

## **Corporate Director's Briefing for Children's PDS, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

### **GCSE and A level Results**

Early results as reported by schools indicate that pupils in Bath and North East Somerset have improved their GCSE results compared to last year. In a year when pupils, parents, teachers and school leaders have been concerned about the new, more challenging GCSE courses it is a credit to all concerned that results have improved.

Initial data across the area shows that the average Attainment 8 score (a measure showing how well pupils have done in a range of 8 subjects) has risen so that it is now equivalent to a strong pass (Grade 5). The proportion of pupils achieving at least a strong pass in both English and maths has risen from 42% to 48% and the proportion achieving at least a standard pass (Grade 4) has risen from 63% to 69%.

Early indications of A level results across the area show a substantial increase in the average grade achieved by pupils and this is a real credit to the hard work that they and their teachers have put in. We are seeing some strong improvements from local schools, both in the average grade achieved and in the proportion of pupils achieving the highest grades.

From the results of nearly all the schools and colleges in the area it would seem that the average grade achieved has moved from a C in 2017 to halfway between a C and a B grade in 2018. The percentage of pupils achieving at least two A grades and a B grade in the subjects most favoured by universities has increased from 14.6% to 17.2%. This is a credit to pupils and teachers and should enable more students to get to the best universities.

This has been a period of substantial change for teachers and pupils, both at GCSE and A level. Bath and North East Somerset Council recognises the hard work that pupils have put in to achieve these results, and the dedication that their teachers have shown in preparing them so well. Behind these average figures there are many individual stories of success at all levels.

### **Alternative Education Provision**

The Council has commissioned 2 new providers of Alternative Provision who have commenced locally from September 2018. Learn@ (for secondary-age provision) and Broadlands (Primary) were both successful in securing the necessary DfE registration status in time for the start of term.

### **Adoption West**

Adoption West, the new Regional Adoption Agency serving B&NES, Bristol, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire will be in place from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018, with staff transferring across from individual local authorities on 1<sup>st</sup> November. A joint scrutiny arrangement is proposed for this service, which will be run by a new company wholly-owned by the 6 Local Authorities.

## **Admissions**

Applications for school places for September 2019 are now open and we are encouraging families to use all 5 preferences on the application form to ensure their child has the best chance of securing a suitable local school place. We are conscious that the admissions process is complex to understand and heavily prescribed by the national Code of Practice. A video has been created, presented by two local year 6 pupils, to try to get some of the key messages across to families in a more engaging way.

The national Schools Adjudicator has recently determined an objection to the admissions criteria of Beechen Cliff School. The Adjudicator has found 16 ways in which the criteria do not comply with the Admissions Code and has given the school 2 months to revise them accordingly.

The Adjudicator also commented on the number of children in South West Bath being allocated a school place on the far side of Bath. His findings indicated that this was in part because parents did not understand the implications of not making use of all five preferences. I would once again ask all Councillors to encourage local parents to make full use of their 5 preferences.

**Mike Bowden**  
**Corporate Director**