

Education in Bedford Borough

Introduction

In Bedford Borough we are ambitious for all our children and young people and believe every child in Bedford Borough deserves an outstanding education. Our aim therefore, is to ensure that through collaboration, all our children and young people have access to and enjoy the very best opportunities, in order that they can realise their true potential and be all that they can be.

We are wholly committed to ensuring all children have the best start in life and are driven to ensuring ambitions of broadening participation, removing the gap and building capacity are realised within our Early Years. We know that economic wellbeing is secured through achieving good qualifications at 16 and 19 and we will work in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure this is realised.

For some cohorts of disadvantaged children and young people it is important to remove barriers to engagement in all learning activities. Use of the pupil premium for Free School Meals pupils and Looked after Children should support access to social and cultural opportunities as well as securing progress and attainment that matches their peers.

Five priorities have been identified through data analysis and by using local intelligence and then were shared with stakeholder as part of a wide consultation process in order to garner their views. These priorities are the focus of the School Improvement Strategy and build on the work currently being undertaken around establishing and embedding the offer to, and work in, schools and settings as part of the implementation of the Early Help Strategy. The realisation of these priorities will also ensure enhanced outcomes for all children.

1. To increase the number of schools judged to be Outstanding and rapidly move any Requires Improvement and Inadequate schools to Good.
2. To accelerate progress and attainment of vulnerable groups.
3. To raise achievement in all phases so that standards are above national and statistical neighbour averages.
 - To raise achievement in the Early Years.
 - To increase the levels of progress from KS1 to KS2.
 - To raise achievement at KS4.
 - To raise achievement at KS5.
4. To support key stakeholders in devising and implementing a strategy for recruitment and retention of outstanding practitioners at all levels.
5. To implement a high quality Early Help strategy.

Changes to the School system

Bedford Borough is currently a 3 tier school system. From September 2017 Bedford Borough will commence the transition from 3 tier to 2 tier education. This is an investment of £48m and supports all schools of all types, including academies. The system will move towards a Primary Secondary model in accordance with the majority of the country. This change will have a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people in many ways for example by clarifying the accountability of schools at Key Stage 2.

Facts, Figures, Trends

Every child in Bedford Borough deserves an outstanding education. Our aim is to ensure that all our children and young people enjoy the very best education and that everyone has the opportunity to realise their true potential.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

As set out in The Children and Families Act 2014 and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 0 – 25, 2014, which is interlinked with the Equality Act 2010, the process as to how children with SEND are categorised in school has changed.

For those children with SEN or disabilities who do not need an EHC plan, the government introduced SEN Support, this new category replaces School Action and School Action Plus. Schools and nurseries work with parents and/or carers, agreeing:

- the level support to be provided;
- the expected outcomes;
- the additional resources the school will access if required.

Finally, parent and/or carers and the school will set clear targets in order to measure the impact of this intervention on the outcomes for the child. School pupils and those accessing Early Years provision categorised as School Action/ School Action Plus had to be transferred to the new SEN Support category by the end of the September 2015. The new SEN Support category impacts on children and young people's school life as the intervention that follows should be part of a whole school graduated response to meeting the needs of all pupils. Plans are created meaning that earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised, leading to a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes.

Since January 2011 the number of pupils with SEN in Bedford Borough has reduced from 5,170 to 3,748 with numbers decreasing four years out of the last five. This information is key to forming an accurate SEN strategy for children and young people as the needs of the local area determine the provision that is commissioned.

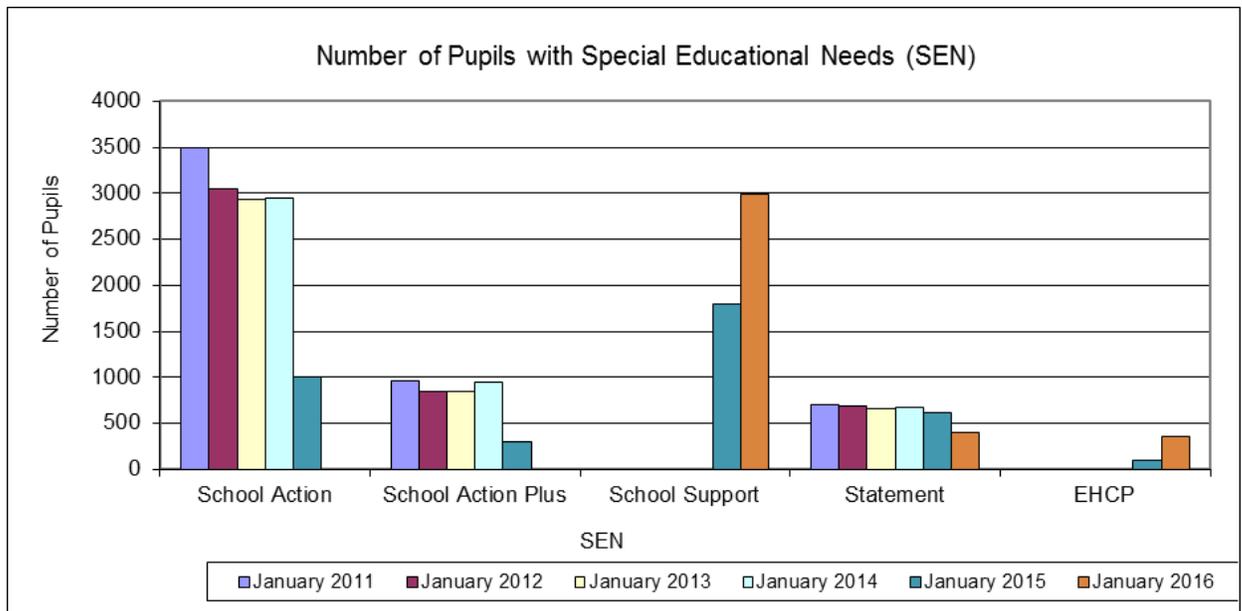


Table 1: Number of Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

	January 2011	January 2012	January 2013	January 2014	January 2015	January 2016
School Action	3499	3041	2934	2943	1000	
School Action Plus	963	849	852	951	296	
School Support					1799	2985
Statement	708	684	658	676	617	405
Education Health and Care Plan					104	358
Total	5170	4574	4444	4570	3816	3748

Source: Local School Census January 2011-2016

Graph 1:



Source: Local school census January 2016

Children with Education, Health and Care Plans/Statements of SEN by Type of Need

The following table lists the specific types of Special Educational Need that children with statements and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) have. It should be noted that they are listed by their Primary Need; some children will have more than one Special Educational Need. In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014 and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 0 – 25, 2014, all statements will be converted to EHCPs by July 2018.

Table 2: Children with EHCP/Statements of SEN by Primary Need

Code	Description	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	131	130	132	142	171	176

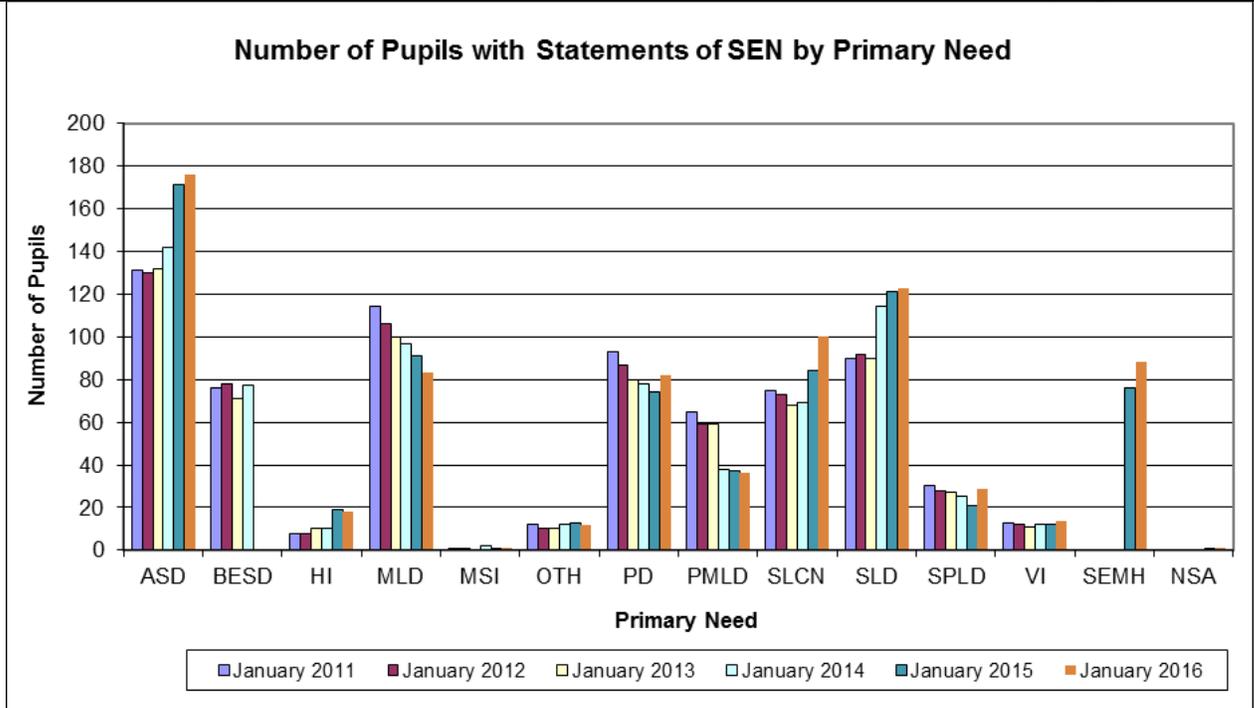


BESD	Behaviour, Emotional & Social Difficulties	76	78	71	77		
HI	Hearing Impairment	8	8	10	10	19	18
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty	114	106	100	97	91	83
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment	1	1	0	2	1	1
OTH	Other	12	10	10	12	13	12
PD	Physical Disability	93	87	80	78	74	82
PMLD	Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty	65	59	59	38	37	36
SLCN	Speech, Language & Communications Needs	75	73	68	69	84	100
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty	90	92	90	114	121	123
SPLD	Specific Learning Difficulty	30	28	27	25	21	29
VI	Visual Impairment	13	12	11	12	12	14
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health					76	88
NSA	Need Special Assistance					1	1
	Total with Statements	708	684	658	676	721	763

Source: Local School Census January 2016

The number of EHCP/statemented children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has grown over a four year period and in order to address this need Bedford Borough Council has developed and extended local provision to meet this need across all age ranges. The numbers of children with EHCP/statements for Severe Learning Difficulties has also grown over the past two years; as a direct result of this information, Bedford Borough Council is working with local providers and the Department of Education in order to identify how to meet this need. Numbers in the new category of Social, Emotional and Mental Health, is the third area that has continued to rise. The local authority is working with all key stakeholders in order to identify this need and has secured funding to open two new provisions, one primary and one secondary provision, to support the growth in need. The numbers of children with EHCP/statements for Moderate Learning Difficulty has continued to decrease. As the numbers have not increased, we have not sought to change the number or type of special school places.

