



A First Class Education for
Every Hartlepool Learner

EDUCATION COMMISSION REPORT

Child & Adult Services

September 2015

Education Commission Report - A First Class Education for Every Hartlepool Learner - September 2015

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Glossary of Terms

CEIAG	Career, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
ESF	European Social Fund
FE	Further Education
FSM	Free School Meals
GLD	Good Level of Development
HE	Higher Education
HYIP	Hartlepool Youth Investment Project
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LMI	Labour Market Intelligence
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Economic
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPaG	Spelling Punctuation and Grammar
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TVU	Tees Valley Unlimited

Education Commission Report

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Foreword by the Chair of the Commission

The setting up of the Hartlepool Education Commission by the local authority Children's Services Committee in February 2014 marked a growing awareness among the educational community of Hartlepool that the challenges faced by those involved in the education of the young people of the town requires concerted and coordinated action.

At the heart of this report is our belief in the power of partnerships and of collaboration to provide an effective education for the young people of Hartlepool. Our approach is to acknowledge the increased responsibility of schools, academies and colleges with a stronger expectation that they commit to:

- strong relationships with other schools, academies, colleges and early years settings in the Borough where objectives and accountabilities are focused on the attainment and progression of every child;
- collaboration with the Council and with other local schools and organisations who work with young people and with the wider community where both the objectives and accountability are focused on the well-being of every child;
- wider partnerships across Hartlepool and the region with those who have experience and expertise in improving educational outcomes for children and young people, and for the benefit of the community in which they live.

Making a reality of this vision is the right thing to do, but it is also a challenge.

For these partnerships to make a difference they must be long term, substantive, focused and based on measurable goals. We believe publicly funded institutions must take both individual and shared responsibility for the interests of the children and young people of Hartlepool. We think it is essential to involve the wider community, especially parents and other carers of young people, in valuing education and raising children's achievement. We also think that schools should purposefully engage with a wide range of partners in education and training, as well as engaging with employers to enable children and young people to have a richer understanding of and engagement in the world of work.

We are at a time when there are valuable opportunities as well as challenges. There is a growing awareness of the value of evidence about effective teaching and learning and this is now clearly a part of the educational landscape. It will still be important to evaluate progress towards our goals, drawing on these evidence-based solutions and adapting and developing them to ensure they meet the needs of children and young people in Hartlepool. This requires a commitment to effective evaluation and the courage to abandon choices which are not providing the improvement needed, but also to scale those that are working in the local context. The underlying strategy for success must therefore be a different way of bringing about improvement. It is not about identifying a solution and sticking to it come what may, but it requires an adaptive process which seeks to test out and improve solutions as they emerge.

Progress will not therefore be made by imposing a quick-fix imported from elsewhere. A strength of the Commission's work, in my view, has come from the opportunity to discuss what has worked in other places with a range of stakeholders and to think of ways to apply these solutions so they fit the specific Hartlepool context. In future years other localities looking for ways to improve should be seeking to learn the lessons from Hartlepool's success.

Just about everyone we have met over the last year has the same vision for Hartlepool: for every child and young person to have the best possible chance to grow into successful, fulfilled and responsible citizens as members of a vibrant local community. We believe that our recommendations provide a clear and distinctive framework, but ultimately it is not further deliberation that Hartlepool needs, but action. We are confident and excited about the direction that we think Hartlepool's schools and communities should take and motivated by the progress we will be able to achieve in the months and years to come.



Professor Steve Higgins
Durham University
July 2015

Section 1 – Introduction

The Aims and Purpose of the Commission

The Hartlepool Education Commission was established in February 2014 by the local authority Children's Services Committee. The remit of the Commission was to address both the strategic priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan 2013-2016 and further priorities that have been identified through analysis of Hartlepool's performance trends across all key stages.

The key questions posed to the Commission were:

- How do we best direct our resources to ensure that every school in Hartlepool is good or outstanding by 2015-16 and, within that, how do we strengthen leadership and governance and improve the quality of teaching and learning?
- How do we ensure that the educational transition periods in children and young people's lives are well managed to ensure continuity of learning?
- How do we work with schools and colleges to diversify the curriculum across Hartlepool in order to provide coherent pathways from primary to secondary schools and into high quality post-16 provision?
- How do we improve the literacy and communication skills of children and young people through a Borough-wide literacy and oracy programme across early years, primary, secondary schools and FE colleges?
- How do we improve participation and achievement rates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and in modern foreign languages?
- How do we improve the quality of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) so that children and young people have the advice and guidance that improves their self-esteem, raises their expectations and helps them to make better life choices?
- What is our vision for alternative education provision, taking into account behaviour and attendance, so that we re-engage young people with difficult and challenging behaviour?
- How do we ensure that we integrate assessment, planning and resource allocation so that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) make good progress and good transitions into adulthood?
- How do we accelerate the educational progress of all our vulnerable learners so that they achieve at the highest level and progress to high quality education, training and employment?
- How do we better match the current provision within our schools with the expectations of employers?

The aim of the Commission was to work with partners and professionals in key areas to develop an Education Improvement Strategy which not only considers what the core purpose of education is, but looks at the wider agenda in ensuring our young people develop the competencies and capabilities to live a fulfilled life and make a positive contribution to their community.

Commission Members

The Commission brought together leaders from primary, secondary and special schools, academies, colleges, elected members, the local authority, public health in Hartlepool and key partners from the wider Tees Valley area including local employers. The Chair of the Commission was Professor Steve Higgins (Durham University). A full list of Commission Members can be found in Appendix 1.

About the Commission

The Commission met on six occasions between April 2014 and November 2014. During this time the Commission gathered information about the priority areas within education and the wider children's services and considered a wide range of published evidence, organised workshops where colleagues and experts in the relevant fields were invited to speak, and held a conference inviting all key stakeholders to attend to record and share their views. A list of witnesses who presented to the Commission can be found in Appendix 2.

As part of the stakeholder engagement process, the Commission identified the importance of gathering the views of young people within our schools. A group of young people was identified and a series of meetings held with them to ascertain what their key priorities were regarding education provision within Hartlepool. The group visited two 'Outstanding' Ofsted graded schools in the region where they spoke with other students about their experiences. This supported the young people in identifying what was important to them moving forward. The culmination of this workstream was shared with the wider stakeholder audience at the Commission's conference in September 2014.

The conference was attended by Hartlepool headteachers, FE principals, chairs of governors, elected members, public health colleagues, key partner organisations and senior local authority officers. As part of this event, workshops were held to consider the following eight areas identified through the Commission's work;

- Workshop 1: Closing the achievement gap in white working class children and young people
- Workshop 2: Improving participation, teaching and achievement in science
- Workshop 3: Cognitive and language development in the 0-7 age range
- Workshop 4: Teacher recruitment, retention and middle leadership development
- Workshop 5: Engaging and supporting parents
- Workshop 6: Broadening horizons
- Workshop 7: Emotional wellbeing, resilience and growth mindset
- Workshop 8: Transitions

Participants were invited to work together to develop a series of recommendations for the Commission to consider. These recommendations and emerging issues were then presented to the Commission to support the development of the Commission's findings as set out in this report.

Section 2 - Our Context and Our Challenges

Demographic Information

Hartlepool is located on the north-east coast within the Tees Valley region. It is a small unitary authority with a population of approximately 93,000. Mid-year population estimates show that there are around 20,300 children and young people under the age of 18 living in the town.

Take up of free early education is high with 97% of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing the free entitlement, 84% of which were accessing a provision rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. In addition, 270 children aged two were accessing funded early education with 47% accessing a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' provider.

Hartlepool is one of the most deprived towns in the country with 29.7%¹ of children under 16 years of age living in a low-income family compared to 19.2% nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is also above average with 25.9% of primary age pupils and 22.4% of secondary age pupils claiming free school meals compared to 17.0% and 14.6% nationally.

The rate of referrals to social services is lower than average for the North East region at 618.3 per 10,000 population under 18 compared to 659.8 in the region. However, this is high compared to the national rate of 573.0 per 10,000.

Hartlepool also has a high rate of children in need of social care services with 608.3 children in need per 10,000 population under 18. The average rate per 10,000 in the North East region is 456.7 and the national rate is 346.4.

The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan is also high compared to the national average. In 2014, the rate per 10,000 population under 18 in Hartlepool was 63.5 compared to 42.1 nationally and 59.3 in the North East.

The number of children looked after by the local authority has continued to increase with the rate per 10,000 population under 18 at 103.0 in 2014. This is higher than the North East average of 81.0 and national average of 60.0 per 10,000. In 2014, 57.0% of care leavers aged 19, 20 and 21 were in education, employment or training and this is above both North East and national averages of 49.0% and 45.0% respectively placing the authority in the top quartile.

The number of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) decreased from 2,771 pupils (18.5%) in 2013 to 2,576 pupils (17.2%) in 2014. This is part of a continuing decline since 2011 when 24.6% of pupils had SEN. This decline reflects a national decrease in the number of pupils with SEN without statements, however the rate of decrease in Hartlepool since 2011 has been greater than that nationally. The proportion of pupils with a statement has returned to the 2007 figure of 2.3%.

¹ Data relates to 2012.

The number of children with statements of SEN slowly decreased from 2007 (364) to a low in 2011 (282) and then slowly increased to 338 in 2014. This was in line with the national trend.

After a period of increase between 2007 and 2011, the percentage of pupils with SEN without statements has fallen sharply for the third year in a row, from 22.7% in 2011 to 15.0% in 2014, and is now in line with national levels.

Participation of 16 year olds in education and work based learning is in line with national average at 91.0%. Participation of 17 year olds is above the national average at 90.0% compared to 85.0% nationally.¹

Schools/Academies/Colleges in Hartlepool

Hartlepool has a total of 38 schools, including:

- 25 Primary Schools (all include nursery provision)
- 2 Secondary schools
- 1 Primary Special School
- 1 Pupil Referral Unit
- 9 Academy schools (3 Secondary, 5 Primary and 1 Secondary Special)

The schools vary in size, from primary schools with fewer than 100 pupils to over 1500 pupils in our largest secondary school. Taken together, the 38 schools in Hartlepool provide education for a total of 15,086 pupils from nursery to Year 14.

Post 16 provision in Hartlepool consists of a College of Further Education, a Sixth Form College, a Roman Catholic Academy with a Sixth Form College, an Academy with a Sixth Form College, a specialist College of Art and Design and several local and national training providers. There is a diverse mix of voluntary and community providers who support the re-engagement of 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) learners to post 16 learning via community based European Social Fund (ESF) projects.

Economic Development and Regeneration

Hartlepool is part of the Tees Valley region which is an area of innovation that contributes over £10 billion to the national economy. The Tees Valley is a major hub for process industries, high value engineering and advanced manufacturing. There are 665,100 residents, 419,200 are of working age (16 to 64 years).

A Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan has been developed and outlines the region's proposals to generate growth through transformational change. The plan has four objectives:

1. support innovation and sector development;
2. develop the workforce;
3. develop and provide infrastructure;
4. attract and retain wealth.

¹ Data relates to 2012.

By working collaboratively with partners, the Tees Valley Strategic Plan aims to create an additional 25,000 jobs within the Tees Valley growth sector industries and provide an additional £1billion for the Tees Valley economy over the next decade.

The ageing workforce issue will also bring skills shortages (estimated at around 120,000 over the next 10 years) when experienced (many highly skilled) staff leave the workforce. The aim is to work with schools and colleges to ensure that our young people are equipped and trained with the skills and qualifications to meet this need in areas such as advanced manufacturing, health and computing.

The ambitious strategy across the Tees Valley is focused on developing a more diversified and inclusive economy. The aim is to stimulate growth in the existing employment base by creating more indigenous businesses, supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and attracting mobile investment. In addition there is a need to work with employers in the private and public sector to improve succession planning in relation to replacement jobs arising from an ageing workforce.

Meeting the skill needs of these developments will present local schools, academies and colleges with a considerable challenge in the coming years, but will provide their pupils and students with a huge range of exciting new opportunities.

Hartlepool has published its vision for economic regeneration and the subsequent detailed master plan is close to completion. The master plan builds on the economic regeneration strategy and together provides the framework for future sustainable economic growth for the town.

Challenges – Education

Education in Hartlepool

The ambition outlined in the current Education Improvement Strategy is to establish a reputation for Hartlepool as a town that provides a first-class education for every learner. This is a shared vision with elected members, Council officers, schools, academies, colleges and external partner organisations.

The Commission received evidence on the performance of Hartlepool schools across all key stages. The evidence identified what we are doing well as a town but also highlighted the key educational challenges facing our schools, academies and colleges.

The Commission was provided with a wide range of performance information in relation to attainment and progress. A summary of school performance information and associated narrative can be found in Appendix 3.

Performance data show that the education system in Hartlepool is on a rapidly improving journey. The percentage of Hartlepool primary schools that are judged as good or outstanding by OFSTED is well above the national average, as are results at Key Stage 2.

The percentage of 16-year-olds participating in education and training is above the national average.

However, there are some key areas where improvements must be made. The Commission acknowledged that:

- the baseline on entry into reception is significantly worse than the national average;
- the overall achievement of children at the end of KS1 and the KS1 Free School Meal (FSM) gap are worse than the national average;
- the pupil premium gap at KS4, KS5 and in relation to progression to Higher Education (HE) is significantly greater than the national benchmarks;
- the variation between secondary schools in relation to 5A*-C including English and mathematics is significant;
- the percentage of young people attending good or outstanding secondary schools is significantly lower than the national average;
- participation and achievement in premium science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) subjects and modern foreign languages (MFL) is significantly below the national average;
- Hartlepool has suffered from high levels of youth unemployment (18-25 year olds). In October 2012, shortly after the launch of the Hartlepool Youth Investment Project (HYIP), youth unemployment was at 17.8% or 1,470 young people: this was the worst level for over fifteen years and the highest rate in Great Britain. Due to the dedication and efforts of the Council, partners and employers the youth unemployment rate has reduced significantly in less than three years and is now at 6.1% or 500 young people. This is the biggest reduction of any area in Great Britain over the same time period and Hartlepool is no longer in the bottom 10% of local authorities for youth unemployment.

The Commission identified that the single most important priority for the town is closing the gap in attainment outcomes and raising aspirations for those young people from low income backgrounds.

It was also noted that strong and visionary leadership is required to address the following areas:

0-7 cognitive and language development

There is clear evidence that more children in their earliest years, 0-4 years old, are not making sufficient progress in their cognitive and linguistic development which results in a poor baseline on entry to school. Commissioners identified that tackling this issue will require an integrated approach across the health, social care and education early help/early years workforce.

Teaching and learning

The Commission acknowledged that the quality of teaching and leadership are a critical part of the solution in raising attainment at each key stage. The attainment gap is narrowest in schools with higher levels of quality teaching. Therefore, how we attract good quality teachers into less attractive areas and into schools causing concern is a key challenge, because success attracts success. We also need to invest effort into growing our own inspiring teachers and supporting effective evidence-based classroom practice. This will require investment in a high quality, focused continuing professional development (CPD) programme for the workforce.

Middle leadership

The Commission recognised that the pressures that are being put on teachers to be leaders are significant. The quality of young teachers has never been better, but they have not been trained to take on leadership roles. There is particular pressure in the system because the professional capacity required of teachers to step up to middle leadership is not being sufficiently developed.

Science teaching

Understanding the challenges in relation to participation and achievement in science at KS4 and KS5 are critical to ensuring our young people become engaged and motivated in this subject area. The Commission identified the need to understand the issues in relation to strengthening teaching and leadership of science and the quality of science facilities. The approach to science teaching in primary schools also needs to be considered.

