

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1	Meeting:	Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member and Advisers
2	Date:	31st March 2009
3	Title:	GCSE Examination Results 2008
4	Directorate:	Children and Young People's Services

5 Summary:

The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning of the GCSE examination results for 2008 and how they compare to previous years, to the national average and to the results of our statistical neighbours.

6 Recommendations:

That:

- The report be received.
- The Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning and Advisers, note the improved levels of performance across all indicators at the end of Key Stage 4.
- All schools are encouraged to continue to improve their results, and strive to achieve outcomes at least in line with the national rate of improvement.
- The Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning endorses the drive to:
 - reduce the gap between Rotherham's performance and the national average performance especially in relation to 5A*-C including English and Maths;
 - continue to improve boys' attainment,
 - continue to improve the attainment of black, minority ethnic (BME) pupils and
 - continue to improve the attainment of Looked After Children (LAC)
- The report be forwarded to Cabinet and the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel for consideration

7. Key Aspects of Performance

A. Overview

- i. Performance at GCSE 5+A*-C across the LA rose for the sixth consecutive year. The LA average rose 3.7% against a national average increase of 3.3%
- ii. On the now critical 5+A*-C including English and Maths indicator, the LA average rose 1.9% against a national average increase of 0.8%.
- iii. Performance at 5+A*-G including English and Maths rose 2.8% against a national average decline of 0.5%. Rotherham now exceeds national averages at 5 A*-G and 5A*-G incl English & Maths
- iv. 9 of the 16 schools matched or exceeded Fischer Family Trust "D" measures for progress from KS2-4, i.e. progress equal to that of the top 25% of students nationally.
- v. There was important improvement in key core subject departments in the Borough's most vulnerable schools, notably in English, which is helping to improve the overall performance of boys

B. Priority areas for action 2008/9

- i. The collaborative programme focussed on 5+A*-C including English and Maths performance led by a Consultant Headteacher working with senior leaders across the 16 schools has been sustained for a second year. In 2008 it promoted significant improvement in targeted schools, well above national averages
- ii. The culture of high expectations now pervasive across the secondary phase is exemplified in the aspirational targets set by schools for 2009 and 2010, which are consistently above FFT "D"
- iii. Improvement in the schools' most vulnerable schools (those with the highest proportion of children receiving Free School Meals) remains a priority and has seen significant improvement over the last 3 years
- iv. Two of the three National Challenge schools (identified by DCSF on 2007 results) performed above the 30% national threshold in 2008; one remained stable at 26%. Rotherham, therefore, has one school below the floor target, significantly fewer than other local and comparable Metropolitan Authorities.

C. Strategic focus of School Effectiveness Service

- i. Targetted support for underachievement is coordinated across the School Effectiveness Service, Consultant Headteachers and the nominated three lead consultancy schools. In 2008/9 we have further increased our consultancy resources by commissioning additional support from lead schools in English (Wath CS) and Maths (Wales HS).
- ii. The School Improvement Partner (SIP) programme has sharpened school self-evaluation, increased school leadership capacity and strengthened the focus on standards and achievement. Rotherham's practice is judged to be Outstanding by the National Strategies. The same strengths now inform our approach to the National Challenge (NC).
- iii. Programmes promoting the development of senior leadership capacity in the secondary phase are an area of excellence receiving regional and national recognition
- iv. Core subject consultancy demonstrated significant impact in underperforming departments in 2008 especially in English and Science
- v. Partnership between schools and SES is unprecedentedly close, responsive and productive. It has made the local introduction of the NC relatively straightforward and informs the ambitious vision for Transforming Rotherham Learning (TRL)

D. Background

The reporting of GCSE results is often complicated by the different ways in which the results are expressed. Local Authority (LA) results are sometimes published, by different Government departments, to include all the pupils in the cohort (i.e. all the pupils in secondary and special schools), on other occasions the results only represent pupils in mainstream secondary schools.

The results used to compare schools and LA's nationally are the DCSF validated results that cover all pupils in secondary and special schools at the end of Key Stage 4. These figures are used in this report.

In 2007 a new statistical neighbour model was introduced to replace the models previously used by Ofsted and the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). The old models both had limitations as they were not designed to meet the needs of the new national and local structures for delivering children's services.