Graph 2:



Source: Local School Census January 2016

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are reported via the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. The key measure is the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD). Children are defined as having reached a good level of development at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved at least the expected level in:

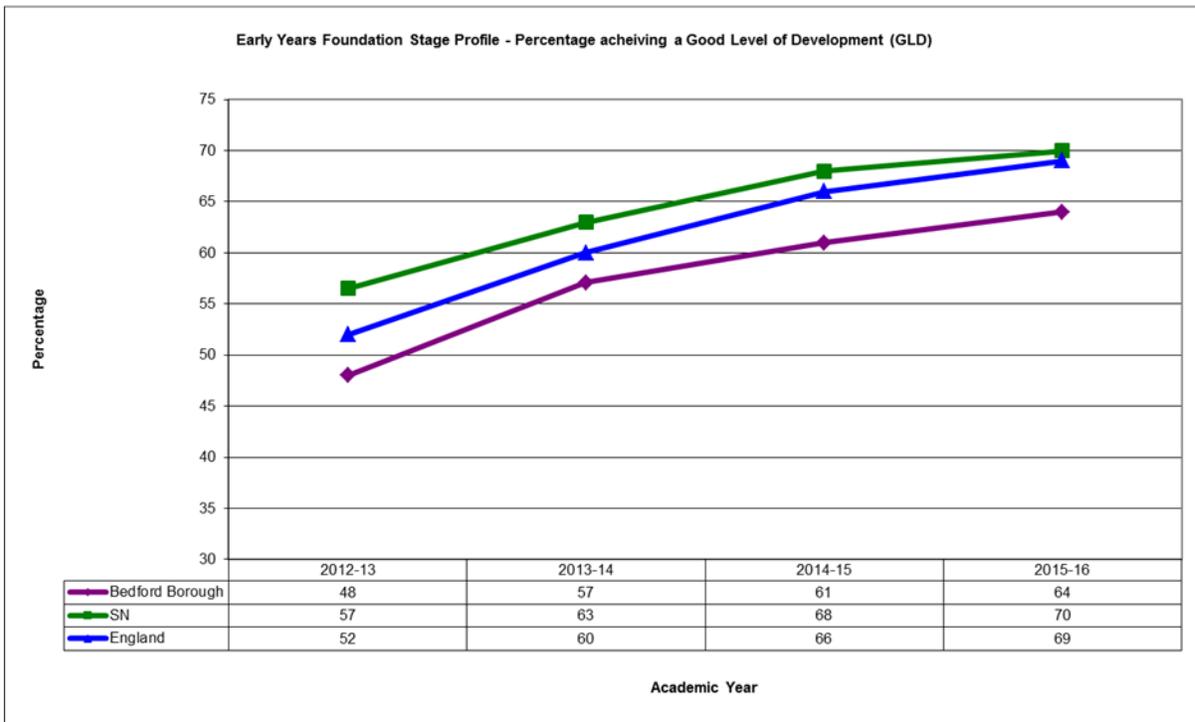
- The early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language)
- The early learning goals in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

The percentage of children in the Borough achieving a Good Level of Development was 64%. A rise of 3% from the previous year (61%) and the third annual rise in a row. In comparison, in England this percentage was 69% and in the Statistical Neighbours it was 70%.

The focus in Early Years Foundation Stage is to close the gap against national, as although there has been annual rises in outcomes, the gap between children in Bedford against national remains at 5%. In order to achieve this, the School Improvement Team is working closely with settings to ensure a high standard of practice in assessment and moderation to certify the accuracy and robustness of progress. Additionally, it provides support to schools and settings to identify new models of assessment as well as supporting developments in Language, Literacy and Mathematics.



Graph 3:

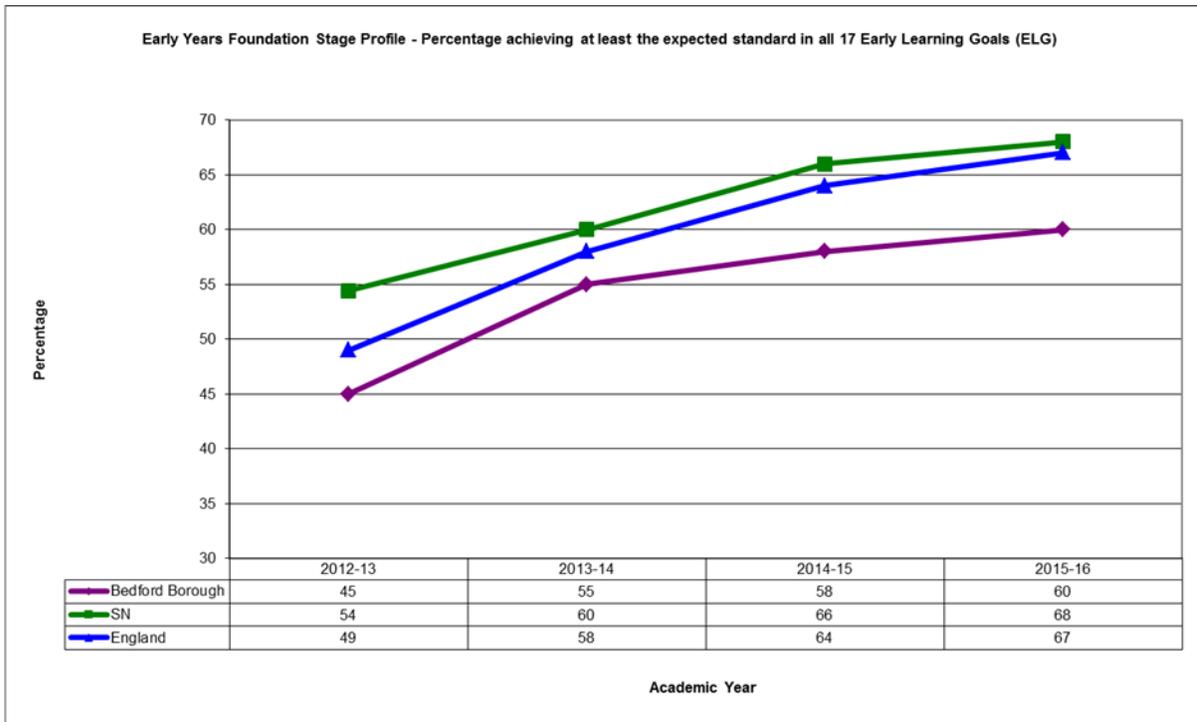


Source: SFR Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Results 2015/16. Published 20.11.16

60% of children in Bedford Borough achieved the expected standard in all 17 of the Early Learning Goals. This is a rise of 2% from the previous year (58%) and is also the third annual rise in a row. In comparison, in England this percentage was 67% and in the Statistical Neighbours it was 68%.



Graph 4:



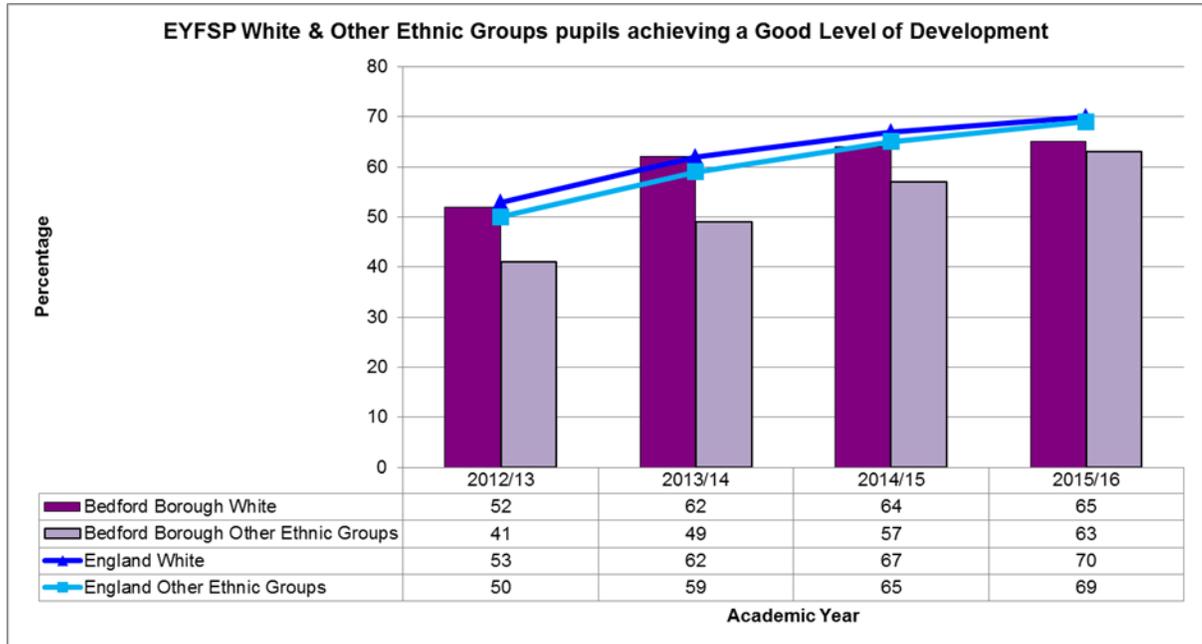
Source: SFR Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Results 2015/16. Published 20.11.16

Ethnicity

In terms of ethnic groups in Bedford Borough achieving a Good Level of Development, white pupils performed better than the other ethnic groups pupils, 65% to 63% respectively. However schools in Bedford Borough have been working hard to close this gap and have successfully reduced it from 13% in 2013/14 to 2% in 2015/16. The gap nationally is now 1%.



Graph 5:



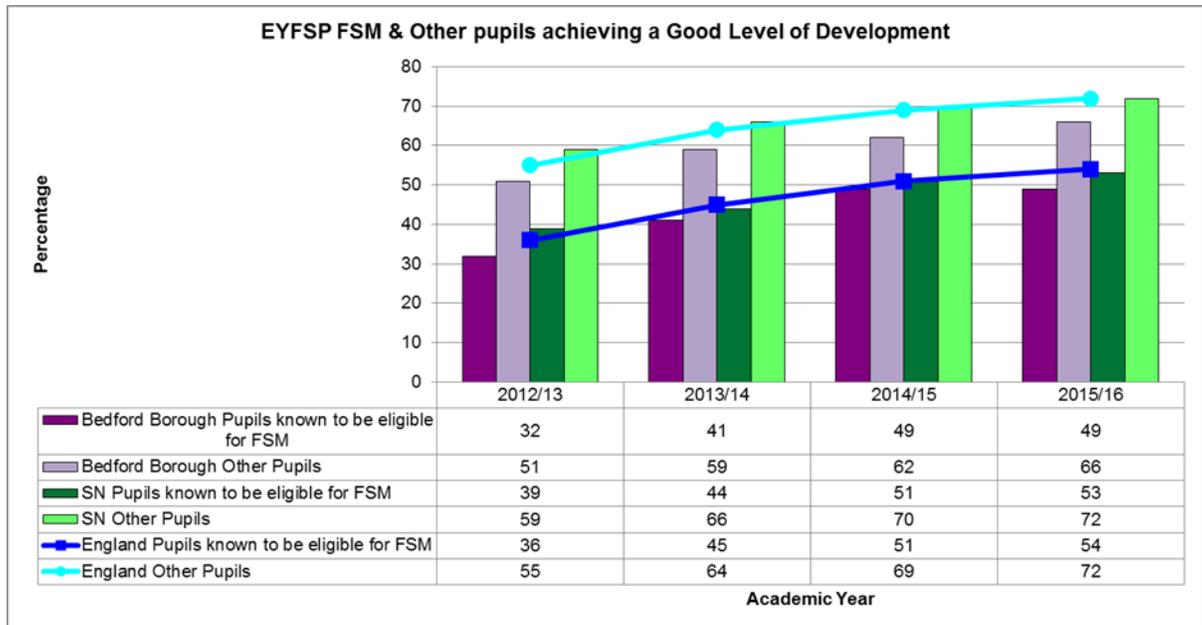
Source: SFR Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Results 2015/16. Published 20.11.16

Attainment Gap between Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their peers in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In the EYFS, Bedford Borough has a gap in the attainment levels of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals and those who are not. The gap between FSM pupils and other pupils achieving a Good Level of Development is 17% (49% to 66% respectively). This has grown from 13% in 2014/15. Whilst attainment in Statistical Neighbouring Local Authorities is higher, the attainment gap between these two groups in Bedford Borough is smaller. The attainment gap for the Statistical Neighbours is 19%. This is also the case when comparing the attainment gap in Bedford Borough to the national gap, nationally the gap is 18%.