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

The very low participation and achievement rate in MFL is a cause for concern within the context of the skills required in the regional and global economy, and the need to change perceptions of the town as parochial. The fact that the most popular language subject is French is a potential opportunity in relation to the roll out of MFL within the primary curriculum. Commissioners identified the need for a town-wide approach to this to secure high quality teaching and continuity and progression across the 3-14 curriculum.

Transition, continuity and progression

The need for better sharing and understanding of assessment data at points of transition is important to securing continuity and progression through curriculum and teaching approaches that build upon prior learning. The changes to assessment within the new 3-14 curriculum are both an opportunity and a threat. Commissioners highlighted the need to address this issue.

Digital technologies

A co-ordinated local and regional approach is required to ensure that schools, academies and colleges are appropriately supported in the development, delivery and use of digital technologies. There are a number of places where technology is being used to support both high quality outcomes and where technology is tangibly transforming the process of teaching and learning. To remain competitive we need people who can manage, develop and invent the systems that will drive our economy. The vast majority of jobs and services in the future will require knowledge and understanding of technology; we need our children and young people to be equipped with these skills. By ensuring that our education system embeds up to date and flexible technology into the learning process we can ensure that learners access the skills they require to be competitive in the modern workplace. The Commission recognised the need to champion this practice within schools and provide our young people with the best opportunities to progress and to broaden the possibilities available to them.

Further and Higher Education

Participation rates for 17- and 18-year-olds in education, training and employment have been significantly improving, are currently above the national averages and are currently the best in the region. Similarly, the percentage of young people engaged in Level 2 apprenticeships is above the national average. However, at Key Stage 5 (A-level or equivalent), whilst the percentage of students achieving two passes at A-level is above the national average, the grades achieved are below the national average, and the percentage of young people achieving the equivalent of a Level 3 qualification at age 19 is below the national average. In addition, both participation and achievement in STEM related subjects are below the national average. The relatively poor performance in further and higher education underpins a lower proportion of young people progressing to university from Hartlepool. Additionally, a significantly lower percentage than the national average of young people from low income backgrounds progress to higher education. Alongside this, Hartlepool has the highest percentage of 18-24-year-olds seeking job seekers allowance in the region, and the third highest level in the UK.

There are several challenges facing the town's post-16 providers including further changes to both academic and vocational qualifications – for example the replacement of linear exams for A-levels and the abolition of AS qualifications, and the creation of Technical Awards at Level 2 and 3. Accompanying these curriculum changes, proposals also focus on ways of measuring post-16 performance and league tables. A further challenge centres around the prospect of reduced government funding and a change in existing funding arrangements – for example, funding for apprenticeships to be routed via employers using a voucher scheme. This potentially creates uncertainty among employers and reduces the willingness to employ these types of young learners.

Challenges – Broadening Horizons and Changing Culture

The Commission identified that Hartlepool's economic future is strongly linked to that of the wider Tees Valley and North East region. Simply put, there are not enough jobs in Hartlepool to meet the requirements of the current working age population which has resulted in Hartlepool having some of the highest levels of unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, in the country. To reach the north east employment rate Hartlepool needs an additional 3,000 jobs within the town and the travel to work area. However there has been good progress with the overall unemployment rate at 3.9%, being 0.1% above the pre-recession rate and youth unemployment has dropped from 17.8% to 6.1% demonstrating the largest reduction in youth unemployment within Great Britain. In addition, Hartlepool's business start up rate per 10,000 head of population has been above the north east rate for a number of years, business stock is growing and 5 year business survival rates are above the national average.

As previously mentioned, the ageing workforce issue will bring skills shortages (estimated at around 120,000 over the next 10 years) when experienced (many highly skilled) staff leave the workforce. Added to this is the understanding that the changing economic base of the town and broader region now requires a workforce with higher and intermediate skills, particularly in relation to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects and that is willing to travel. The Commission noted that there are existing and predicted skills shortages in relation to general employability skills, entrepreneurship, communication, STEM, graduate engineers, health, social care and support services.

The Commission acknowledged that thriving economies are dependent upon excellent education systems that help local people develop the skills, knowledge, qualifications and attitudes needed by the economy.

The need for young people to stay on in learning beyond statutory school age is already widely understood across learning establishments in Hartlepool with the town boasting the highest post-16 participation rates in North East region, and one of the highest in the country. However, the commission noted that young people are evidently struggling beyond the age of 18 to progress into employment or go onto higher education. The Commission noted that:

- the percentage of young people at aged 18 qualified to Level 3 is significantly below the national average
- the percentage of young people progressing to higher level apprenticeships is below the national average
- participation in STEM subjects at A-level is below the national average
- the percentage of young people progressing to higher education is below the national average, with young people from low-income backgrounds being significantly under-represented.

The quality of independent careers advice and guidance is an area of concern nationally and it was noted that the focus on promoting employability and skills in our schools requires further consideration. The young commissioners highlighted that young people need a better understanding of the full range of further education and training opportunities and information about local employer needs. The young people also identified the need for students to access high quality, face to face, objective careers advice and that they should be given opportunities to learn about the choices they will have to make. It is vital that local young people know what the world can offer them but also where they might contribute and the skills they can bring.

The Commission agreed that, going forward, providing local young people with the inspiration, motivation, knowledge, skills and opportunities they need to help them achieve their potential is key to preparing them for life and work in a skills-led global and regional economy and that this needs to start within primary school.

Modern careers guidance is as much about inspiration and aspiration as it is about advice. Sustained and varied contacts with employer networks, FE colleges, higher education institutions, mentors, coaches, alumni or other high achieving individuals can motivate pupils to think beyond their immediate experiences, encouraging them to consider a broader and more ambitious range of future education and career options.

The Commission established that helping young people and their parents/carers to understand the link between learning in school and the kind of employment opportunities that will exist in the 21st century needs to be at the heart of efforts to broaden their horizons and secure improvements in academic performance.

More contact with employers, enthusiastic and passionate about their own careers, not only inspires pupils but also challenges pre-conceived ideas about jobs. Having the opportunity to talk to people in those jobs, visit workplaces and participate in employer-led challenges would help to build knowledge and understanding of the full range of careers available in a particular sector. This can help to broaden horizons, challenging stereotypical thinking about the kind of careers to which individuals might aspire. There is a real opportunity to build on the success of HYIP where a number of key local employers have been engaged as steering group members, supporting education/business links and helping to shape policy and delivery on new initiatives that positively impact on young people and employers.

The Commission identified that young people need access to labour market information and intelligence (LMI) that supports their understanding of what jobs will be available in the coming years, the qualifications and skills necessary to compete for these jobs, and support to develop the attitudes and behaviours that are attractive to employers and underpin success in work and life.

Alongside this, the Commission identified that there was a need to ensure that labour market intelligence is embedded across all aspects of teaching and learning to ensure that teachers understand areas of economic growth, including information relating to entrepreneurship, to support students to broaden their horizons and raise their aspirations.

The Commission identified that the development of strong education business partnerships would be essential in taking these aspirations forward to provide better strategic join up in this area between the local authority, the Local Enterprise Partnership, schools, post-16 providers, universities and employers to move away from initiatives and to establish coherent education to employment pathways. It is also recognised that the initiative needs long term resource allocation to be successful.

Local Enterprise Partnership

Tees Valley Unlimited, the Local Enterprise Partnership for the five local authority areas of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton on Tees, collates and issues statistical data, comparisons and analysis for the whole area through the TVU website and provides information to support education and skills challenges through the TVU Skills Portal.

The Tees Valley Skills Strategy 2014-20 highlighted a number of challenges facing the wider area as well as Hartlepool, including:

- demographic changes - the increasing proportion of over 65s and the fall in the number of young people. The ageing workforce issue will bring skills shortages (estimated at around 120,000 over the next 10 years) when experienced (many highly skilled) staff leave the workforce. We therefore need to develop the skills of those both in work and wanting to work so that they can act as replacements. This could offer significant opportunities for our young people particularly in sectors such as engineering, chemical processing and logistics;
- an additional 25,000 'new' jobs are expected to arise over the same time period. It is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 of these will require a science, technology, engineering and/or mathematics qualification;
- a lack of understanding about the key employment sectors and the opportunities they offer amongst young people, their parents, teachers and advisers, as well as in adults looking for a job, promotion or progression in their career path;
- addressing the high level of youth unemployment and of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET);
- the need to maintain our improvement in Level 2 and improve on our relatively low levels of Level 3 and Level 4 attainment;
- the need for promotion of a positive image of the Tees Valley as a place to do business, work and live and to rebalance the local jobs economy with a move from a dependency on public sector jobs to more private sector employment.

Evidence was presented to the Commission highlighting the following key challenges:

- youth unemployment rate (% of 18-24 year olds claiming JSA) has decreased from around 17.8% in October 2012 to its current level of 6.1% (March 2015) and currently stands at 500 young people (18-24 years);
- 2013: non-participation at age 18 – 14.8% (national 7.0%). Job Seekers Allowance age 18-24 – 11.5% (national 5.0%);
- government data states that the number of 16-18 year olds not in employment, education or training has decreased from 7.8% in 2013 to 5.6% in 2014, with Hartlepool seeing the biggest improvement in the Tees Valley;
- only 447 pupils out of a Year 11 cohort of 1119 achieved an English Baccalaureate recognised science qualification in 2014.

Challenges – Health & Wellbeing

Commissioners acknowledged that the determinants that influence inequality in education outcomes are the same as those that influence inequalities in health outcomes. The Marmot Review “Fair Society, Healthy Lives” report highlighted the impact of poverty on a child's cognitive development and their overall health and wellbeing. It stressed the link between good health and wellbeing outcomes and employment, education and the environment.

Evidence presented to the Commission highlighted that children in Hartlepool do not get off to as good a start in life as children in the North East generally or England. Hartlepool children are more likely to be exposed to smoking and alcohol during pregnancy, and less likely to benefit from breast feeding and immunisation. They are also more likely to be overweight or obese as identified by the measurements undertaken in Reception and Year 6.

In their teenage years Hartlepool young people are more likely to be involved in risk-taking behaviours that impact on their life chances with worse than the national average trends in relation to teenage conceptions, substance misuse, sexually transmitted infections and self-harm.

A targeted and integrated approach is required to change behaviours in the small number of families affected in order to improve these overall trends.

Neglect

One of the key challenges facing the town is the number of young people suffering from neglect. Evidence presented to commissioners highlighted the impact that neglect has on brain development of children in their early years, and identifying the intervention strategies utilised by the Council to break the cycle of neglect. The Commission identified the need to gain a better understanding and definition of neglect and the impact it has on a child's development.

PSHE

There is a concern nationally and locally that the current approach to PSHE and citizenship education is not providing young people with the kind of framework that prepares them for life. The focus has been on a deficit model and focussed on risk management, rather than helping young people develop the resilience, capabilities and sense of self-worth that enables them to make positive life choices. The UK Youth Parliament has raised the need to change the approach around a 'curriculum for life'.

This was also raised as a priority by the group of young commissioners involved as part of the consultation process. The young people identified the importance of pupil feedback, that their voices should be heard and their opinions should make a difference. The Commission noted that the young people were keen to learn about life beyond school/college and to gain an understanding of the skills they require to become ambitious, successful and confident members of the communities they live in.

Complex needs

Evidence provided to the Commission showed increased numbers of children with complex needs. The Commission identified the need to consider ways of ensuring that the economy, education, health and social care system can meet the needs of these young people so that they can enjoy healthy and fulfilling lives.

Section 3 - Root Causes

Culture

The dominant culture across Hartlepool is its strength and its weakness. There is a strong sense of pride in place, drawing upon a rich heritage community spirit and strong networks across families and friends. However, this leads to an insular and parochial culture, even at the level of specific neighbourhoods. However, the future will require an outward looking culture and the confidence to engage with new opportunities in a changing economic environment. Broadening horizons, raising expectations across schools, families and the communities, and equipping our young people to travel out of town and the region to explore new opportunities and experiences is therefore part of the solution.

Education visions and landscape

Core purpose of education - the core purpose of education is more than just preparation for work and employability. It should be about ensuring every child can develop the competencies, capabilities and sense of self-worth they need for living a fulfilling life and making a positive contribution to their community.

Shaping our own destiny - the short-term nature and centralisation of education policy has led to a situation where local areas have not taken control of the education improvement programme in their area. Local authorities and schools have been beset with implementing national initiatives and this area has been vulnerable to budget cuts. There is a need to take control over developing our own strategic plan which is not dependent upon national policy changes.

Schools as agents of change - the breadth of Hartlepool schools' curricula makes them agents of change not only in terms of the educational achievement of children and young people, but also their personal, social and emotional development, and hence agents of change within the labour market and the wider context of our social communities. Schools currently identify, share and learn from best practice and improve incrementally as a result. This, in turn, improves outcomes and life chances for our children and young people. The challenge facing Hartlepool schools in the near future is to accelerate this further. This can be done by capitalising on opportunities to learn from other schools regionally, nationally and internationally more effectively, but also by innovating and trialling new practices.

Leadership capacity

Schools in Hartlepool, and indeed along the Tees Valley, repeatedly report difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality leaders into positions of middle and senior leadership. The reasons for this are not fully understood, but anecdotal evidence suggests that Hartlepool's geographical location and its profile are not 'attractors'. Additionally, career development opportunities are not immediately clear to professionals considering employment here. Research in other sectors suggests that 'incentivising' employment posts for an initial period of time may attract a richer pool of applications, but longer term it is clear that a well-structured and resourced leadership development programme, tailored to Hartlepool's local context and aspirations, is required not only to recruit well but also to retain the highest calibre leaders.

Early help services and family capacity for early childhood development

There is a low baseline on entry to school. The role of health and early intervention services in supporting early learning and child development within the home and in early years provision therefore needs to be considered as part of the Commission's work. Particular concerns relate to early language development and helping families support their child's learning and development. The potential role of schools as providers of two-year-old provision falls within scope, as does the need to target interventions effectively to disrupt the intergenerational cycle of neglect. Ensuring our work with families across health, social care and education is effectively integrated and targeted will be a key priority.

Transition

A review needs to be undertaken of how key transitions are managed across Hartlepool. The problem is that each part of the system focuses on 'our part of the race'. Hence transition between primary and secondary, and secondary and post-16 is not smooth or joined up. At each stage the 'sending' organisation feels that their assessment of the potential and the needs of each young person are not sought or taken seriously by the 'receiving' organisation. Transitions are the point in the system at which things fall between the gaps. We can significantly improve the progress and experiences of children and young people if we can weld the gaps and get continuity right.

Education, business and economic development

The Commission identified the need to explore ways of strengthening partnerships between education, businesses and the broader economic regeneration vision for Hartlepool to ensure that Hartlepool does not face a brain drain. Developing indigenous business start-ups, growing business stock, supporting growth SMEs, attracting new employers and the best teachers and school leaders into Hartlepool is dependent upon continued regeneration and infrastructure to ensure the town has the platform to be a sustainable and successful economy. This is part of the regeneration vision for Hartlepool. It is recognised that the education system is one of the largest employers in local communities and has a role in growing local talent for the school workforce. The Commission noted that teaching was one of the few jobs that brings graduates back into employment in Hartlepool. We also need to explore ways of working more systematically with employers in helping us to shape the skills framework within a Hartlepool curriculum model in order to respond to the wider workforce needs. The Commission highlighted the need to consider ways of scaling up coherent and high quality education to employment pathways through apprenticeship models and harnessing post-16 changes. Models involving employers working with schools to provide careers guidance also need to be developed.

Teacher recruitment, retention and development

Recruiting the best teachers and school leaders is a particular challenge because of the reasons cited above. This is a particular issue in premium subjects such as science, English and mathematics. The Commission will, therefore, need to give consideration to strategies for recruiting and retaining good teachers at this point in our journey.