The rationale for the development of a new model was that there should be one set of statistical neighbours for children's services which everyone would use. The LA's designated to have similar characteristics to Rotherham have now changed; therefore, comparisons cannot be made to previous years. The current SN group provides a more challenging set of comparators for Rotherham.

a) Overall GCSE Results

Table T1: Overall 5+ A* - C GCSE Results 2003 - 2008

GCSE results	Rotherham (R) %	National (N) %	% Diff between R and N	Statistical Neighbours (SN) %	% Diff between R and SN
5+ A*-C					
2003	44.4	52.9	8.5	46.4	2.0
2004	45.9	53.7	7.8	47.0	1.1
2005	49.5	57.1	7.6	50.9	1.4
2006	52.2	59.2	7.0	53.8	1.6
2007	54.6	62.0	7.4	57.9	3.3
2008	58.3	65.3	7.0	62.8	4.5

- The percentage of pupils attending special schools in the 2008 cohort was 1.3%.
- The percentage of pupils achieving 5+GCSEs at the higher grade A*-C has increased from 54.6% in 2007 to 58.3% in 2008, against a national average of 62.0% in 2007 to 65.3% in 2008.
- This is an improvement of 3.7% for Rotherham schools (2007 to 2008), against a national improvement of 3.3%. Since 1999, the percentage achieving at 5A*-C has increased by 17.9%, 0.5% above the national average increase for that period.

Table T2: Performance at 5+ A* - C (including English and Mathematics)

GCSE results	Rotherham (R) %	National (N) %	% Diff between R and N	Statistical Neighbours (SN) %	% Diff between R and SN
5+A*-C (including English and maths)					
2006	37.5	45.8	8.3	38.8	1.3
2007	39.0	46.7	7.7	40.3	1.3
2008	40.9	47.6	6.7	42.8	1.9

- In 2006 a new performance indicator was included in the performance tables showing the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics. This is a “harder test” and part of the Government’s drive to improve literacy and numeracy skills.
- In 2008 40.9% of Rotherham pupils achieved 5+A*-C (including English and maths), against a national average of 47.6% and a statistical neighbour average of 42.8%.
- In 2008 Rotherham reduced the gap to national averages.
- In 2008:
 - 52.1% of pupils gained A*-C in English (61.0% nationally)
 - 49.0% gained A*-C in mathematics (55.0% nationally) and
 - 41.1% gained A*-C in English and mathematics combined (48.0% nationally).

Table T3: Performance at 5+ A* - G

GCSE results	Rotherham (R) %	National (N) %	% Diff between R and N	Statistical Neighbours (SN) %	% Diff between R and SN
5+ A*-G					
2003	88.3	88.8	0.5	90.0	1.7
2004	88.1	88.8	0.4	90.0	1.9
2005	88.2	90.2	2.0	89.0	0.8
2006	88.6	90.5	1.9	89.6	1.0
2007	89.4	91.7	2.3	91.1	1.7
2008	91.8	91.6	-0.2	91.9	0.1

- The percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-G grades has increased by 2.4% with a slight decline in the national average of -0.1%. This is an important measure of schools’ inclusiveness and provision for students across the whole ability range.
- Rotherham’s 5+A*-G performance is slightly above the national performance.
- Rotherham’s 5+A*-G performance is in line with the performance of statistical neighbours.

Table A4: Performance at 5+ A* - G (including English and mathematics)

GCSE results	Rotherham (R) %	National (N) %	% Diff between R and N	Statistical Neighbours (SN) %	% Diff between R and SN
5+A*-G (including English and maths)					
2003	85.4	86.3	0.9	N/A	N/A
2004	84.5	86.7	2.2	N/A	N/A
2005	86.5	88.0	1.5	86.9	0.4
2006	86.0	87.8	1.8	87.4	1.4
2007	87.5	87.9	0.4	88.8	1.3
2008	90.3	87.4	-2.9	89.9	-0.4

- 90.3% of Rotherham pupils gained 5+A*-G (including English and mathematics), an increase of 2.8% from 2007.
- This is against a national average of 87.4% which declined by 0.5% from 2007 and the statistical neighbour average of 89.9%.