Graph 6:



Source: SFR Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Results 2015/16. Published 20.11.16

Key Stage 1:

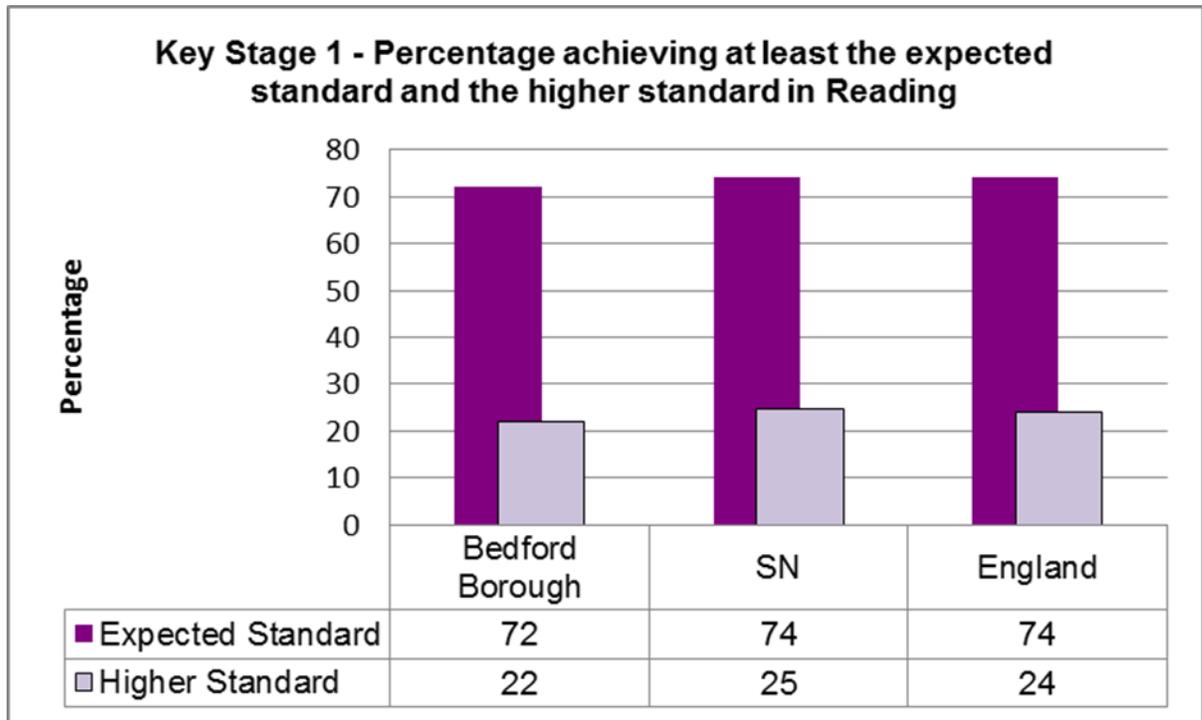
How the government reports achievement at the end of Key Stage 1 (7 years of age) has changed. This is the first year where outcomes are reported in terms of the percentage of children meeting the expected standard and higher standard whereas previously all results would be reported in levels.

- The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level and above for reading was 72% and national was 74%
- The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level and above for writing was the same as national at 65%
- The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level and above for maths was 71% and national was 73%

The School Improvement Team continues to work with all schools in order to provide and broker, continual support across the year to support schools to implement high quality curriculums that engage pupils as well as support with ensuring accurate assessment as schools implement assessment without levels.

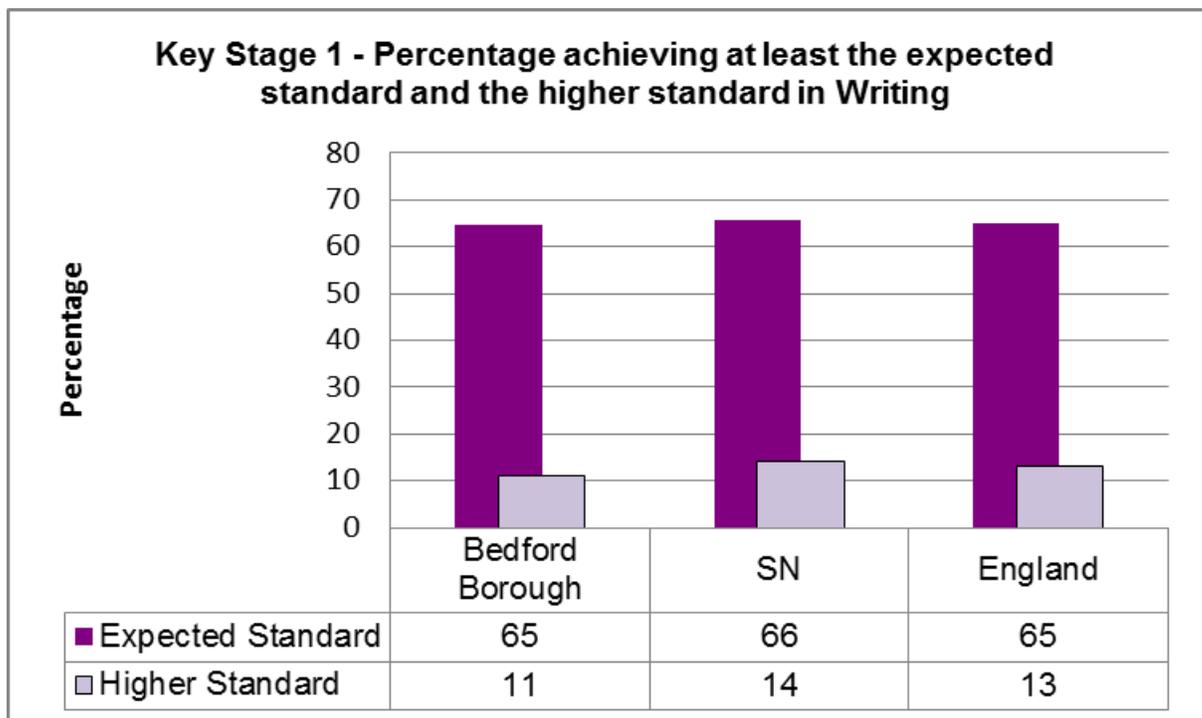


Graph 7:



Source: SFR Phonics Screening Check and Key Stage 1 Assessments England 2016 (provisional). Published 29.09.16

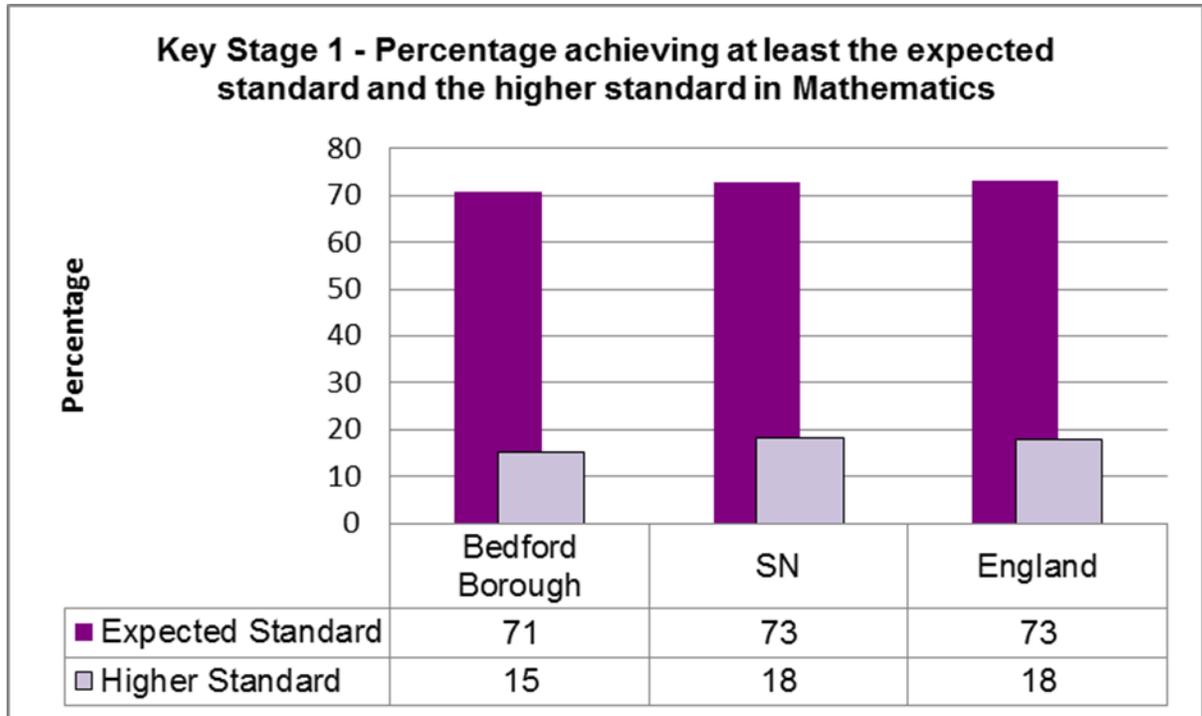
Graph 8:





Source: SFR Phonics Screening Check and Key Stage 1 Assessments England 2016 (provisional). Published 29.09.16

Graph 9:



Source: SFR Phonics Screening Check and Key Stage 1 Assessments England 2016 (provisional). Published 29.09.16

Key Stage 2

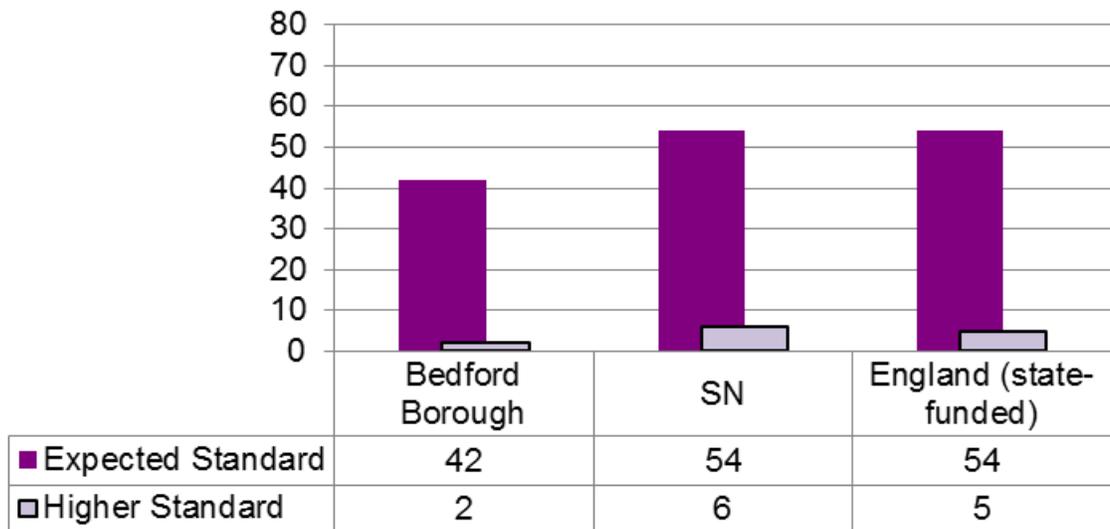
How the government reports achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 (11 years of age) has changed. This is the first year where outcomes are reported in terms of the percentage of children meeting the expected standard and higher standard whereas previously all results would be reported in levels.

