

ESSEX'S EDUCATION CHIEF WARNS AGAINST COMPLACENCY



Essex's education chief has warned against complacency after primary schools in the county showed a slight improvement overall in their SAT results.

The league table data released by the Department for Education (DfE) today showed that 75% of year 6 pupils in Essex reached the required Level 4 standard in reading, writing and maths this year - exactly the national average score and a percentage point improvement on the 74% of Essex primary school pupils who made the grade last year.

Essex County Council's cabinet member for education and lifelong learning, Ray Gooding, said it was encouraging that results in Essex's primary schools were "heading in the right direction".

"I would like to congratulate all teachers, parents and pupils for their hard work and achievement in improving results at Key Stage 2," he said.

"I am particularly proud to learn that 12 Essex schools achieved a fantastic 100% in their results, with a further 66% of schools achieving 90%. Overall 211 Essex schools achieved above the national average of 75%, proof that our results are heading in the right direction.

Schools that shone in the county include Millfields Primary School in Wivenhoe near Colchester, which was the joint 9th best primary school in the country for the average SATs score per pupil. Hamilton Primary School in Colchester was joint 15th while Perryfields Junior School in Chelmsford was joint 16th

However, Mr Gooding warned school not to rest on their laurels.

He added: "We must not be complacent. We are always striving to achieve the highest standard of education in Essex to give the children in our county the best possible start in life and will continue to look at how we can achieve even higher in the future."

At teacher's union NUT, general secretary for Essex, Jerry Glazier, also cautioned against using the table to compare different schools that may be facing different challenges.

He said: "People mustn't fall into the trap of looking at schools at the top of the list and thinking they are doing better than those at the bottom.

"Some schools may be facing a range of socio-economic challenges, such as poverty, in their catchment, which works against academic attainment. It doesn't mean teachers at these schools are doing excellent work."