Digital technologies

The use of digital technology to improve teaching and learning is an area that needs to be given priority. More could be done to share resources and exemplar lessons across schools, and to improve the way in which information and feedback is given to children, young people and parents/carers. These tools are vital in engaging our young people in utilising technologies that they use in a social context in a way that will widen opportunities in the workforce. Consideration also should be given to ensuring the computing and ICT curriculum matches the skills needs of employers.

Hartlepool Challenges – A Summary

- Supporting and working with parents and partner organisations in improving the language and cognitive development of children in their early years
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning
- Recruiting and retaining excellent teachers and leaders in Hartlepool schools
- Developing the roles of middle leaders and supporting teaching staff in making the transition into leadership positions
- Increasing the number of young people studying STEM and MFL subjects in preparation for the world of work
- Improving careers information and advice, and creating Education Business Partnerships, to better prepare and support our young people in identifying careers that meet their needs and those of the emerging economy
- Developing systems and partnerships to improve transition between each stage of a young person's life to ensure continuity throughout their educational journey and beyond.

Section 4 - Evidence of what has worked

Local

Hartlepool Schools, Academies and Colleges

The Commission received presentations regarding the key challenges faced by our schools, academies and colleges. The following messages were a constant theme through each presentation on what has been successful on the ground in similar contexts.

Focus on the basics

The Commission heard that there are a number of key challenges facing schools, academies and colleges, with pressure to achieve higher levels of attainment, changes in the curriculum, uncertainty over funding levels, and raising the aspirations not only of young people but also of parents. However, in the face of such adversity the focus in schools has been to improve attendance, improve the learner's experience, improve pupil expectations and build relationships between students and staff to ensure continued improvement.

It was acknowledged by a number of witnesses that a positive learning environment is influential in improving behaviour, attendance and attainment. It was acknowledged that a number of schools have recently benefited from Building Schools for the Future funding and Priority School Building Programme investment. The local authority is committed to identifying funding and applying for any additional grants to support school capital investment and infrastructure.

Culture of expectations

A contributor from the secondary sector identified that due to the large number of female staff members in the school, a large cohort of girls are aware of the need for academic success and what they need to do to move on and achieve in the next stage of their lives. Women in key leadership roles have had a positive impact on the expectations and aspirations for the young women attending the school. It was highlighted that this now needs to be replicated for the boys.

Information received by the Commission identified that schools strive to provide students with an education intellectually, morally and socially. Schools, academies and colleges are focussed on working with children and young people to improve aspirations and encourage them to aim high. This also involves working with parents, the wider community and businesses to ensure that these goals are achieved.

Targeted interventions

One contributor provided evidence regarding a reading initiative that has been running in the school for three years. All Year 7 students attend school at 8am to take part in reading sessions. The success of the initiative has meant that Years 8 and 9 also now benefit from this intervention. However, the school did experience some resistance from a small number of parents, and identified the need for parental engagement to be a priority to ensure supportive relationships are established not only for students but also parents/carers.

Another expert witness from the primary sector identified that transition to secondary provision is a key challenge in the school. In order to overcome this issue secondary school teachers are invited to visit the Year 6 classes to understand the ability of the pupils and engage in dialogue regarding transition planning.

Lessons Learnt

Quality of assessment and monitoring, teaching and learning relationships

All contributors identified the importance of rigorous assessment and monitoring of pupil progress. It was acknowledged that through a comprehensive assessment process teachers gain a clear understanding of each pupil's knowledge, skills and understanding enabling them to set challenging and rigorous learning targets, identify areas for further development and strengthen learning across the curriculum.

It was agreed that a culture of reflection, regularly reviewing pupil progress and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are embedded in many of Hartlepool's schools.

Headteachers also highlighted that the teaching staff in schools are committed to improving outcomes for our children and young people, and that the cohort of new, young teachers bring energy and enthusiasm to education. It is crucial that we have a comprehensive CPD programme available to all teaching staff clearly identifying what Hartlepool teachers are entitled to. The view of the Commission is that we should be identifying, developing and retaining our own teachers and providing leadership and management training as part of our succession planning.

Young commissioners reported that strong, positive relationships with teachers gave children and young people the confidence to question and query subject matter, and encouragement to aim high. The young people identified this as a strength in Hartlepool, where the school is seen as a 'family', where pupils and staff alike look out for each other. Conversely, the young commissioners highlighted the need for consistency in teaching staff to establish effective teacher/pupil relationships and accelerate the learning journey. It was felt that supply staff often cover lessons which aren't their subject area, and this can have a detrimental impact on the performance and attainment of children and young people.

Collaboration to develop a solution to common problems

The Commission identified the need to re-establish a one team, one town, one plan concept, outlining how all key stakeholders contribute to joint goals and helping to better understand the wider family and community context within which we work.

The Commission also acknowledged that the local authority has a role to play in facilitating the collegiate approach in education. Inevitably there will be competitive tensions between education establishments, however, the importance of constant dialogue, ensuring key stakeholders are involved in key decisions was recognised. Competition between schools can sit productively side-by-side with collaboration if goals are shared and relationships strong.

The overwhelming feedback from education colleagues and key stakeholders is the willingness to engage with partners to exchange learning experiences and share expertise. Three significant areas identified by the Commissioners were:

1. *Learning from Hartlepool* - someone in the area is already doing well in each important aspect of education. Identify: (a) Who is it? (b) Where are they? (c) How are they succeeding in this area?
2. *Learning from research* - Targeted interventions - how do we focus work to close the gap?
3. *Learning from enquiry* - engaging in finding out and tackling problems together to find local solutions to local issues.

In addition, it was recognised by the Commission that these four areas focus on partnerships requiring effective relationships, trust, and a common purpose (coming together at specific times for specific outcomes):

1. *Effective partnerships outside the area* - e.g. with third sector, private sector, education centres and centres of higher education etc;
2. *Effective partnerships with parents* - engaging meaningfully with parents on their own terms, developing better ways to translate educational language and identity beyond the school;
3. *Effective partnerships between professionals across schools* - CPD programme for teachers to build partnerships and expertise in the local area, working with the Teaching School Alliance and wider Tees Valley authorities to provide a cohesive CPD offer;
4. *Effective partnerships with young people* - listening to their voice, engaging them in finding solutions.

National

The following examples are some of the areas and models that the Commission discussed. They provide some evidence of works elsewhere in the country, and internationally, which may offer some insight and suggestions as to how the interventions may support our thinking and approach in Hartlepool.

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

The Commission received evidence on a national level from the Education Endowment Foundation (see Appendix 4) with a focus on improving attainment and closing the gap. Information was also provided about the work that had been undertaken in east London as part of the initiative known as The London Challenge.

The Commission heard that in 2003, 25% of young people in Tower Hamlets achieved 5+ A*-C (inc. English and mathematics) which improved to 64% by 2013. It was acknowledged that the focus of the programme was directed at improving primary education which then had a positive impact on the performance within the secondary sector. The strategies used by those involved in the scheme were based on the following principles:

- ambition – all parties agreed that poverty isn't an excuse for poor outcomes;
- sustained effort – improvement over time is key, which means hard work year after year;
- leadership – change requires the skill and tenacity of key people: governors / headteachers / teachers at every level;
- relationships – knowing, understanding and acknowledging the needs of others to achieve a shared vision and successful outcomes;
- partnerships – systems don't improve school by school, we require a diverse education system without fragmentation.

Evidence presented to the Commission highlighted that the critical success features of the programme were:

- building professional trust within schools, which identified three stages of development,
 - a) order, structure and a focus on learning;
 - b) development of educational capital;
 - c) focus on pedagogy and professional development.
- building professional trust between schools: developing collaboration and healthy competition: creating a new sense of identity and new ideology of self interest; taking responsibility for local schools.

International

STRIVE

Harborquest was founded in 1970 on Chicago's North Side by its current president, John Plunkett, and a group of friends. The organisation began as Just Jobs, Inc. with the goal of bringing justice to the temporary help industry.

Just Jobs soon became the country's first non-profit organisation to run a temporary staffing service focused on creating employment opportunities for residents of low income, inner city neighbourhoods. It provided these workers with decent living wages and ensured that their overtime hours, unemployment compensation claims, workers' compensation claims and taxes withheld were properly processed and paid. By 1976, Just Jobs had earned the James Brown IV Award for Excellence in Community Service from the Chicago Community Trust.

By 1986, the organisation had a top share of the light industrial contracting market in the Chicago region and employed more than 800 people per day. By the 1990s, most light industrial manufacturing jobs had moved from the city to the suburbs, so Just Jobs responded by providing long-term transportation to low-income workers. The name of the organisation was changed to Suburban Job-Link in 1991 to reflect this focus on transportation.

In 1995, with funding from the (Chicago) Mayor's Office of Workforce Development and the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Suburban Job-Link established the Job Oasis facility in Bensenville, Illinois. (Bensenville, a suburb northwest of Chicago, is a warehouse and manufacturing centre near O'Hare airport.) The Job Oasis provided a realistic connection between city jobseekers and suburban employers. It provided job search and transportation assistance to workers who previously had no access to entry-level/lower-skilled jobs beyond the reach of public transportation. One such innovative business/community partnership with a large suburban firm resulted in Suburban Job-Link receiving the 1999 Masterworks Award from the Council on Foundations and the Dayton Hudson Foundation (now the Target Foundation).

In 2003, Harborquest was formed through the merger of the Chicago affiliate of the New York-based STRIVE Network and Suburban Job-Link Corp. Prior to the merger, STRIVE/Chicago trained and supported over 4,000 Chicago residents, assisting them in finding and retaining gainful employment. As a result of this merger, Harborquest is licensed to deliver the internationally renowned training and support.

STRIVE/Chicago training provides Harborquest Members with intensive preparation to ensure long-term effectiveness and dependability in the workforce. Every Harborquest Member is required to participate in STRIVE/Chicago's comprehensive screening, assessment and at least 80 hours of work preparation in the classroom, prior to receiving a first staffing assignment. They are subsequently required to return to the classroom for at least 20 hours of additional instruction before receiving a referral for direct-hire employment. Those completing the STRIVE/Chicago programme are eligible for post-placement counselling, support, and re-placement for as long as they choose to remain in contact with the organisation.

STRIVE/Chicago's training protocol, in tandem with on-the-job work experience and coaching through Harborquest, provides reliable support to employers and employees alike. This powerful combination helps job seekers overcome barriers, improves their dependability, and enhances their ability to work well with supervisors and peers. Whether assigned as a Harborquest temporary worker or directly employed by another firm, Harborquest referrals are well prepared to adapt to a new company culture and quickly become productive.

Section 5 - Recommendations

The Commission's recommendations are set out below. The Commission acknowledges that schools, academies, colleges and other learning institutions are working in a challenging and continually changing educational landscape, and the only way to transform this area is when all involved work collegiately and collaboratively. There is increased concern regarding the fragmentation of the current system and the pressures on current partnerships. The Commission's aim is to ensure that all who are committed and involved in improving the life chances of our children and young people have a moral responsibility to develop a co-ordinated strategy in collaboration with neighbouring schools, colleges and partners. The bottom line is that children and young people of Hartlepool, and their future, is at the heart of what we do.

A: Leadership, governance and collaboration

- **A commitment to partnership:** working together with children, young people, parents, carers, schools, academies and colleges to develop a 'Charter' outlining our promise to every child and young person in the town, based on inspiration, aspiration and ambition
- **Transforming leadership and governance:** harnessing the power of collective leadership and governance to deliver ambitious goals through a strong alliance within Hartlepool and across the Tees Valley
- **Excellence in leadership and governance:** co-ordinating a Hartlepool developing leaders and governors programme

B: Culture, aspirations and employment

- **Achieving high aspirations and broadening horizons:** develop a cradle-to-career programme in collaboration with employers that works with young people to achieve high expectations and that provides children and young people with the information and opportunities, including high quality careers advice, work experience, mentoring and apprenticeship and HE pathways, that enables them to make good life choices
- **Engaging with and supporting families:** to accelerate children's learning and achievement by providing effective and targeted family support in partnership with the wider children's services offer
- **Supporting transition:** develop a model that secures continuity and progression at key transition points across the town through a focus on curriculum, assessment, information sharing, pastoral support and shared pedagogy
- **21st century curriculum offer:** establish a network of employer linked curriculum and qualification pathways that facilitate access to work in skill shortage sectors as well as to continued education
- **Emotional and physical well being:** improve the emotional and physical well-being of young people through a revised curriculum for life

C: Closing the gap

- **A focus on early child development:** develop and support an integrated family support and early intervention programme for 0-2 year olds that stimulates early child development
- **Raising achievement through targeted interventions:** develop evidence-based practice across clusters of schools with a focus on literacy, mathematics, science and transforming outcomes for low income and vulnerable children and young people
- **Alternative education provision:** develop a continuum of specialist provision across the education landscape that engages the disaffected and accelerates their learning

D: Getting every school, academy, college to good or outstanding and maintaining educational excellence

- **Teacher recruitment and retention:** proactively recruit and retain excellent teachers within Hartlepool schools
- **School intervention programme:** continue to identify schools that are a cause for concern and broker school-to-school support in order to intervene early and swiftly to secure rapid improvement
- **Professional Improvement:** Improve the quality of teaching and learning through a town wide CPD programme including high quality conferences, master classes, practice networks and school and cluster based CPD.

Section 6 – Establishment of Education Improvement Board

It is the view of the Commission that the implementation of its recommendations will require considerable drive, focus and resource. Commissioners therefore advise the establishment of an Education Improvement Board to implement the recommendations outlined in this report to support educational improvement in Hartlepool to increase the focus on the outcomes of children and young people in the town.

The role of the Education Improvement Board will be to oversee and co-ordinate the vision of the Commission. One of its first tasks will be to develop a 'Charter' with key stakeholders to set out a shared vision, and from this to create and shape an action plan, identify the necessary resources required and monitor the progress of the plan. This will require involvement from all key partners, including:

- School representatives
- Academy representatives
- HE/FE College representatives
- Council officers
- Elected members
- Governor representatives
- Children and Young People
- LEP representative
- Regional representatives
- Employer representatives
- Parents and Carers

The Commission acknowledges that there are networks and groups already working across the town, but believe the recommendations from this report must be the focus for all future meetings and that by working collaboratively together, and by establishing new networks we can achieve real, tangible improvements for our children and young people.

Appendix 1 : Membership of the Hartlepool Education Commission

Information correct as at launch of Education Commission - February 2014.

Professor Steve Higgins	Durham University
Gill Alexander	Director of Child & Adult Services
Councillor Chris Simmons	Chair of Children's Services Committee
Councillor Marjorie James	Member of Children's Services Committee
Dean Jackson	Assistant Director, Child & Adult Services
Mark Patton	Senior School Improvement Advisor
Louise Wallace	Director of Public Health
Denise Ogden	Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Damien Wilson	Assistant Director, Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Rachel Smith	Strategic Commissioner, Education and Children's Services
Darren Hankey	Principal, Hartlepool College of Further Education
Anne Malcolm	Headteacher, Manor Community Academy
John Hardy	Headteacher, St John Vianney RC Primary School
Karl Telfer	Headteacher, Springwell School
Michael Lee	Headteacher, The English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College
Julie Thomas	Headteacher, Brougham Primary School
Neil Nottingham	Headteacher, Stranton Academy
Alby Pattison	Governor, Manor Community Academy / High Tunstall College of Science
Judy Thompson	Governor, Eskdale Academy
Sue Hannan	Tees Valley Unlimited

Appendix 2 : List of expert witnesses

Information correct as at launch of Education Commission - February 2014.

