



North East and North Cumbria's Child Health and Wellbeing Network

The Facts of Life for children and young people growing up in the North East and North Cumbria:

Chapter 8 – Education and attainment September 2021

@NorthNetChild





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Ambers and greens in educational attainment in primary schools too often become reds in secondary schools and this is linked in the worst performing areas to persistent absence from school and school exclusions. The data also shows wide variation between the best and the worst performing areas. Step 1 in terms of action might be about some more granular information about what is going on here and Step 2 might be about putting in place and testing out a support system to address this.

Chapter Eight SPOTLIGHT to direct momentum for initiatives

8 Education and attainment

8.1 Relevance

Education is the most important modifiable social determinant of health¹. Research evidence shows that education and health are closely linked throughout the life course. Pupils with better health and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically² and levels of educational attainment in childhood are positively correlated with adult health behaviours, illness, life expectancy, employment and wealth³. School is a key setting for forming or changing health behaviours⁴ and education can promote health

¹ Editorial. Education: a neglected social determinant of health. The Lancet Public Health; 2020: link

² PHE (2014) The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment A briefing for head teachers, governors and staff in education settings: link

³ ONS (2016) How do childhood circumstances affect your chances of poverty as an adult?: link

⁴ https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/improving-publics-health/healthy-schools-and-pupils





equity⁵. In the UK, there is growing evidence of widening inequalities in education. How much money a child's parents earn, which region they live in and their ethnicity are all factors which shape educational attainment⁶.

Early childhood is an important period of rapid brain growth. Attachment and good maternal mental health shapes a child's later emotional, behavioural and intellectual development. Getting a good start in life, building emotional resilience and getting maximum benefit from education are the most important markers for good health and wellbeing throughout life⁷.

Inequalities in educational provision were also evident during the COVID 19 pandemic⁸ with long-term implications for educational progression and labour market performance9.

This section details educational indicators relating to attainment throughout school age, as well as related indicators on exclusions and absence.

8.2 Commentary and findings

8.2.1 Early years foundation stage

School readiness at the end of reception is a key measure of early years development across a wide range of developmental areas. Metrics relating to school meal status can indicate early inequalities - children from poorer backgrounds are at higher risk of poorer development and the evidence shows that differences by social background emerge early in life.

Children defined as having reached at least the expected level of development in communication and language skills means that they achieved 'expected' or 'exceeded' levels of development within all three communication and language early learning goals (listening and attention, understanding, speaking). Disparities in child language capabilities are recognisable in the second year of

⁵ Hahn RA et al. (2015) Education improves public health and promotes health equity. Int J Health Serv 2015; 45(4): 657-78: link

⁶ The Social Market Foundation (2017) Commission on inequality in education: link

⁷ PHE (2021) Early years high impact area 6: Ready to learn and narrowing the word gap: link ⁸ Children's Commissioner (2021) The numbers behind homeschooling during lockdown: link

⁹ Institute for Fiscal Studies (2021) Inequalities in education skills and incomes in the UK: the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic: link





life and are clearly having an impact by the time children enter school. If left unsupported, these children are more likely to fail to achieve their full potential¹⁰.

¹⁰ PHE (2021) Fingertips Early Years Foundation Stage: <u>link</u>



worse

similar

better



															Uppe	r tie	er loca	l au	thoritie	es										
					Nort Cumb		Ν	orth	of Ty	ne a	and Ga	ates	head				, South Sund			е				Т	ees Va	alle	у			
	Period	England		Region	Cumbria		Gateshead		Newcastle upon	- yrie	Northumberland		North Tyneside		County Durham		South Tyneside		Sunderland		Darlington		Hartlepool		Middlesbrough		Redcar and	Olevelallu	Stockton-on-Tees	
School readiness: percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception (Persons, 5 yrs, Proportion- %)	2018/19	71.8	•	-	70.6	•	73.4	A			74.8	•	72.0	•	71.8	•	73.3	•	72.6	•	71.7	•	72.2	•	63.1	•	71.1	•	73.8	•
School readiness: percentage of children achieving at least the expected level in communication and language skills at the end of Reception (Persons, 5 yrs, Proportion- %)	2018/19	82.2	A	-	82.4	•	89.9	^	83.0	•	84.8	A	82.6	•	81.6	•	83.4	A	82.9	•	78.1	١	79.3	•	71.8	•	79.9	•	84.4	•
School readiness: percentage of children achieving at least the expected level of development in	2018/19	72.6	•	72.4	71.7	•	74.3	A	70.8	•	75.6	A	73.1	•	72.4	•	73.8	•	73.4	A	72.2	▶	73.2	•	63.3	•	71.6	•	74.3	•
School Readiness: percentage of children with free school meal status achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception (Persons, 5 yrs, Proportion-%)	2018/19	56.5	•	-	50.1	A	52.7	>	61.3	•	60.7	A	54.2	•	54.6	•	59.8	A	62.6	•	60.5	▶	61.5	•	54.9	•	53.0	•	58.3	A

