



Department  
for Education

**Social Mobility**



**Hastings**

## Opportunity Area 2017-20

A plan to provide children and young people in Hastings  
with the essential foundations for success

## Our ambition for Hastings

Our ambition is that all children and young people in Hastings have the key foundations in literacy and maths to be successful, that teachers and academics visit Hastings to observe the excellent teaching practice in these subjects, that mental health and resilience are talked about openly and everyone can access support if they need it, and that children and young people have the wider life skills that are essential for future study and employment. The Hastings partnership board has agreed a plan to achieve that ambition – to equip all children and young people with the essential foundations they need to achieve their potential and be successful in the world. Our actions will benefit all children, young people and families, and will be targeted with greater intensity and scale at those children and young people experiencing poverty or disadvantage.

We are investing up to £6m of direct funding from the Opportunity Area programme as well as attracting additional funding from other sources to improve outcomes for over 11,000 children and young people in Hastings. This plan sets out how we will begin to allocate those resources to address our four priorities:

- Improving literacy
- Raising attainment in maths
- Improving mental health and resilience
- Broadening horizons and preparing young people for work

This is our starting point, and our plans and activities will grow over the course of the programme.

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# OUR VISION



## A message from the Secretary of State for Education



The world economy is changing and it is through education, skills and training from the early years into adulthood that we will make sure no one is left behind – delivering a modern

country that is globally competitive and fit for the future. Education is at the heart of that ambition, and is central to breaking down the barriers to social mobility that too many young people from Hastings face.

Hastings is a town steeped in history, but it is also a town that is earning a reputation for being vibrant and creative. Educational outcomes are improving in Hastings, and we want to build on that success and make Hastings a centre for excellence. Across Hastings there is a real commitment from the education sector, employers, the voluntary sector, young people and the wider community to work together to ensure that all young people in Hastings have a high quality education and are supported to realise their potential.

I'd like to thank Richard Meddings, the Hastings partnership board and all the local partners and people who have contributed to developing this ambitious plan. This is a plan that will equip all children and young people in Hastings with the essential foundations for success.

### The Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP

Secretary of State for Education

### GET IN TOUCH



[hastings.opportunityarea@education.gov.uk](mailto:hastings.opportunityarea@education.gov.uk)



[@oa\\_hastings](https://twitter.com/oa_hastings)

## A message from the Chair of the Hastings partnership board



Whilst I grew up in Wolverhampton, where my mother was a primary school teacher, I have lived near Hastings for over 20 years. I was fortunate enough to receive an excellent state education, and – with hard work and much support – I was able to secure a place at Oxford University to read History. The excellent academic and broader education I received provided me with the foundations for future success. The children and young people of Hastings deserve the same. That is why I am delighted to have been asked to chair the Hastings Opportunity Area partnership board – a board made up of talented local leaders determined to ensure that all children and young people in Hastings have the essential foundations for future success.

Hastings is a vibrant town with a rich cultural heritage and a real sense of community. It is also a town that is changing – educational outcomes are improving. But Hastings still lags a long way behind other areas and too many young people reach adulthood without the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

This ambitious plan seeks to address that. Over the coming months, we will focus on the things we know will make the biggest difference. We will improve literacy and maths, promote good mental health, and provide opportunities for young people to develop essential life skills. Our activities will develop and grow over the lifetime of the programme, but will always be shaped the evidence of what works and our core priorities.

I do not underestimate the scale of the challenge to improve social mobility in Hastings. Collaboration is key to our success, and I would like to thank all the local partners and people who have contributed to this plan. This, however, is just the start. It will take everyone working together to truly make a difference, and I encourage you to get in touch about this plan and share your ideas about how we can increase opportunity for young people in Hastings.

### **Richard Meddings**

Independent Chair of the Hastings Opportunity Area partnership board

## Providing children and young people in Hastings with the essential foundations for success

This plan is our commitment to the children and young people of Hastings. It is a commitment to equip them with the essential foundations to achieve their potential and help them to be successful in the world.

Technology is changing the way that we live and work. It is often said that many of the jobs of the near future do not exist yet. This change is evident in the Hastings economy, where businesses are already driving the adoption of new digital technologies and the specialist engineering sector is growing. We will seek to ensure that Hastings' children and young people are able to embrace all of the opportunities that are available to them. Whilst we do not yet know what the next big technological advance will be, or which sectors will grow the fastest, we can equip the children and young people in Hastings with the key foundations to be successful in this ever-changing world.

Good literacy and numeracy skills remain key building blocks of learning. Whatever the future holds, young people will need to be literate and numerate in order to achieve their potential. That is why this plan focuses first on raising attainment in these two core areas.

In addition to literacy and numeracy skills, young people will need non-cognitive skills in order to adapt in a fast-paced and changing world. Skills like resilience, confidence, perseverance, self-control and social skills. These life skills have shown to be highly predictive of educational and labour market

success. This plan will offer all children and young people in Hastings the opportunity to develop these skills, as well as expanding their experiences – whether that be participating in sport, playing in a band, joining a club, volunteering or experiencing the world of work.

Unfortunately, for many children and young people in Hastings poor mental health can be a barrier to achieving their potential. This plan will provide children and young people, parents, communities, and schools with strategies to improve mental health and wellbeing. Crucially, it will seek to ensure that children and young people can access support when they need it.

This ambitious plan is our starting point and sets our course, but it will evolve and change as we progress. We will be rigorous in the monitoring and evaluation of projects, but are flexible and will change our approach as we learn what works best.

We have high ambitions for the children and young people of Hastings. We need everyone in Hastings – families, communities, employers, the public sector, schools and colleges, charities and more – to work together and support our children and young people to succeed.

**DELIVERING OPPORTUNITY  
FOR HASTINGS' CHILDREN  
AND YOUNG PEOPLE**





## Building on strong foundations

- **Growth in employment** is expected in and around Hastings as a result of major capital projects to improve transport and housing. The Hastings to Bexhill corridor has seen investment in education, business support, transport and infrastructure to unlock further growth. The specialist and high value engineering and manufacturing sector is growing, and Hastings is becoming a hub for the creative industries with new businesses choosing to start up here, and established businesses choosing to relocate.
- **The Hastings economy is typified by small businesses.** Unlike some other Opportunity Areas there are few large companies with national headquarters in the area, which makes the logistics of ensuring that all young people can experience the world of work more difficult. There is, however a real commitment from Hastings employers to support children and young people in the town, with organisations such as Marshall Tufflex, the Source Skate Park and General Dynamics working with schools to provide opportunities. We will also work with national firms to provide further opportunities for children and young people to experience the world of work.
- **Hastings is a town with incredible community spirit.** 39% of residents have undertaken formal volunteering in the last twelve months, compared to 27% in London and 25% in the North East<sup>1</sup>. The town worked together to raise just under £1 million for a new MRI scanner for the Conquest Hospital. Over 200 organisations are part of Hastings Voluntary Action, an organisation that promotes volunteering and supports the development of local initiatives to meet community needs. The Hastings Youth Council has organised successful campaigns on better mental health awareness and services in Hastings, better sex education for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people in schools, and cheaper transport for young people. This is a town full of committed individuals that will pull together to make a difference.


