



County performs well and opens eco-school

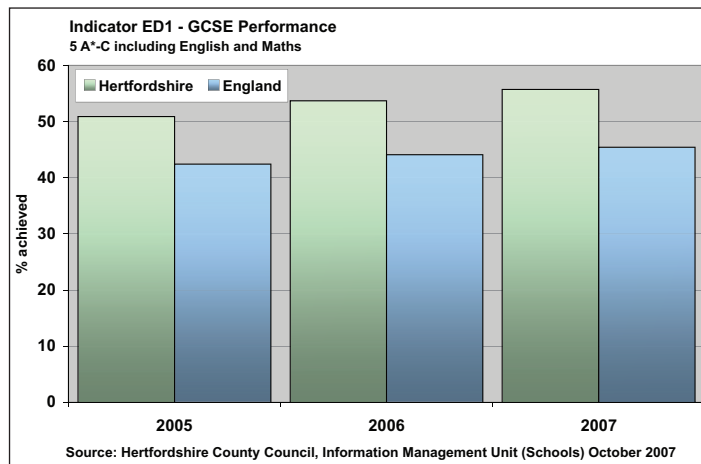
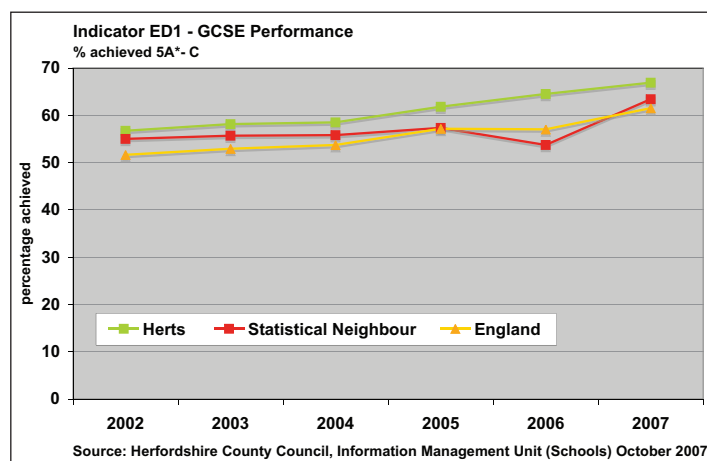
Hertfordshire had another successful year in education during 2006/07. Outcomes improved across all Key Stages and its schools received good inspection reports. Progress in the development of childrens' centres and extended schools was also good and is key to the growth of integrated services for improving the well-being and opportunities for vulnerable children.

County schools inspected in 2006/07 that were judged to be in an "outstanding" or "good" category were found to be in higher proportions than that of the national profile. The profile for nursery and special schools was "exceptional" with 78% and 54% respectively judged as "outstanding" against national figures of 49% and 22%.

In tests, assessments and examinations held in the county during 2007, Hertfordshire again proved to be one of the highest performing local authorities in England. At Key Stage 1, results changed very little for level 2. However, results for level 3 within Key Stage 1 were more buoyant. At Key Stage 2, the high standards achieved in english, maths and science placed the county in the top 6% of local authorities nationally. At Key Stage 3 progress continued to be made; results in all core subjects were higher than the national average for levels 5 and 6.

Indicator ED1 - GCSE Performance

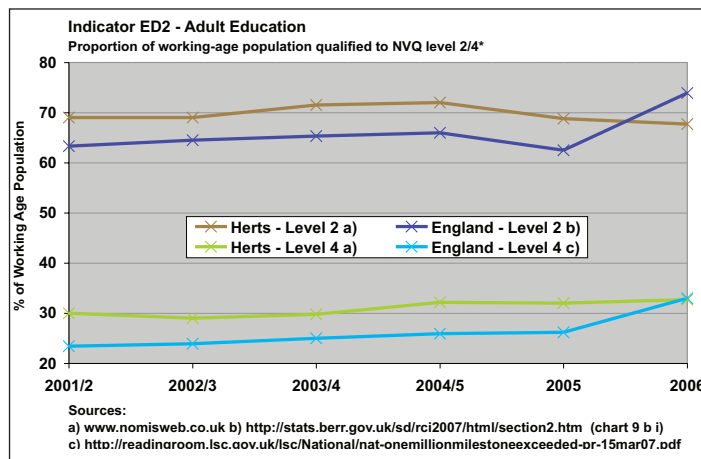
Results at Key Stage 4 continued to show significant improvements in all statutory indicators. The percentage of 5 GCSE A*-C increased by almost 3% to reach 66.9% compared to a national 61.5% figure. There was also a strong improvement in the new GCSE 5A*-C measure which includes english and maths. This now stands at 55.7% compared to the national figure of 46.5%. This places Hertfordshire



second highest of all shire counties in England. Nearly three quarters of the county's secondary schools have demonstrated improved results since 2006 with 11 schools improving by over 10%.