During the period of our Commission, we received presentations from the following expert witnesses:

Dean Jackson	Assistant Director, Child & Adult Services
Denise Ogden	Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Louise Wallace	Director of Public Health
Tom Grieveson	Senior HMI, Ofsted
Mark Patton	Senior School Improvement Advisor
Andrew Jordon	Headteacher, Dyke House College
Michael Lee	Headteacher, The English Martyrs Schools and Sixth Form College
Karl Telfer	Headteacher, Springwell School
Julie Thomas	Headteacher, Brougham Primary School
Dr Kevan Collins	Education Endowment Foundation
Jon Haines	PGCE Science Lead, Newcastle University
Anne Malcolm	Headteacher, Manor College
Sally Robinson	Assistant Director, Child and Adult Services
Pauline Wonders	Director, Tyne Gateway Trust
Brian Cartwright	HMI, Ofsted National Lead, Science
Antony Steinberg	Economic Regeneration Manager, Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Sue Hannan	Tees Valley Unlimited (LEP)
Alby Pattison	Managing Director, Hart Biologicals Ltd

Commission Sessions

Session 1	1st April 2014
Session 2	7th May 2014
Session 3	23rd June 2014
Session 4	17th July 2014
Education Commission Conference	17th September 2014
Session 5	5th November 2014

Meetings with young commissioners

The group included representatives from each Hartlepool secondary school/academy, a member of Youth Parliament and a Young Inspector

Workshop 1	25th June 2014
School Visits	7th July 2014
Workshop 2	22nd August 2014
Workshop 3	8th September 2014
Presentation to the Commission	17th September 2014

Appendix 3

EDUCATION IN HARTLEPOOL

Education Commission Data Report

Child & Adult Services
Hartlepool Borough Council
April 2015

Education in Hartlepool

Education Context

Hartlepool is a small unitary authority with a population of approximately 93,000. Mid-year population estimates show that there are around 20,300 children and young people under the age of 18 living in the town.

The current education provision is as follows:

- 30 primary schools (of which 5 are academies)
- 5 secondary schools (of which 3 are academies and 2 have sixth form provision)
- 2 special schools (of which 1 is an academy)
- 1 pupil referral unit supporting pupils in Key Stages 2 to 4.

The school, academy and school sixth form provision in Hartlepool currently serves 15,086 pupils from nursery to year 14. In addition, there is 1 sixth form college and 1 further education college. Schools vary in size, from primary schools with fewer than 100 pupils to over 1500 pupils in our largest secondary school (includes sixth form provision).

For the majority of schools, pupil numbers are stable. However, some primary schools experience significant turnover in their pupil numbers as a result of pupil mobility within the town.

Figure 1 shows projected primary age pupil numbers for the next ten years in Hartlepool.

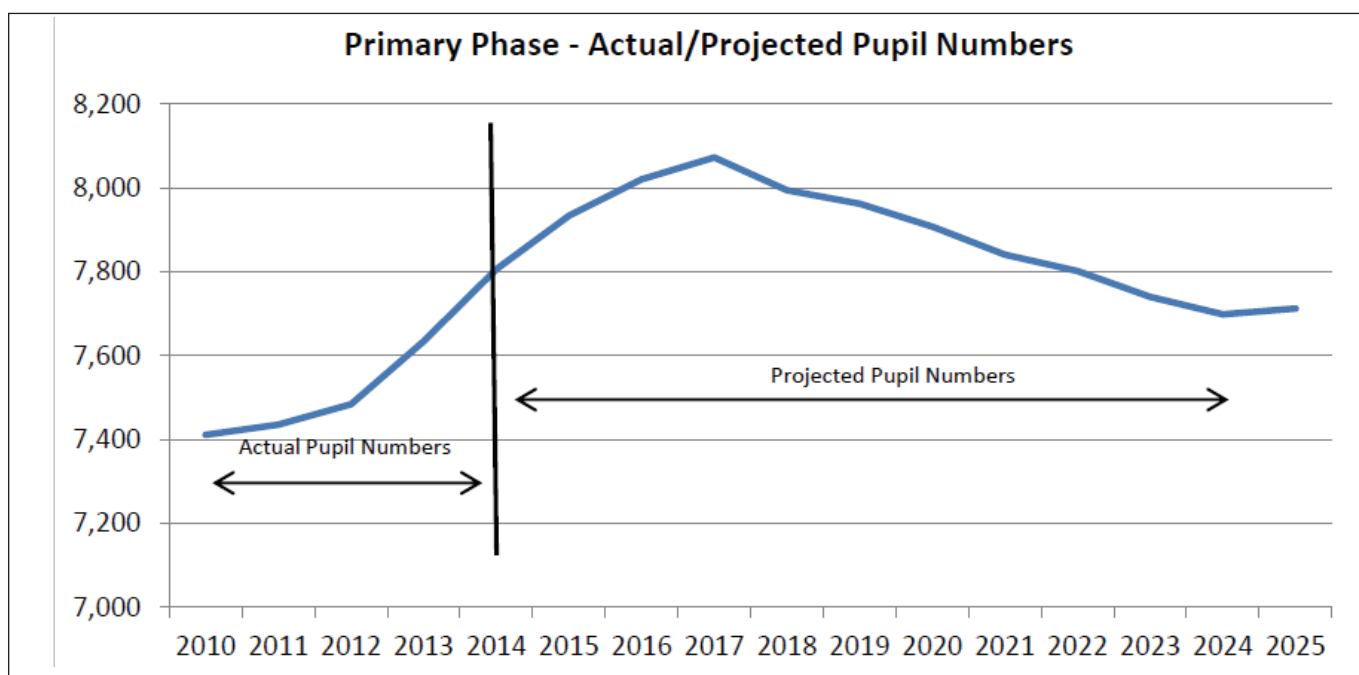


Fig.1 – Source: Tees Valley Unlimited Pupil Projections 2014

As a result of previous increases in birth rates, it is projected that Hartlepool primary school rolls will continue to increase until 2017. However, 2013 live birth data from the Office of National Statistics shows a 4.3% reduction in the national birth rate and it is expected that this will result in decreasing pupil numbers; revised projections suggest that Hartlepool will have approximately 108 fewer pupils in 2024 than in 2014.

Figure 2 shows the projected secondary age pupil numbers for the next ten years in Hartlepool.

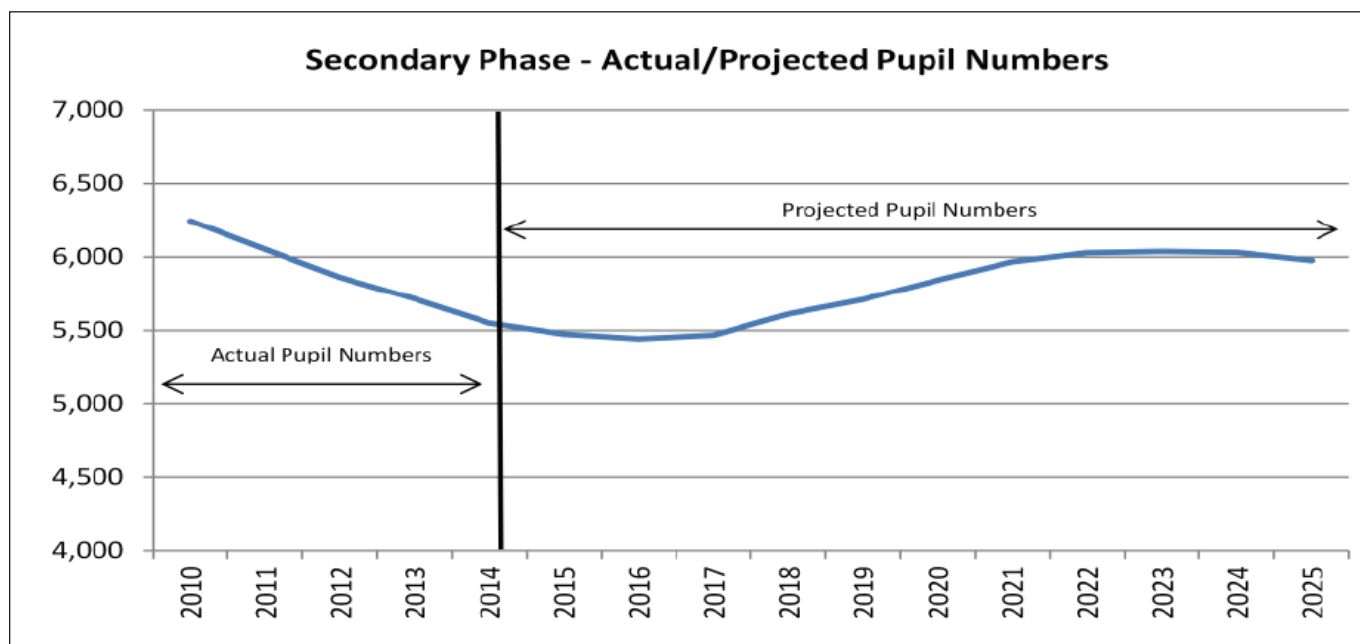


Fig. 2 – Source: Tees Valley Unlimited Pupil Projections 2014

Births in the area feed through to primary school entry five years later and to secondary school entry 11 years later and there is a strong correlation between births and numbers entering school for both sectors.

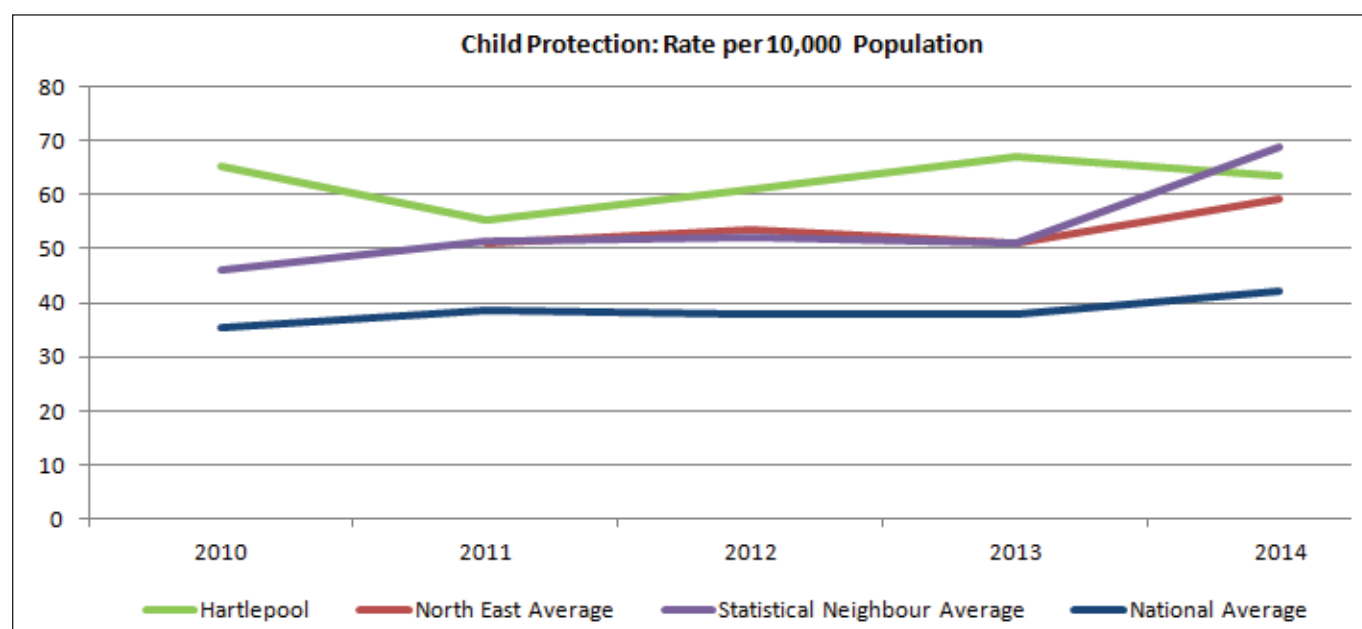
Secondary schools are in a period of declining numbers and this is expected to continue for the next two years as the smaller cohorts of the late 1990s/ early 2000s feed through. These will then be replaced by larger cohorts and numbers are expected to increase slowly initially, and then by around 100 per annum from Spring 2018 until Spring 2021 when numbers are expected to level off at around 5,700.

Social Care Context

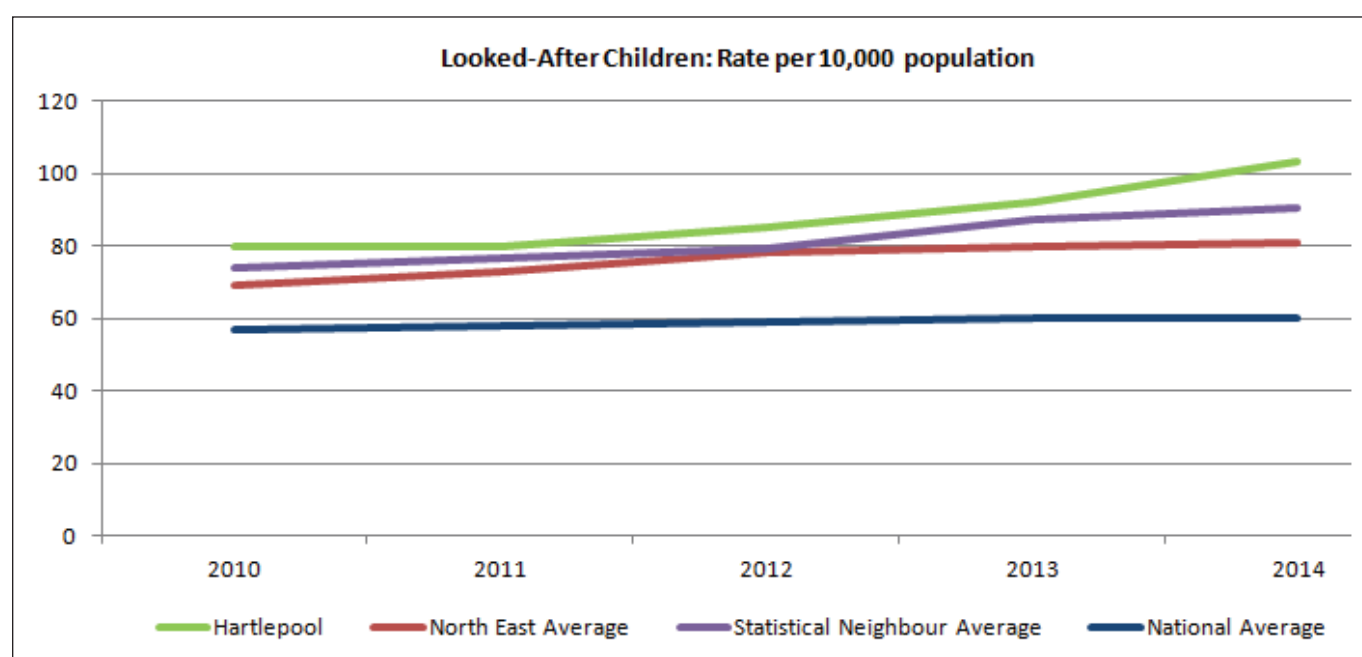
Referrals to Children's Social Care are high compared to the national average with Hartlepool receiving 618.3 referrals per 10,000 under 18 population in 2014. The national average was 573 per 10,000. However, Hartlepool rates were below both the regional (659.8) and statistical neighbour (662.7) averages.

Just over half of the referrals received by Hartlepool Children's Social Services in 2014 were for neglect (51.0%).

As can be seen in figure 3, the rate per 10,000 of children aged under 18 who were the subject of a Child Protection Plan has remained consistently higher than the national, regional and statistical neighbour averages until 2014 when it dropped below the statistical neighbour average.

Figure 3*Fig 3. Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)*

The rate of children in care in Hartlepool in 2014 was 103 children per 10,000 population aged under 18. This is higher than the national average of 60 per 10,000 and also above both the regional and statistical neighbour average.

