

Slow progress in test setback



Appliance of science: Tapton School pupils Michael Liu, Eigen Horsefield, Elizabeth Wild and Ecre Karadag

Little improvement leaves schools trailing

By Mike Russell

SHEFFIELD'S 14-year-olds are still stuck in the slow lane according to the latest batch of test results - dumping them at the bottom of South Yorkshire's mini league table.

English results improved by three per cent on the previous year's efforts, while pass rates in science rose by a single percentage point.

But maths scores fell by two per cent - leaving the city 22 per cent behind the overall national average for the three key subjects.

And Sheffield teenagers are being left behind by their contemporaries in neighbouring authorities - they now trail behind Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley.

A recent across-the-board improvement in Barnsley's schools was maintained with a solid nine per cent advance in English, maths and science, allowing the town to overtake Sheffield for the first time.

Rotherham's results were up by nine per cent, compared with Doncaster up by one per cent and Sheffield by two.

Nationally that leaves Sheffield in 125th place out of 150 English local authorities - well ahead of the lowly 147th place managed by primary pupils in 2007.

Rotherham has the top local county ranking at 110th place, with Doncaster at 112 and Barnsley moving up from 133 to 118th spot.

Individual Sheffield schools produced a mixed bag of results.

National and local averages	% Level 5 English		% Level 5 Maths		% Level 5 Science		Aggregate score
	2006/7	2007/8	2006/7	2007/8	2006/7	2007/8	
Barnsley	67	70	68	70	205		
Derbyshire	78	80	78	78	236		
Doncaster	67	71	70	70	208		
Rotherham	69	72	70	70	211		
Sheffield	67	69	67	67	203		
England	74	78	73	73	225		

The most improved secondary was Parkwood High, where scores rose by an overall 35 per cent in the three key subjects - although the school is still one of five in the bottom 200 list nationally.

At City School - currently on the failing blacklist - results were 21 points up on 2006, while Wisewood, set to be merged in three years time, saw its scores up by an overall 20 per cent. Fir Vale continued its rise with a hefty 31 point improvement.

But there were slumps too - Yewlands saw its pass rates fall by 26 points, while All Saints was down by 22 and Newfield fell by 20.

The results also show there is still much work to be done at one of Sheffield's two new City Academies - Springs had the city's lowest pass rates and is ranked 12th from bottom nationally.

Park - the former Walthef School

- did much better and is 52 points ahead of its sister institution.

Paul Makin, Sheffield's acting executive director of children's services, admitted the picture was mixed but said there were also encouraging signs. "Our priority is that every child should make the best progress they can. We have systems in place now that are carefully tracking each pupil's individual progress," he said.

"Over the years to come these systems will produce greatly improved results and we will see their impact. We're also very pleased that at last our boys are catching up with the girls, which has been a national issue for some time," Mr Makin added.

Authority analysts have found the achievement gap between boys and girls has shrunk sharply in maths and English after the issue was made a priority by many schools.

Coun Harry Harpham, Sheffield's cabinet member for children's services, said he was tremendously proud that evidence of success was being seen in the authority's work to raise attainment.

He added: "We are seeing young people from all our communities do well, and the gap between the attainment of white students and those from ethnic minority communities is closing, which is great news.

"Improving achievement at all key stages is one of the council's highest priorities, and we are looking very carefully at these results to help us plan how best to support the schools who still need to raise their game."