Figure 8.1 – Early years foundation stage – Upper tier local authorities

On average, where available, the data relating to the **North East and Cumbria** in 2018/19 indicate that:





• Compared to England (72.6%), a similar percentage of children (72.4%) achieve at least the expected level of development in communication, language and literacy skills at the end of reception, and this is increasing both nationally and in the region.

At a locality level, the data indicate that on average:

- **Middlesbrough** has a significantly lower rate than England across all three measures of development relating to all children, while **Northumberland** has a significantly higher rate for all three.
- All of the Tees Valley with the exception of Stockton-on-Tees have a significantly lower than England (82.2%) percentage
 of children who achieve at least the expected level of development in communication and language skills at the end of
 reception.
- For children with free school meal status **Cumbria** (50.1%) has a significantly lower percentage than the England average (56.5%) achieving a good level of development. **Newcastle upon Tyne** (61.3%) and **Sunderland** (62.6%) have a significantly higher percentage than England.

Live indicators from this section can be viewed at https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/indicator-list/view/oX5dlwtXbE.





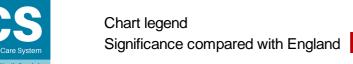
8.2.2 Key stage 1 and 2



Figure 8.2 - Key stage 1 and 2 - Phonics

At a locality level, the data indicate that on average in 2018/19:

- Cumbria has a significantly lower percentage of children achieving the expected level in the phonics screening check than the England average, as well as a significantly lower percentage of children with free school meal status achieving the expected level. Stockton-on-Tees has a significantly higher percentage for both indicators.
- For all children, **Northumberland** (84.3%) has the highest percentage of children achieving the expected level in the phonics screening check in the region, while **Middlesbrough** (78.3%) has the lowest.







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	Period	England	Region	Cumbria	Gateshead	Newcastle upon Tyne	Northumberland	North Tyneside	County Durham	South Tyneside	Sunderland	Darlington	Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar and Cleveland	Stockton-on-Tees
Key stage 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in reading (Persons, 6-7 yrs, Percentage point-%)	2019	74.9	-	74.6	75.4	74.9	78.4	78.0	76.0	76.1	74.9	74.8	73.5	69.8	75.4	77.0
Key stage 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in writing (Persons, 6-7 yrs, Percentage point-%)	2019	69.2	-	68.5	69.6	71.0	73.2	72.0	71.9	70.4	71.7	68.1	70.4	65.7	72.8	73.6
Key stage 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in maths (Persons, 6-7 yrs, Percentage point-%)	2019	75.6	-	75.0	75.1	75.5	78.7	78.0	77.3	76.9	77.0	74.8	75.1	70.7	76.7	78.6
Key stage 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in science (Persons, 6-7 yrs, Percentage point-%)	2019	82.3	1	84.7	81.7	81.1	84.9	84.7	83.2	83.3	81.2	81.5	80.4	76.3	81.5	84.1
Key stage 2 pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (Persons, 10-11 yrs, Percentage point- %)	2018	64.9	-	64.8	70.9	69.6	64.6	68.2	67.7	67.7	68.3	65.0	66.5	63.9	70.7	70.6

Figure 8.3 – Key stage 1 and 2 – Expected standards





At a locality level, the data indicate that on average:

- Middlesbrough has a significantly lower than England percentage of children meeting the expected standard across all four measures at key stage 1 (reading, writing, maths and science). All other local authorities have percentages which are similar or significantly higher than England, with Northumberland, North Tyneside and Stockton-on-Tees significantly higher across all four.
- At key stage 2 all local authorities are similar to or higher than the England average for pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, with **Gateshead** (70.9%) the highest in the region.

Live indicators from this section can be viewed at https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/indicator-list/view/fEtyQan4Tk.







