

6. CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

6.10 Education

Buckinghamshire is a relatively affluent area of the country, as is the South East region generally. The level of poverty is lower than the England average and fewer children are in care. Health and well-being of children is generally better than the England average. However, parts of the county are less affluent and the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is an area of concern.

Buckinghamshire has a large number of schools which includes two maintained nursery schools, 182 primary schools, 35 secondary schools (of which 13 are selective, 2 are Free Schools and 1 is a University Technical College), 2 all-through schools (age 3 – 18 years), 11 special schools and 3 Pupil Referral Units¹.

Significant changes to the education system nationally are reflected locally. For example, most secondary schools and a small number of primary schools are now Academies, free to set their own admission criteria and funded directly from Central Government. The County Council, in its role as champion for children, continues to build on established relationships with schools and other education providers to make sure that as changes happen, all Buckinghamshire children and young people have the opportunity to reach their potential.

The percentage of pupils attending a school in Buckinghamshire which Ofsted has judged to be good or outstanding school is improving and has increased from 79% in August 2014 to 83% in March 2016.²

Overall pupil attainment in Buckinghamshire is above average in most measures, with end of Key Stage results generally above the national average and those of similar Local Authorities known as our Statistical Neighbours³. However, the latest [Buckinghamshire Education Standards Report](#) (May 2016) identified that there are still specific groups of children where further improvements need to be made. The County Council will therefore continue to focus on driving improvements in the progress and attainment of certain underachieving groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils⁴ so that they do as well as other pupils.

¹ Based on January 2016 School Census

² Based on Ofsted published reports and January School Census.

³ Statistical Neighbours - Bedfordshire (Central), Bracknell Forest, Cambridgeshire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey, West Berkshire, Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham.

⁴ Disadvantaged pupils - those pupils that attract pupil premium funding because they were eligible for free school meals at any point in the past 6 years, who are looked after children or who have been adopted from care.

6.10.1 Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

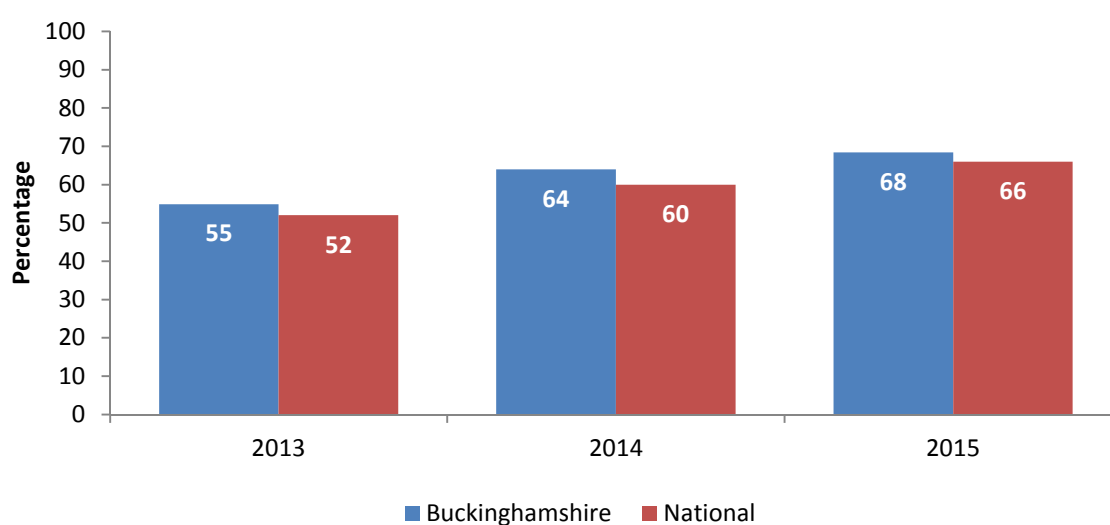
Education providers in Buckinghamshire are committed to providing all children with the best start in life. Evidence shows that the earliest years in a child's life have a significant and long-lasting impact. All children should be at a point where they are ready to learn by the time they start school and improving the advice, help and support available to parents and early year's providers has made a real difference.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) summarises children's attainment at the end of Reception. The key measure is the percentage of children reaching a good level of development, which are those children achieving at least the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and the early learning goals in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

Buckinghamshire results have increased by 4 percentage points since 2014, and 13 percentage points since 2013. 68% of Buckinghamshire pupils now reach a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Buckinghamshire results in 2015 are 2 percentage points higher than national. Nationally results have increased at a slightly faster rate than in Buckinghamshire, with results increasing by 6 percentage points in 2014 and 14 percentage points since 2013.

Figure 1 Attainment of a good level of development by the end of the EYFS, Buckinghamshire and England 2013-2015

