

SHROPSHIRE PRIMARY SCHOOLS MAKE THE GRADE



More than three quarters of primary school pupils across the Shropshire local education authority hit the Government's benchmark standard in reading, writing and maths, new figures revealed today.

Seventy-eight per cent of children in schools covered by Shropshire Council reached the level four target in their Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) this year – according to the league tables released by the Department for Education.

This represents a rise of two per cent compared to last year.

In the Telford & Wrekin Council LEA the figure was also 78 per cent – a rise of four per cent.

Eight schools in the county saw all of their pupils achieve the level four standard in reading, writing and maths. No school in Telford matched that achievement.

Joy as schools chalk up 100pc

The eight schools where all key stage two children achieved level four or above in reading, writing and maths were:

Adderley School

Barrow 1618 Free School

Condover School

Gobowen School

Onny School

Stottesdon School

Wistanstow School

Woore School

None of the schools in Telford & Wrekin achieved the same – despite a higher percentage of pupils across the LEA faring better than last year. It is only the second year that pupils have been rated on the new core subjects of maths, reading and writing.

Previously they were judged on maths and English, which covered both reading and writing. However, critics argued that a pupils who was good at reading but poor at writing could skew the results, so the two subjects were split.

But 14 of the county's 125 primary schools fell below the requirement of having 65 per cent of pupils reach the level four grade in the three core subjects.

The Government has strengthened its assessments again this year, requiring schools to see 65 per cent of their pupils hit the level four target, instead of last year's target of 60 per cent.

And figures released by the Department for Education have proven fairly volatile for schools across the county, some of which have risen or fallen dramatically.

Last year's lowest ranked school in Telford & Wrekin, Queenswood School and Nursery, soared 26 places to 23rd in the rankings after 80 per cent of its pupils hit the target in the three key subjects, compared to 29 per cent the year before.

But this year's league tables will make bad reading for St Lawrence School in Preston on the Weald Moors. Ranked top of the table in the borough last year, it fell 49 places to the bottom of this year's rankings for Telford. The school had just six pupils sitting the Key Stage.

In Shropshire, Condover School in Shrewsbury maintained its place at the top from last year but this year's second ranked institution, Gobowen School, rose 46 places from last year. Other climbers included Morda School which soared 84 places from 95th in the county last year to 11th.

The new rankings reveal the performance of about 16,000 primaries in national curriculum tests in reading and maths, as well as teacher assessments of pupils' writing skills.

Still lots of work to be done, says report

There is still much work to be done. That's the verdict from Ofsted chiefs to primary and secondary schools in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, despite performing better than the national average.

A report published by the education watchdog yesterday revealed that there was "no change" to the performance of secondary schools in Telford & Wrekin since last year, while Shropshire Council had gone up by one point in the rankings.

Inspectors found both local authorities had gone up by seven points for their primary school results.

Ofsted recorded that both Telford & Wrekin Council and Shropshire Council had 81 per cent of pupils who were attending a good or outstanding primary schools.

Meanwhile, 75 per cent attend a good or outstanding secondary school in Shropshire and 89 per cent in Telford & Wrekin, which ranked 26th in the country.

Nationally, inspectors warned that too many secondary schools in England were not making progress, with almost a third judged not to be good enough.

Russell Jordan, a senior inspector for the West Midlands region, said secondary schools in Shropshire had bucked that trend by improving from last year, with Telford & Wrekin remaining "one of the best performing" local authorities for secondary school rankings in the region.

He said: "The reason secondary schools have remained similar to last year's results in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin is because they were already doing well. Shropshire was one of only five in the region to improve from last year.

"There has been improvement in primary schools across the county but there is still a lot of work to do in all areas. The point is they are both performing better than the England average but we would like them to improve more rapidly."

The information comes from Ofsted, and covers secondary schools, including academies, only.

Mr Jordan added: "Primary schools are doing better than secondary schools and that is normally the case, but in Telford and Wrekin the rankings are better for secondary schools.

"Governors need to fulfil their roles very precisely and challenge senior leaders to improve."

Russell Griffin, a spokesman for Telford & Wrekin Council, said: "We are particularly encouraged that we have maintained our high performance across our secondary sector, which has resulted in us being ranked 26th in the country."

Ann Hartley, cabinet member for Children's Services, Transformation and Safeguarding at Shropshire Council, said: "I am very pleased that Ofsted has recognised the improvement that has taken place and I would like to thank headteachers, their staff and those who have supported them for their continued commitment to providing the very best opportunities for Shropshire pupils."