Figure 4*Fig 4. Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)*

Early Years

Take up of free early education is high with 97% of three- and four-year-olds accessing the free entitlement, 84% of which were accessing a provision rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted. In addition, 270 children aged two were accessing funded early education, with 47% accessing a good or outstanding provider.

In Autumn 2014, the local authority collected assessment data for funded two-year-olds for the first time. At this point in their education, the age related expectation is for each child to be secure in the 16-24 month age band or emerging in the 22-36 month age band.

Approximately 80% of two year olds for whom data were available were working at or above the age related expectations. The age related expectation for the Autumn 2014 two-year-old cohort is to be secure in the 16-26 month age band or emerging in the 22-26 month age band.

The area of development with the highest percentage of children working at or above age related expectation was Moving & Handling (88%).

The area of development with the highest percentage of children working 'below' age related expectation was Understanding (24%), closely followed by Health & Self Care (23%).

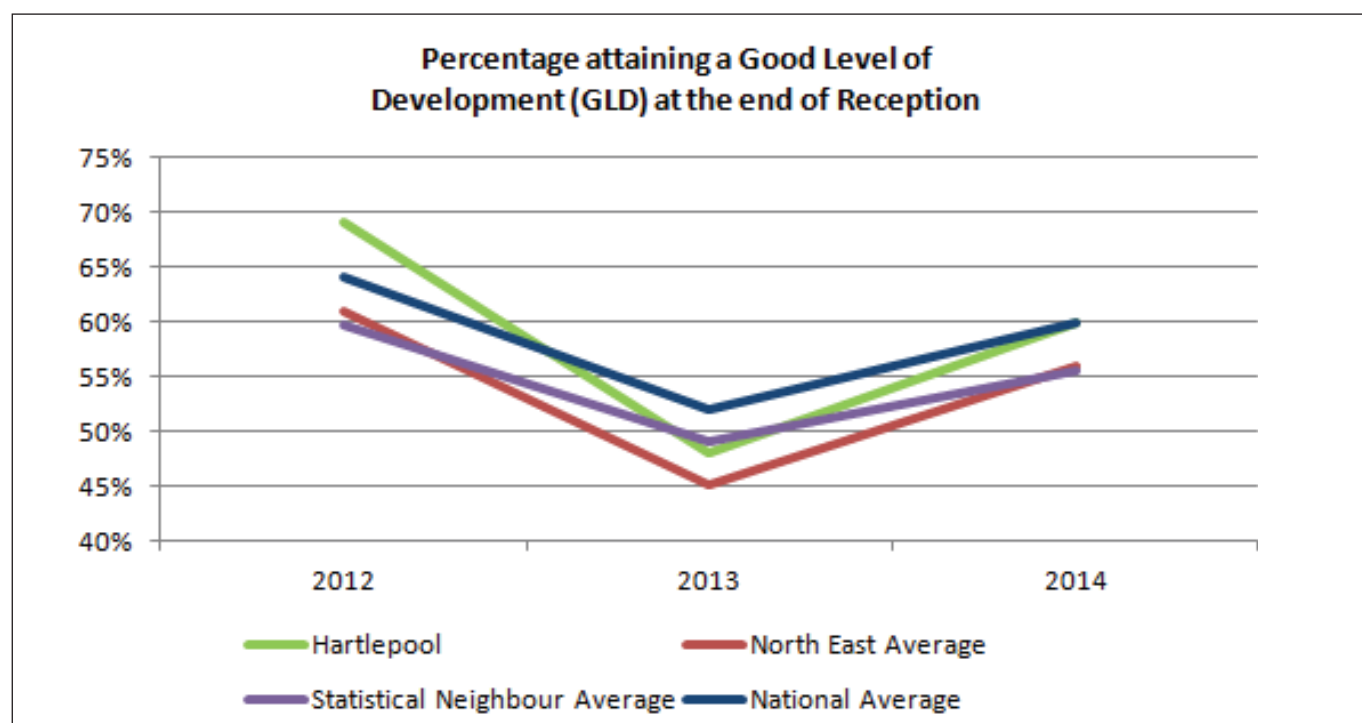
Figure 5

	Autumn 2014 - 2 Year Old Assessments						
	Making Relationships	Self-confidence & Self-awareness	Managing Feelings & behaviour	Listening & Attention	Understanding	Moving & Handling	Health & Self Care
Working Below Age Related Expectation	14.4%	19.2%	21.6%	20.8%	24.0%	12.0%	23.2%
Working At Age Related Expectation	48.0%	32.8%	51.2%	46.4%	45.6%	52.8%	50.4%
Working Above Age Related Expectation	37.6%	48.0%	27.2%	32.8%	30.4%	35.2%	26.4%
Working At/Above Age Related Expectation	85.6%	80.8%	78.4%	79.2%	76.0%	88.0%	76.8%

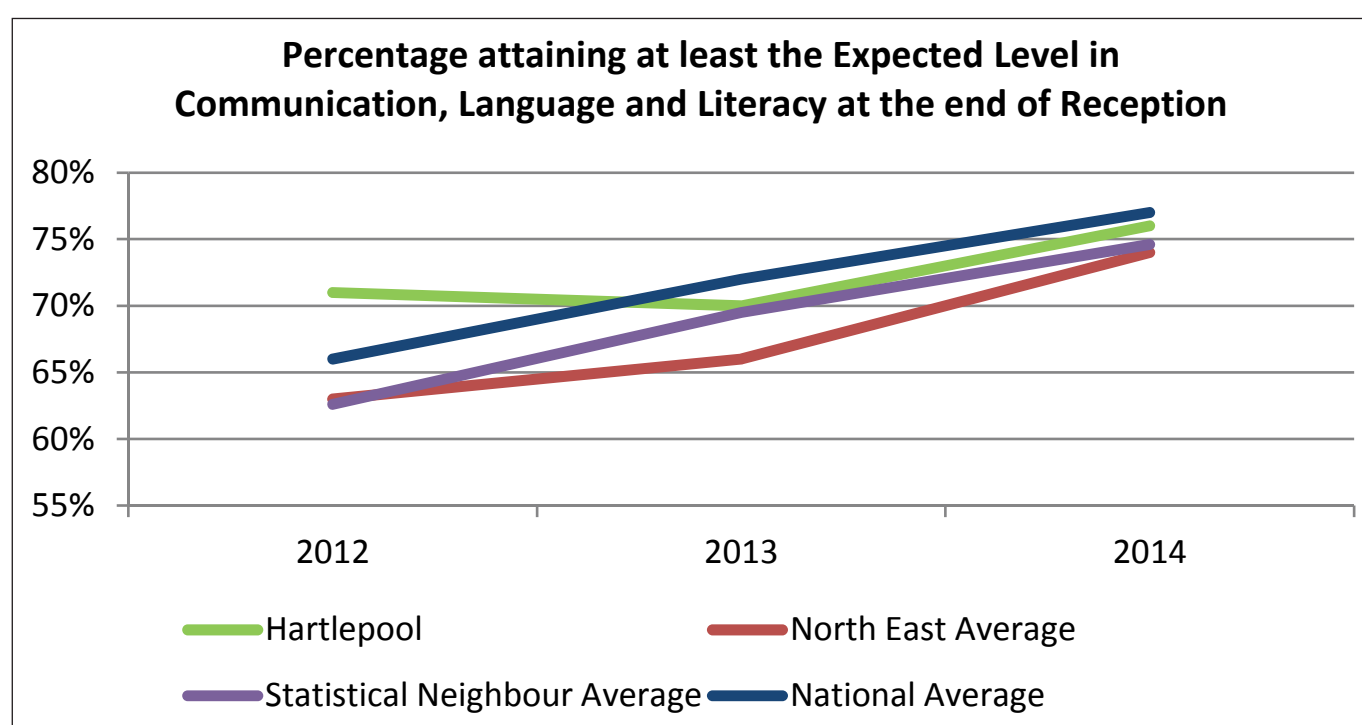
Fig. 5 – Source: Local Authority Data Collection (Autumn 2014)

At the end of the Reception year children are assessed in 17 areas of development. Children who are assessed as being at or above the expected level of development in each of the five prime areas and in literacy and mathematics are considered to have achieved a good level of development (GLD). The percentage of children achieving a good level of development in Hartlepool has increased by 12% from 48% in 2013 to 60% in 2014, bringing the town in line with the national average.

The percentage of Hartlepool pupils achieving a GLD was above both the regional and statistical neighbours in 2014.

Figure 6*Fig. 6 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2014)*

In Communication, Language and Literacy the Hartlepool average was just below national average with 76% of pupils working at the expected level or above. This is an increase of six percentage points from 2013 and brings the town within one percentage point of the national average.

Figure 7*Fig. 7 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2014)*

Year 1 Phonics Decoding

Children undertake a test at the end of Year 1 to assess their phonic decoding ability. The percentage of children in Hartlepool schools reaching the expected level in phonic decoding has increased by 19 percentage points between 2012 and 2014; this is a greater rate of improvement than that seen nationally. In 2014, 80% of children in Year 1 reached or exceeded the expected standard compared to 74% nationally, and Hartlepool continued to perform above both regional and statistical neighbours.

Figure 8

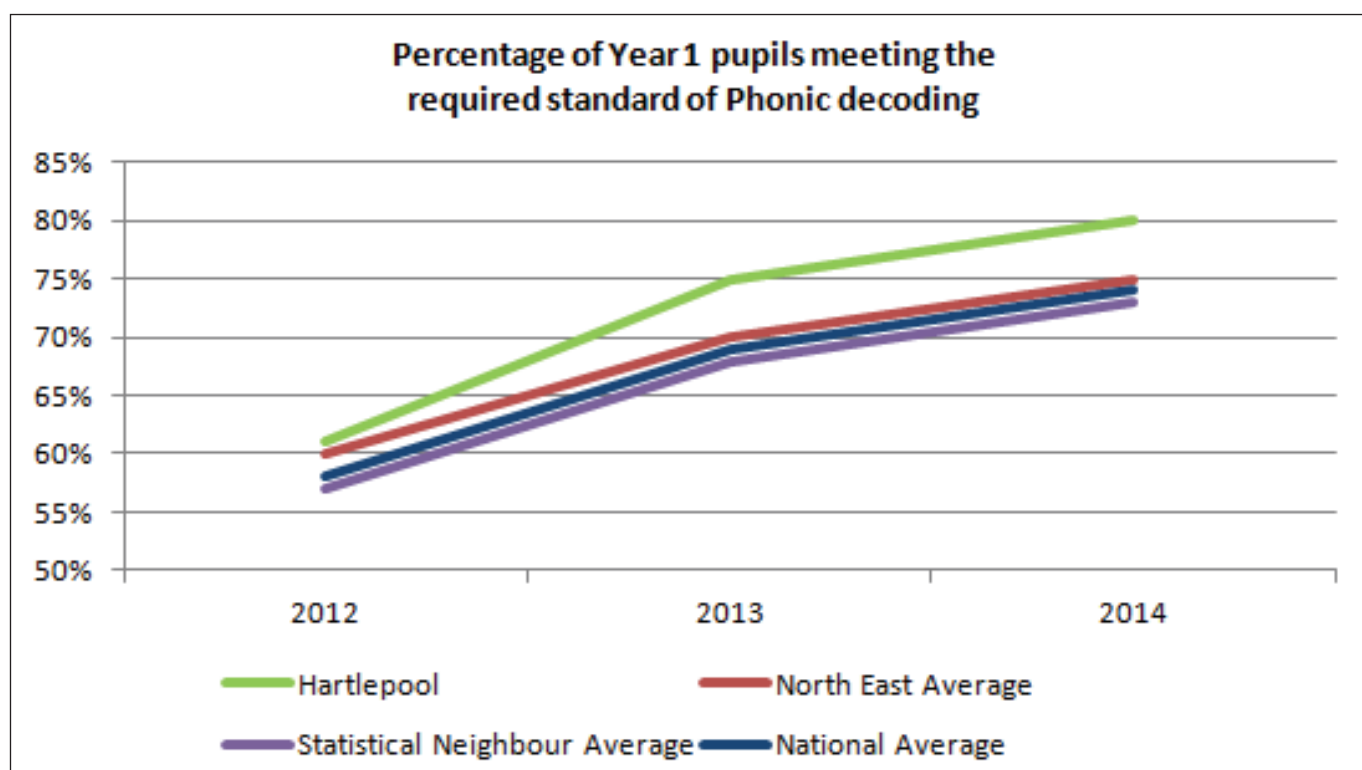


Figure 8. Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

Girls outperformed boys again in 2014 but the gender gap narrowed from 10% in 2013 to 4% in 2014. Those children entitled to free school meals (FSM) did not perform as well as their non-FSM peers. The gap widened from 9% in 2013 to 12% in 2014.

Key Stage 1

Standards at Level 2+ in reading, writing and mathematics were very similar in 2014 compared to 2013. Data indicate that Hartlepool children are just below national benchmarks in reading (three percentage points) and mathematics (two percentage points) and one percentage point above in writing in this measure. Girls outperformed boys once again this year, with the gender gap being five percentage points in reading, four percentage points in writing and three percentage points in mathematics. These gaps all widened slightly in 2014.

Children in receipt of free school meals continue to underachieve relative to their peers in Hartlepool; in reading this gap is eleven percentage points; in writing it is ten percentage points; and in mathematics it is eight percentage points.

Overall standards in the more challenging Level 3+ indicator for reading, writing and mathematics fell slightly in 2014 compared to 2013. The largest fall of three percentage points was in reading.

Figure 9

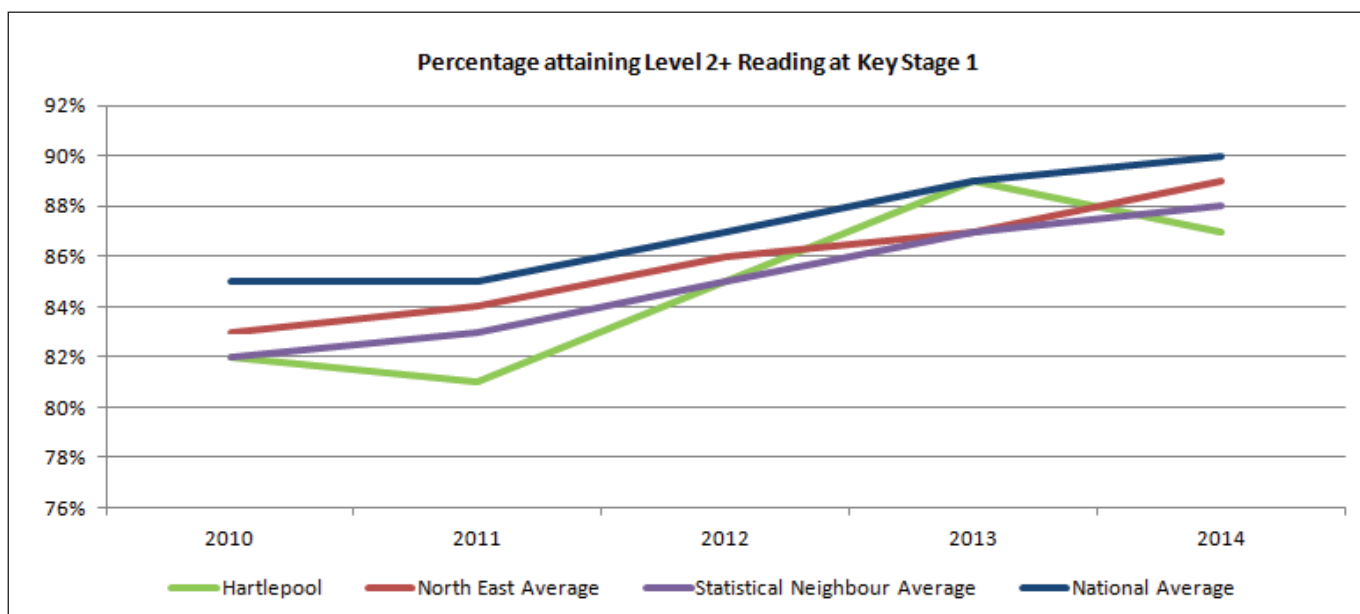


Fig. 9 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

The percentage of pupils attaining L2+ in reading has increased by six percentage points since 2011 with a peak in 2013 (89%). Performance in 2014 was below national average by three percentage points.

