

NOTTINGHAM CLOSES THE GAP FOR PRIMARY-AGE PUPILS SATS

Nearly three-quarters of children leaving Nottingham primary schools this year did so having reached expected levels. The majority of schools in the city performed well in Sats exams, with some seeing 90 per cent or more of pupils achieving the right standard. Some schools, however, were left with much room for improvement.

The Department for Education today reveals how 11 year olds across the country got on in their summer tests.

In Nottingham, 73 per cent reached level four in reading, writing and maths combined, the benchmark standard. This was two per cent below the national average of 75 per cent. Councillor David Mellen, portfolio holder for children's services at the city council, said the results suggest a bright future for education.

However, it comes at a time when seven city secondary schools are set to be slammed by Ofsted for poor standards. Mr Mellen said children performing well at primary school was encouraging.

He said: "If we have children doing well in primary school we believe this should be reflected in how well they do at secondary school. We are pleased to see that, once again, we are narrowing the gap on the national average."

Changes in the goalposts for standards in Sats make exact comparison with previous years difficult to make. Previously, the combined mark of overall English and maths was the benchmark. From this year, both the reading and writing elements of English were taken into consideration separately.

Nottingham has consistently lagged behind national levels, but has been closing the gap. In 2012, it was four per cent behind the national average. In individual subjects this year, Nottingham was slightly behind national levels in all.



Some schools were celebrating outstanding results, particularly St Patrick's Catholic Primary, in Wilford, where every child reached level four in reading, writing and maths. Six other schools saw more than 90 per cent of children reach this level.

These were St Teresa's Catholic Primary, Aspley (98 per cent); Blessed Robert Widmerpool Catholic Primary, Clifton (97); Haydn Primary, Sherwood (97); Hempshill Hall Primary, Bulwell (90); Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary, Bulwell (90); and Warren Primary, Top Valley (90).

Sats are seen as important indicators for the levels children reach, as well as a way of judging the performance of schools. Greenfields Community School in The Meadows saw 83 per cent of children reach the right levels. Head teacher Terry Smith has put the school's success down to everyone involved. He said: "It is all down to the hard work and dedication of staff and children, with the support of parents. It is very important we give children the best start possible to life."

Blue Bell Hill Primary, in St Ann's, saw 77 per cent of children reach the right level.

Head teacher Jo Bradley said good results are down to "schools in the city working hard to achieve the best for pupils", but has raised concerns about the pressure the exams put on young children.