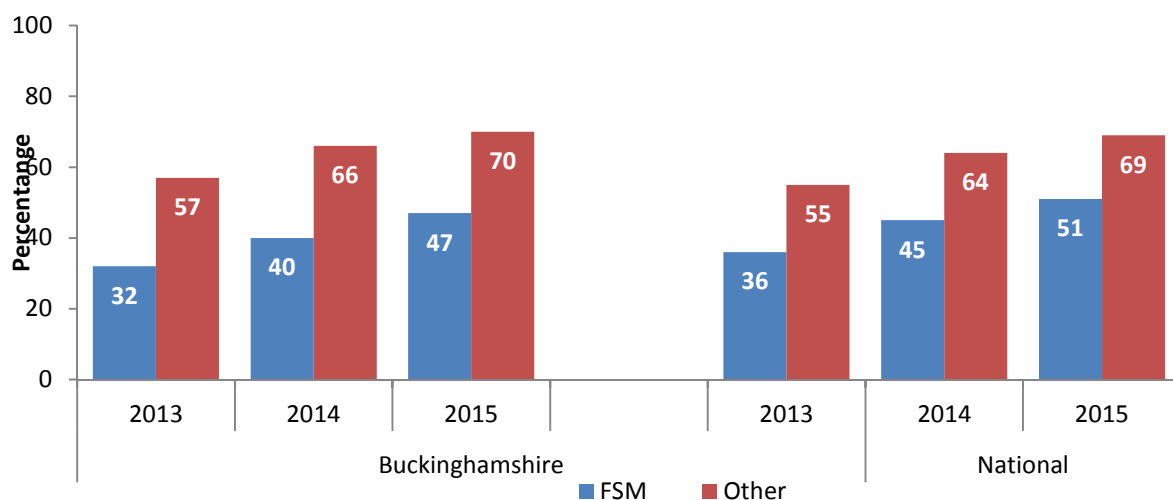


Buckinghamshire results for pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) have increased by 7 percentage points and the attainment gap has improved by 3

percentage points; 47% of pupils known to be eligible for FSM achieved a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage compared with 70% of all other pupils.

FSM pupils in Buckinghamshire do not perform as well as FSM pupils nationally, and the gap between attainment of FSM pupils and all other pupils is wider in Buckinghamshire than nationally. Nationally, 51% of pupils known to be eligible for FSM achieved a good level of development compared with 69% of all other pupils, a gap of 18 percentage points.

Figure 2 Attainment of a good level of development by the end of the EYFS by FSM, Buckinghamshire and England 2013-2015



For the early Years Foundation Stage Profile, Buckinghamshire was ranked 8th when compared to statistical neighbours and 44th when compared to all Local Authorities in England.

Early Years - Key areas of focus for Buckinghamshire schools

- Continue to improve the performance of disadvantaged children so that increasing numbers reach a good level of development by the end of the Foundation Stage
- Continue to improve the performance of children who have a first language other than English so that an increasing number reach a good level of development
- Continue to raise standards of underachieving groups

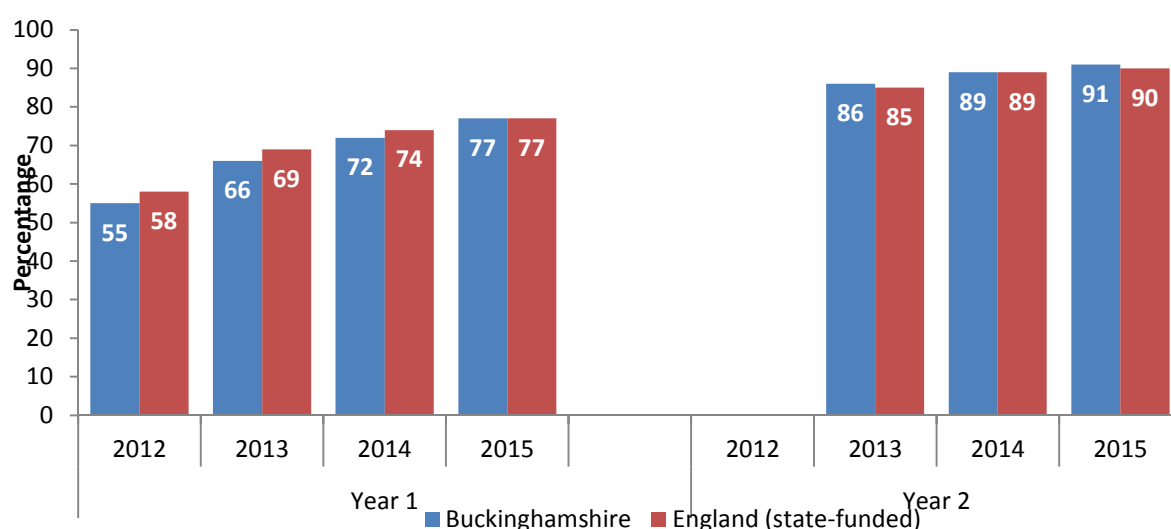
6.10.2 Phonics Screening Check

The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. It helps to identify pupils who need extra help to improve their decoding skills, but does not test other aspects of reading. The check consists of 20 real words and 20 pseudo-words that a pupil reads aloud to the teacher. All pupils have to take the Phonics Screening Check at the end Year 1. Children in Year 2 must also take the check if they did not meet the required standard in Year 1 - this includes children who did not take the check in Year 1 for any reason.

Buckinghamshire results in the Year 1 phonics check have increased by 5 percentage points since 2014. This means that Buckinghamshire results are now in line with national results for the first time, having been below national results since the introduction of the phonics check in 2012.

Those children who do not reach the expected standard of phonics decoding in Year 1 are retested at the end of Year 2. Historically Buckinghamshire results have been in line or above national by the end of Year 2, and this trend has continued with Buckinghamshire results being 1 percentage point higher than national.