Figure 10

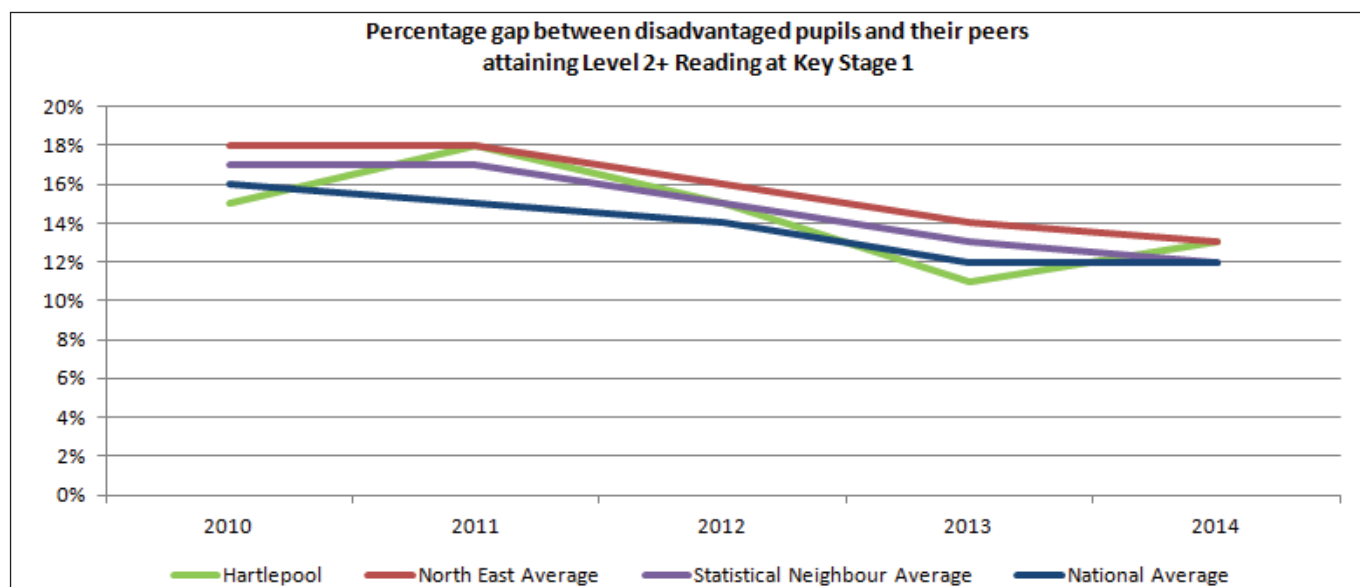
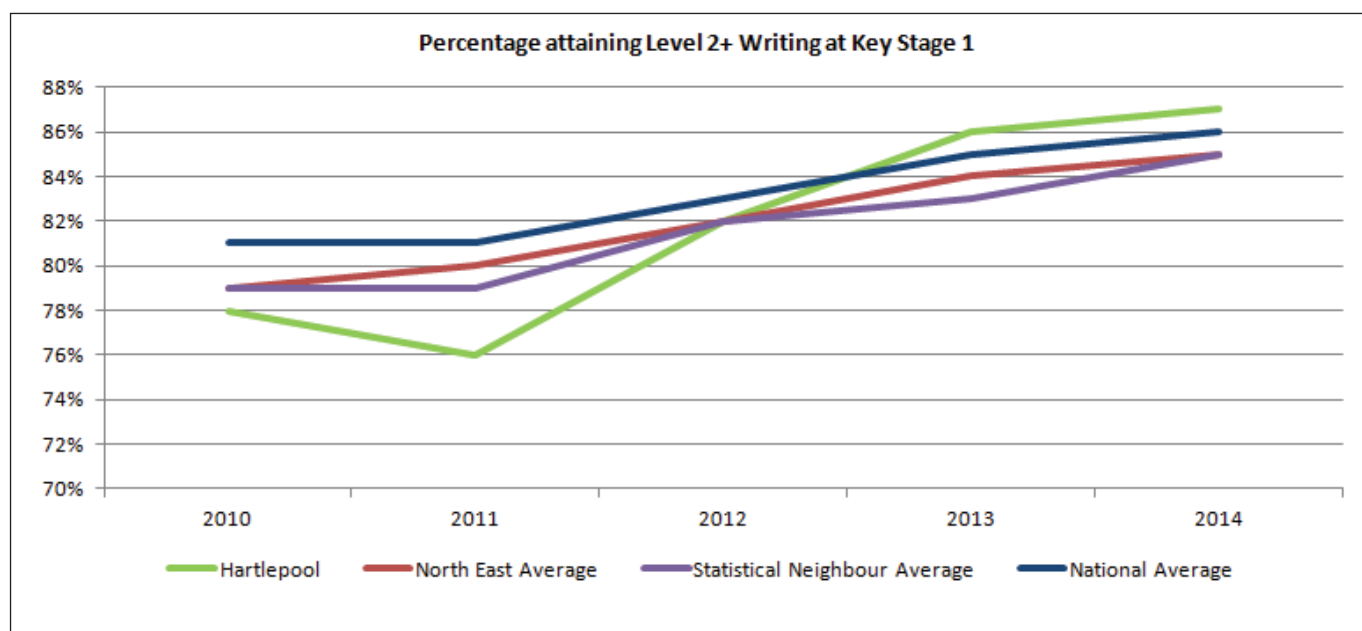
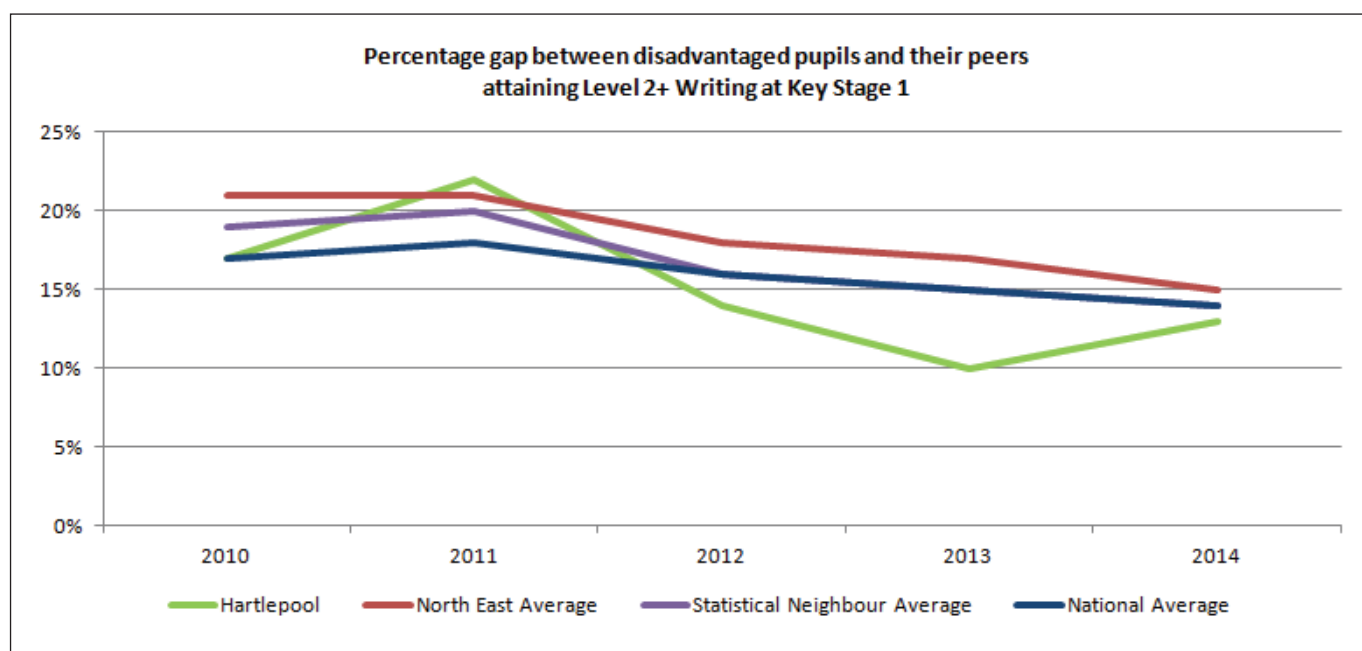


Fig. 10 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

The gap between disadvantaged pupils (those entitled to a Free School Meal in the past six years or looked after by the LA for six months or more) and their peers decreased between 2011 and 2013 but increased in 2014 to slightly above the national average and in line with the North East average.

Figure 11*Fig. 11 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)*

In writing, the percentage of pupils attaining L2+ has increased steadily since 2011 and is above the national average of 86% in 2014. Hartlepool is also above the averages of both regional neighbours and statistical neighbours.

Figure 12*Fig. 12 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)*

The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has decreased at a much quicker rate than that seen nationally, with the gap at 13 percentage points in 2014.

Figure 13

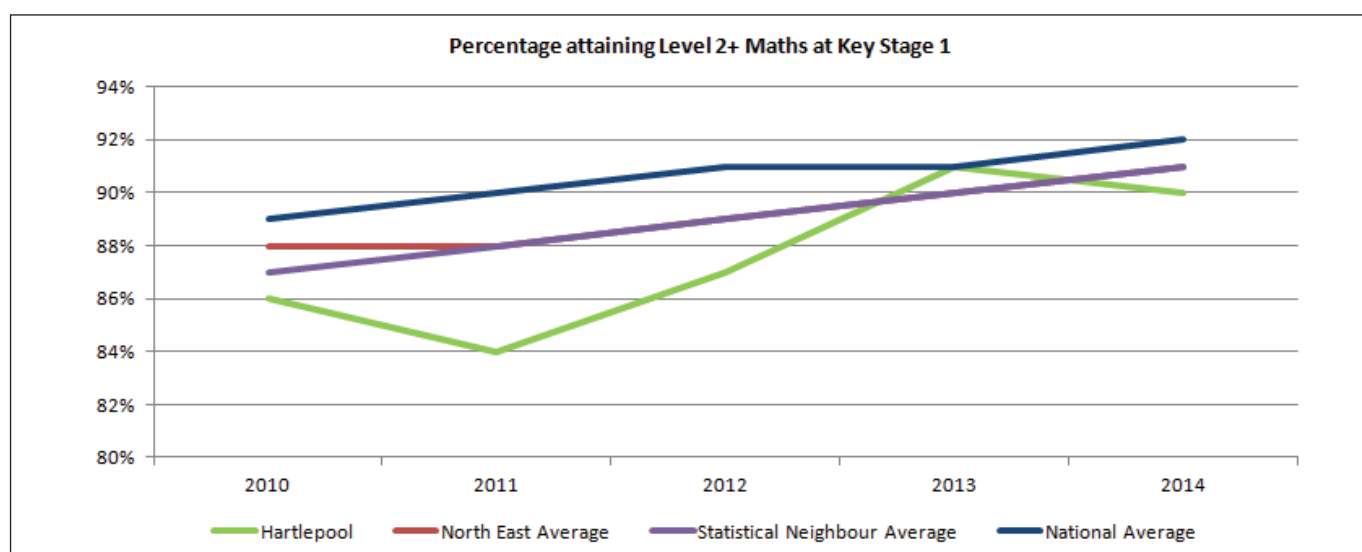


Fig. 13 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

The percentage of pupils attaining L2+ in Maths has increased by six percentage points over the last three years. This is a greater rate of improvement than that seen nationally. In 2013, Hartlepool pupils were in line with the national average but a drop in 2014 puts the Hartlepool average two percentage points below the national average.

Figure 14

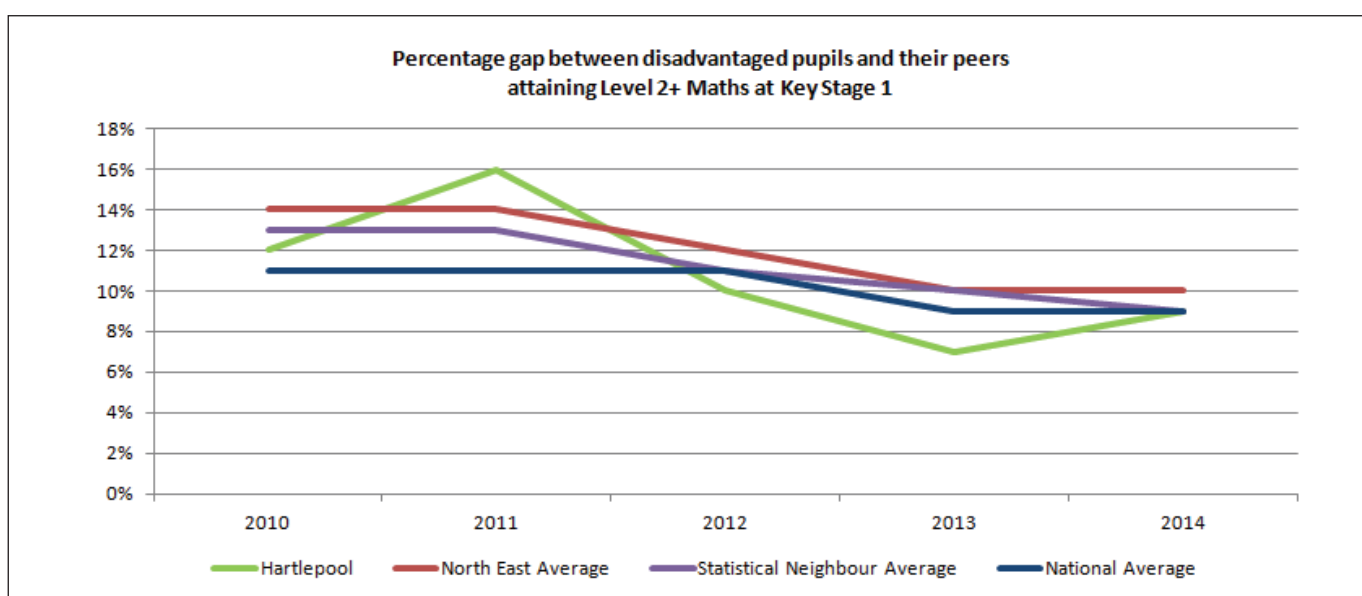


Fig. 14 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in mathematics has decreased by seven percentage points over the last three years. This is again, a quicker rate of improvement than that seen nationally and brings Hartlepool in line with national averages. However, 2014 saw an increase in the gap compared to 2013.

Key Stage 2

At age 11, primary schools in Hartlepool generally have levels of attainment similar to the rest of England. In terms of level thresholds, in 2014, 80% of pupils attained at level 4+ in each of reading, writing and mathematics, which is just above the national average (79%).