Table T5: Performance – Any passes

GCSE results	Rotherham (R) %	National (N) %	% Diff between R and N	Statistical Neighbours (SN) %	% Diff between R and SN
Any passes					
2003	94.6	94.8	0.2	95.9	1.3
2004	95.0	95.9	0.9	95.9	0.9
2005	96.3	97.4	0.9	96.2	+0.1
2006	96.6	97.8	1.2	96.8	0.8
2007	97.0	98.9	1.9	97.6	0.6
2008	98.0	98.6	0.6	98.2	0.2

- Only 2% of pupils in Rotherham left school in 2008 with no GCSE equivalent passes. The majority of these (1.3%) children were in Special schools.

Table T6: Average Point Score (capped – i.e. results of the best 8 subjects taken)

GCSE results	Rotherham (R) %	National (N) %	% Diff between R and N	Statistical Neighbours (SN) %	% Diff between R and SN
APS (capped)					
2004	263.0	282.3	19.3	266.4	3.4
2005	270.6	291.8	21.2	273.9	3.3
2006	274.4	296.0	21.6	279.3	4.9
2007	281.5	303.1	21.6	290.2	8.7
2008	292.9	308.6	15.7	300.5	7.6

- The capped average points score is calculated from the best 8 GCSEs or equivalent.
- The average (capped) point score for pupils in Rotherham is 292.9, an increase of 11.4 in 2008 compared to a national average increase of 5.5.

b) Progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4

The system used by most schools, LAs and the DCSF to judge the progress of pupils is based on information provided by the Fischer Family Trust (FFT). This information shows the performance of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and provides estimates to support schools in the target setting process for pupils at the end of Key Stage 4. The FFT information gives two key pieces of information based on each pupil's prior performance:

- FFT B estimates - estimate the future performance of each pupil, and from this each school, if they make as much progress as similar pupils in similar schools
- FFT D estimates - estimate the future performance of each pupil, and from this each school, if they make as much progress as the progress made by pupils in the top 25% of schools in terms of value-added

In 2008, 9 of the 16 secondary schools showed progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 in line with or better than the 5+A*-C FFT D estimates. Rotherham schools have ceased to use FFT "B" because of the lower level of challenge.

c) Progress across Rotherham Schools

The Council, through its Single Plan for Children and Young People, is striving to raise the attainment of pupils in all Rotherham schools. 12 secondary schools improved their 5+A*-C results in 2008 with four schools showing significantly improved results of 8% and over. 11 secondary schools improved their 5+A*-C (including English and

Mathematics) results in 2008, with four schools showing significantly improved results of 8% and over. The focus for support in 2008/9 is on those schools where the progress of pupils from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 is less than that which would be expected in similar schools nationally using the estimates provided by the Fischer Family Trust data information system.

d) Vulnerable Groups

(i) Gender

Table T7: Analysis of Performance by Gender - 5+A*-C grades

5+A*-C	Boys		Girls		Difference	
	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
2004	42.1	46.2	49.7	56.7	7.6	10.5
2005	43.0	52.2	56.1	62.0	13.1	9.8
2006	44.3	54.6	60.3	64.0	16.0	9.4
2007	48.8	57.7	60.5	66.4	11.7	8.7
2008	54.1	60.9	62.6	69.9	8.5	7.3

- The gap between the performance of girls and boys at 5+A*-C is 8.5%, this has decreased in 2008 by 3.2%; this is due to an increase in boys' performance by 5.3%. Girls' performance improved by 2.1% between 2007/2008.
- The gap in national performance between girls and boys is 7.3%, with a decrease of 1.4% from 2007.

Table T8: Analysis of Performance by Gender - 5+A*-C grades (including English and mathematics)

5+A*-C (inc En + Ma)	Boys		Girls		Difference	
	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
2005	30.7	40.7	42.3	49.1	11.6	8.4
2006	31.1	41.6	44.2	50.2	13.1	8.6
2007	32.7	42.4	45.5	51.2	12.8	8.8
2008	37.2	43.2	44.8	52.3	7.6	9.1

- The gap between the performance of girls and boys at 5+A*-C (including English and maths) is 7.6% with a decrease of 5.2%; this is due to an increase in boys' performance by 4.5%
- The gap in national performance between girls and boys is 9.1%, with a slight increase each year.
- The difference between boys and girls in Rotherham is less than the national difference.

