of schools with shared timetabled provision increased to 47, with a further 7 schools planning shared provision in September 2004. Many schools, following changes to the 16-19 Strategy funding criteria, are now planning collaborative arrangements with their local further education college for September 2004.

## **5. Achievement 16-19**

- 5.1. The Strategy started in 2000-01 and clearly it has had an impact on the level of collaboration. The issue of its impact on achievement, participation and retention is considered below. It will be noted that the data relates to only 2 years – the year prior to the introduction of the Strategy i.e. 1999/2000 and the last year for which we have data i.e. 2001-02
- 5.2. Against the background of increasing collaboration between schools there has been a steady improvement in achievement in Hertfordshire schools. The average points per candidate has risen from 17.2 in 1997 to 20.0 in 2002. Similarly, on the key measure of average points per entry for AS/A/GNVQ, results have improved from 5.3 in 1997 to 5.9 in 2002 (using the “old” UCAS points system).
- 5.3. Compared to our statistical neighbours (details at Appendix 1), Hertfordshire remains in the middle/lower half of the table.
- 5.4. Appendix 2A and Appendix 2B compare collaborating (2A) and non-collaborating (2B) schools’ outcomes on a range of measures between July 2000 and July 2002.
- 5.5. The retention figures compare the number of students on roll in January compared with the number who originally enrolled in September. For example, in the case of Barclay School in Year 12 for 1990/2000, the January number was 95.7% of the September enrolment figure. Where the figure is greater than 100%, this indicates that additional pupils joined the year group following the submission of the September figures.
- 5.6. The data indicates that, in relation to retention, the rates are very similar for Year 12 in both collaborating and non-collaborating schools. In Year 13, the retention rates for non-collaborating schools are slightly higher than those in collaborating schools.

- 5.7. Schools are requested to submit curriculum analysis data to the LEA, but this return is non-statutory. A significant minority of schools do not submit a return and it is therefore difficult to draw any conclusions from the efficiency data, which measures average class size.
- 5.8. The average points per student data shows the score on a per-school basis for the outcomes of Year 13 examinations. A student sitting 3 'A' levels, achieving 3 Bs, would achieve a score of 24 points, whilst a student achieving 3 Es would achieve a score of 6 points. The average is calculated by adding the scores of all the students entered together and dividing the total by the number of students.
- 5.9. The achievement data in relation to average points per student shows an increase of 9.5% for non-collaborating schools, from 17.9 to 19.6. For collaborating schools the increase is 13.7%, rising from 18.3 to 20.8.
- 5.10. The average points score per entry is calculated on a school by school basis by adding up the scores for all students entered, and dividing the total by the number of examinations entered. For example, a school whose students achieved a total of 810 points following 148 examinations entered would achieve an average points per entry of  $810 \div 148 = 5.5$
- 5.11. The data shows that the average points per entry for students in collaborating schools improved from 5.9 to 6.0, whilst in non-collaborating schools it fell from 5.8 to 5.7.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 It is evident that the 16-19 Strategy is helping to create a structure of collaborative working across the county which is opening up more opportunities for young people year-on-year.
- 6.2 It is also clear that there has been a steady improvement in achievement post-16, but that we have not made greater progress than our statistical neighbours.
- 6.3 Further work will need to be carried out during the Spring Term to analyse the outcomes of the 2003 examinations, which will facilitate a detailed evaluation of the impact of the 16-19 Strategy.

## Hertfordshire Statistical Neighbours

2002	LEA	APS per entry (new UCAS points system)	
		GCE/VCE A/AS	
	Cheshire	76.6	1
	Kent	76.4	2
	Gloucestershire	76.0	3
	Lancashire	75.8	4
	West Sussex	75.3	5
	Surrey	75.1	6
	<b>Hertfordshire</b>	<b>74.9</b>	<b>7</b>
	Warwickshire	74.8	8
	Essex	72.9	9
	Worcestershire	72.6	10
	Bedfordshire	70.7	11

2001	LEA	APS per entry A/AS/VCE/AGNV Q	Rank
	Lancashire	5.8	1
	Kent	5.6	2
	Gloucestershire	5.6	2
	Warwickshire	5.5	4
	Cheshire	5.4	5
	Worcestershire	5.4	5
	<b>Hertfordshire</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5</b>
	Surrey	5.4	5
	West Sussex	5.4	5
	Bedfordshire	5.2	10
	Essex	5.2	10

2000	LEA	APS per entry A/AS only	Rank
	Lancashire	5.7	1
	Kent	5.6	2
	Gloucestershire	5.6	2
	<b>Hertfordshire</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>4</b>
	Cheshire	5.4	5
	Surrey	5.4	5
	West Sussex	5.4	5
	Warwickshire	5.2	8
	Essex	5.2	9
	Bedfordshire	5.1	10
	Worcestershire	5.0	11

1999	LEA	APS per entry A/AS only	Rank
	Gloucestershire	5.6	1
	Cheshire	5.5	2
	Lancashire	5.5	2
	Kent	5.5	2
	<b>Hertfordshire</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5</b>
	Surrey	5.4	5
	West Sussex	5.4	5
	Warwickshire	5.2	8
	Essex	5.2	8
	Worcestershire	5.1	10
	Bedfordshire	4.9	11