Figure 14

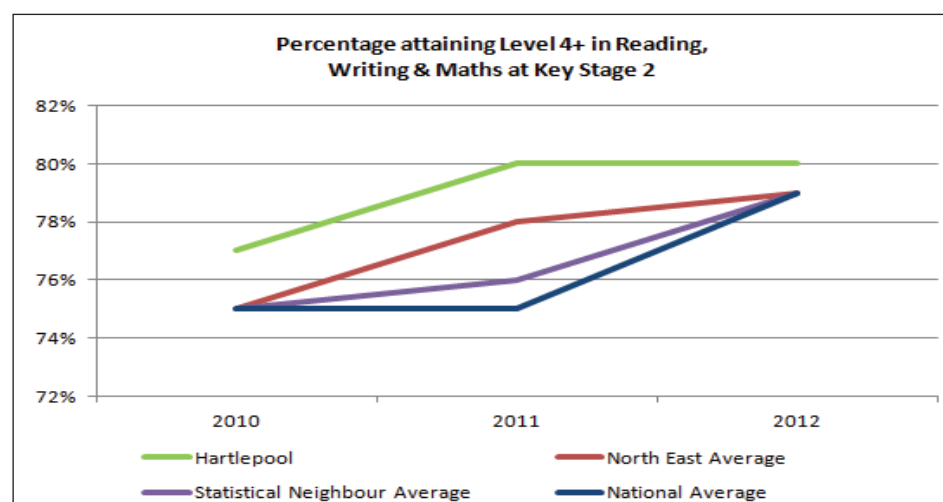


Fig. 14 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

Standards at Level 4+ all remain above national benchmarks. Reading rose by two percentage points to 90% in 2014 which is above the national average of 89%. Standards in writing increased by one percentage point this year to 86%, against a national figure of 85%. Mathematics fell slightly by one percentage point to 88% in 2014 compared with the national average of 86%.

In Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG), 79% attained at Level 4+, an increase of three percentage points on 2013, (national average 76%), whilst 54% attained at the more challenging Level 5+, an increase of ten percentage points on 2013 (national average 2014 is 52%). Girls performed better than boys in this test by 12% (national gap 9%), and FSM performed less well than their non-FSM peers.

Figure 15

Level Thresholds Key Stage 2, Hartlepool 2014				
		%L4+	%L4B+	%L5+
Mathematics	Hartlepool	88	78	41
	National	86	76	42
	Difference	+2	+2	-1
Reading	Hartlepool	90	78	48
	National	89	78	49
	Difference	+1	0	-1
Writing	Hartlepool	86	n/a	33
	National	85	n/a	33
	Difference	+1	n/a	0
Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar	Hartlepool	79	70	54
	National	76	68	52
	Difference	+3	+2	+2

Fig. 15 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015) & RAISEonline 2014

Standards in the more challenging Level 5+ indicator for reading rose by five percentage points to 49% this year (national average 50%), whilst writing improved by two percentage points to 33% (national average 33%). In mathematics standards remained static at 41% (national average 42%).

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils attaining Level 4 or above in reading, writing and mathematics has increased by eight percentage points since 2012 and is above the national average. This is a greater rate of improvement than that seen nationally and is also above both regional and statistical neighbour averages.

Figure 16

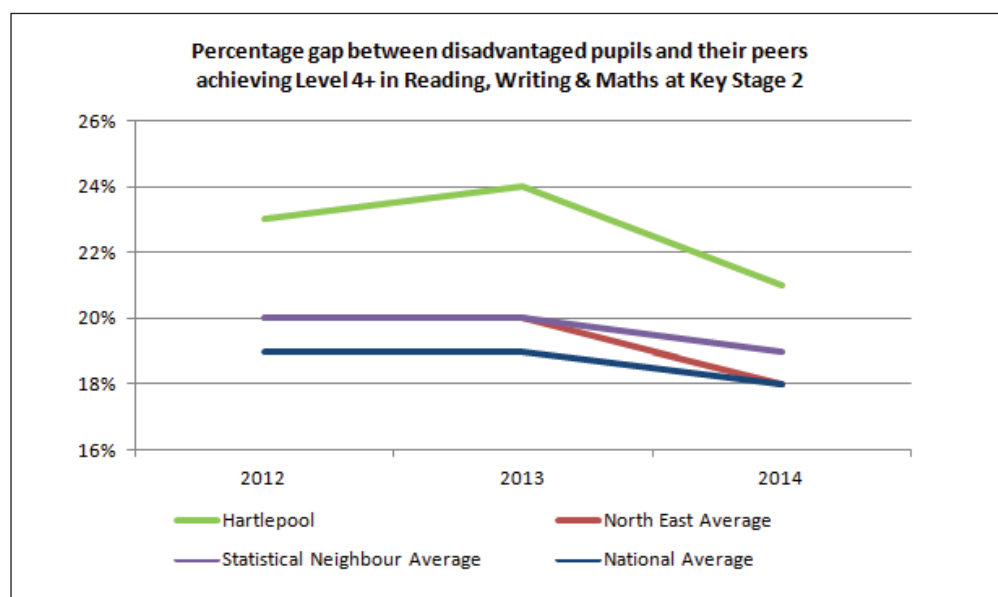


Fig. 16 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers was 21% in 2014 compared to 18% nationally. Whilst the gap has reduced by three percentage points since 2013, the town still has a wider gap than national, regional and statistical neighbour averages.

Figure 17

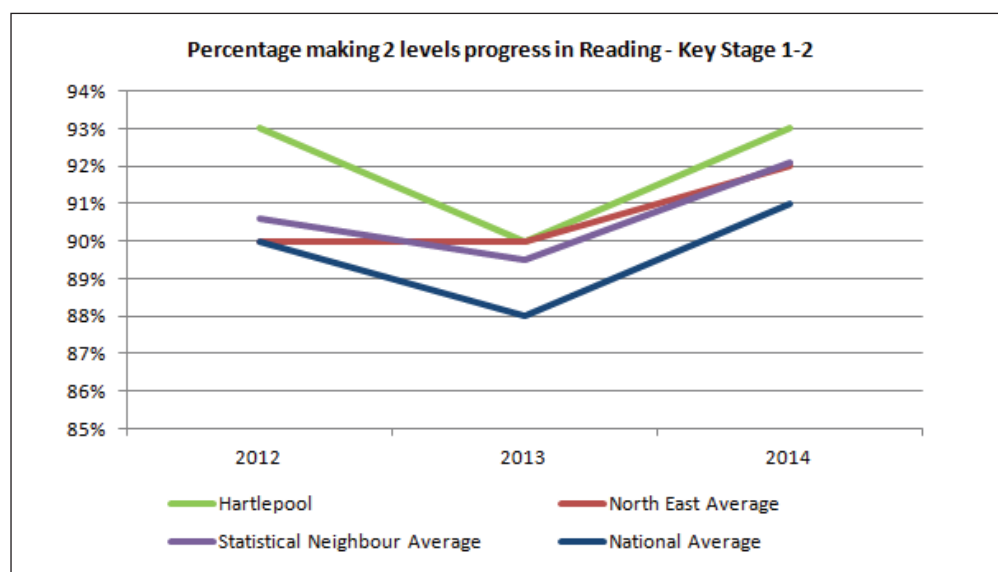


Fig. 17 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

The proportion of children making the expected progress in reading from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 rose by three percentage points this year to 93%; this is above the national, regional and statistical neighbour averages. The proportion of children making more than expected progress in reading increased to 39%.

Figure 18 a

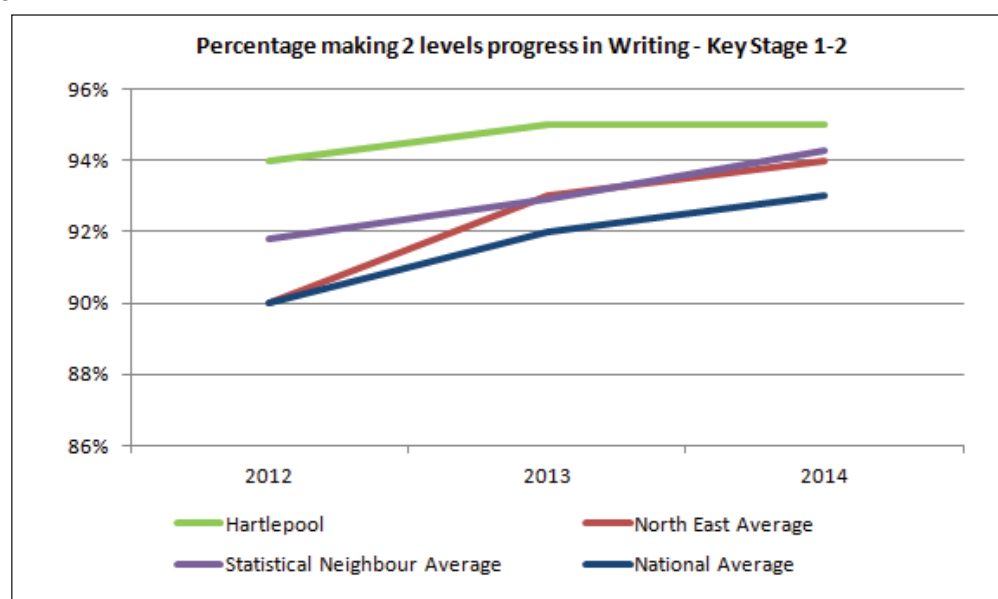


Fig. 18 a – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

The proportion of children making the expected progress in writing from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 remained static this year at 95%. This is above the national, regional and statistical neighbour averages. The proportion of children making more than expected progress in writing increased to 36%.

Figure 18 b

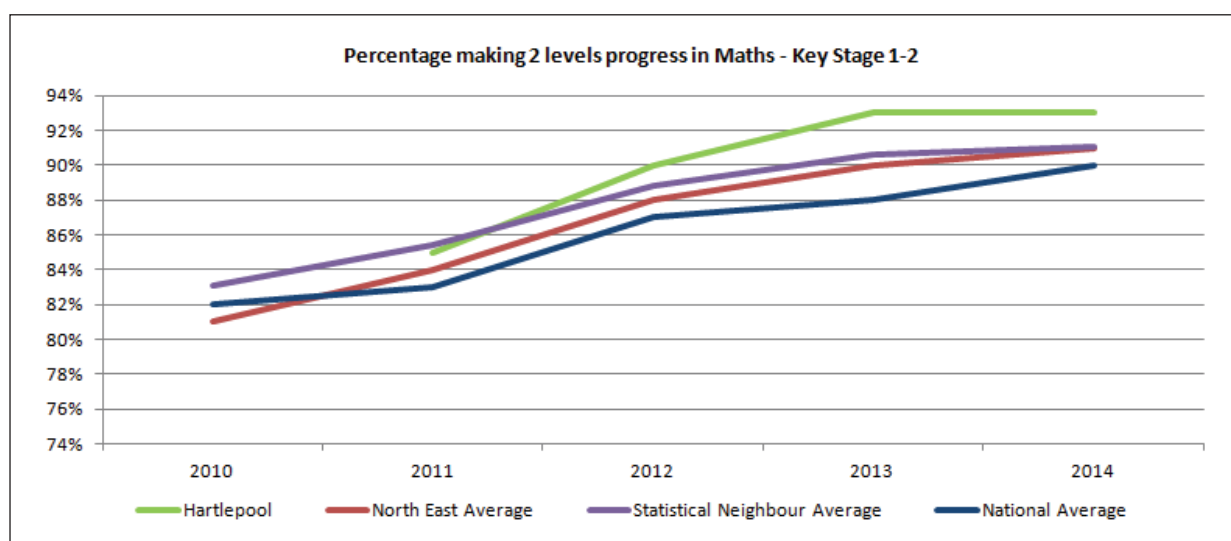


Fig. 18 b – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

The proportion of children making the expected progress in mathematics from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 also remained static at 93%; again this is above the national, regional and statistical neighbour averages. The proportion of children making more than expected progress in mathematics increased to 38%.

Key Stage 4

Attainment at GCSE has shown an improving trend over a long period and is now virtually in line with the national average as measured by GCSE 5A*-C including English and mathematics.

The key indicator of 5A*CEM decreased from 59% in 2013 to 55% in 2014. The national figure fell at a faster rate from 59% to 53%. For the second year running Hartlepool is now performing at the national average in this measure; Hartlepool was significantly below the national average in 2012.

Figure 19

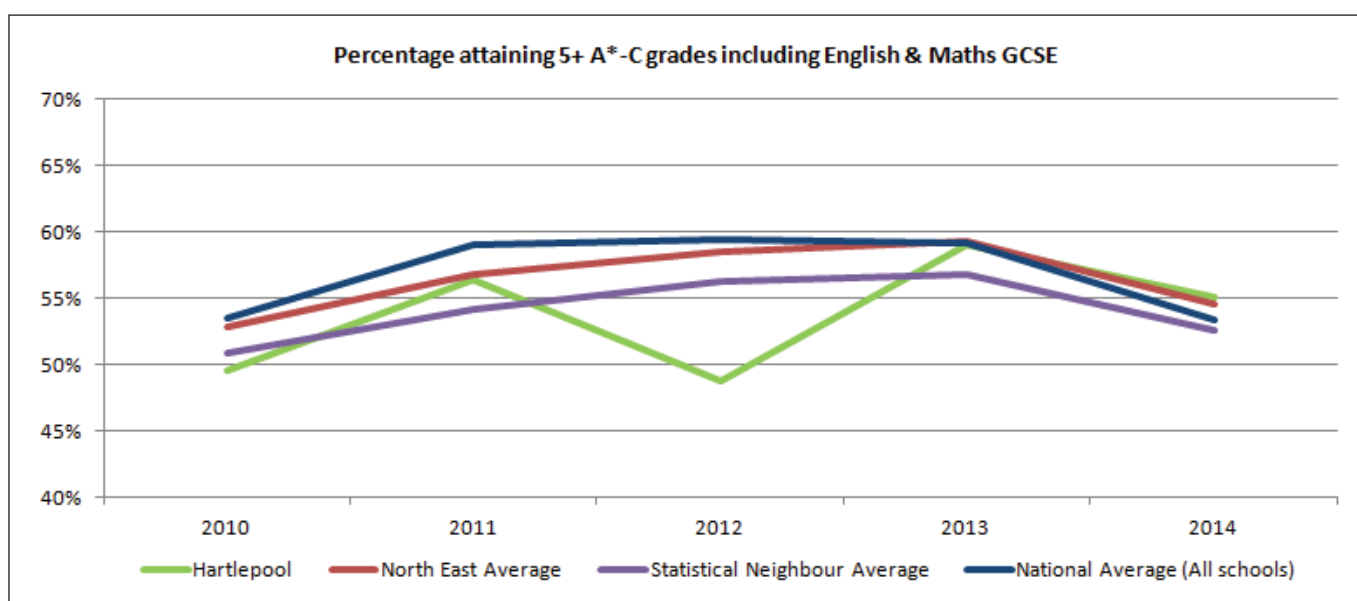
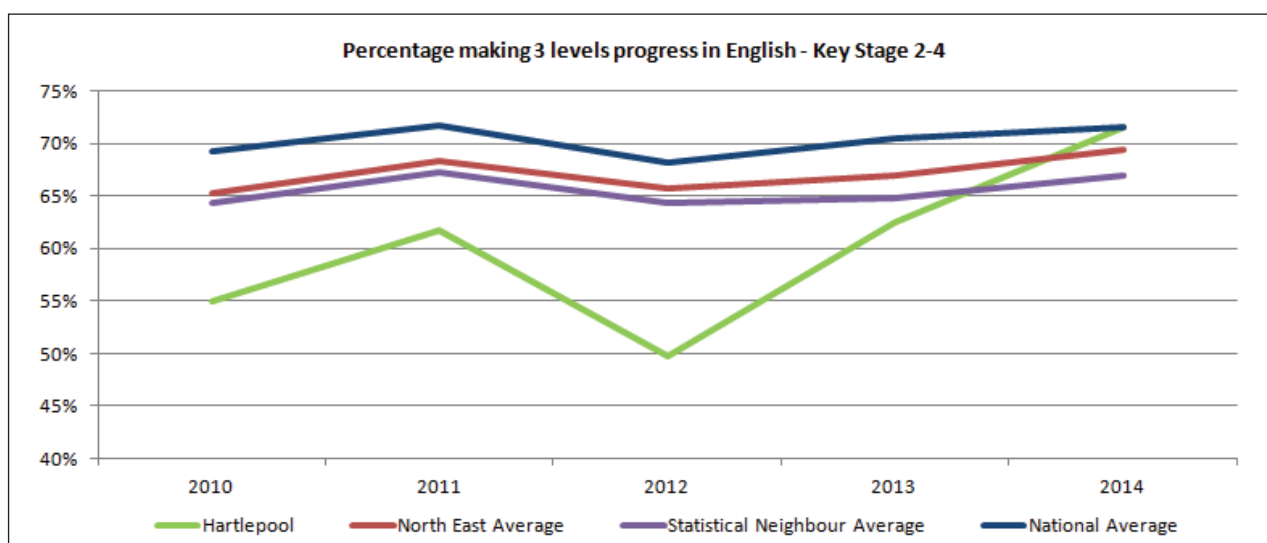


