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**SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN 2004: NATIONAL TESTS/EXAMS**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor Chris McEwan, Children's Services Portfolio**

**Responsible Director(s) - Geoff Pennington, Director of Education**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide an analysis of pupil performance in Darlington in 2004.

**Information and Analysis**

2. Performance at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 is now, generally, in line with or above national, those local authorities defined as our statistical neighbours and those local authorities within the Government Office of the North East (GONE). At Key Stage 1 performance is generally in line with statistical neighbours but below national and GONE. At Key Stage 4 (GCSE) performance is generally above GONE but below national and statistical neighbours.
3. Test results in reading, writing and mathematics all fell this year in Key Stage 1. Reading remains in line with the national average but writing and mathematics have both fallen below the national average. Teacher assessments in mathematics also reflect the dip seen in test results, as do the teacher assessments in English and science.
4. Performance at Key Stage 2 in Darlington improved significantly in 2004. The improvement in English was well above the national rate of improvement and in mathematics it was above the national rate of improvement. Although results in science dipped on the previous year, standards in science are still in line with or above national, statistical neighbours and GONE. Standards in English are now above national, statistical neighbours and GONE and standards in mathematics are at least in line with national, statistical neighbours and GONE. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) in the tests increased in English, mathematics and science. Darlington is now above national, statistical neighbours and GONE in all subjects at Level 5.
5. This improvement in performance at Key Stage 2 has reduced the number of schools below the national floor target in English and mathematics from 7 in 2003 to 4 in 2004.
6. Performance improved significantly in 2003 at Key Stage 3. This momentum has continued in 2004, with continued improvement in English and mathematics. The national average for English is yet to be published due to issues surrounding the marking of this year's tests. In mathematics however, standards are now in line with national and above statistical neighbours and GONE. Even though results dipped in science to a point where they are now just below the national average, standards remain in line with statistical neighbours and above GONE. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 6) in the tests increased for the second year in succession for English and mathematics. . Darlington is

above national, statistical neighbours and GONE in science and in line with national but above statistical neighbours and GONE in mathematics at Level 6.

7. At Key Stage 4 (GCSE) the percentage of pupils achieving five or more grades at A\* to C fell from 51% to 49%. Within this figure the percentage of boys improved by 3% on the previous year but the percentage of girls achieving five or more grades at A\* to C fell by 8%. The improved performance of boys was a positive feature across all the Key Stage 4 measures. The percentage of pupils achieving three or more grades at A\* to A increased from 2003, as did the average points score. Despite the dip in performance, all secondary schools remain above the national GCSE floor targets.
8. At Key Stage 5, pupils at Carmel RC Technology College achieved a 99% pass rate, with 75% of the entry awarded higher grades.

Appendix 1 to this report provides more detailed information on school performance

### **Key Stage 1**

9. The test results compared to those in 2003 at level 2B and above are as follows:

Reading – down 3%  
Writing – down 4%  
Mathematics – down 2%

Darlington is in line with the national average for reading but below in writing and mathematics.

### **Key Stage 2**

10. The test results compared to those in 2003 at level 4 and above are as follows:

English – up 4%  
Mathematics – up 2%  
Science – down 2%

Darlington is above the national average for English and mathematics and in line for science

### **Key Stage 3**

11. The test results compared to those in 2003 at level 5 and above are as follows:

English – up 3% (provisional)  
Mathematics – up 1%  
Science – down 1%

Darlington is in line with the national average for mathematics but below for science

### **Key Stage 4 – GCSE and GNVQ Equivalent**

12. The exam outcomes compared to those in 2003 at Key Stage 4 are as follows:

- Five or more grades at A\*-C – down 2%
- Three or more grades at A\*-A – up 1%
- Five or more grades at A\*-G (inc mathematics and English) – down 0.8%
- Five or more grades at A\*-G – down 0.2%
- One or more grades at A\*-G – down 0.4%
- No passes – up 0.4%

Darlington is below the national average at five or more grades at A\*-C and at five or more grades at A\*-G (inc mathematics and English).

### **Legal Implications**

13. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

### **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

14. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

### **Council Policy Framework**

15. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework

### **Decision Deadline**

16. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter

### **Conclusion**

17. Significant gains were made this year in the performance of pupils at Key Stage 2. The gains of 2003 were consolidated and built upon at Key Stage 3 but performance dipped at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 4 (GCSE).

### **Recommendation**

18. Cabinet are asked to note the contents of this report.

## **Reasons**

19. The recommendation is supported as it allows Cabinet to monitor the performance of schools against national, regional and statistical neighbours.

**Geoff Pennington**  
**Director of Education**

## **Background Papers**

The statistical data used in this report is attached as Appendix Summary.

author : David Walker Extension: 2824