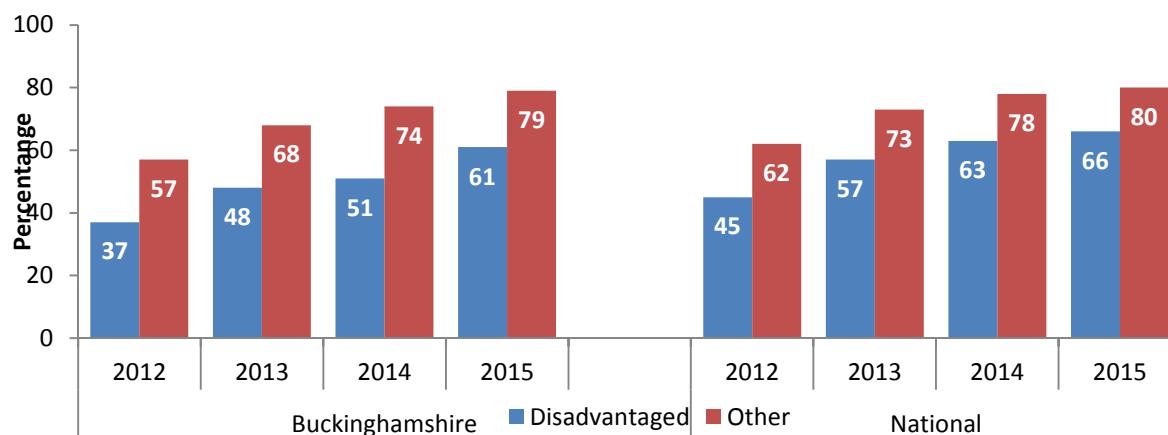
Figure 3 Attainment of the expected standard in phonics decoding in Year 1 and by the end of Year 2, Buckinghamshire and England (state-funded schools) 2012-2015



In 2015 the percentage of disadvantaged pupils in Buckinghamshire meeting the expected standard in phonics decoding has increased by 10 percentage points to 61%. At the same time attainment for other pupils only increased by 5 percentage points, meaning that the attainment gap has improved by 5 percentage points; 61%

of pupils known to be disadvantaged met the expected standard compared with 79% of all other pupils, making a gap of 18 percentage points.

Figure 4 Attainment of the expected standard in phonics decoding in Year 1 by disadvantage, Buckinghamshire and England (state-funded schools) 2012-2015



For the Year 1 phonics check, Buckinghamshire was ranked 6th when compared to our statistical neighbours and 63rd when compared to all Local Authorities in England. Results improve when looking at the performance of children by the end of Year 2, and Buckinghamshire was ranked 5th against statistical neighbours and 34th when compared to all Local Authorities in England.

Phonics - Key areas of focus for Buckinghamshire schools

- Continue to increase the percentage of children reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check so that Buckinghamshire results are higher than national.
- Continue to improve the performance of disadvantaged pupils so that they do as well as other pupils.
- Continue to raise standards of underachieving groups

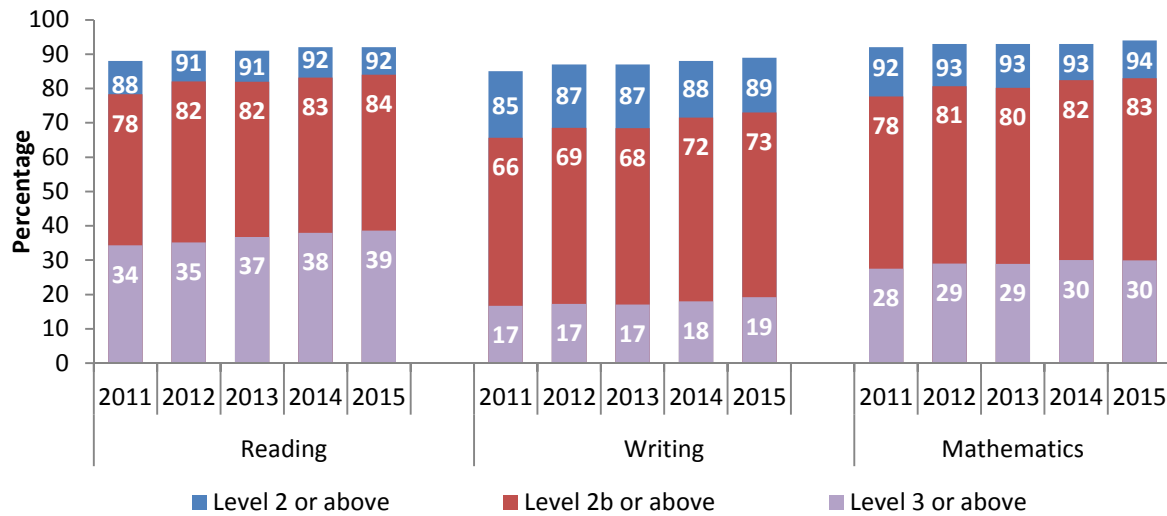
6.10.3 Key Stage 1

Pupils are assessed at the end of Year 2 in Reading, Writing and Maths. The expected level for pupils at this age is level 2.

In Buckinghamshire results for all subjects and levels have increased by 1 percentage point since 2014, except for level 2 and above in reading and level 3 or above in mathematics which have remained unchanged.

Attainment at all levels in all 3 subjects is higher than national results.