The percentage of pupils in the Borough achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths was 42%. In comparison, achievement in both England (state funded) and the Statistical Neighbours was 54%. The percentage of pupils in the Borough achieving the higher standard in Reading, Writing and Maths was 2%. In comparison, achievement in both England (state funded) and the Statistical Neighbours was 5% and 6% respectively.

Graph 10:



KS2 - Percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard & achieving a higher standard in Reading, Writing & Maths



Source: SFR National curriculum assessments: key stage 2, 2016 (revised). Published 15.12.16

Gender

In this first year of the new reporting system, girls performed better than boys at the expected standard, 46% compared to 39% respectively. This is mirrored both nationally and in terms of our Statistical Neighbours. However both girls and boys in Bedford Borough underachieved when compared to their peers in terms of Statistical Neighbours, 58% and 51%, and nationally, 58% and 50% respectively.

In terms of achieving the higher standard, boys and girls achieved at the same rate, 2%. Again, this is mirrored both nationally and in terms of our Statistical Neighbours. However both girls and boys in Bedford Borough underachieved when compared to their peers in terms of Statistical Neighbours, 6% and 5%, and nationally, 6% and 5% respectively.

Table 4: KS2 - Percentage of Pupils reaching the expected standard & achieving the higher standard in Reading, Writing & Mathematics by Gender 2015/16

	Number of Eligible pupils			Percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard			Percentage of pupils reaching a higher standard		
	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls
Bedford	1933	1007	926	42	39	46	2	2	2
Statistical Neighbours				54	51	58	6	5	6
SN Rank				11	11	11	11	10	11
England (state-funded)				54	50	58	5	5	6
England (ALL)				53	50	57	5	5	6

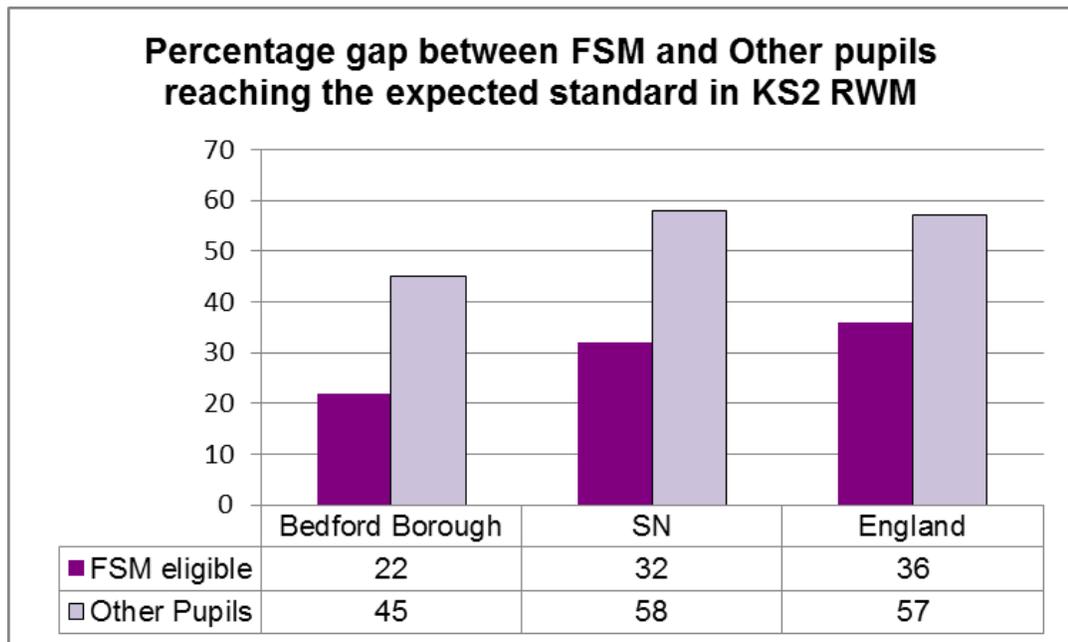


East of England				53	49	57	6	5	6
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Attainment Gap between Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their peers at Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, Bedford Borough has a gap in the attainment levels of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals and those who are not (NI 102a). Under the new reporting system, the gap between FSM pupils and other pupils achieving the expected standard is 23% (22% to 45% respectively). Whilst attainment in Statistical Neighbouring Local Authorities is higher, the attainment gap between these two groups in Bedford Borough is smaller. The attainment gap for the Statistical Neighbours is 26%. Whereas the national attainment gap is smaller than that of Bedford Borough, 21%.

Graph 11:

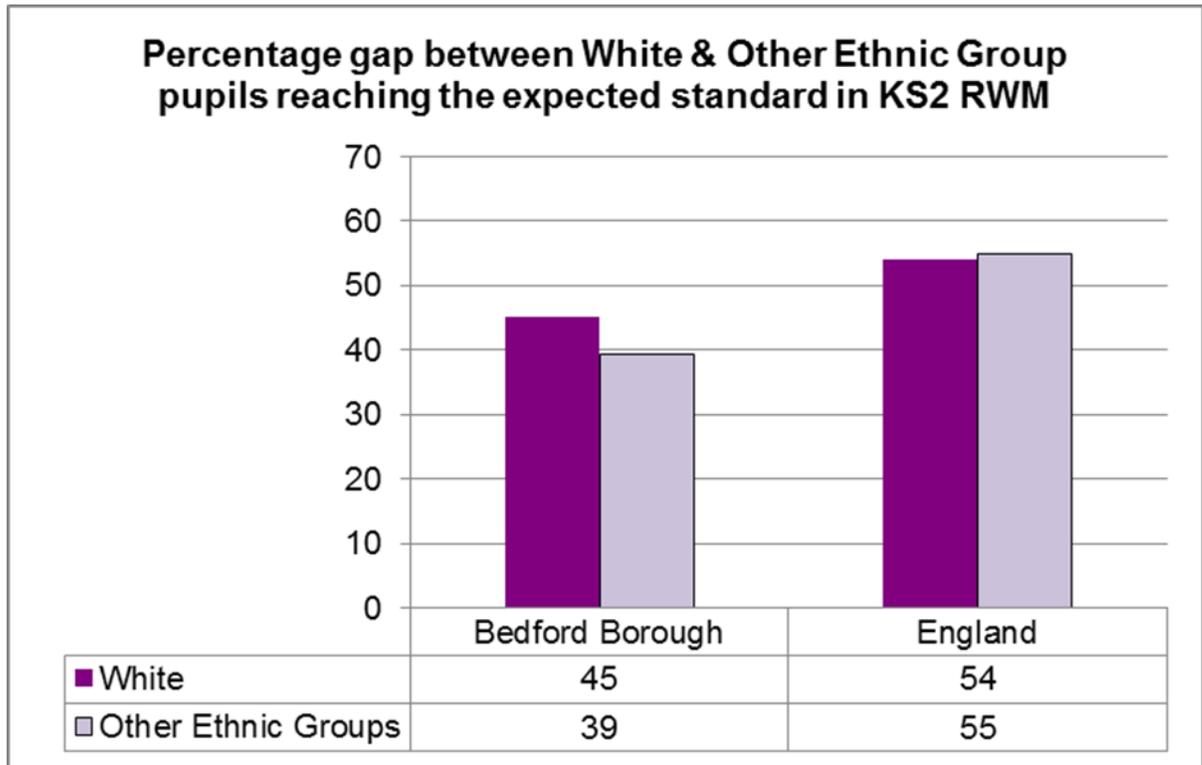


SFR National Curriculum Assessments : Key Stage 2 2016 (Revised). Published 15.12.16

Ethnicity

In this first year of the new reporting system, white pupils performed better than the other ethnic groups pupils at the expected standard, 45% to 39% respectively. This is mirrored both nationally. However the both white pupils and other ethnic groups underachieved when compared to their peers nationally, 55% to 54% respectively. Furthermore, the achievement gap between the groups is wider in Bedford Borough, 6% than it is nationally, 1%.

Graph 12:

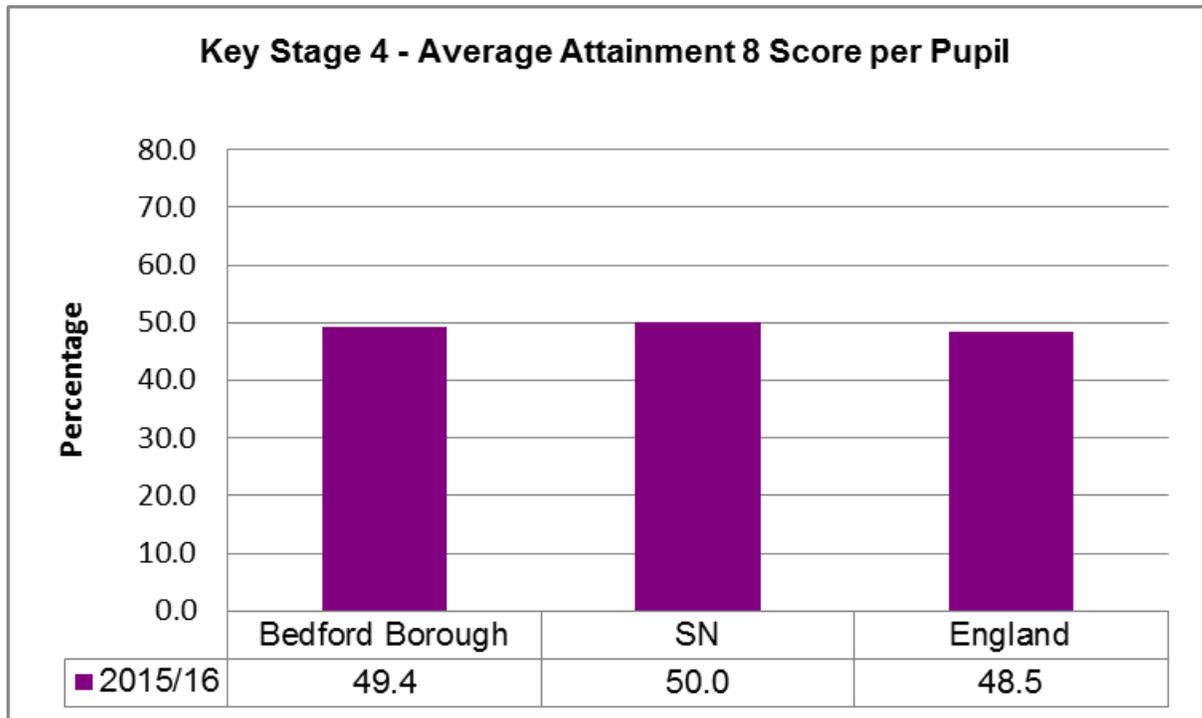


Source: SFR National curriculum assessments: key stage 2, 2016 (revised). Published 15.12.16

Bedford Borough Council aims to ensure that all our children and young people enjoy the very best education and that everyone has the opportunity to realise their true potential. Therefore closing achievement gaps for all vulnerable groups whilst raising outcomes for all is a key priority. In order to achieve this, a dedicated improvement plan focusing on raising standards at Key Stage Two has been written. This plan was written in consultation with all key stakeholders and is monitored regularly to ensure the actions are impacting positively on the achievement of the young people in Bedford.