8.2.3 Key stage 4

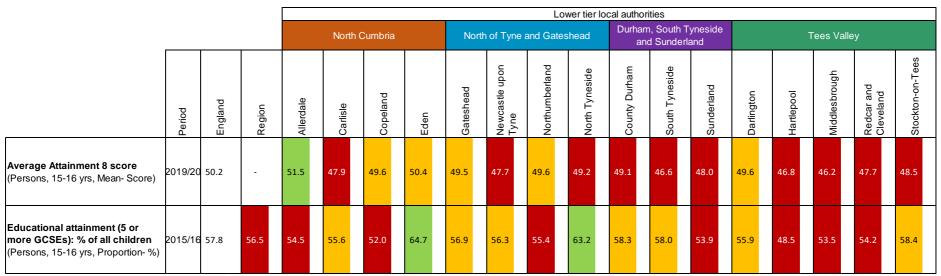


Figure 8.4 – Key stage 4 – Upper tier local authorities

- The majority of local authorities in the **NENC region** have significantly lower average attainment 8 scores than the England average. The only NENC local authority to have a significantly higher score than the England average (50.2) is **Allerdale** (51.5).
- Prior to the adoption of attainment 8 educational attainment at key stage 4 was based on achieving 5 or more GCSE's at grades A*-C (including English and Maths). In 2015/16 the NENC region as a whole has a statistically lower percentage of children achieving this than the England average. The exceptions to this are in Eden and North Tyneside both of which have statistically higher percentages than the England average.



worse	similar	better
low		high



				Upper tier local authorities												
_			North Cumbria North of Tyne and Gateshead Durham, South Tyneside and Sunderland Tees Valley Durham, South Tyneside and Sunderland Tees Valley													
	Period	England	Region	Cumbria	Gateshead	Newcastle upon Tyne	Northumberland	North Tyneside	County Durham	⊢	Sunderland	Darlington	Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar and Cleveland	Stockton-on-Tees
Average Attainment 8 score of children in care (Persons, 15-16 yrs, Mean- Score)	2019	19.2	-	22.2	18.6	23.4	16.5	23.9	25.6	16.0	20.5	14.6	16.7	20.0	19.3	21.2
16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) or whose activity is not known (Persons, 16-17 yrs, Proportion- %)	2019	5.5	-	4.0	5.2	9.2	4.7	3.8	4.8	7.3	10.6	4.2	3.7	4.7	5.5	4.9

Figure 8.5 – Key stage 4 – Upper tier local authorities

- There is a lot of variation in the average attainment 8 score of children in care across the **North East and Cumbria** with both **South Tyneside** and **Darlington** being in the lowest quintile for England but **Newcastle upon Tyne**, **North Tyneside** and **County Durham** being in the highest quintile for England. Prior to the adoption of attainment 8 data for GCSE's achieved (5 A*-C's including English and maths) was published for children in care at a regional level. In 2015 11.0% of children in the North East achieved this, which was similar to England (13.8%).
- The majority of local authorities have a lower percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) or whose activity is not known than England. **Sunderland** (10.6%) has a percentage that is almost double the England average and is significantly higher.

Live indicators from this section can be viewed at https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/indicator-list/view/AArivWAYnE.





8.2.4 Absence and exclusions

Regular school attendance is central to raising standards and ensuring that all pupils can fulfil their potential. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.¹¹

Pupil absence includes both authorised and unauthorised absences. Persistent absence relates to absences which equate to at least 10% of all possible sessions. Exclusion represents the removal of a child from their existing educational establishment. There are a range of reasons why a pupil might be excluded, persistent disruptive behaviour being the most prevalent.¹²

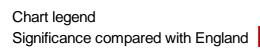
Certain vulnerabilities are recognised as increasing a child's risk of exclusion (see Chapter 4). These include: Special educational needs and disability (SEND) (including social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs), poverty, low attainment, being from certain minority ethnic groups, being bullied, poor relationships with teachers, life trauma and challenges in their home lives. Gender also appears to play a role - boys are more likely than girls to experience permanent exclusion¹³. Inequalities in school exclusion rates are recognised as major contributors to widening inequalities in adult life¹⁴.