Table T9: Gap between Girls' and Boys' Performance in English from 2004 - 2008

English A*-C	Boys		Girls		Boy / Girl difference	
	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
2004	37.9	45.7	53.8	62.2	15.9	16.5
2005	39.3	50.0	57.7	65.0	18.4	15.0
2006	38.0	51.0	62.0	67.0	24.0	16.0
2007	40.9	53.0	60.6	68.0	19.7	15.0
2008	44.1	54.0	60.4	69.0	16.3	15.0

- The improvement in the performance of boys in English A*-C, is 3.2% from 2007 to 2008
- The gap between the performance of girls and boys at A*-C, in English, has decreased by 3.4% in 2008.
- The gap in the performance of boys and girls nationally, in English, has remained relatively static since 2004.

Table T10: Gap between Girls' and Boys' Performance in Mathematics from 2004 - 2008

Maths A*-C	Boys		Girls		Boy / Girl difference	
	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
2004	40.9	45.7	42.3	48.5	1.4	2.8
2005	45.0	50.0	47.7	53.0	2.7	3.0
2006	45.0	52.0	50.0	55.0	5.0	3.0
2007	46.9	53.0	49.6	56.0	2.7	3.0
2008	48.6	54.0	49.2	57.0	0.6	3.0

- The improvement in the performance of boys in mathematics A*-C, is 1.7% from 2007 to 2008
- The gap between the performance of girls and boys at A*-C, in mathematics, has decreased by 2.1% to 0.6% in 2008.
- The gap in performance of boys and girls nationally, in mathematics, has remained relatively static since 2004.
- The gap between girls and boys in mathematics has been less than the national gap for two years.

(ii) Looked After Children

Table T11: Percentage of Looked After Children (LAC) achieving 5+ GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade A*-G (2003- 2007)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Rotherham %	28%	29%	50%	26%	47%
Rotherham LAC Cohort No.	25	30	30	23	36
National %	39.4%	40.7%	41.4%	43.1%	N/K

Table T12: Percentage of Looked After Children achieving 1+ GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade A*-G 2003-2007

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Rotherham %	40%	65%	70%	61%	78%
Rotherham LAC Cohort No.	25	30	30	23	36
National %	56.1%	60.2%	63.2%	63.7%	N/K

National Data source DCSF SFR08

- Care should be taken in comparing small numbers of pupils year on year but the outcomes reflect committed and successful work by students, school, the Get Real Team and other colleagues.

iii) Performance by Ethnicity (mainstream schools)

Table T13: Performance by Ethnicity 2004 – 2008

		Number in Group	3+ A* to A	5+ A* to C Inc Eng & Maths	5+ A* to C	5+ A* to G
2004	BME	238	10.4%	31.7%	47.1%	91.3%
	WBRI	3397	12.3%	33.6%	46.0%	89.5%
	ALL	3635	12.2%	33.5%	46.1%	89.6%
2005	BME	210	11.9%	31.9%	48.1%	90.5%
	WBRI	3355	13.3%	37.2%	50.1%	89.0%
	ALL	3565	13.2%	36.9%	50.0%	89.1%
2006	BME	250	15.5%	36.1%	51.2%	88.1%
	WBRI	3480	14.8%	38.3%	52.9%	89.7%
	ALL	3730	14.9%	38.1%	52.8%	89.6%
2007	BME	273	16.8%	39.9%	55.3%	93.0%
	WBRI	3427	14.5%	39.8%	55.4%	90.4%
	ALL	3700	14.7%	39.8%	55.4%	90.6%
2008	BME	262	14.5%	34.7%	56.9%	93.5%
	WBRI	3489	17.0%	42.0%	58.7%	92.8%
	ALL	3751	16.8%	41.5%	58.6%	92.9%

(BME) Black and Minority Ethnic background

(WBRI) White British background

- The percentage of BME pupils in the cohort has decreased slightly from 2007 (7.3%) to 2008 (7.0%).

e) Contextual Value Added (CVA)

In the autumn term of 2005, OFSTED introduced a new Performance and Assessment (PANDA) report, this has recently been replaced by RAISEonline (Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through School Self-Evaluation) a web-based interactive tool. Previously progress was assessed by placing schools into groups according to their similarity in prior attainment. Schools were given benchmark grades according to their performance compared with the other schools in their group. However it was recognised that there are many other possible factors that affect pupils' progress that are not taken into account by these methods.