Graph 13:



Source: SFR Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015 to 2016 (19.01.17).

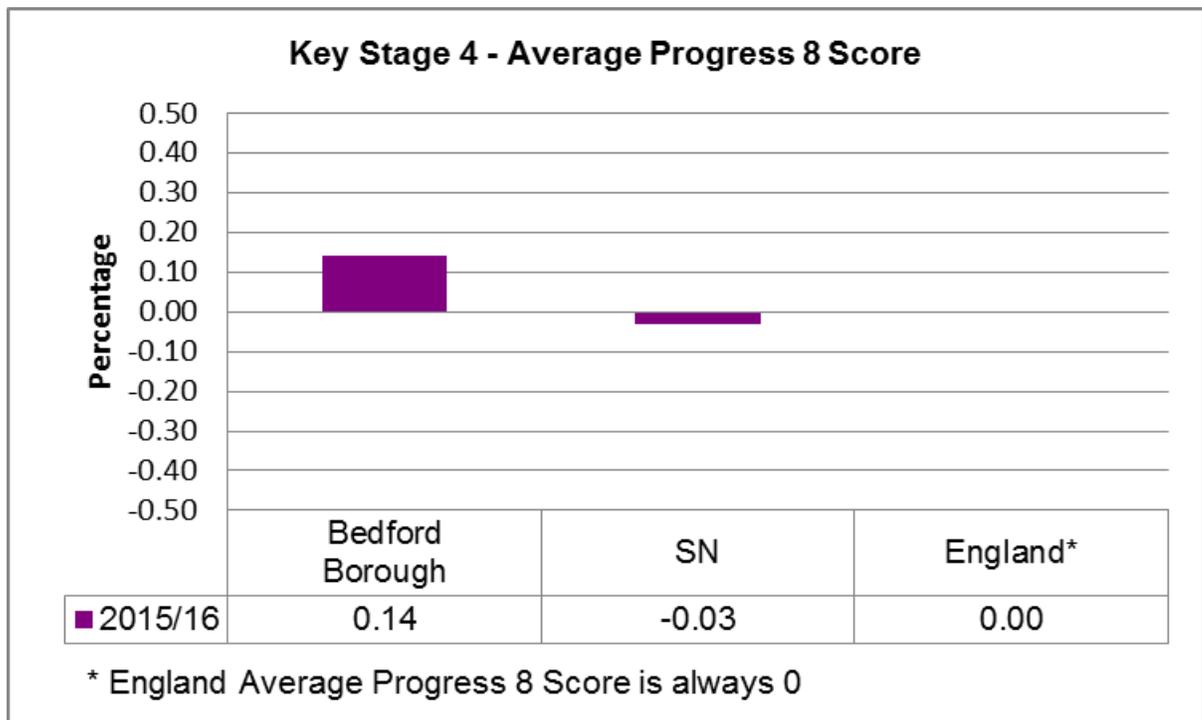
Progress 8 is a new measure which aims to capture the progress a student makes from the end of primary school to the end of secondary school. It is a type of value added measure, which means that students' results are compared to the actual achievements of other students with the same prior attainment. As with Attainment 8, Progress 8 is based on a range of subjects. These subjects are defined as: English; mathematics; three other English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects (sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages); and three further subjects, which can be from the range of EBacc subjects, or can be any other approved, high-value arts, academic, or vocational qualification.

A school's Progress 8 score is calculated as the average of its students' Progress 8 scores. A score below zero means pupils made less progress, on average, than pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

As can be seen from the table below, the Progress 8 score for Bedford Borough is 0.14, which is above the national score of 0.00 and the Statistical Neighbour score of -0.03. This means that students in Bedford Borough, with the same prior attainment, make more progress than their peers nationally and in terms of Statistical Neighbour Local Authorities.



Graph 14:



Source: SFR Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015 to 2016 (19.01.17).

Gender

Under the new Attainment 8 measure, girls (51.5 points) outperformed boys (47.3 points). Girls achieve higher scores than boys nationally and in terms of Statistical Neighbours. When focusing on the new Progress 8 measure, again, girls make more progress from their KS2 results than boys. Girls in Bedford Borough achieved more than a quarter grade more than their peers nationally with the same prior attainment, whereas boys achieved in line with their peers nationally.

Table 4a : KS4 – Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores by Gender

	Number of Eligible pupils			Attainment 8 Score			Progress 8 Score		
	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls
Bedford	1862	942	920	49.4	47.3	51.5	0.14	0	0.28
Statistical Neighbours				50.0	47.7	52.5	-0.03	-0.18	0.11
SN Rank				5	5	5	1	1	1
England (state-funded)				50.1	47.8	52.4	-0.03	-0.17	0.11
England (ALL)*				48.5	46.0	51.1	.	.	.
East of England				50.4	48.2	52.6	0.03	-0.10	0.16

*National (England - ALL) Progress 8 figure is always 0.00.

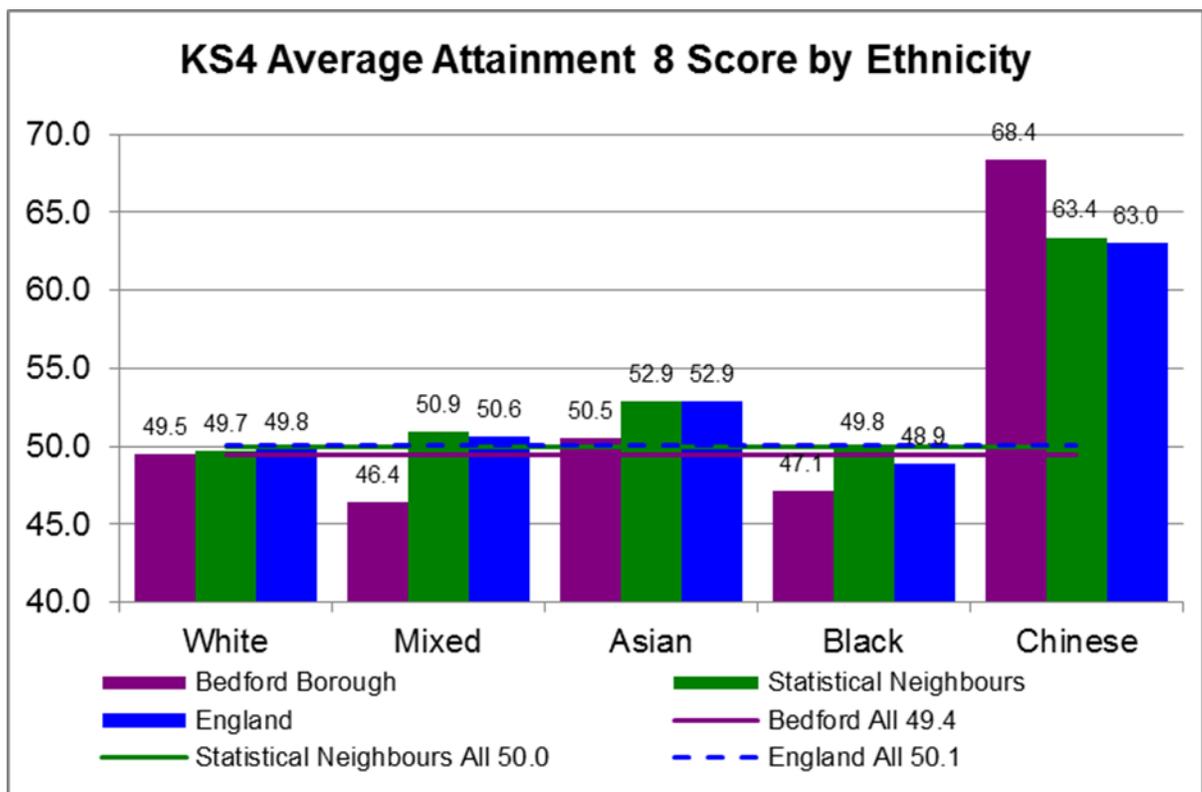


Ethnicity

Attainment 8 scores identify those students that identify as mixed and those who identify as Black in Bedford Borough underachieve when compared to their peers nationally and in terms of Statistical Neighbours. They also underachieve when compared to their peers in Bedford Borough. Chinese students outperform all ethnic groups, however in Bedford Borough, their numbers are low.

In terms of Progress 8, all ethnic groups in Bedford Borough achieve a positive score, meaning that students in Bedford Borough make more progress than their peers nationally based on their KS2 results. All progress scores are higher than national and Statistical Neighbours.

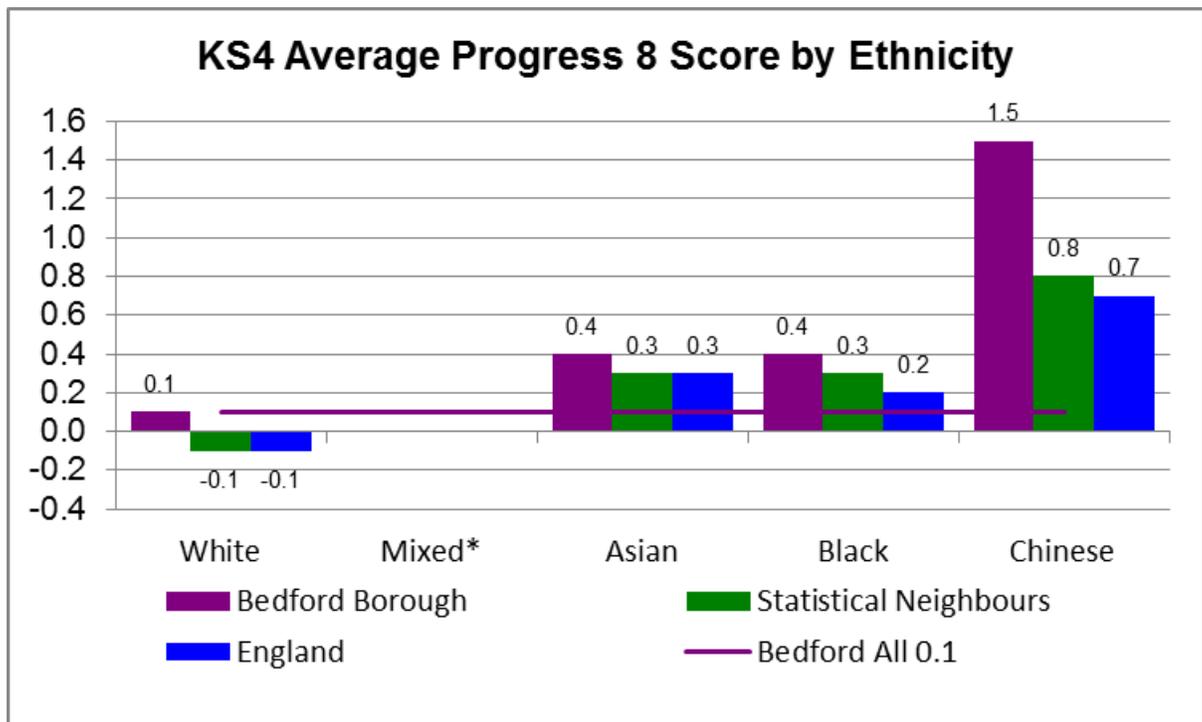
Graph 15:



Source: SFR Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015 to 2016 (19.01.17).