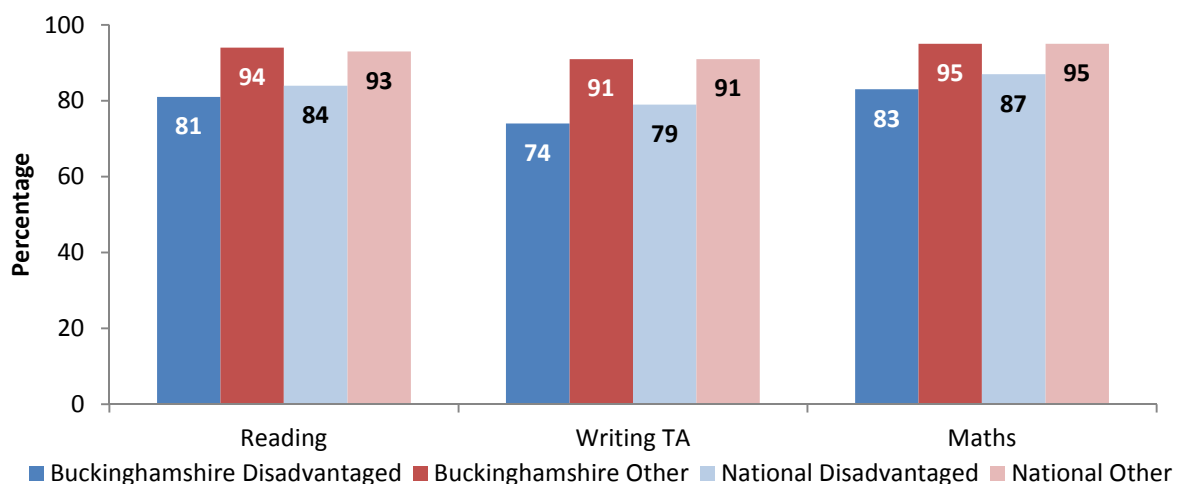
Figure 5 Attainment in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Buckinghamshire and England 2011-2015



The gap between the attainment at level 2 or above of disadvantaged pupils and others in Buckinghamshire decreased in 2014 but has increased again in 2015. The gap for reading has increased by 1 percentage point to 13 percentage points. The gaps for writing and mathematics have both increased by 2 percentage points, to 17 percentage points and 12 percentage points respectively.

Nationally the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others is smaller than in Buckinghamshire for all 3 subjects, although there has only been improvement in the reading gap, with gaps for writing and mathematics staying static. National gaps are currently 9 percentage points for reading, 12 percentage points for writing and 8 percentage points for mathematics.

Figure 6 Attainment at Level 2 by subject and disadvantage, Buckinghamshire and England 2015



Performance in Buckinghamshire compares favourably to other Local Authorities. At level 2 or above Buckinghamshire was ranked 4th in reading, 6th in writing and 4th in mathematics when compared to statistical neighbours. Buckinghamshire was ranked 16th in reading, 28th in writing and 18th in mathematics when compared to all Local Authorities in England.

Key Stage 1 - Key areas of focus for Buckinghamshire schools

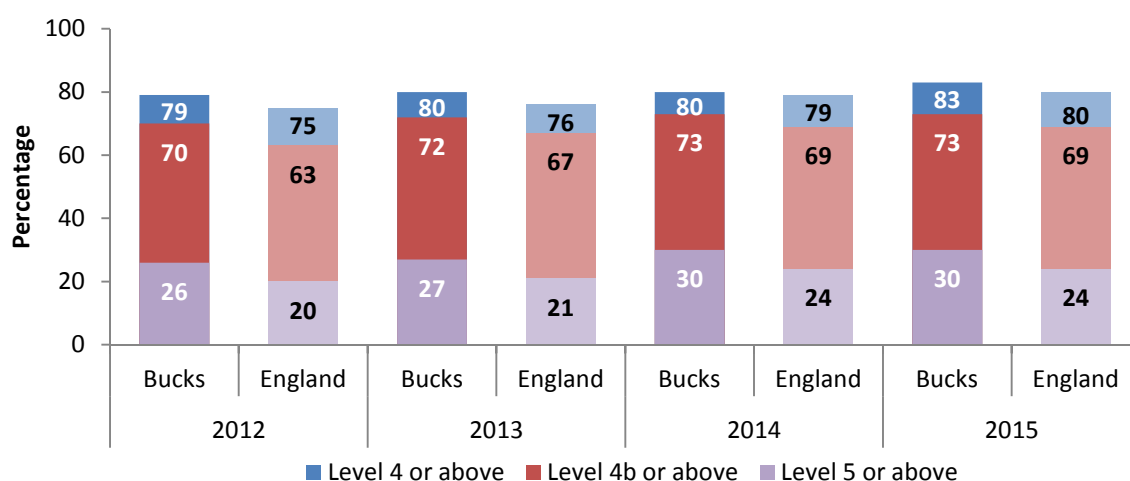
- Continue to improve the performance of disadvantaged pupils so that they do as well as other pupils
- Continue to raise standards of underachieving groups

6.10.4 Key Stage 2

Pupils take tests in Reading and Maths at the end of Year 6, and are also assessed in Writing and Science. A Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling test was introduced in 2013. The key performance measure at Key Stage 2 (KS2) is the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in the reading test, writing teacher assessment and maths test.

Attainment at level 4 or above in reading, writing and mathematics combined increased by 3 percentage points from 2014 to 83% in 2015. Nationally results increased by 1 percentage point to 80%. Results at level 4b or above and level 5 or above remained unchanged in 2015 for both Buckinghamshire and England.

Figure 7: Attainment by level in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, Buckinghamshire and England 2012-2015



The proportion of children making expected progress in writing, increased by 2 percentage points to 94% bringing Buckinghamshire in line with national figures. The proportion of children making expected progress in mathematics remained unchanged (90%), while the proportion of children making expected progress in reading fell by 1 percentage point (92%).

Nationally, since 2012 the proportion of children making expected progress in each subject has increased. However there has been little change between 2014 and 2015, with writing the only subject to increase by 1 percentage point.