Key Stage 3 Performance Tables 2008

	No of pupils to take test	% Level 5 English	% Level 5 Maths	% Level 5 Science	Aggregate score	Average point score	Authority rating	Value added
SHEFFIELD								
Abbeydale Grange	137	36%	45%	33%	115	27.9	26	99.4
All Saints	201	70%	73%	70%	212	34.3	13	99.9
Birley	240	68%	75%	74%	217	33.9	11	98.9
Bradfield	187	84%	85%	81%	250	36.5	4	100.3
Chaucer	188	59%	47%	46%	152	30.1	24	100.1
City	293	67%	61%	56%	184	32.6	19	99.3
Ecclesfield	348	69%	76%	70%	216	34.0	12	99.5
Fir Vale	150	65%	65%	61%	191	32.3	17	100.6
Firth Park	259	53%	60%	54%	166	30.6	21	100.6
Handsworth Grange	214	61%	72%	71%	204	33.6	15	98.2
High Storrs	240	78%	86%	82%	245	36.6	6	100.1
Hinde House	178	57%	60%	60%	176	31.9	20	101.1
King Ecgbert	196	84%	87%	84%	255	37.0	3	102.2
King Edward VII	233	81%	79%	82%	242	36.6	7	100.4
Meadowhead	329	69%	78%	73%	220	35.1	10	98.6
Myers Grove	152	67%	64%	69%	200	33.2	16	101.0
Newfield	212	63%	68%	60%	191	32.3	18	99.5
Notre Dame	201	89%	89%	90%	268	37.6	2	101.0
Parkwood High	144	45%	56%	53%	155	30.5	23	100.9
Sheffield Park Academy	216	55%	55%	53%	162	30.4	22	100.7
Sheffield Springs Academy	193	37%	40%	33%	110	28.5	27	99.5
Silverdale	179	91%	94%	91%	275	39.3	1	101.3
Stocksbridge High	198	78%	78%	75%	231	35.1	9	100.0
Tapton	227	83%	82%	83%	248	37.4	5	100.1
Westfield	248	72%	69%	70%	211	33.9	14	100.1
Wisewood	159	81%	79%	80%	239	35.9	8	100.8
Yewlands	178	47%	50%	51%	148	30.7	25	98.2
ROTHERHAM								
Aston	318	75%	82%	81%	238	35.3	4	99.4
Brinsworth	261	60%	70%	74%	204	33.5	10	98.9
Clifton	279	49%	54%	48%	151	30.6	16	100.3
Dinnington	251	65%	71%	65%	202	34.0	11	99.6
Maltby	219	68%	68%	64%	200	32.7	12	98.6
Oakwood	218	71%	65%	68%	204	33.9	9	99.7
Pope Pius X	128	86%	73%	79%	238	34.7	5	100.3
Rawmarsh	217	61%	70%	58%	188	32.5	14	98.9
St Bernard's	133	85%	83%	84%	252	36.8	1	101.6
Swinton	173	63%	69%	66%	198	33.6	13	99.3
Thrybergh	113	56%	60%	58%	174	32.0	15	101.3
Wales High	251	78%	80%	73%	231	35.4	6	99.9
Wath	280	82%	80%	76%	238	36.4	3	101.1
Wickersley	300	77%	84%	86%	247	36.6	2	100.4
Wingfield	193	68%	76%	65%	209	33.6	8	98.9
Winterhill	327	75%	76%	76%	227	35.1	7	100.5
DONCASTER								
Armthorpe	140	64%	79%	63%	206	33.6	7	100.0
Balby Carr	224	54%	63%	60%	177	31.7	14	98.8
Campsmount	128	52%	73%	73%	198	32.6	9	99.2
Danum	283	64%	67%	63%	194	33.1	12	99.6
Don Valley	245	67%	67%	68%	202	33.3	8	98.7
Edlington	196	61%	71%	66%	197	32.6	10	98.6
Hall Cross	326	75%	82%	79%	236	35.8	5	99.7
Hatfield	188	54%	60%	53%	167	31.2	17	97.6
Hayfield	181	92%	86%	91%	269	37.8	1	101.0
Hungerhill	229	83%	80%	86%	249	36.4	4	99.6
McAuley	279	83%	87%	87%	257	37.1	3	100.4
Mexborough	206	73%	64%	59%	196	33.2	11	100.4
North Doncaster	243	48%	58%	63%	169	31.7	15	98.2
Northcliffe	159	57%	57%	56%	169	31.1	16	98.8
Ridgewood	278	88%	85%	87%	260	36.7	2	98.7
Rossington All Saints	163	58%	69%	66%	193	33.0	13	99.4
Trinity Academy	203	67%	79%	70%	217	34.1	6	100.2
BARNLSLEY								
Barnsley Academy	78	38%	46%	42%	127	29.0	14	98.6
Darton High	234	67%	71%	76%	213	34.0	5	98.9
Dearne High	219	58%	66%	60%	183	31.9	11	100.7
Edward Sheerion	148	52%	57%	59%	168	31.0	13	101.1
Foulstone	182	68%	65%	68%	201	32.8	9	99.7
Holgate	191	54%	75%	71%	201	33.3	8	99.3
Kingstone	297	76%	71%	65%	212	33.8	6	99.9
Kirk Balk	239	63%	75%	70%	208	33.5	7	99.9
Penistone Grammar	260	85%	88%	87%	259	36.8	1	99.7
Priory	197	59%	59%	57%	176	31.6	12	100.1
Royston	129	71%	75%	69%	215	33.8	4	101.2
St Michael's	133	84%	75%	83%	243	35.1	2	100.2
Willowgarth High	177	65%	66%	67%	198	33.3	10	100.1
Wombwell High	181	77%	72%	72%	221	34.5	3	99.6
DERBYSHIRE								
Dronfield Henry Fanshawe	308	84%	85%	84%	253	36.6	11	99.4
Eckington	303	70%	81%	80%	231	34.3	26	99.5
Hope Valley	126	78%	85%	89%	252	37.2	13	101.2
Lady Manners	230	89%	90%	89%	267	39.0	6	100.9

What the figures mean

THESE performance tables, the last from the academic year 2006/7, cover tests taken by 14-year-olds in English, maths and science last summer and reflect progress made during the first half of their secondary school careers.

The first column shows how many pupils were eligible for the tests - results at smaller schools can often prove to be more volatile as ability levels between different year groups are more clearly highlighted.

The next three columns show the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard - level 5 - for the age in English, maths and science.

Column five adds up the three subject pass rates to give an aggregate score - which can be compared with the national average of 225.

Column six shows the average point score achieved per pupil - a figure above 35 is ahead of the national average.

Column seven shows a school's ranking within its local authority, with one the highest.

And finally column eight shows a school's estimated 'value added' rating - which attempts to assess how much progress a child has made between Years 7 to 9, the time they have spent at their secondary school.

Ratings above 100 are regarded as above average, below 100 as below average.