Graph 16:



Attainment Gap between Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their peers at Key Stage 4

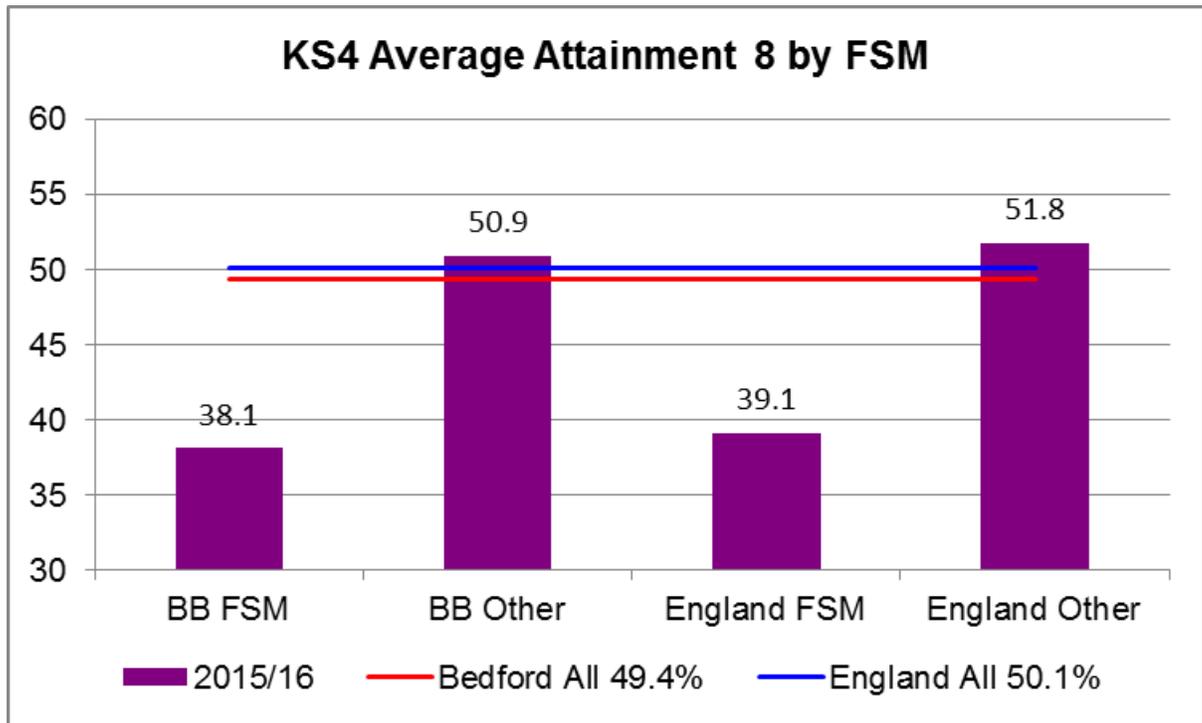
At Key Stage 4, Bedford Borough has an attainment gap between the attainment levels of students who are eligible for Free School Meals and those who are not (NI 102b).

Attainment 8 scores identify those students who access Free School Meals attained 12.7 points less than their other peers locally. In terms of nationally, the gap was 12.8 points.

Whilst Progress 8 scores for other students in Bedford Borough are positive, meaning students have achieved higher than their peers nationally with the same prior attainment, scores for Free School Meals students are negative. This means that in Bedford Borough, students who access Free School Meals achieve less well than their peers nationally with the same prior attainment. Nationally, the Progress score for students accessing Free School Meals is lower than that of Bedford Borough's.

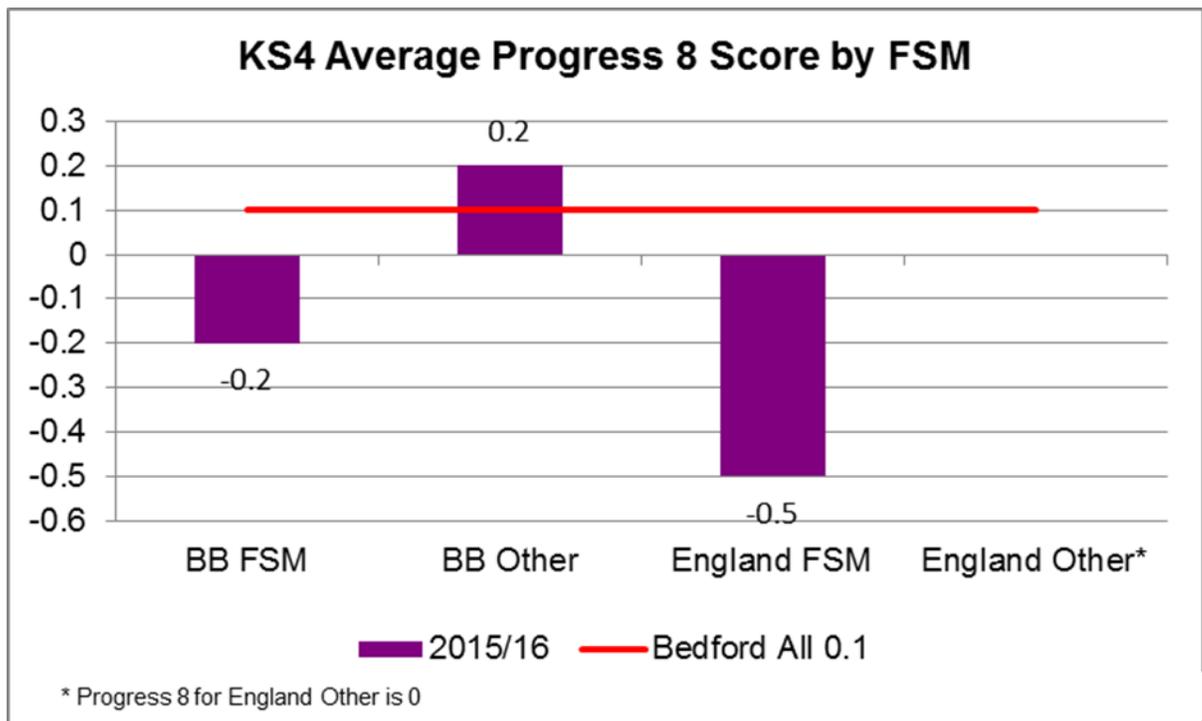


Graph 17:



Source: SFR Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015 to 2016 (19.01.17).

Graph 18:



Source: SFR Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015 to 2016 (19.01.17).



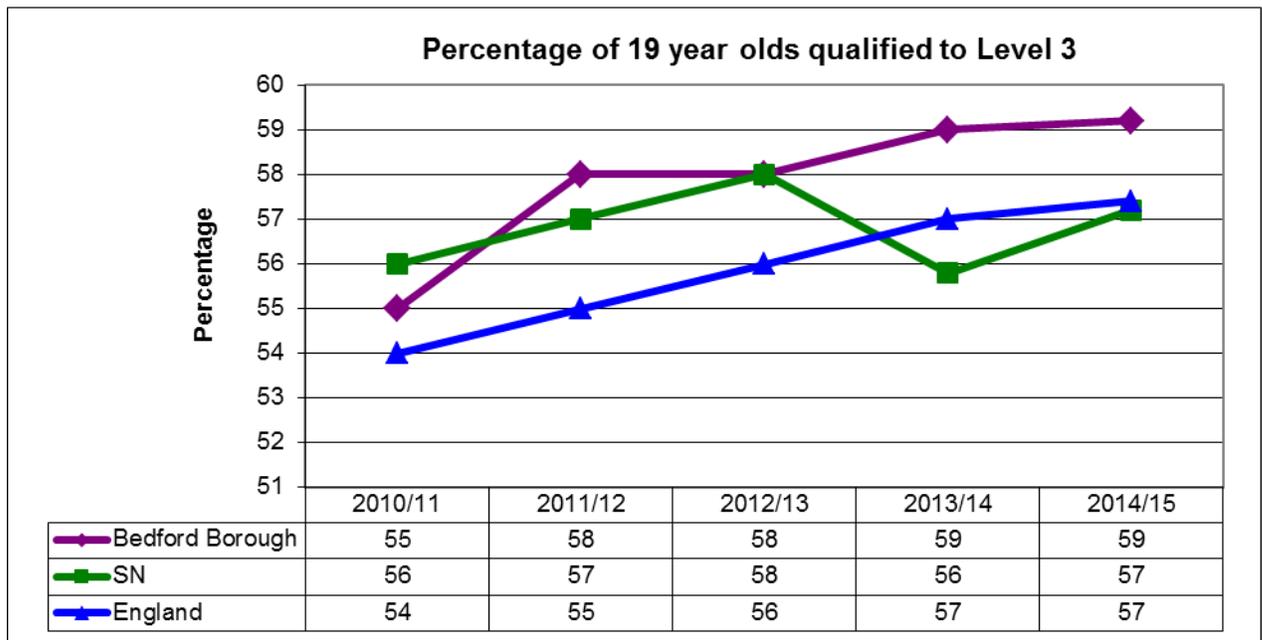
Attainment and Progress in Bedford Borough at Key Stage 4 has improved locally and when compared to national as evidenced in the graphs above. However there is still work to be done. Underperformance of vulnerable groups and gaps in achievement are being addressed through a comprehensive improvement plan, created in line with the Key Stage 2 plan, utilising the stakeholder opinion and expertise to strengthen school to school improvement.

Achievement of a Level 3 Qualification by the Age of 19

This is the proportion of people studying in a local authority at the age of 16 that reach the NVQ level 3¹ by the age of 19.

Bedford Borough has a higher proportion reaching this level than both England and our Statistical Neighbours. Attainment at this level has increased 4% over the last four years and remains 2% higher than Statistical Neighbours and the England averages in 2014/15. Attainment at level 3 is a very strong indicator of future economic wellbeing.

Graph 19:



Source: SFR Level 2 and 3 attainment by young people aged 19 in 2015 07.04.2016 Table 18a
Please note figures for 2015/16 are not available until Spring 2017

1

This is a range of academic and vocational qualifications deemed equivalent to 2 A Levels.