The RAISE report uses a CVA model that OFSTED and the DCSF have worked together to derive. This involves looking at the progress observed amongst all pupils nationally in each year according to a wide range of contextual characteristics which change year on year and, therefore, require caution in interpretation. The main factors in the models include:

- Prior attainment
- SEN status
- Free school meals entitlement
- Whether English is an additional language

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Mobility
- Economic deprivation

Each pupil's expected progress from an earlier Key Stage is calculated, taking into account the national data for all factors in the model. Then their actual progress is compared to their expected progress. The difference indicates whether a pupil has progressed more or less than expected and by how much. These differences are then combined for all pupils to provide a contextual value added score for each school.

The following tables provide a summary of the performance in Rotherham Key Stage 2-4 and Key Stage 3-4. This includes the overall CVA measure for each school, and core subject CVA scores relative to the national mean of 1000. Where the school value differs significantly from corresponding national value, sig+ or sig- is shown.

a) Key Stage 2-4

The total number of secondary schools in 2005 was 17. This reduced to 16 in 2006

Table E1: Overall CVA – Number of schools designated in each category

	2006	2007	2008
Significance -	4	2	2
Significance - and declining	0	2	1
Significance - and improving	0	2	0
Significance +	5	1	2
Significance + and improving	0	0	2
Significance + and declining	0	0	0
No significance	7	9	9

Minus sign (-) means below national average

Plus sign (+) means above national average

- The overall profile of Rotherham schools from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 has moved closer to the national CVA profile with the majority of schools in 2008 (9) being in line with the national profile.
- In 2008, 3 schools were significantly below the national profile
- In 2008, 4 schools were significantly above the national profile

f) LA Statistics for Individual Schools (against the year cohort)

Appendix A: Rotherham's results compared with National and Statistical Neighbour (SN) averages

A (i) Rotherham LA, National and Statistical Neighbour averages 2008

A (ii) Rotherham 5+A*-C results compared with Statistical Neighbour and National averages 2006-2008

A (iii) Rotherham 5+A*-C including English and Mathematics results compared with Statistical Neighbour and National averages 2006-2008

Appendix B

Schools Results

- B (i) Percentage of Pupils achieving 5+A*-C and 5+A*-C including English and mathematics 2006-2008 calculated against the Year 11 Cohort
- B (ii) Progress from 2006-2008 in the percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-C calculated against the Year 11 Cohort
- B (iii) Progress from 2006-2008 in the percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-C including English and Mathematics calculated against the Year 11 Cohort
- B (iv) Percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-C ranked in order of % eligible for FSM 2008
- B (v) Percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-C including English and Maths ranked in order of % eligible for FSM 2008

11. Finance:

Resources, within the Council, to drive the school improvement agenda are a combination of core budget, DCFS grant through the Standards Fund and income.

Schools also receive additional funding, through Standards Fund, to address the national strategies agenda to raising standards.

12 Risks and Uncertainties:

The level of achievement of Rotherham pupils on leaving statutory education will have a major impact on the re-generation of the area. Schools, working with the LA, are setting challenging targets and are striving to drive up the standards of attainment for all pupils.

The coherent implementation of a range of nationally funded projects will be instrumental in achieving this improvement. Failure to achieve the targets will limit the economic prospects of the young people and could put this additional funding at risk.

13 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

Any plans arising from an analysis of this report are consistent with the Community Strategy, the Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People's Single Plan. The improvement actions should address the Corporate Priorities for:

- Learning
 - to raise the attainment for all children and young people;
 - to ensure a high quality education for all children and young people
 - to increase the number of young people in education, employment and training
- Achieving
 - to develop Rotherham as a prosperous place;
 - to minimise inequalities

14. Background Papers and Consultation:

GCSE and 'A' Level Examination Results 2004 - Report to Education Cabinet 2005.

GCSE Examination Results 2005 - Report to Cabinet 2006.

GCSE Examination Results 2006 - Report to Cabinet 2007.

GCSE Examination Results 2007 - Report to Cabinet 2008.

Contact Name:

David Light

Head of School Effectiveness T: 01709 82555

E: david.light@rotherham.gov.uk