Table 1 Percentage of pupils making at least two levels of progress: Buckinghamshire 2012-2015

	Buckinghamshire		
	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
2015	92%	94%	90%
2014	93%	92%	90%
2013	90%	90%	88%
2012	91%	90%	88%

Table 2 Percentage of pupils making at least two levels of progress: England 2012-2015

	England		
	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
2015	91%	94%	90%
2014	91%	93%	90%
2013	88%	92%	88%
2012	90%	90%	87%

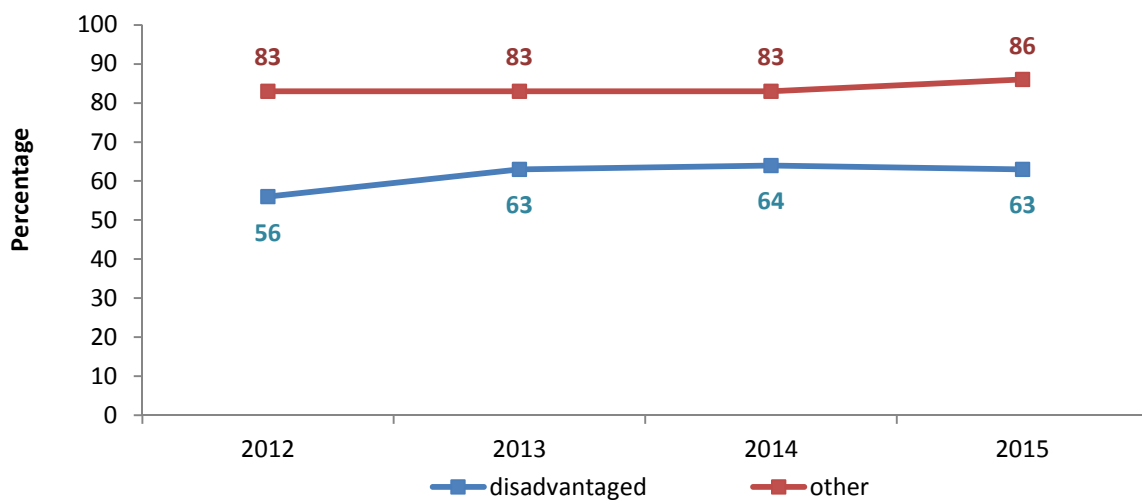
The government's KS2 "floor target" identifies schools which have below 65% achieving L4+ in reading, writing and maths, and are also below the national median (not the mean, as used in other measures) for 2 levels progress in all of reading, writing and maths from KS1. In 2015, the national median levels (middle point of the distribution) for the percentage of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics were 94%, 97% and 93% respectively. The medians for reading and mathematics are unchanged from last year. The median for writing has increased by 1 percentage point.

There are 3 Buckinghamshire schools below the 2015 primary school floor standard. This is an improvement from the 2014 figure of 4 schools. In 2007 when the target was much lower, there were 16 schools below the floor.

The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in Buckinghamshire decreased each year up until 2014, but has increased again in 2015. The gap is 23 percentage points.

Nationally the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others is smaller than in Buckinghamshire, and has decreased in each of the last four years. The current national gap is 15 percentage points.

Figure 8 Attainment at Level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined by disadvantage, Buckinghamshire 2012-2015



Overall performance in Buckinghamshire compares favourably to other Local Authorities. For the key Level 4 or above in reading, writing and mathematics combined measure, Buckinghamshire was ranked 3rd when compared to statistical neighbours and 28th when compared to all Local Authorities in England.

Key Stage 2 - Key areas of focus for Buckinghamshire schools

- Improve progress of pupils from KS1 to KS2 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics so that it is above national.
- Continue to improve the performance of disadvantaged pupils so that they do as well as other pupils.
- Continue to raise standards of underachieving groups.
- Decrease the number of schools judged to be below the Government's floor standards or in danger of being below the three-year coasting standard

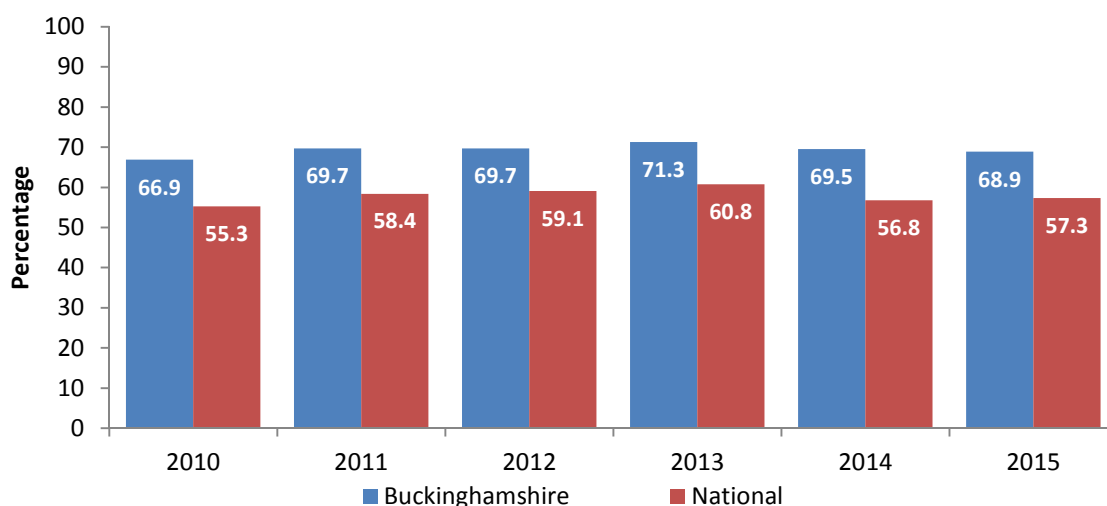
6.10.5 Key Stage 4

Pupils reach the end of key stage 4 in Year 11, typically when they are aged 15. School performance at key stage 4 is measured by exam results in GCSEs and equivalent qualifications, as well as pupil progress from key stage 2 to key stage 4.