<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-life-survey-2015-to-2016-data>

- **The Hastings arts and culture scene is thriving** and the town is earning a reputation as a cultural hotspot, with creative professionals from London and Brighton choosing to relocate here. Recent years have seen the opening of the Jerwood Gallery, a non-for profit organisation housing the Jerwood Collection of Modern British Art; the rebuilding of Hastings Pier, a performance venue as well as a traditional pleasure pier and recent winner of the Stirling prize for architecture; the refurbishment of the Victorian White Rock Baths as an International BMX and Skateboard Centre; and the opening of many more independent galleries and music venues.
- **There is some excellent provision and outstanding teaching in Hastings.** Pupils' achievement at age five in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is above the national average, as is the proportion of children attending good and outstanding early years provision. This places Hastings in the top 10% of all local authority districts for the early years, according to the social mobility index 2017<sup>2</sup>. The number of good and outstanding schools is increasing and young people have access to good post-16 provision, with Sussex Coast College and Bexhill College both rated good by Ofsted. Special school provision for children and young people with high needs is also good and outstanding. There is a clear commitment from the range of education providers in the town to work together to improve outcomes for all pupils.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk/JsnaSiteAspx/media/jsna-media/documents/publichealthreports/2016\\_17/DPHreport2016\\_17\\_Main\\_report.pdf](http://www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk/JsnaSiteAspx/media/jsna-media/documents/publichealthreports/2016_17/DPHreport2016_17_Main_report.pdf)

## Why Hastings?

Despite these strengths there remain some big challenges.



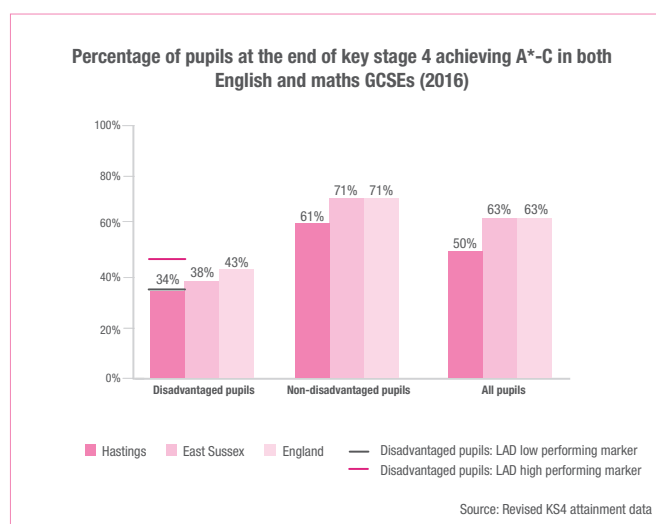
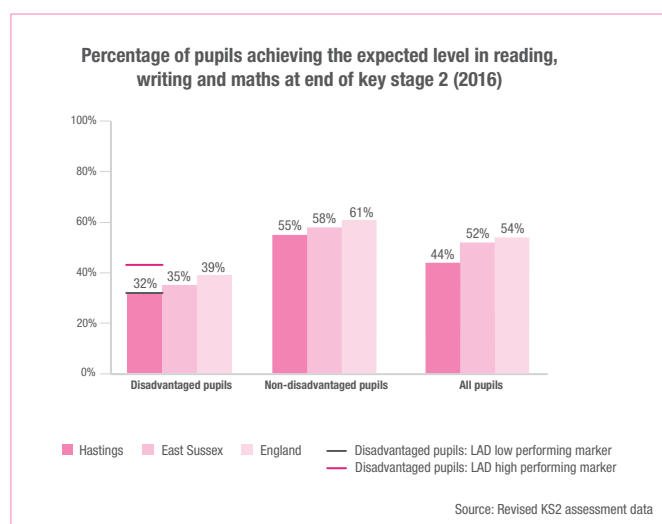
**282<sup>nd</sup>**  
out of 324 districts

– Hastings' ranking in the Social Mobility Index in 2016<sup>3</sup>. The index compared the chances that a child from a disadvantaged background will do well at school and get a good job. In the most recent Social Mobility Index Hastings ranked 299<sup>th</sup><sup>4</sup>.

As well as speaking to local partners, we have also undertaken a comprehensive data analysis, which has highlighted the following concerns:

- Too many pupils leave primary school without achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics – the key foundations for future learning. This is particularly true for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, where only a third of pupils achieved this standard.
- This same trend is evident in secondary schools and further education, with attainment in Hastings lower than the national average and disadvantaged pupils particularly at risk of low outcomes. 50% of pupils achieved A\*-C in GCSE English and maths in 2016, compared

with 63% nationally. Disadvantaged pupils made less progress than their peers, and achieved on average half a GCSE grade less than their peers nationally. By age nineteen, just over half of all pupils (54%) had achieved a level 2 qualification (the equivalent of A\*-C GCSE) in English and maths, compared with 71% nationally. Only 35% of disadvantaged pupils had achieved a level 2 qualification (the equivalent of A\*-C GCSE) in English and maths, compared with 53% of disadvantaged pupils nationally. These outcomes are a call to action.

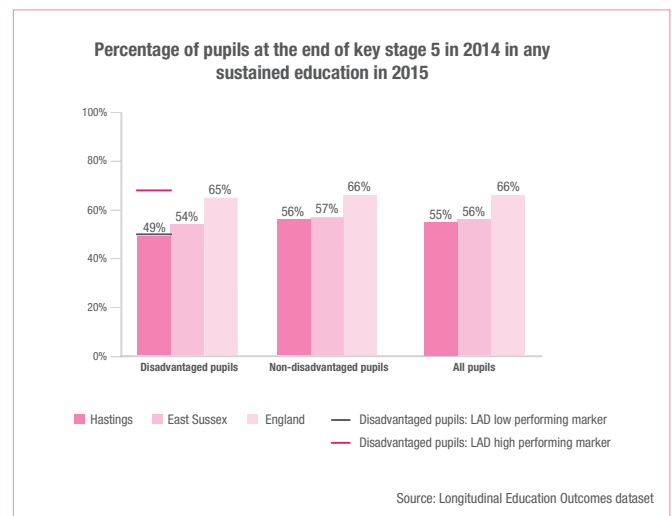
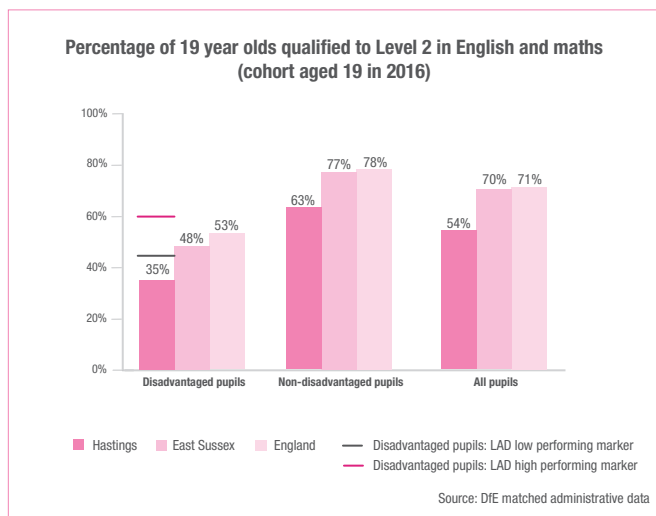


3 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-index](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-index)

4 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-index-2017-data](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-index-2017-data)

## Delivering opportunity for Hastings' children and young people

- Evidence from teachers, parents and carers, employers, the voluntary sector and the NHS highlights an increase in the number of young people needing support to improve their mental health. Although we do not have a national data set to compare Hastings to other areas, young people have told us that it is the most important issue for them, and a barrier to their future success.
- Young people from Hastings are more likely to be 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) than young people in other areas and are less likely to progress to higher education. Employers tell us that a number of young people lack the essential skills for employment – such as motivation, time-keeping, self-control and perseverance.





# STRENGTH THROUGH PARTNERSHIP



## Hastings partnership board

The partnership board has brought together talented and committed individuals with experience across local government, education, business, health and voluntary and community organisations. Together we have analysed data and drawn on national and international evidence to understand what has worked elsewhere. We have talked to local people and organisations to understand the strengths in the town, and the challenges facing young people. These include the Hastings Education Improvement Partnership, Hastings Youth Council, the Education Futures Trust headteachers' forum, Hastings Voluntary Action and the Local Strategic Partnership.