Number and Proportion of the Population by Educational Level (NVQ equivalent)

More further information link to **Employment and Income** chapter

Primary and Secondary School exclusions

Table 5: Permanent Exclusions in Primary Schools as a percentage of the school population

	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population
Bedford Borough	0	0	5	0.05	6	0.06	x	x	x	x
England	610	0.01	690	0.02	670	0.02	870	0.02	920	0.02

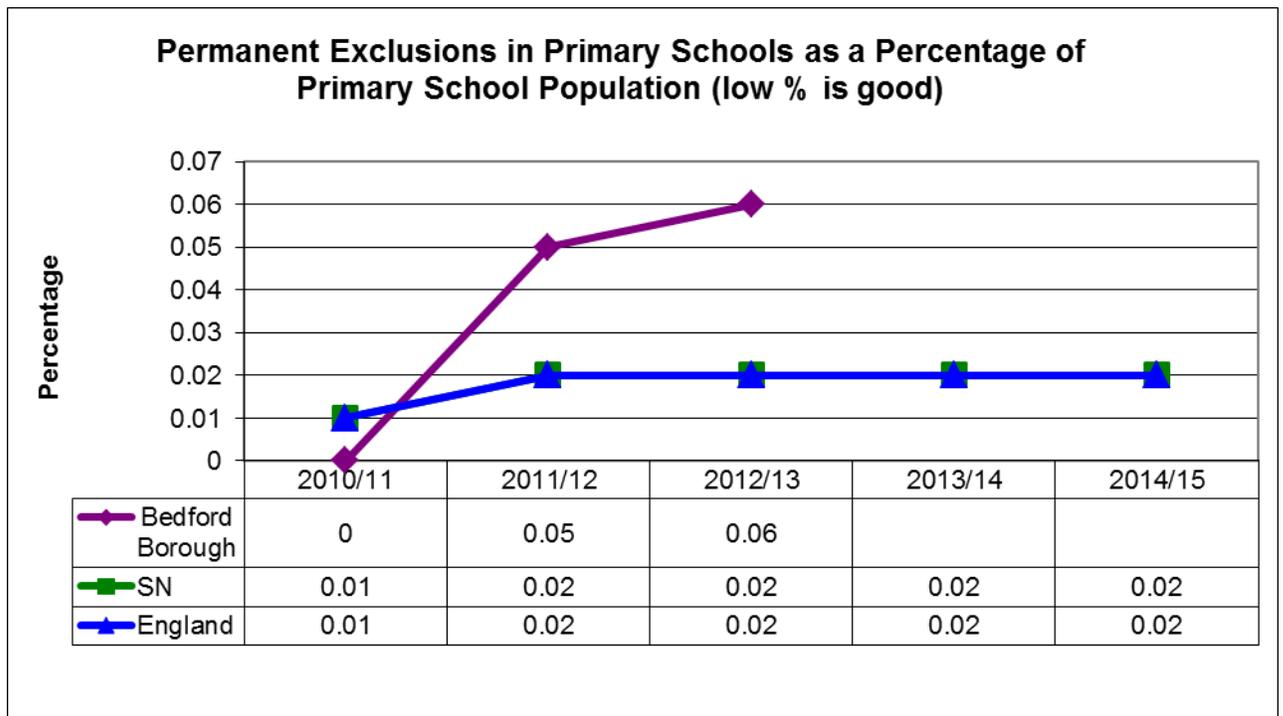
Source: SFR Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2014-2015 21.07.16 Table 16

x = figures suppressed to maintain confidentiality

There have been relatively high numbers of permanent exclusions from primary schools in the recent past in the Borough, with six in 2012/13 (0.06% of the school population). This was significantly higher than the England average (0.02% of the population). However these figures dramatically reduced in 2013/14 and 2014/15 and are now suppressed in order to maintain confidentiality. We know that pupils who are permanently excluded are significantly more likely to be excluded for second time or not be returned to mainstream education. This has not become a trend as figures in 2013/14 have been suppressed due to low numbers and to ensure confidentiality meaning that there has been a reduction from 2012/13.



Graph 20:



Source: SFR Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2014-2015 21.07.16 Table 16

Please note that Bedford Borough figures for 2014/15 are suppressed due to low numbers and to ensure confidentiality.

Table 6: Fixed Term Exclusions in Primary Schools as a percentage of the school population

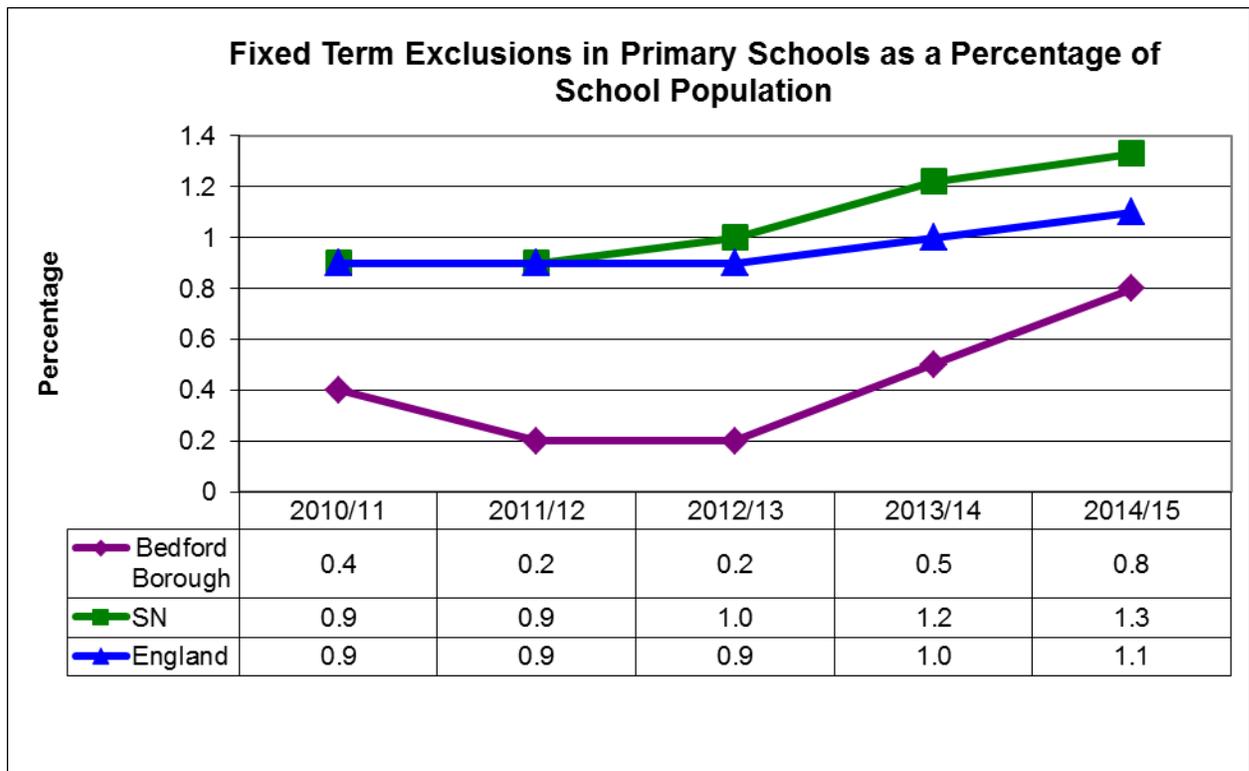
	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population
Bedford Borough	36	0.4	22	0.2	26	0.2	61	0.5	98	0.8
England	37790	0.9	37790	0.9	37870	0.9	45010	1.0	49650	1.1

Source: SFR Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2014-2015 21.07.16 Table 16

The number of Fixed Term Exclusions rose from 26 in 2012/13 to 61 in 2013/14 and again in 2014/15 to 98. This represents 0.8% of the school population. Although this is much lower than in England and against our Statistical Neighbours it is still a concerning trend. The Early Help Strategy is working to address to ensure that the right support is given to children at the right time to support ensure they remain positively engaged in education. However from the graph below, increases in the number of Fixed Term Exclusions in Bedford Borough are mirrored nationally.



Graph 21:



Source: SFR Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2014-2015 21.07.16 Table 16

Table 7: Permanent Exclusions in Secondary Schools as a percentage of the school population

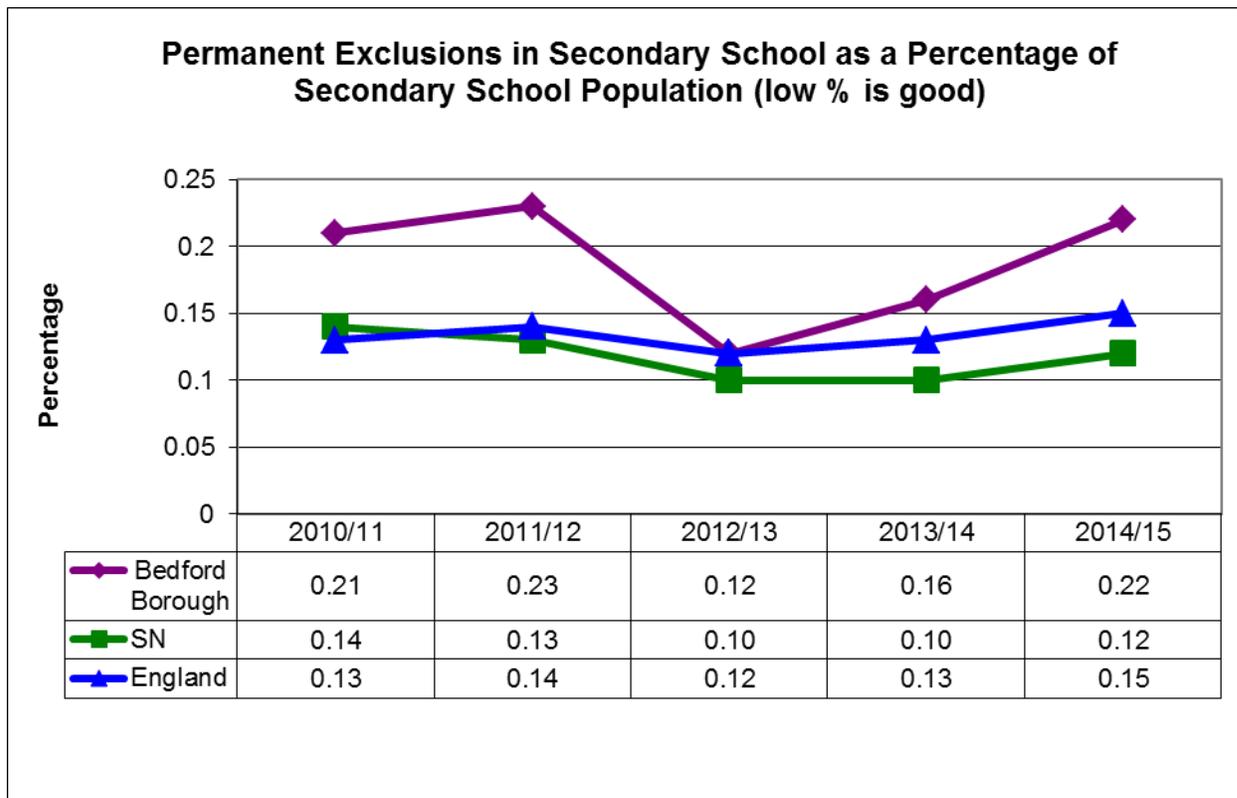
	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Permanent Exclusions	% of School Population
Bedford Borough	31	0.21	34	0.23	17	0.12	23	0.16	31	0.22
England	4730	0.13	4390	0.14	3900	0.12	4000	0.13	4790	0.15

Source: SFR Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2014-2015 21.07.16 Table 16

The numbers of Permanent Exclusions in Secondary Schools has varied significantly over the past three years, from 31 in 2010/11, up again to 34 in 2011/12 and then down to 17 in 2012/13. Unfortunately it has risen again in 2013/14 to 23 and again to 31 in 2014/15. The % of school population in Bedford Borough remains above both England and Statistical Neighbour averages.