There were multiple GCSE methodological changes made in 2014. The Wolf review restricted the qualifications counted, prevented any qualification from counting as larger than one GCSE, and capped the number of non-GCSEs included in performance measures at two per pupil. The early entry policy meant that for exams in English Baccalaureate subjects sat after 29th September 2013 the results from a pupil's first attempt at the exam was counted, rather than their best.

The current headline attainment measure is the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and maths GCSEs. In Buckinghamshire in 2015, 68.9% of pupils achieved this measure. This is a decrease of 0.6 percentage points compared to 2014. Nationally results increased by 0.5 percentage points.

Figure 9 Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent including English and mathematics, Buckinghamshire and England (state-funded schools) 2010-2015



In 2015, 38.2% of pupils in Buckinghamshire schools entered the EBacc, compared to 38.8% of pupils in state-funded schools nationally. In Buckinghamshire entry is down 2 percentage points when compared to 2014, whereas nationally entries were stable and there was no change for state-funded schools.

In Buckinghamshire in 2015, 31.9% of pupils achieved the EBacc, compared to 24.4% of pupils in state-funded schools nationally. Buckinghamshire results have

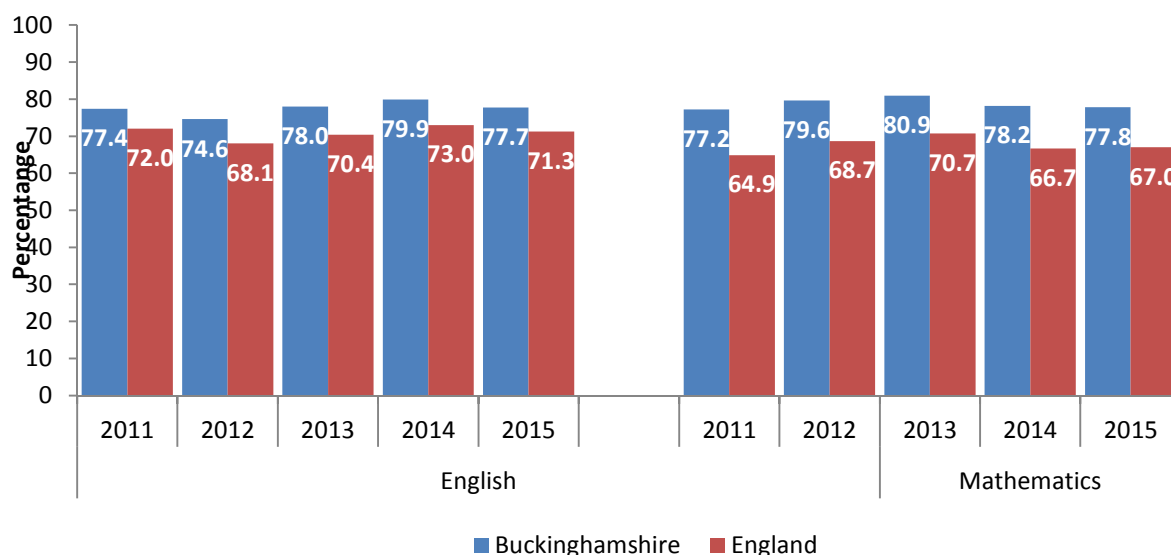
decreased from 33.4% in 2014, whereas nationally results increased slightly (from 22.8% to 24.4%).

Pupils are expected to make the equivalent of at least 3 levels of progress between key stages 2 and 4 – this is the equivalent of moving from a level 4 at key stage 2 to a grade “C” at GCSE. Buckinghamshire 2015 results for the percentage of pupils making expected progress were above national for both English and mathematics. Results in English were lower than in 2014, with English decreasing from 78.7% to 77.7%. Mathematics results increased from 76.9% to 77.8%.

Nationally results (for state-funded schools) have also fallen slightly in English from 71.8% in 2014 to

71.3% in 2015, but have risen in mathematics from 66.6% to 67.0%.

Figure 10 Percentage of pupils making expected progress, Buckinghamshire and England (state-funded schools) 2011-2015



In 2015 schools were assessed against one of two floor standards. All schools had the opportunity to opt in to the Progress 8 measure this year and 11 Buckinghamshire schools chose to do so. These schools were assessed against the Progress 8 floor standard. The remaining 24 Buckinghamshire schools were assessed against the 5+ A*-C and expected progress floor standard (see below), which is the same floor standard as in 2013 and 2014.

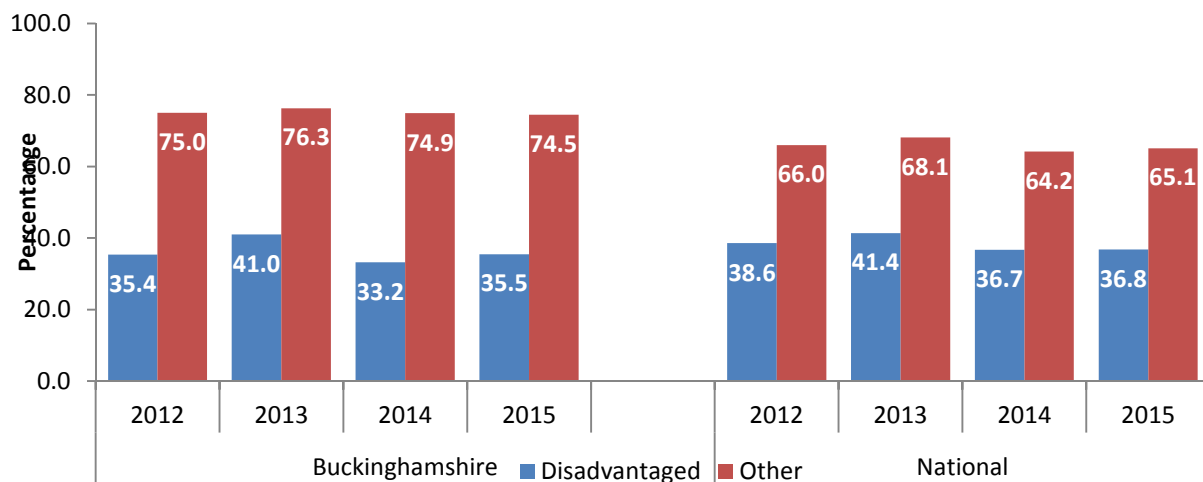
Three Buckinghamshire schools are below the 2015 5+ A*-C and expected progress floor standard, and no schools are below the Progress 8 floor standard. In 2014 there were also 3 Buckinghamshire schools below floor standard.