The partnership board will meet regularly to oversee progress, working alongside the Department for Education and other national organisations to ensure that the programme is ambitious, coherent, effective and represents good value for money.

### Hastings partnership board Chair

**Richard Meddings** serves on the Boards of TSB Bank, Deutsche Bank and Jardine Lloyd Thompson Group PLC. He is a Non-Executive Director of HM Treasury and a Trustee at Teach First. From 2002–2014 Richard was a Group Executive Director at Standard Chartered PLC and Group Finance Director for eight years. He is an Associate of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and has a Degree in Modern History from Exeter College, Oxford.

### Hastings partnership board membership

- **Carole Dixon:** Chief Executive, Education Futures Trust, a charity working to transform opportunities for students and families in Hastings
- **Dan Shelley:** Vice Principal, Sussex Coast College
- **Graham Peters:** Deputy Lieutenant, Chair of Team East Sussex and Vice-Chair of South East Local Enterprise Partnership
- **Jessica Stubbings:** Senior Manager, Partnerships and Governance, East Sussex County Council
- **John Smith:** Head of School of Education, University of Brighton and Chief Executive, University of Brighton Academies Trust
- **Lorraine Clarke:** Regional Director, Ark academies trust
- **Maria Ludkin:** Legal Director, GMB
- **Paul Hetherington:** CEO, Marshall-Tufflex Ltd
- **Paul Lewis:** Director of Government Relations, The Careers & Enterprise Company
- **Richard Preece:** Executive Headteacher / CEO, Torfield & Saxon Mount Academy Trust
- **Richard Watson:** Health Inequalities Programme Manager, NHS Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group
- **Victoria Conheady:** Economic Development Manager, Hastings Borough Council

The meetings are also attended by the Regional Schools Commissioner and by the Department for Education Head of Delivery and delivery lead.

## Our national partners

We are working with three national partner organisations to deliver a comprehensive offer to children and young people in the area.

**The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC)** has made a commitment for all secondary school and college pupils in Hastings to have at least four meaningful encounters with the world of work. A dedicated Enterprise Coordinator has been appointed to strengthen connections between schools and colleges, and employers locally and nationally. Through this work we are ramping up the scale, ambition and quality of connections between employers and children and young people. This will build upon the work of Skills East Sussex, a sub board of Team East Sussex the federated board of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and Hastings Borough Councils' 'Own Grown' programme to connect business with schools and young people.



Over the lifetime of this plan, we expect almost **21,700** high quality encounters with the world of work will be delivered for some **6,672** young people in Hastings. To support this, the CEC has identified nine cornerstone employers across a range of sectors that will lead the call to action amongst the wider business community. They include:

- **Marshall Tufflex**
- **Let's Do Business Group**
- **Talkative Online**
- **LoveLocalJobs.com / Be the Change**
- **Jerwood Gallery**
- **Hastings Direct**
- **Hastings Borough Council**
- **East Sussex County Council**

The CEC is actively seeking more employers to join the campaign.

To support the partnerships between schools and businesses the CEC has established and is growing its Enterprise Adviser Network. Each school and college will have access to an Enterprise Adviser, a senior volunteer from business, who will help to unlock relationships with other local employers.



### The National Citizen Service

is a programme designed to help young people learn the skills employers value and prepare for the journey into adulthood.



In 2016, 23% of eligible young people in Hastings completed the National Citizen Service programme, higher than the national average of 15%, and in doing so delivered over 7,000 hours of social action. The National Citizen Service is working closely with East Sussex County Council, Hastings Borough Council, the National Youth Agency and schools across Hastings to recruit more young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to this life-changing programme. The National Citizen Service is building partnerships with the local voluntary sector and other local stakeholders so that after participating in the programme young people can continue to volunteer and make social action a habit for life.

### The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

will support the partnership board and Hastings schools



to make the best use of evidence about what works in educational improvement. Together with the Institute of Effective Education, the EEF has appointed and will support the new EEF Research School<sup>5</sup> – Ark Blacklands Primary Academy. In its first year, the EEF Research School will promote and disseminate information about evidence based practice. Specifically, it will provide training to schools about how to maximise the impact of teaching assistants to support learning.

<sup>5</sup> The Research Schools Network is a collaboration between the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and the Institute for Effective Education (IEE) to fund a network of schools which will support the use of evidence to improve teaching practice. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/scaling-up-evidence/research-schools/>.

## Putting children and young people at the heart of our plan

This plan is for the children and young people of Hastings, and if we are to make a real difference we need to listen to their views, work with them to design programmes and involve them to help implement the change.

### We will do this by:

- **Involving young people in the design of the programme.** We have consulted Hastings Youth Council, a group of 13-25 year olds from a diverse range of backgrounds, in the development of this plan. We will ensure that children and young people's views are considered at every stage of the programme by consulting a range of groups and holding events across the town. We will also use technology and social media to consult with young people and get their input. The partnership board will meet children and young people at least four times a year.
- **Appointing a team of young ambassadors to champion the programme and provide challenge to the partnership board.** They will attend key meetings and hold us to account, as well as helping to get more young people engaged in the programme.
- **Evaluating our work.** We will directly evaluate the programme with young people – through surveys and regular monitoring – to ensure that the projects are having the right impact.

In November 2017, members of Hastings Youth Council visited the Department for Education to talk about what it is like growing up in Hastings and what support they would like to help achieve their ambitions. They said:

**“I love this town but I have to go out of town to get anywhere. This includes college and work.”**

**“If you are poor in Hastings you can't do anything, everything costs money and I can't get anywhere.”**

**“More youth clubs are needed... more music sessions, boxing and doing up motor bikes, sessions like that if you want to improve the kids round here.”**

**“I would like courses on how to get loans for business help and support with running a business and where to start. And more free stuff like sport and arts.”**

**“I'd like to learn about money and how to get a job, budgeting and cooking.”**

## Our priorities for Hastings

The Hastings partnership board has agreed a plan that will focus on four priority areas to equip all children and young people with the essential foundations they need to achieve their potential and be successful in the world. Our actions will benefit all children, young people and families, and will be targeted with greater intensity and scale at those children and young people experiencing poverty or disadvantage. Over the three years of the programme, we expect this plan to develop to reflect the programme's achievements and ambition.

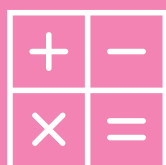


## Providing children and young people in Hastings with the essential foundations for success



### Improving literacy

Children and young people in Hastings have the literacy skills they need to make the most of every opportunity and achieve English results in the top half of the country across all key stages.



### Raising attainment in maths

Hastings is known as a centre of excellence for teaching maths and children and young people achieve maths results that place them in the top half of the country at all key stages.



### Improving mental health and resilience

Children and young people experience positive personal and social wellbeing, understand the signs of being emotionally or mentally unwell, and receive excellent support if they need it.



### Broadening horizons and preparing young people for work

Young people are inspired, motivated and equipped for adult life.

## Underpinning themes

**Quality teaching – recruiting and retaining the best teachers and investing in leadership**

**Good attendance from early years to further education**



## OUR PRIORITIES





## Improving literacy

### Why this is an issue

Literacy<sup>6</sup> is an essential building block for learning. Pupils who achieve high standards in literacy are more likely to succeed at school, achieve good qualifications, and subsequently progress to a rewarding career. Poor standards of literacy make individuals and communities more vulnerable to inequality, increasing the risk of social exclusion and undermining social mobility. Unemployed adults are twice as likely to have weak literacy skills as those in full-time employment.