Graph 22:

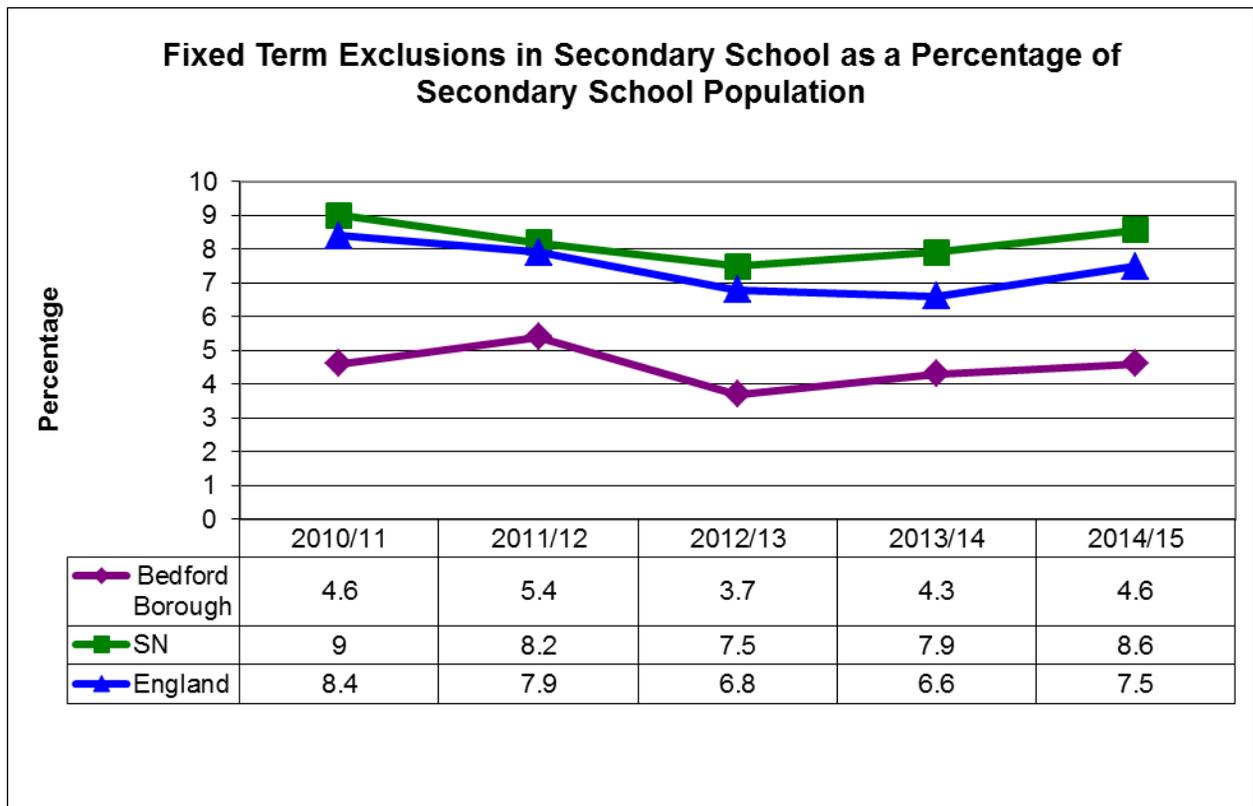


Source: SFR Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2014-2015 21.07.16 Table 16

The exclusions figures above are taken from the Statistical First Release on permanent and fixed term exclusions; however these figures are different from Bedford Borough's actual figures due to issues with the School Census returns. This discrepancy is being followed up.



Graph 23:



Source: SFR Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2014-2015 21.07.16 Table 16

The number of Fixed Term exclusions in Bedford Borough's Secondary Schools has varied across a four year period. The numbers increased from 674 in 2010/11 to 788 in 2011/12 but then fell again in 2012/13 to 544. The figure increased again to 627 in 2013/14 and again to 655 in 2014/15. At each point in the five year period, Fixed Term Exclusions in terms of % of school population in Bedford Borough have been lower than averages in England and Statistical Neighbours.

Table 8: Fixed Term Exclusions in Secondary Schools as a percentage of the school population

	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population	No of Fixed Term Exclusions	% of School Population
Bedford Borough	674	4.6	788	5.4	544	3.7	627	4.3	655	4.6
England	271980	8.4	252210	7.9	215560	6.8	210580	6.6	239240	7.5

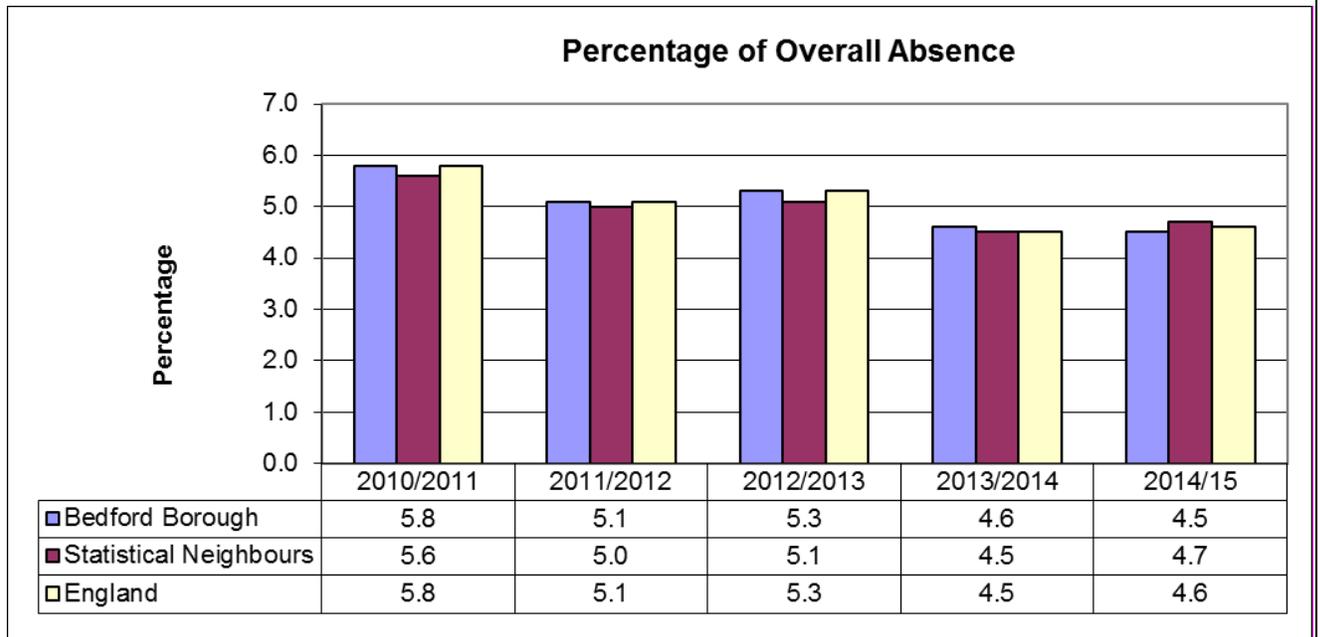
Source: SFR Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2014-2015 21.07.16 Table 16



Pupil Absence (authorised or unauthorised)

The overall absence rate of pupils in all schools in Bedford Borough has decreased from 5.8 in 2010/11 to 4.5 in 2014/15. This is good news as poor attendance is a strong indicator of being not in employment, education or training (NEET) post 16 and is related to poorer educational outcomes.

Graph 24:



Source: SFR Pupil absence in schools in England: 2014 to 2015 24.03.16 Table 11.1

Please note the above figures for 2010 to 2013 are based on our old statistical neighbours. The figures for 2013/14 onwards are based on our new statistical neighbours from October 2014.

Table 9: Annual Absence Rates by Type of Absence

In comparison to England and our Statistical Neighbours, absence rates are generally slightly lower in Bedford Borough in 2015//16, except for Authorised Absence where the Borough is slightly higher than England but in line with Statistical Neighbours. Absence in Bedford Borough reflects both national and local trends.



2010-2011	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	Overall Absence	Percentage of Persistent Absentees
Bedford Borough	4.9	0.9	5.8	6.2
Statistical Neighbours	4.7	0.9	5.6	5.8
England	4.7	1.1	5.8	6.1
2011-2012	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	Overall Absence	Percentage of Persistent Absentees
Bedford Borough	4.3	0.8	5.1	5.1
Statistical Neighbours	4.2	0.8	5.0	5.1
England	4.1	1.0	5.1	5.2
2012-2013	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	Overall Absence	Percentage of Persistent Absentees
Bedford Borough	4.4	0.9	5.3	4.3
Statistical Neighbours	4.2	0.9	5.1	4.3
England	4.2	1.1	5.3	4.6
2013-2014	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	Overall Absence	Percentage of Persistent Absentees
Bedford Borough	3.8	0.9	4.7	3.4
Statistical Neighbours	3.5	1.0	4.5	3.8
England	3.5	1.1	4.5	3.6
2014-2015	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	Overall Absence	Percentage of Persistent Absentees
Bedford Borough	3.6	0.9	4.5	3.4
Statistical Neighbours	3.6	1.1	4.7	4.0
England	3.5	1.1	4.6	3.7

Source: SFR Pupil absence in schools in England: 2014 to 2015 24.03.16 Table 11.1

Please note the above figures for 2010 to 2013 are based on our old statistical neighbours. The figures for 2013/14 onwards are based on our new statistical neighbours from October 2014.

Nb. Persistent absence threshold changed after 2010/11 from 20% to 15% of possible sessions and again for 2014/15 from 15% to 10%. In addition in 2014/15 a new methodology classified pupils as persistent absentees based on the proportion of their own individual possible sessions that they miss, rather than when they reach a standard threshold of absence sessions. However for the academic year 2014/15, the DfE published PA rates at both for comparison. The table above shows Persistent Absence at the 15% threshold and according to the old methodology to allow for comparisons to be made.

What is this telling us?

Whilst the overall picture suggests that ethnic minority pupils, pupils with SEND and those eligible for free school meals do less well across Bedford Borough, we know that in some schools this gap is significantly smaller than in others or there is no gap at all. This is because in some schools, outstanding pupil progress tracking, successful interventions and effective use of pupil premium are closing the gaps in attainment. The key challenge is to identify and disseminate this effective and excellent practice across the Borough.

Closing the gap is important to ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to progress post 16 in a school or college or secure employment with training.

What are the key inequalities?

Levels of attainment are still not where we would wish them to be. Ensuring that all pupils make good progress helps to reduce inequalities in adult life. Every child in Bedford Borough deserves an outstanding education. Our aim is to ensure that all our children and young people enjoy the very best education and that everyone has the opportunity to realise their true potential.

Recommendations for consideration by organisations

The Bedford Borough School Improvement Strategy identifies 5 key priorities:

1. To increase the number of schools judged to be Outstanding and rapidly move any Requires Improvement and Inadequate schools to Good.
2. To accelerate progress and attainment of vulnerable groups.
3. To raise achievement in all phases so that standards are above national and statistical neighbour averages.
 - To raise achievement in the Early Years.
 - To increase the levels of progress from KS1 to KS2.
 - To raise achievement at KS4.
 - To raise achievement at KS5.
4. To support key stakeholders in devising and implementing a strategy for recruitment and retention of outstanding practitioners at all levels.
5. To implement a high quality Early Help strategy.

Each of these key priorities is under pinned by an action plan that implemented by the School Improvement Team and monitored for impact by the Senior Management Team and reported on to the Director of Children's and Adults Services.

The thorough effective implementation of these plans, achievement will rise for all children and young people and gaps for our most vulnerable will close.



By working with key strategic improvement partners, we have extended the support we can offer and the School Improvement Team now has a Teaching and Learning Adviser for SEND as well as EAL, funded by the Education Strategic Improvement Group. We now offer specialist support for numeracy and literacy in KS2 and English and mathematics in KS4 as well as further EAL support through a specialist provider.

This section links to the following sections in the JSNA:

- Foundation Stage attainment (school readiness)
- Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Employment and Income