As in other Key Stages, results were lower for disadvantaged pupils than for non-disadvantaged pupils in Buckinghamshire and gaps were wider than national.

Changes to GCSE measures, as outlined above, have had a greater impact on disadvantaged pupils and a greater effect on these pupils in Buckinghamshire than nationally.

In 2015 the percentage of disadvantaged pupils in Buckinghamshire achieving 5+A*-C including English and mathematics GCSEs has increased by 2.3 percentage points to 35.5%. At the same time attainment for other pupils decreased by 0.4 percentage points, meaning that the attainment gap has improved by 2.7 percentage points; 35.5% of pupils known to be disadvantaged achieved 5+A*-C including English and mathematics compared with 74.5% of all other pupils, making a gap of 39 percentage points.

Figure 11 Attainment at GCSE 5+A*-C including English and mathematics by disadvantage, Buckinghamshire and England (state-funded schools) 2012 – 2015



Nationally the attainment of disadvantaged pupils increased by only 0.1 percentage points, with 36.8% of disadvantaged pupils attaining 5+A*-C including English and mathematics. The national attainment gap increased by 0.8 percentage points in 2015, although it is a lot narrower than in Buckinghamshire at 28.3 percentage points.

Disadvantaged pupils continue to make less progress between KS2 and KS4 than their peers.

- 56% of disadvantaged pupils made expected progress in English compared with 80% of other pupils.
- 49% of disadvantaged pupils made expected progress in mathematics compared with 82% of other pupils.
- Results for disadvantaged pupils in Buckinghamshire are the same as for disadvantaged pupils nationally in English, and are only 1 percentage point behind national for mathematics.

Performance in Buckinghamshire compares favourably to other Local Authorities. For the key 5+A*-C including English and mathematics measure, Buckinghamshire was ranked 1st when compared to statistical neighbours and 6th when compared to all Local Authorities in England.

Key Stage 4 - Key areas of focus for Buckinghamshire schools

- Improve the performance of disadvantaged pupils in the new headline Progress 8 measure so that they do as well as other pupils.
- Improve the performance of underachieving groups in the new headline Progress 8 measure.
- Decrease the number of schools judged to be below the Government’s floor standards or in danger of being below the three-year coasting standard.

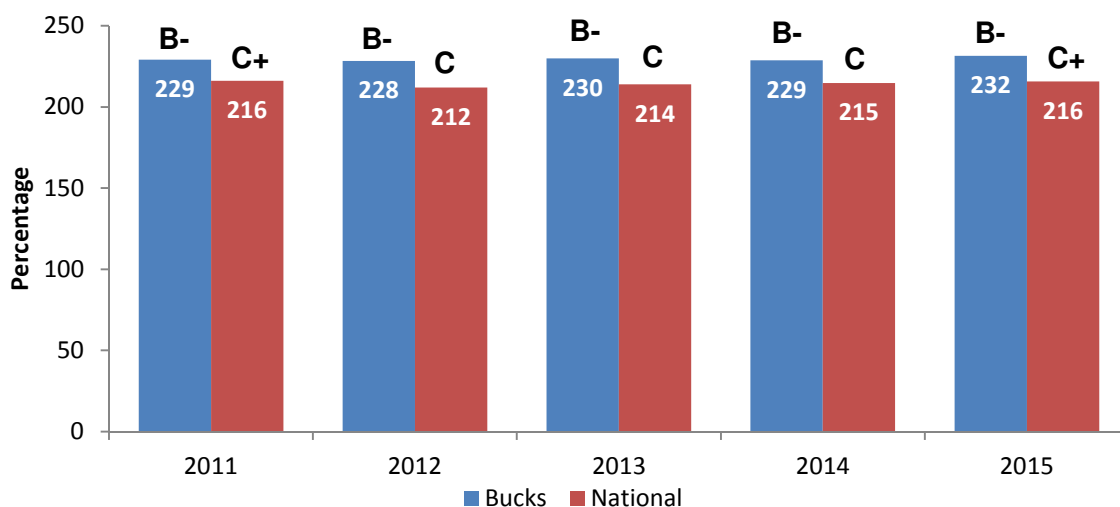
6.10.6 Post-16

6.10.6.1 Key Stage 5

The average point score (APS) per A level entry, expressed as a grade, has been stable for the past five years. It is higher than national at B-, while nationally it has fluctuated between a C and C+ over this period.