Whilst the proportion of children achieving the expected level in the early learning goals related to communication and language development at age five was above the national average, and there is some excellent practice that we can build upon, there are significant variations in performance between different cohorts of pupils across the town. In addition, professionals working in the sector report increasing numbers of very young children entering early years' provision with communication difficulties. Given the importance of securing a good foundation in the early years, it is important that we continue to focus on improving standards in this area.

From age six, children in Hastings start to fall behind their peers nationally with disadvantaged pupils falling behind the most. Only 63% of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) met the expected

standard in the phonics screening check at age six in 2016, compared with 69% of FSM pupils nationally. Children not securing sound phonetic knowledge fall behind their peers from the start of their schooling. By the end of key stage 1 (age seven), achievement in reading is slightly below the national average (72% achieving the expected standard in Hastings compared with 74% nationally), but for disadvantaged pupils it is significantly lower, with just 56% achieving the expected standard. Pupils make less progress in reading between key stage 1 and key stage 2 than their peers across England. More than half of disadvantaged pupils (54%) leave primary school with a reading level below the expected standard.

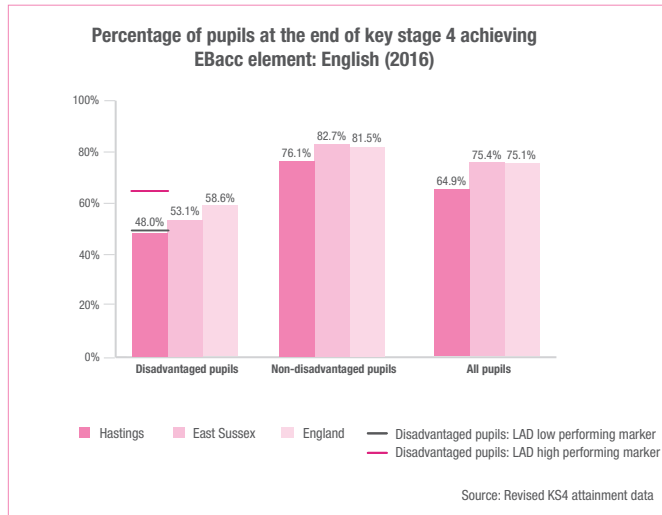
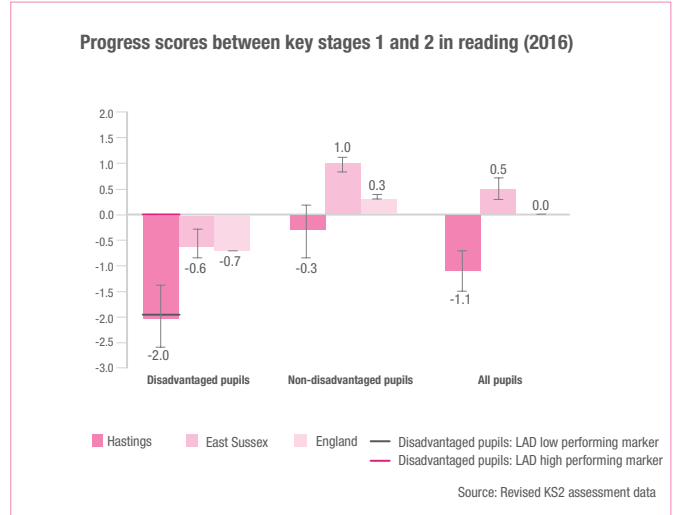
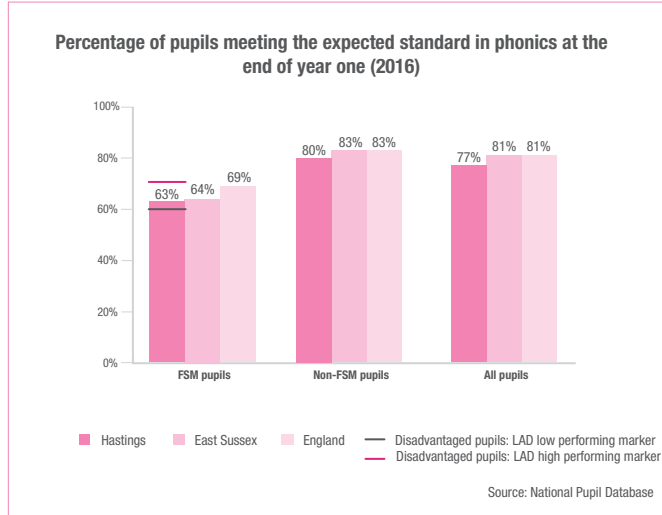
At secondary school, 65% of pupils achieved a grade C or above in English in 2016 compared with 75% nationally. Fewer than half (48%) of disadvantaged pupils achieved a grade C or above in English. Pupils do not make sufficient progress in English in two of the four secondary schools.

By age nineteen, over a third (37%) of pupils in Hastings did not achieve a level 2 in English (GCSE grade C or equivalent). Over half (55%) of disadvantaged students failed to achieve this level.

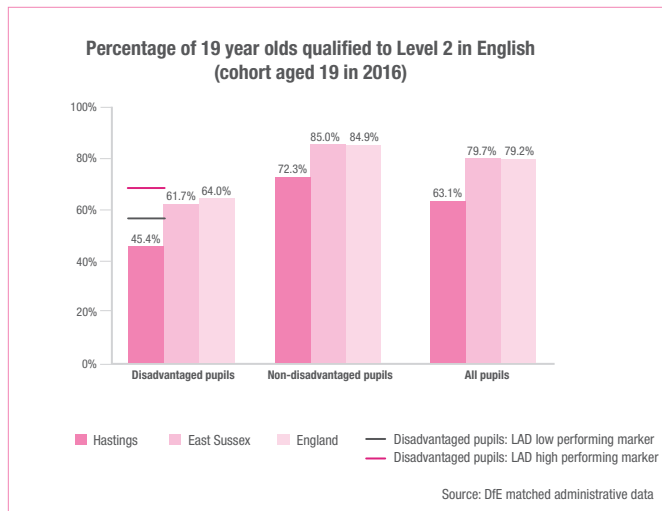
We are not yet getting this right. If we are to improve social mobility, we must improve literacy levels for Hastings' pupils.

<sup>6</sup> Literacy is defined by the OECD as the ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community – to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential – OECD (2013) OECD Skills Outlook 2013: First Results From the Survey of Adult Skills p.26.

## Why this is an issue



The chart above shows pupils' results in Hastings at key stage 2 in reading compared to the achievements of other pupils across the country who had a similar starting point at key stage 1. It shows that pupils in Hastings make less progress than their peers with similar starting points.





## What we will do

- A Hastings town-wide literacy campaign:** We will galvanise the community spirit to get Hastings reading. We will provide up to £250,000 of funding to an organisation with expertise and experience in improving literacy to work with parents and carers, schools and settings, community champions, voluntary organisations and local businesses. The aim will be to get children and young people of all ages reading more every day – particularly the most disengaged – to improve literacy skills and reading comprehension. The campaign will use evidence based approaches and consider in particular the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Through the campaign we will also support families and parents with low levels of adult literacy.
- Improve teaching of literacy for children aged three to seven:** Whilst performance in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile across Hastings is strong, the proportion of children achieving the early learning goal for reading was lower than the national average in fifteen schools in 2017. We will provide up to £300,000 to improve the quality of teaching in the early years in these target schools. The project will support schools to use baseline screening tests to identify children at risk of underperformance. The project will train teaching assistants in each school to support target children; provide development to all early years' teachers to deepen their knowledge and understanding of strategies to support language development; and support parents to better understand ways in which they can support their child's language development at home. We will evaluate whether the programme has been successful through baseline and end of programme language screening checks, outcomes in reading at age five, and surveys of teaching assistants, teachers and parents.
- Improving the teaching of phonics:** Evidence shows that adopting a systematic approach to teaching phonics is one of the most effective ways to teach children to read. Following on from a successful phonics roadshow, the EEF Research School will provide additional support and training to schools to improve the teaching of phonics. In addition, we will support schools to receive intensive support to improve the teaching of phonics and reading through support from 'Ruth Miskin Training', funded by DfE's Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund.
- Parental engagement and developing early literacy in the home:** Evidence suggests that family involvement in early learning has a greater impact on children's wellbeing and achievement than any other factor, including family income, parental education or school environment. All parents and carers receive visits from health workers in the first two years of their child's life. We will provide all practitioners working with families in Hastings with evidence based training and resource to promote early literacy in the home. Parents and carers will be able to access simple strategies to support their child's early language and communication development, and to help their children read at home.