¹¹ Department for Education (2020) School attendance: <u>link</u>

¹² IPPR (2017) Making the difference. Breaking the link between school exclusion and social exclusion: <u>link</u>

¹³ Department for Education (2019) School exclusion: a literature review on the continued disproportionate exclusion of certain children: link

¹⁴ Children's Commissioner (2013) They go the extra mile: reducing inequality in school exclusions: <u>link</u>









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						Nor Cuml		N	lorth	n of Ty	ne a	and Ga	ates	head				, Sout I Sunc		ynesid and	o				Т	ees V	alle	y			
	Period	England		Region		Cumbria		Gateshead		Newcastle upon	lyne	Northumberland		North Tyneside		County Durham		South Tyneside		Sunderland		Darlington		Hartlepool		Middlesbrough		Redcar and	Olevelariu	Stockton-on-Tees	
Persistent absentees - Primary school (Persons, Primary school age, Percentage point- %)	2018/19	8.2		1		7.0		7.7		9.5		7.4		7.1		8.4		9.5		10.2		8.8		8.5		11.8		6.9		6.9	
Persistent absentees - Secondary school (Persons, Secondary school age, Percentage point- %)	2018/19	13.7		-		14.5		16.7		17.5		12.3		12.3		13.5		15.5		17.7		13.6		20.6		21.8		19.1		15.6	
Primary school fixed period exclusions: rate per 100 pupils (Persons, Primary school age, rate per 100)	2016/17	1.4	A	0.8	A	0.7	A	0.5	Þ	1.0	A	1.0	A	0.2	•	1.6	•	0.3	•	1.0	A	1.1	A	0.2	•	1.0	•	0.5	٠	0.4	•
Secondary school fixed period exclusions: rate per 100 pupils (Persons, Secondary school age, rate per 100)	2016/17	9.4	•	12.7	A	11.8	•	12.0	Þ	6.9	•	6.2	•	5.9	•	7.3	A	8.6	•	4.8	A	17.0	A	26.1	A	55.2	A	29.5	•	24.2	•
Fixed period exclusion due to persistent disruptive behaviour: rate per 100 school aged pupils (Persons, School age, Proportion- %)	2016/17	1.4	A	2.3	•	2.4	A	0.7	•	1.1	•	1.3	A	1.2	•	1.3	^	0.8	•	0.7	•	3.1	•	3.2	•	11.1	^	2.8	•	5.3	•

Figure 8.6 – Absence and exclusion – Upper tier local authorities





At a locality level, the data indicate that on average:

- The percentage of primary school enrolments classed as persistent absentees (defined as missing 10% or more of possible sessions) varies from 6.9% in both **Stockton-on-Tees** and **Redcar & Cleveland** to 11.8% in **Middlesbrough**. Four local authorities have statistically higher percentages of persistent absentees within their primary school enrolments. However, six out of thirteen of the North East and Cumbria local authorities have statistically lower percentages of persistent absentees.
- In secondary school the majority of local authorities have a statistically higher percentage of persistent absentees than the England average. The exceptions to this are in the **Northumberland** and **North Tyneside** which have statistically lower percentages, while **County Durham** and **Darlington** have similar percentages to the England average.
- For primary school exclusions all local authorities in the region with the exception of **County Durham** (1.6 per 100 pupils, significantly higher than England) have a significantly lower rate than the England average, however rates are increasing in many areas.
- For secondary school exclusions the region is split roughly halfway between areas with significantly lower rates and significantly higher rates. Rates in the **Tees Valley** local authorities are particularly high, with **Middlesbrough** (55.2 per 100 pupils) the highest. All local authorities other than **Gateshead** and **Newcastle upon Tyne** have increasing trends.
- For exclusions due to persistent disruptive behaviour the region again varies by local authority. Cumbria, plus all of the Tees Valley have significantly higher rates than England (1.4), with Middlesbrough (11.1 per 100) the highest. Five other local authorities have significantly lower rates, but other than Newcastle upon Tyne and Sunderland all local authorities have increasing trends.

worse similar

better



					North C	Cumbria		North	n of Tyne	and Gate	shead		n, South T d Sunderl			1	rees Vall	еу	
	Period	England	Region	Allerdale	Carlisle	Copeland	Eden	Gateshead	Newcastle upon Tyne	Northumberland	North Tyneside	County Durham	South Tyneside	Sunderland	Darlington	Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar and Cleveland	Stockton-on-Tees
Pupil absence (Persons, 5-15 yrs, Proportion-%)	2018/19	4.7	1	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.3	4.7	5.3	4.9	4.5	4.8	5.0	5.5	4.7	5.5	5.7	5.2	4.8

Figure 8.7 – Absence and exclusion – Lower tier local authorities

In regard to overall absence the majority of local authorities have a similar percentage of half days missed to the England average. The exceptions to this are in **Newcastle upon Tyne**, **Sunderland**, **Hartlepool**, **Middlesbrough** and **Redcar & Cleveland** all of which have statistically higher pupil absences than the England average. Like the England average, **Newcastle upon Tyne**, **Sunderland** and **Hartlepool** all show recent significant increasing trends in their data.