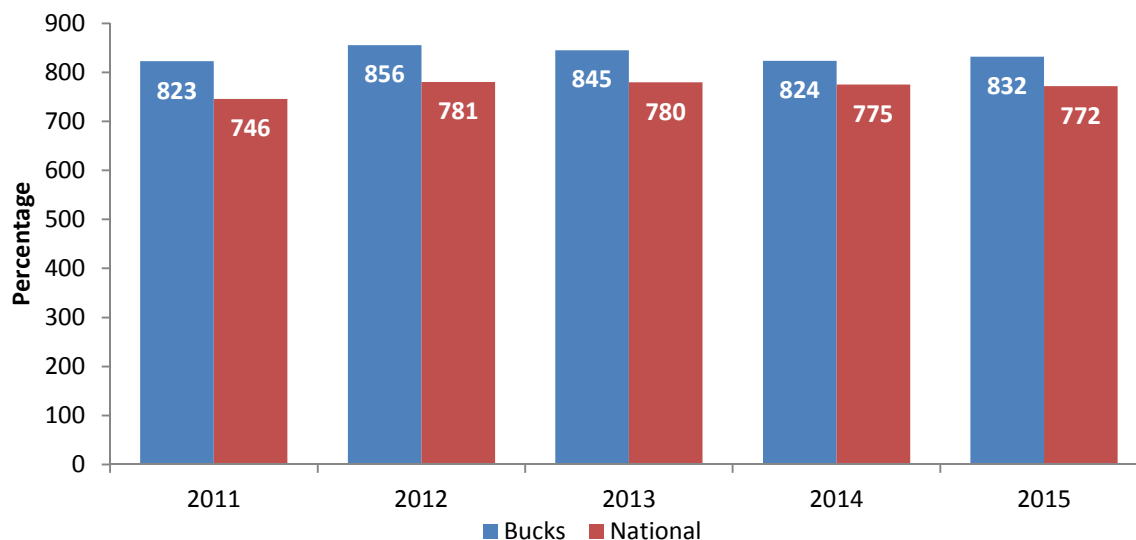
The underlying point score in Buckinghamshire has increased by 3 points since 2014, compared to 1 point nationally.

Figure 12 KS5 Average Point Score per Entry, Buckinghamshire and National 2011-2015



The average point score per student in Buckinghamshire has increased since 2014, whereas national results fell slightly.

Figure 13 KS5 Average Point Score per Student, Buckinghamshire and National 2011-2015



6.10.6.2 6th Form Education – Ofsted Inspections

The majority of students in Buckinghamshire undertake post-16 education in sixth forms. The quality of Sixth Form Provision, from September 2014, is measured by the OFSTED inspection framework with Sixth Forms now receiving an independent judgement. Since the implementation of the new framework, 8 secondary schools have received inspections with 75% of sixth forms receiving good or outstanding judgements, and the remainder (2 schools) judged as requiring improvement.

6.10.6.3 Further Education (FE) Provision

With school sixth forms providing the majority of post-16 provision, Further Education Colleges deliver to only 25% of Buckinghamshire students, compared to 34% nationally. Buckinghamshire does not have any sixth form colleges, although 3% of students' access provision in sixth form colleges in neighbouring authorities.

Currently, three Buckinghamshire post-16 providers are graded as Good and one is graded as Requires Improvement. Review of Ofsted inspection reports identified issues with the delivery of English and Maths tuition and inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning in these institutions.

6.10.6.4 Raising the Participation Age (RPA)

The Raising of the Participation Age requires students completing statutory schooling to continue in education or training until they are aged 18. Education and training is defined as full time Apprenticeship, College courses, School Sixth Form courses and Training Provision. Young people also have the option to become employed, self-employed or undertake voluntary work for 20 hours or more a week, this needs to be combined with part-time education or training for the equivalent of one day per week.

The percentage of young people achieving Raising the Participation Age (RPA) compliance in Year 12 has consistently increased over the past year. Buckinghamshire is well ahead of national and statistical neighbour performance averages.

6.10.6.5 Promoting the effective participation of all 16 to 18 year olds

The local authority promotes the effective participation of all 16 to 18 year olds in education, training or an apprenticeship and works diligently to identify young people who are not participating.

The impact of activity to raise the participation age and to support participation can be clearly seen in the table below, which shows the percentage of students becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) at the end of Year 11. For the past 3 years this percentage has consistently fallen in upper schools where the vast majority of NEET prevention and support work is focused.

Table 3 % NEET of the Year 11 leavers by academic year and school type

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
All Bucks Schools	2.5%	1.7%	1.3%	1.3%
Bucks Grammar Schools	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
Bucks Upper Schools	3.5%	2.6%	1.8%	1.5%

Table 4 shows NEET and Unknowns (those whose destination after leaving school is not known) against national averages. Buckinghamshire has consistently low levels of NEET and Unknowns when compared with national, regional, and statistical neighbour averages.

Table 4 % NEET and Unknowns, Buckinghamshire and England

	% Year 12-14 NEET	National Average % NEET	% Year 12-14 Not Known	National Average % Year 12-14 Not Known
December 2015	2.8	4.2%	2.4%	8.3%

POST-16 - Key areas of focus for Buckinghamshire

- Work to ensure that every sixth form in Buckinghamshire is judged as good or outstanding.
- Support the Area Based Review process and its outcomes to ensure Buckinghamshire residents have access to high quality and sustainable Further Education College provision
- Continue to engage hard to reach parents in Careers, Skills and Participation events to improve outcomes amongst vulnerable and underrepresented groups
- Continued growth in high quality apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities, with particular focus on the most vulnerable
- Improve young people's employability skills and access to work inspiring opportunities
- Embed the new Buckinghamshire Youth Support Services model to reduce duplication and improve outcomes for vulnerable young people
- Work with EFA/SFA to replace and develop alternative post-16 education provision and ensure that the places offered are maintained.

Joanna Preston
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June 2016