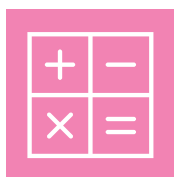
### Our 2018 activity will include:

- We will launch the Hastings town-wide literacy campaign with parents, schools, the community and employers in the summer term 2018.
- From April 2018 children will receive improved support with literacy in early years and key stage 1 through professional development for teachers and teaching assistants in each of the fifteen target schools.
- From March 2018 schools will have access to training and resources to improve the teaching of phonics, building on the success of the phonics roadshow held in November 2017.
- By April 2018 we will fund resources and training for practitioners working with families to promote early literacy in the home.

### Our targets for 2020/21 are:

- At least 85% of pupils meet the expected standard in phonics.
- Pupils in Hastings are in the top half of the country in reading and English at all key stages, with disadvantaged pupils making more progress than disadvantaged children nationally.



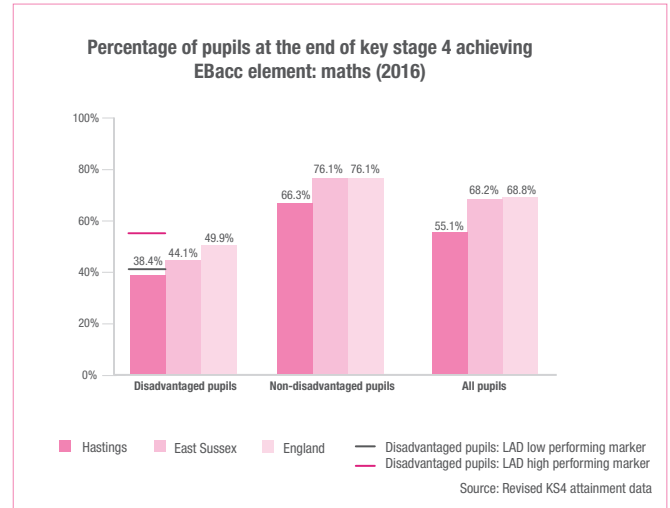
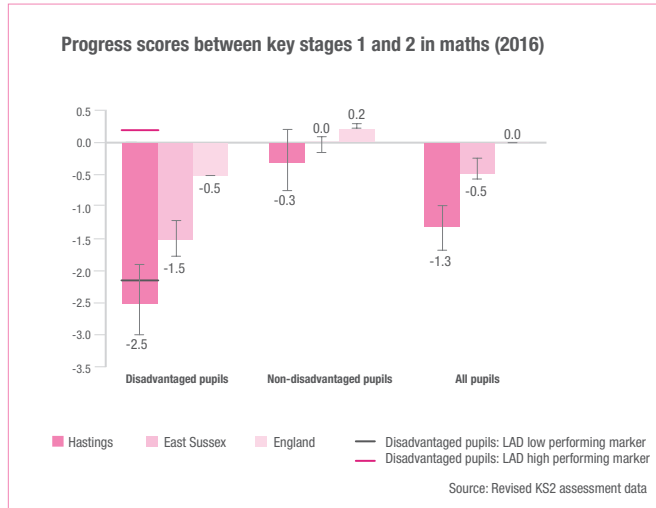


## Raising attainment in mathematics

### Why this is an issue

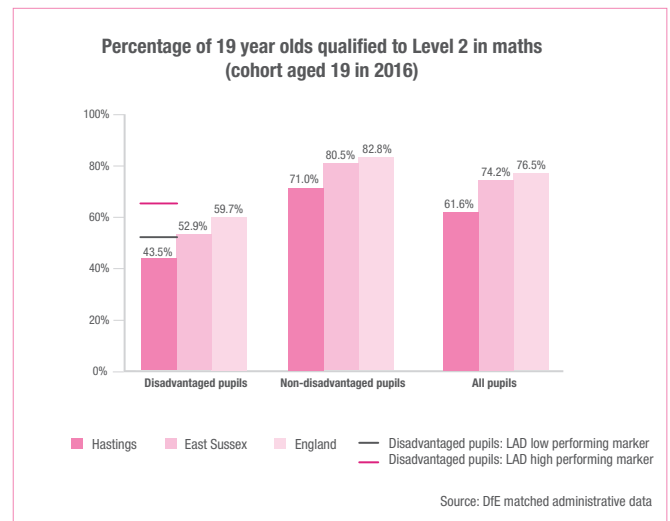
- Good numeracy skills are essential for the workplace. Adults who master basic numeracy skills earn higher wages and are more likely to be employed. Furthermore, higher levels of achievement in mathematics are associated with higher earnings for individuals and higher productivity.
- The increasing importance and sophistication of technology in the workplace is increasing the demand for mathematical and quantitative skills. As the engineering and technological sectors in Hastings grow, so does the demand for advanced mathematical skills from the workforce. It is our duty to ensure that the young people in Hastings have the essential foundations in mathematics to access this exciting and changing world.
- Achievement in maths is low across all key stages. In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, 59% of pupils achieved the expected standard in maths compared with 70% nationally in 2016. Fewer than half (48%) disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard. Disadvantaged pupils do not make sufficient progress between key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- At secondary, disadvantaged pupils achieved more than half a GCSE grade lower than their peers in maths (-0.55) in 2016. Pupils made less progress in maths than their peers nationally at all four mainstream secondary schools in Hastings. By age nineteen, 43.5% of disadvantaged pupils had achieved level 2 (GCSE grade C equivalent) in maths. This is not good enough, and we must act.
- There is, however, some really excellent practice to build upon. In the last academic year, those schools that worked with the Sussex maths hub to adopt ‘teaching for mastery’ approaches saw achievement in mathematics improve at a higher rate than nationally. Teaching maths for mastery involves employing approaches that help pupils to develop a deep and secure knowledge of mathematics, so that by the end of every key stage pupils have acquired mastery of the facts and concepts they’ve been exposed to, equipping them to move on confidently and securely to more advanced material. We want all Hastings’ children to acquire mastery of mathematics.

## Why this is an issue



The chart shows pupils' results in Hastings in maths at key stage 2 compared to the achievements of other pupils across the country who had a similar starting point at key stage 1. It shows that pupils in Hastings made less progress than their peers with similar starting points.

Nationally, disadvantaged pupils got 0.5 progress score points fewer in the maths test compared to all pupils nationally with a similar starting point. In Hastings, the gap is bigger: disadvantaged pupils got 2.5 fewer progress score points.