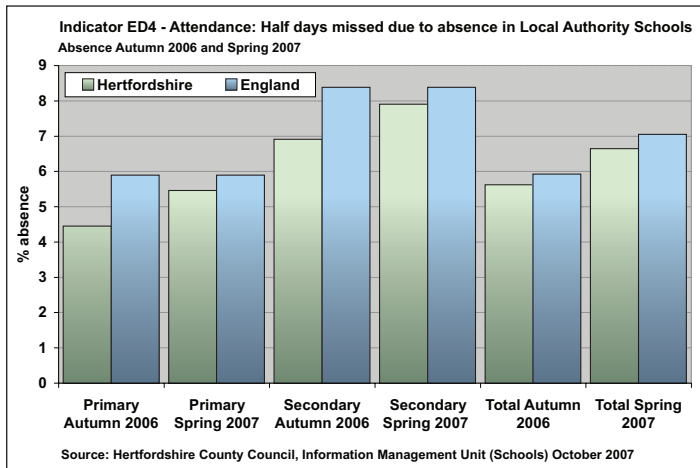
Indicator ED2 - Adult Education

Unlike previous years, the proportion of working-age population with NVQ levels in the county are no longer greater than England's proportion. This follows a continuing decline at Level 4 in the county against remarkable improvements at Levels 2 & 4 in England in 2006. As such, England has exceeded its 1 million milestone target set for the end of 2006¹.



Indicator ED4 - Attendance: Half Days Missed Due To Absence In Local Authority Schools

As in previous years, the county continued to show below the national average of school absences. However, the method for reporting and collecting data has changed nationally and these are now collected each term through a school census. The graph shows total absence rates fluctuate between autumn and spring terms but it is too early to make any significant conclusions yet without further data.



Indicator ED3 - Funded Early Education and Childcare²

The trend for improved outcomes from Ofsted inspections, for both maintained and non-maintained settings, continued in 2006-7. In addition to the nursery schools inspected, 80% of primary schools with Foundation Stages were judged “good” or “outstanding”. Out of the 715 inspections held amongst Early Years settings and childminders, the percentage receiving “good” or “outstanding” judgements rose from 50.3% in 2006 to 64.3% in 2007.

Hertfordshire will have created 82 children’s centres by 2010. By December 2007, 31 of its children’s centres had been designated and lead agencies commissioned for the remainder of the Phase II centres. Most of these centres have appointed a manager that is required to achieve the national professional qualification in integrated centre leadership.

There are 38 extended schools consortia across Hertfordshire working with children’s centre communities. By September 2007, 116 schools were providing the full range of facilities required by the core extended schools offer. As a result, the county is over half way towards its target for September 2008.

Educational Achievement Within Vulnerable Groups²

- Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities made good progress in most mainstream schools and special schools
- The gap between children in care and all children is slowly narrowing. Their performance continues to exceed the national average across key stages
- There were 3%-9% rises at GCSE 5A*-C with english and maths for Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black Caribbean pupils in 2007 whilst results fell amongst black Africans, mixed whites and black Caribbeans

Hertfordshire’s First Sustainable School Opens

Hertfordshire’s flagship sustainable school opened on 5 September 2007 on the former site of the De Havilland airfield in Hatfield. Howe Dell opened following years of planning involving a specialist sustainable education adviser, architects, contractors, the County Council, the Town Council, staff and its pupils.

Thought to be the first of its kind, the school was built to meet the County Council’s aim of creating a school that set new standards in building design and construction. Towards meeting this target, it has already received the Department of Children Schools & Family’s BREEAM³ excellent rating and ‘Green Flag’ status.

The school was built using the sustainability principles from the area’s Strategic Planning Guidance. This has resulted in significant development of the school’s curriculum so pupils can further their knowledge in sustainability. It also enabled facilities to be created to benefit the local community, such as a Community Hall, a day care centre and a children’s centre.

Examples where sustainability has been incorporated:

- Interseasonal Heat Store uses the playground’s surface to collect heat which is then released to heat the building. It is the UK’s first building to use this technology
- Furniture: locally-sourced sustainable materials
- A foundation which allows for future change of use
- Superior insulation via building’s thermal mass and windows exceed building regulation requirements
- A ventilation system moderating incoming fresh air for summer night-time cooling providing a healthy internal environment
- Solar water heating, photovoltaic cells and a wind turbine supplements electricity purchased with an ability to sell back surplus energy from the turbine
- Recycled roof rainwater used to flush toilets
- Sustainability audit conducted so materials used embody low energy and come from sustainable or renewable sources where possible e.g. natural oak rainscreen cladding, floorcoverings, aluminium and sedum roofs, worktops and waterbased finishes
- Outdoor classroom revealing alternative habitats
- Building’s management system linked with curriculum computers allowing pupils to see how the building is working and where energy is being used

1 <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/natonemillionmilestoneexceeded-pr-15mar07.pdf>

2 *Director’s Annual Report 2007: Standards and quality in Hertfordshire schools*

3 *Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method. Website: www.breeam.org*