Live indicators from this section can be viewed at https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/indicator-list/view/IXME2j9Y1k.

8.3 Commentary on network actions

The Child Health and Wellbeing Network has worked hard to develop links with Education, it has the Regional Education Group Chair as an Executive Board Member, several Core member teachers and network manager with a background in education. This emphasis is reflected in the network's members from educational settings which has risen to 17%.

Many of the network priorities rely on educational settings to maximise their impact through the cross cutting themes like *using all* settings and *transitional bridges* as well as the Enablers such as *Workforce* and *Advocacy*. Education Advisors have been appointed to conduct a piece of work to better understand our connections into school networks to promote partnership working.

Network initiatives have been based in the school setting:





Our **Interactive film** was commissioned on our behalf by a school and targets teenage children and can be freely accessed as part of Schools, Colleges and University pastoral support. It focuses on education and prevention by enabling young people to try life in a safe setting.

Our **Integration Centre** is spreading a social prescribing model, Zone West, focused in Primary school aged children and a strong school rather than health model. It also promotes the spreading of the Beat Asthma initiatives into schools (www.beatasthma.co.uk).

The STAR initiative (South Tees ARts Project) brings an arts intervention to children adopting holiday hunger approaches to two primary schools located within geographies with high levels of deprivation. The work also includes the work of the Canadian Human Early Learning Partnership at the University of British Columbia, who have been using assessments within their schools setting to identify children's wellbeing and trigger focused improvements.

Youth Mental Health First Aid training has been offered by the network with bespoke packages delivered to a school setting with high need following the first wave of the pandemic.

For any further information and proposals on initiatives relating to education and attainment do contact the network via england.northernchildnetwork@nhs.net and the website Child Health and Wellbeing Network | North East and North Cumbria ICS.

8.4 Relevant key policy and research papers

Education and health

Hahn RA et al. (2015) Education improves public health and promotes health equity. Int J Health Serv 2015; 45(4): 657-78 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4691207/

PHE (2014) The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/370686/HT_briefing_layoutvFINALvii.pdf





Editorial. Education: a neglected social determinant of health. The Lancet Public Health; 2020 https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(20)30144-4/fulltext

OECD (2018) Equity in education: breaking down barriers to social mobility <a href="https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/9789264073234-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/9789264073234-en/index

Early Intervention Foundation (2018) Key competencies in early cognitive development https://www.eif.org.uk/report/key-competencies-in-early-cognitive-development-things-people-numbers-and-words

Early Intervention Foundation (2018) What works to enhance the effectiveness of the Healthy Child Programme https://www.eif.org.uk/report/what-works-to-enhance-the-effectiveness-of-the-healthy-child-programme-an-evidence-update

The Social Market Foundation (2017) Commission on inequality in education https://www.smf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Education-Commission-final-web-report.pdf

PHE (2021) Early years high impact area 6: Ready to learn and narrowing the word gap https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/commissioning-of-public-health-services-for-children/early-years-high-impact-area-6-ready-to-learn-and-narrowing-the-word-gap

COVID-19 and education

Children's Commissioner (2021) The numbers behind homeschooling during lockdown https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/2020/06/11/the-numbers-behind-homeschooling-during-lockdown/

Institute for Fiscal Studies (2021) Inequalities in education skills and incomes in the UK: the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic https://ifs.org.uk/inequality/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/BN-Inequalities-in-education-skills-and-incomes-in-the-UK-the-implications-of-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf





United Nations (2020) The impact of COVID-19 on children https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/policy_brief_on_covid_impact_on_children_16_april_2020.pdf

Attendance and absence

Department for Education (2020) School attendance.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf

Department for Education (2021) Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/framework-for-securing-full-attendance-actions-for-schools-and-local-authorities

School exclusion

Department for Education (2019) School exclusion: a literature review on the continued disproportionate exclusion of certain children

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800028/Timpson_review_of_sch_ool_exclusion_literature_review.pdf

IPPR (2017) Making the difference. Breaking the link between school exclusion and social exclusion. https://www.ippr.org/files/2017-10/making-the-difference-report-october-2017.pdf

Children's Commissioner (2013) They go the extra mile: reducing inequality in school exclusions https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/They_Go_The_Extra_Mile-.pdf