## What we will do

- We will provide targeted support of over £500,000 to improve the quality of maths teaching in all four mainstream secondary schools and eight target primary schools.** The project will focus on teaching in key stages 2 and 3. All schools will be given in-depth training and development sessions in a teaching for mastery approach to maths that has been shown to successfully improve pupil attainment. Participating schools will also receive specialist support to develop specific elements of the curriculum, support from a senior maths advocate to guide senior leaders to embed mastery approaches across the school, and workshops to engage parents and support them to develop their child's numeracy skills outside of the classroom. Schools will be asked to track pupil progress regularly to ensure that the mastery approach is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment in maths. Schools will also be asked to respond to surveys about teachers' confidence and knowledge of teaching the mastery approach.
- Increase support from the Sussex Maths Hub for Hastings' schools:** The Sussex Maths Hub will increase its outreach and programme for Hastings' schools, but particularly those that are not receiving support from elsewhere. To start, all Hastings' schools will be invited to Sandown Primary School to observe a maths lesson being taught by an excellent teacher from Shanghai, a jurisdiction that consistently preforms well in maths in international comparisons. The Sussex Maths Hub will follow this up by offering specialist training for teachers that do not have a degree in maths, and more training in and around the Hastings area so that schools are expert in teaching maths for mastery.
- Leadership development for maths teachers in secondary through STEM learning:** Through the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF), the secondary schools will receive support from STEM Learning to establish a STEM hub. A dedicated STEM Learning mentor will create a bespoke, flexible and focused selection of free continuous professional development (CPD) and support for the teachers and leaders in their school or college.
- Improve the quality of teaching of maths post-16:** We will work with the University of Brighton and the National Collaborative Outreach Programme<sup>7</sup> and invest in development for maths teachers in further education, to improve the quality of maths teaching and learning, and enhance the capacity of maths teams. Through evaluations and diagnostic tools, we will gain a better understanding of the barriers GCSE maths resit students face in progressing their performance.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/sas/ncop/>

### What we will do (continued)

- **Develop a network of great maths teachers:** We will encourage collaboration between schools in Hastings by establishing a maths teaching network. Through regular 'Teach Meets', maths teachers across the town will get together to learn about the evidence based approaches from around the world, and provide peer support to one another to improve their practice.
- **Work with employers to promote the importance of mathematics:** There is a growing manufacturing, engineering and digital technology sector in and around Hastings. Employers tells us that they need more young people to have basic and advanced mathematical skills. We will work with the Careers & Enterprise Company and local employers to promote the importance of maths for a range of careers, culminating in a careers fair across the town.

### Our 2018 activity will include:

- From February 2018 a minimum of 24 teachers across eight primary schools and all four mainstream secondary schools will receive training and support to adopt teaching for mastery approach.
- From March 2018 secondary schools in Hastings will establish a STEM hub and receive training and support to improve the teaching of STEM subjects.
- In January 2018 we will hold the first Maths Teach Meet and develop a programme of events for the year.
- The University of Brighton will implement a development programme for maths teachers in further education.
- In summer 2018 we will host a careers fair to promote the importance of mathematics.

### Our targets for 2020/21 are:

- Schools in Hastings are expert in teaching maths for mastery approaches, as measured through evaluation surveys following the training of senior leaders, maths leaders and teachers.
- Pupils in Hastings are in the top half of the country in maths attainment at all key stages, with disadvantaged pupils making more progress than disadvantaged children nationally.



## Underpinning theme: Quality teaching

### What we will do

The most important factor in determining how well children do is the quality of teachers and teaching. We will support quality teaching through:

#### **Recruitment and retention of teachers:**

Like many coastal towns, some Hastings schools struggle to recruit teachers. The issue is most acute in maths and science subjects and at middle leadership level. We are already working with Teach First to attract more of their graduates to Hastings. 22 students started teaching in Hastings in September 2017, and we aim to recruit at least 27 in September 2018.

We want to attract talented people who have had successful careers in other sectors to teaching. We are supporting Now Teach, a new organisation that was set up in 2016 to encourage people who have already had one successful career to retrain as teachers. These people will start a movement of senior professionals redeploying their skills in the classroom and teaching the children who need it most. In its first year, Now Teach operated in London only. In its first expansion outside London, Now Teach is now recruiting a cohort of teachers to start training and working in Hastings schools from September 2018.

We need to also recruit and retain experienced teachers in Hastings. We will work with schools to explore options to attract and retain experienced teachers such as offering non-teaching time to undertake high quality CPD or research in an area of interest. We will focus our strategies in shortage subjects.

#### **Investing in leadership:**

For this plan to be sustainable, we need to support today's great teachers to become tomorrow's exceptional leaders. We will provide fully funded access to National Professional Qualifications in middle leadership, senior leadership, headship and executive leadership to leaders and aspiring leaders in Hastings. In the first year alone, over 30 teachers will undertake this training.

#### **Expert advice and support for leaders:**

We will provide all state-funded schools in Hastings with expert advice and support from experienced educationalists. Schools will receive a visit from an adviser in Spring 2018. The advisers will:

- Support the school to identify needs, for example behaviour management expertise;
- Support schools to broker and access appropriate support, ensuring there is a coherent plan for rapid improvement. This would include access to Opportunity Area programme support such as literacy and numeracy professional development;
- Provide challenge and support to the academy trust or local authority about school performance;

## Our priorities

- Identify best practice to share across Hastings, for example phonics teaching at Ark Blacklands Primary Academy and teaching for mastery at Sandown Primary School;
- Identify where there is capacity in schools to offer support or training/ expertise to other local schools; and
- Provide feedback to the Opportunity Area partnership board about the implementation of initiatives and progress against the priorities in this plan.







## Improving mental health and resilience

### Why this is an issue

Hastings Youth Council ran a survey asking 286 young people about issues affecting them: The survey found that:

- 82% of young people ranked mental health as their biggest concern.
- 100% of young people suggested a mental health campaign to raise awareness should be in the top three campaigns the Youth Council undertake this year.
- 61% of young people know someone who has mental health problems.
- 89% of young people felt mental health provision is poor in Hastings.



## Why this is an issue (continued)

- Poor early childhood experiences combined with multiple impacts of deprivation significantly impact on resilience, social behaviour and mental health. Half of those with subsequent lifelong mental health problems first experience a range of symptoms before fourteen years old.
- In Hastings, all children and young people, parents, carers, professionals and volunteers we have spoken to have identified that the mental and emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority issue. Improving mental health and wellbeing is a key priority for the Hastings Youth Council.
- Hastings has high rates for: the incidence of depression and prevalence of severe mental illness, emergency admissions due to mental health or self-harm and for persons with severe mental illness, working age people claiming Employment Support Allowance (ESA) due to mental health problems<sup>8</sup>.
- An increasing number of young people in Hastings are being diagnosed with ill mental health. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services caseload rate is significantly higher in St. Leonards (Hastings) than East Sussex. Hastings has a significantly higher rate of youth offenders with a mental health disorder (4 per 1,000) than East Sussex (2 per 1,000).
- Adult mood and anxiety disorders are significantly worse than the East Sussex average in ten of the sixteen wards in Hastings.
- There is a growing body of evidence that links non-cognitive skills such as resilience, self-efficacy, emotional and social skills with improved children and young people's outcomes.
- Attendance in Hastings schools is poor. At primary, the absence rate is 5.1% (national average is 4.1%) and at secondary 6.2% (national average is 5.2%). Absence for disadvantaged pupils is higher. Teachers tell us that poor mental health and resilience is a factor that impacts on attendance.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk/JsnaSiteAspx/media/jsna-media/documents/nationalprofiles/profileassests/MH%20JSNA%20Profiles/EastSussex-MH-JSNA-Profile-2017.pdf>

## What we will do

Across East Sussex, partners have worked together to publish and implement the 'Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Local Transformation Plan 2015-2020' to promote and protect the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. We will align and boost the impact of the Transformation Plan in Hastings by delivering additional activities for all children and young people and by targeting prevention approaches. Our strategy has three strands:

### All children and young people can access support

It is important that children and young people know where to go for support and can access it when they need it. For some, this will mean accessing specialist support from Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), and the East Sussex Transformation Plan will improve the provision of these services. For other children and young people, it might mean having someone to talk to about the things that are worrying them, or learning strategies to cope with stress and low level anxiety. We will ensure that every child and young person aged 5-25 years old can talk to a trained professional about the things that are worrying them. We will do this by:

- Ensuring that young people have somewhere outside of school to get support. The i-Rock service offers 14-25 year olds advice and support for emotional and mental wellbeing, employment, education and housing. Since this pilot project commenced in 2016 it has exceeded expectations. All of the 370 young people who have used the service would recommend it to a

friend<sup>9</sup>. Feedback about its impact is also very positive from health and social care professionals. We will enhance this service by extending its capacity and put in place services for younger children.

- Reviewing further, with members of the community and professionals, the support available to children and young people and commissioning additional services where there are gaps.

### Support for parents and carers

- Good mental health starts in the home. We know that early childhood experiences impact on resilience and mental behaviour. We also know that being a parent or carer is a difficult and demanding job, and all parents and carers need some support and help at times. In recent years, East Sussex County Council and local organisations have trained staff in its Early Help Service, schools and the voluntary sector in evidence based parenting programmes such as Incredible Years (0-5) and Triple P Positive Parenting Programme (5+) and STOP (a supportive programme for parents of teenagers). These programmes provide parents with simple and practical strategies to help manage behaviour, support good emotional well-being, prevent problems from developing and develop strong, healthy relationships. The take up of this support varies and feedback suggests that some parents are reluctant to access support because they feel there is a stigma attached. In order to increase take up, we will develop and pilot a universal approach to support earlier engagement of families through digital and light-touch seminar delivery in schools and communities.

## What we will do (continued)

### A whole school and college approach to good mental health and resilience

- Schools and colleges are often the first point of contact for young people and their families when they begin to experience mental health problems. Evidence shows that adopting a whole school/college approach is the most effective to support good mental health and resilience. Evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) suggests that Social and Emotional Learning programmes have an identifiable and significant impact on attitudes to learning, social relationships in school, and attainment itself. We will

develop and implement a professional development programme to support primary and secondary schools and the college to implement a whole school/college approach to support mental health and to embed evidence based approaches. In every school and college, we will identify a mental health and wellbeing staff lead, senior management lead and governing body champion and ensure that they have the right training and support to undertake their roles, including in mental health first aid. Schools may adopt different approaches, but we will support them to use evidence based programmes.

## Our 2018 activity will include:

- We will work with teachers and leaders to develop a bespoke training programme to support schools and colleges to adopt a whole school / college approach to supporting mental health. We will ensure that it is tailored to the needs of Hastings. We will design the specification by March 2018 and deliver the programme in summer 2018. This will include training for identified mental health leads and champions in every school.
- We will expand the capacity of the i-Rock service and put in place a service for younger children by September 2018.
- We will map the provision of support for children and young people by March 2018 and develop programmes where there are gaps.
- We will develop and pilot a universal approach to support families through evidence based parenting programmes by May 2018.

## Our targets for 2020/21 are:



- All state-funded schools in Hastings have a trained mental health lead.
- The i-Rock service will have increased capacity by 40% – operating five days a week instead of three. Similar provision will be put in place for younger children. This increased capacity will ensure that you all young people can access support when they need it.
- All parents in Hastings can access support through digital and light touch seminar engagement in schools and other settings. All parents will be invited to seminars when their children start formal education and at key transition points.

In addition, we will develop outcome indicators drawing on the best practice toolkit developed by Public Health England and the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families<sup>10</sup>. Our aim is that by 2020/21:

- All parents accessing evidence based parenting programmes report improvements in their children's development and behaviour and parental wellbeing.
- All young people have received support at school to understand the signs of being emotionally and/or mentally unwell. They have the confidence to access help. They have the confidence to ask for help from friends and staff when needed and have access to someone to talk to who has received mental health first aid training.
- Pupils report increased personal and social wellbeing in school using the 'Stirling Children's Wellbeing Survey'. In 2017, 33% of boys and 34% of girls in Hastings aged ten recorded levels of high or maximum wellbeing for the 'Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale. We will increase this to 50% by 2020.
- School and college staff feel competent and confident in promoting children's wellbeing and report increased personal and social wellbeing in work.
- Preventative mental health measures are in place and there is a reduction of concerns in addressing mental health issues.

We expect activity to also contribute to reducing the absence rate across all schools so that it is lower than the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and increasing attainment across all schools, with a focus on disadvantaged pupils.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.annafreud.org/media/4612/mwb-toolkit-final-draft-4.pdf>



## Broadening horizons and developing skills for employment

### Why this is an issue

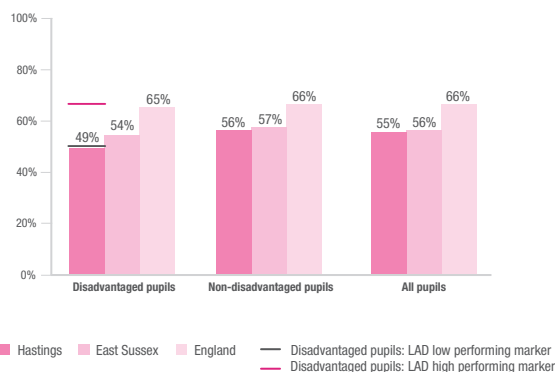
Essential life skills such as confidence, motivation, resilience and communication are associated with better academic outcomes and better prospects in the workplace, and there is an increasing emphasis on their value, given labour market trends towards automation. These skills have long been cultivated by the best state and independent schools. We have heard from young people on the Hastings Youth Council that they need better careers advice and guidance, and more extra-curricular activities to develop wider ‘life’ skills. We know that some young people don’t access the many assets the area offers: from the rich cultural offering of theatres, museums and arts venues, to the seaside and surrounding countryside.

Pupils in Hastings are overall less likely to progress into sustained further education: 55% of all pupils compared to 66% nationally. This gap widens for disadvantaged pupils with 49% progressing into sustained further education compared to 65% of disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Far fewer pupils in Hastings attend universities that demand the best A levels or equivalent; only 8% of all pupils in Hastings progress to the top third universities, compared to 17% nationally. Disadvantaged pupils in Hastings are less likely to progress into sustained education, employment or training at age nineteen than their peers nationally, 8% were recorded as having no activity captured post-19, this is compared to 3% nationally.

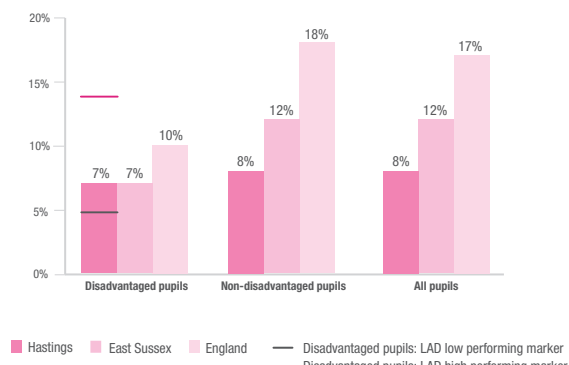
A group of local employers who have volunteered to work with schools (the East Sussex Enterprise Adviser Network) has identified the following as the attributes they most want in the next generation of workers: enthusiasm, passion and attitude; potential; commitment; positive mental attitude; social skills; dress sense / appearance; appropriate behaviour / communication; numeracy / functional maths; possibility of change / resilience.

Percentage of pupils at the end of key stage 5 in 2014 in any sustained education in 2015



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes dataset

Percentage of pupils at the end of key stage 5 in 2014 who went to one of the top third UK higher education institutions in 2015



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes dataset

## What we will do

### Every young person should leave education ready for life and the world of work

- We know that **employer encounters matter**. Research from the Education and Employers Taskforce shows that a young person who has four or more encounters with an employer is 86% less likely to be unemployed or not in education or training, and can earn up to 18% more during their career<sup>11</sup>. The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) has made a commitment for all Hastings secondary school and college pupils to receive at least four meaningful encounters with employers. These could include work experience, mentoring and help with interview practice and CV writing. To enable this, schools will be able to access support from the CEC's investment fund and an Enterprise Adviser volunteer from the business community, supported by Hastings' Enterprise Coordinator, will be offered to every secondary school and college to help unlock business relationships. In addition, we have identified nine cornerstone employers that will build on their existing commitment to young people, by leading the call to action, amongst the wider business community. A growing network of volunteers from the business community will also work strategically to support partnerships between schools and businesses. The special schools in Hastings have expertise in this field that we will build upon.
- We will support schools internally through their **career leaders** to ensure that activities with the world of work are prioritised amongst senior leadership and orchestrated effectively. The Enterprise Coordinator will work with Hastings' schools and colleges to understand their current careers provision using CEC's compass tool to assess performance against the Gatsby Charitable Foundation's 'Eight Benchmarks' of best practice which include employer encounters as well as wider careers education support. This will enable these schools to pinpoint the support they need and how we can help. We know that early engagement is important. We will ensure that throughout primary school young people begin to have their first encounters with the world of work and start to broaden their horizons. We want to expand this effort across wider enrichment activities to enable young people to feel inspired, motivated and equipped for adult life.
- **We will introduce an entitlement to high quality, regular enrichment for all children and young people across Hastings starting at primary school**, funded in part through an additional £650,000 Essential Life Skills Fund. This will build on and expand the activity already taking place and open up new opportunities for children and young people in Hastings. Regular participation in enrichment activities can help develop wider skills such as resilience, commitment, motivation, teamwork and communication skills and will help prepare young people for the jobs of the future.

<sup>11</sup> Mann, A. et al. (2017) Contemporary Transitions: Young people reflect on life after secondary school and college.

## What we will do (continued)

Enrichment could include, for example, playing sports, joining a band, attending a debating club, volunteering in a local community project, working on an art project with one of the many local cultural organisations, learning essential financial skills – and more! We want to ensure that there is an activity that will motivate and inspire every child and help develop essential life skills. The programme will include in-school interventions, activities across clusters of schools and cross town activity. We will put young people at the heart of this proposal and work with them on the design and delivery. We will appoint enrichment coordinators to work alongside the Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) to develop the enrichment entitlement and support schools to access it. This is an ambitious pilot, and is the area that is most likely to evolve over the first year.

- We will begin with **town wide enrichment days on school and college inset days**. This will be an innovative way for children and young people to work with each other, and learn from each other. Children and young people across age ranges will be able to try out new activities, undertake some social action, hear inspirational talks from speakers from different walks of life, explore different careers, or learn about university.
- **National Citizen Service:** The National Citizen Service is committed to increasing its work in Hastings so that more young people can experience and benefit from this four-week programme of personal development and volunteering. The National Citizen Service will work with Hastings Borough Council and East Sussex County Council so that young people who finish the programme can continue with volunteering using networks that already exist and make social action a habit for life.



### Our 2018 activity will include:

- We will make sure that every school and college has a dedicated Enterprise Adviser by February 2018, and support to develop a plan for achieving each of the Gatsby principles of good career guidance by September 2018.
- We will appoint enrichment coordinators to work with young people on the design of the programme in Spring 2018.
- We will introduce the enrichment entitlement in September 2018.
- We will hold town wide enrichment activities on school and college inset days in September 2018, and put in place plans for inset days for the course of the programme.

### Our targets for 2020/21 are:

- All secondary and college aged pupils have at least four meaningful encounters with employers over the life of the Opportunity Area programme.
- All school and college pupils participate in regular extra-curricular enrichment activity by January 2019, as measured through surveys.
- Young people have positive attitudes towards extra-curricular enrichment activity, as measured through regular surveys.



## Underpinning theme: Good attendance from early years to further education

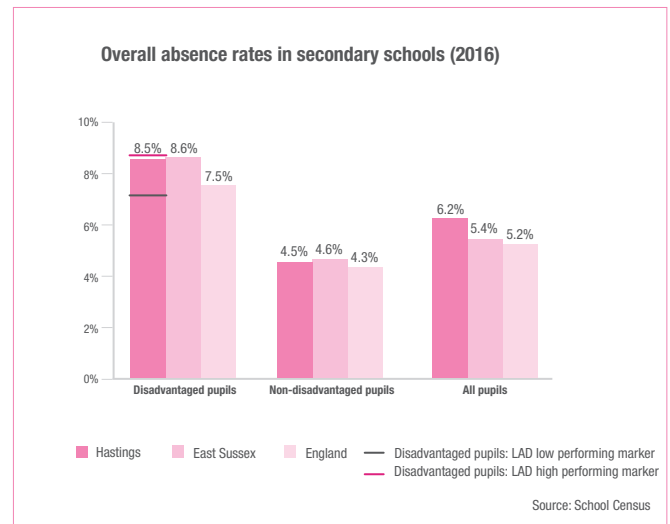
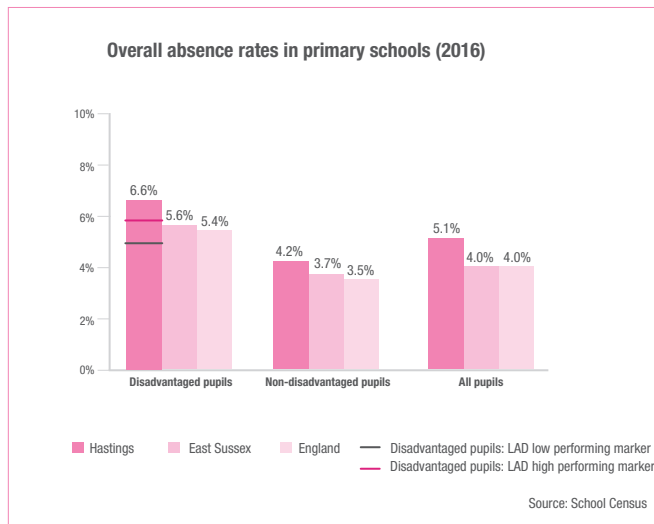
### What we will do

Attendance at school in Hastings is poor. The overall absence rate at primary and secondary school is above the national average.

There are many different underlying causes for poor attendance, and the actions that we are putting in place in this plan will help to address them. For example, we expect that our work to support young people and their families to

improve mental health and resilience will lead to improved attendance. We also expect that our efforts to broaden horizons and prepare young people for work will lead to increased engagement in school, and therefore better attendance.

In addition to these actions, we will work with early years' providers, schools and colleges to develop a town-wide strategy to improve attendance, drawing on the best behavioural insights research and working with partners across sectors.





## What next?

We want to hear from you! Please get in touch and share your ideas about how we can improve opportunities for Hastings' children and young people. We want as many people as possible to help to make our vision a reality. Perhaps you are keen to get involved in the Hastings town-wide literacy campaign, or have ideas about how to instil a love of maths for children and young people. You might be a local

employer wanting to help children and young people prepare for the world of work. You might want to support parents in your community, or you might be a young person with a drive for change.

If you have an idea you'd like to share or would like to learn more please contact [hastings.opportunityarea@education.gov.uk](mailto:hastings.opportunityarea@education.gov.uk) or tweet us @oa\_hastings.

**GET IN TOUCH**

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