Fig. 19 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)

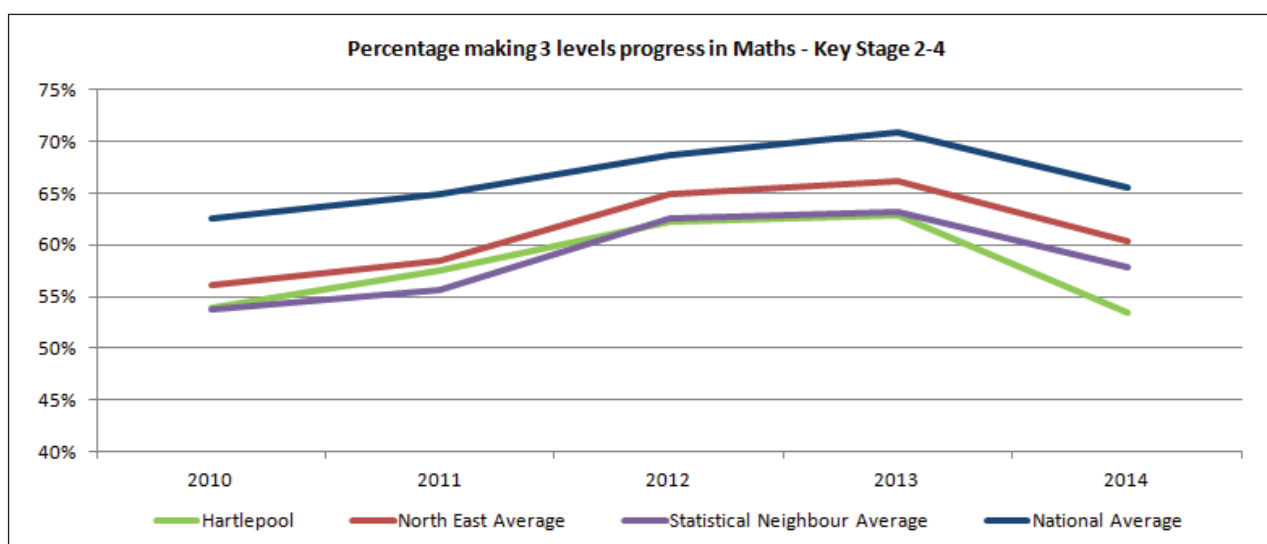
It is important to note that 2014 results are not directly comparable to previous year's results due to changes to the methodology of this measure. Changes include the move to first attempts at qualifications rather than best attempt and changes to which qualifications can be included and the value that they contribute.

Progress in secondary schools in Hartlepool in English is stronger than in mathematics. Progress in mathematics is a key development issue for Hartlepool.

The proportion of students making the expected progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 (KS2-4) in English improved from 63% in 2013 to 72% in 2014. The national average is 72%. The proportion of students making more than expected progress in English improved for the third consecutive year to 27% in 2014 compared to a national average of 32%.

Figure 20*Fig. 20 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)*

The proportion of disadvantaged students making expected progress increased from 48% in 2013 to 59% in 2014. The proportion of disadvantaged students making more than expected progress in English also increased, from 12% in 2013 to 20% in 2014. The gap between Hartlepool disadvantaged students and other students nationally narrowed in 2014 for progress in English.

Figure 21*Fig. 21 – Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (February 2015)*

The proportion of students making the expected progress from KS2-4 in mathematics fell from 62% in 2013 to 54% in 2014. The national average is 65%. The proportion of students making more than expected progress in mathematics also fell to 17% in 2014 compared to a national average of 29%.

The proportion of disadvantaged students making expected progress decreased from 49% in 2013 to 41% in 2014. The proportion of disadvantaged students making more than expected progress in mathematics also fell, from 14% in 2013 to 8% in 2014. The gap between the Hartlepool disadvantaged students and other students nationally widened in 2014 for progress in mathematics.

Girls outperformed boys once again in 2014, and the gender gap remained the same on average. The average GCSE for boys was a grade C- (a half GCSE grade difference). In terms of 5A*CEM, 60% of girls attained this in 2014 compared to 61% of girls nationally; only 47% of boys attained this standard compared to 50% of boys nationally. There is no clear trend to demonstrate that the gender gap is closing over time.

Post 16

The percentage of students achieving AAB or better at A-level has decreased by six percentage points since 2011, placing Hartlepool in the lowest quartile nationally. In 2014, 70% of students attained three or more A-levels (or equivalent) compared to 80% nationally. Hartlepool was also below both regional and statistical neighbour averages.

Figure 22

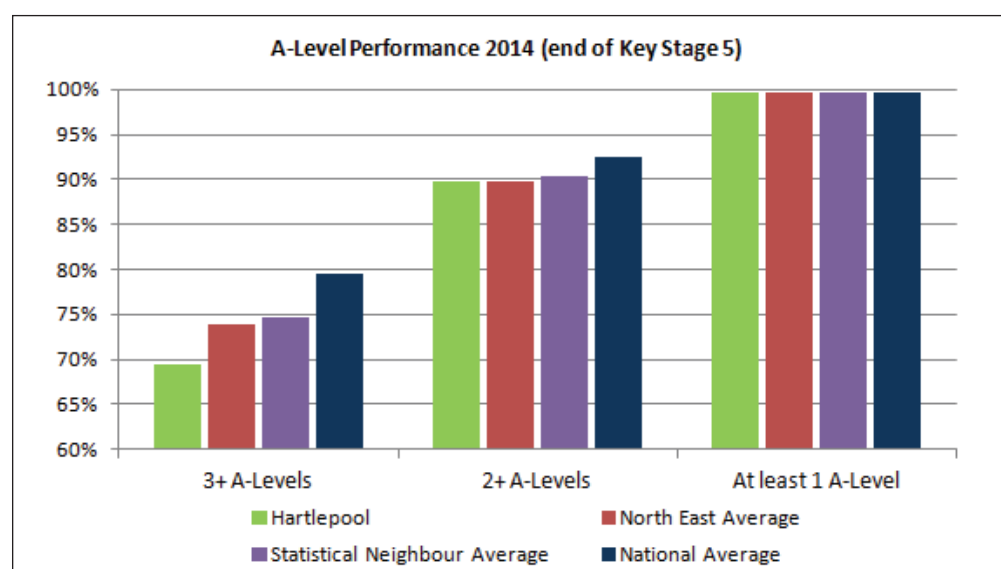


Fig. 22 – Source: 16-19 attainment SfR, underlying data

Figure 23

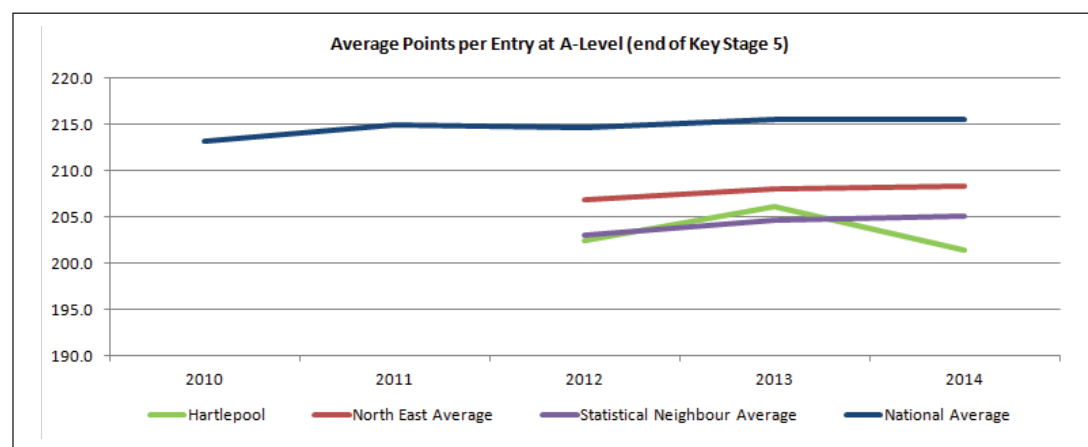


Fig. 23 – Source: 16-19 attainment SfR, underlying data

Average point score per entry at A/AS level is below national, regional and statistical neighbour averages.

The inequality gap for Level 2 qualification including English and mathematics by age 19 is 26% compared to national gap of 27%. The gap is wider for statistical (32%) and regional neighbours (30%).

The inequality gap for Level 3 qualification by age 19 is 32%. This is a wider gap than statistical (28%) and regional neighbours (30%) and significantly wider than the national gap of 24%.

The percentage of young people progressing to Higher Education has decreased over the past four years from 57% in 2010 to 51% in 2014. Hartlepool has had a higher percentage of young people progressing to HE for the past two years and in 2014 was three percentage points above the national average.

Figure 24

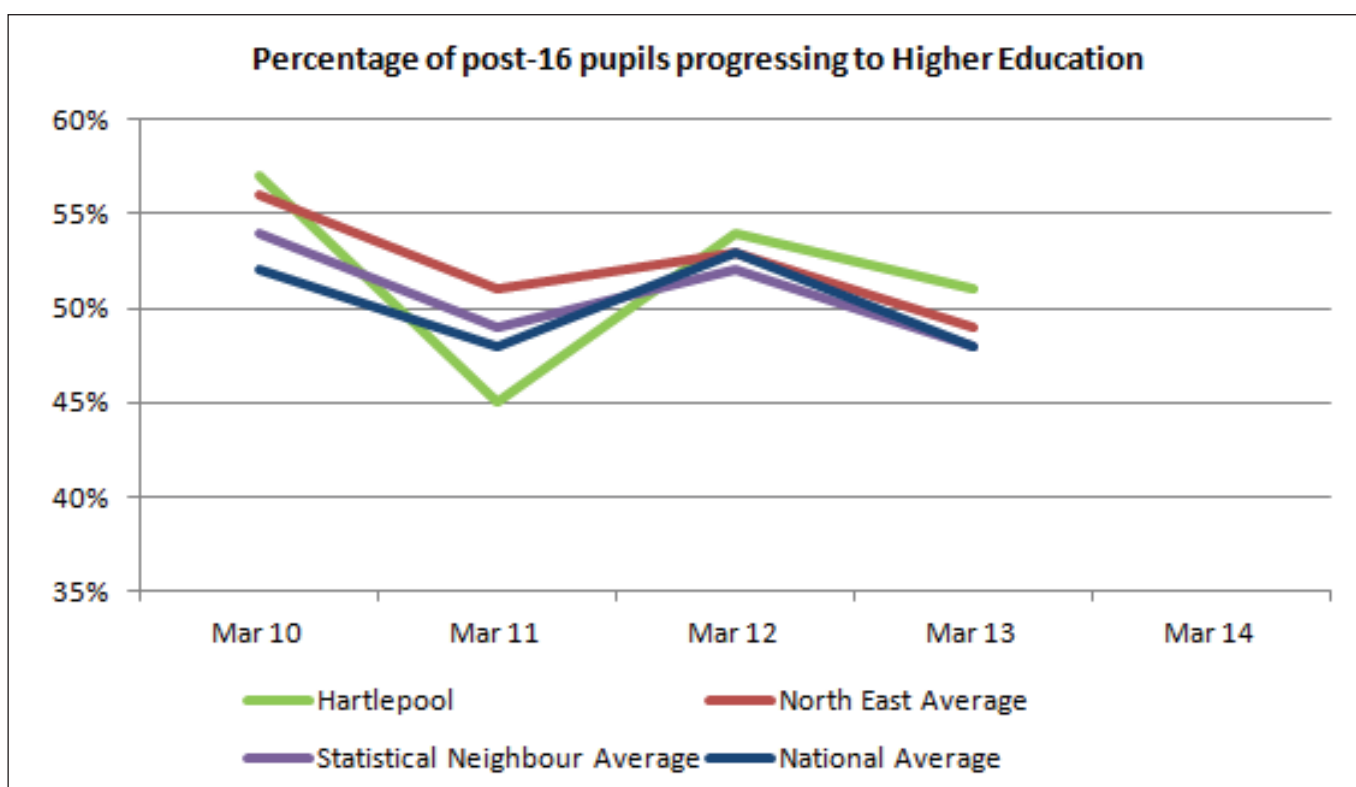
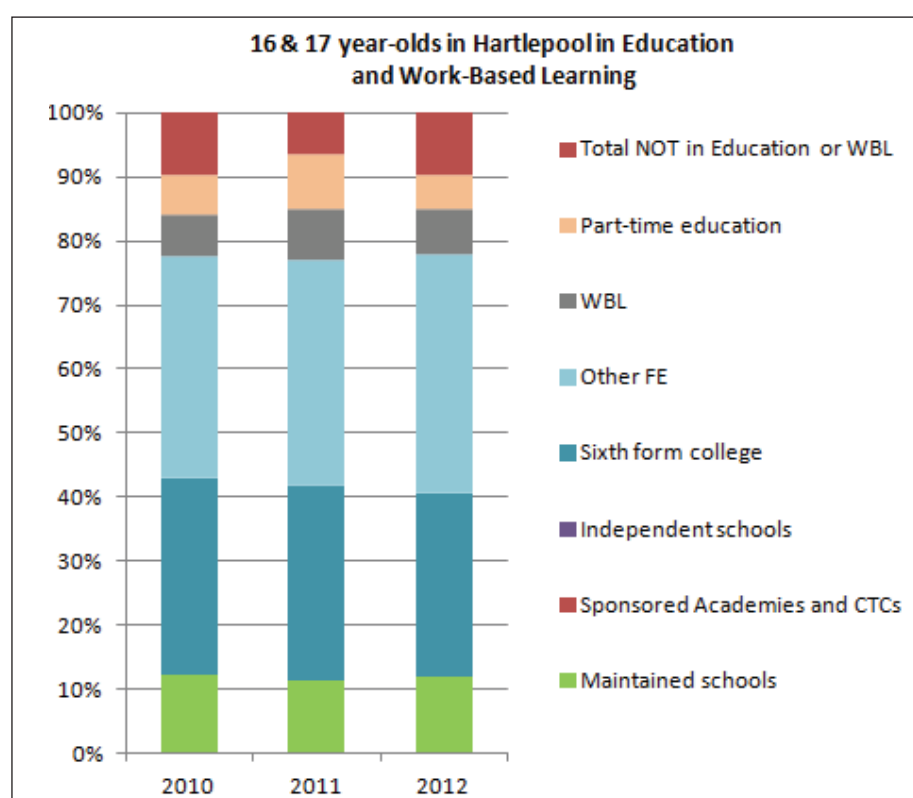


Fig. 24 – Source: 16-19 attainment SfR, underlying data (Pupils from mainstream state-funded schools still in an HEI destination after 2 terms)

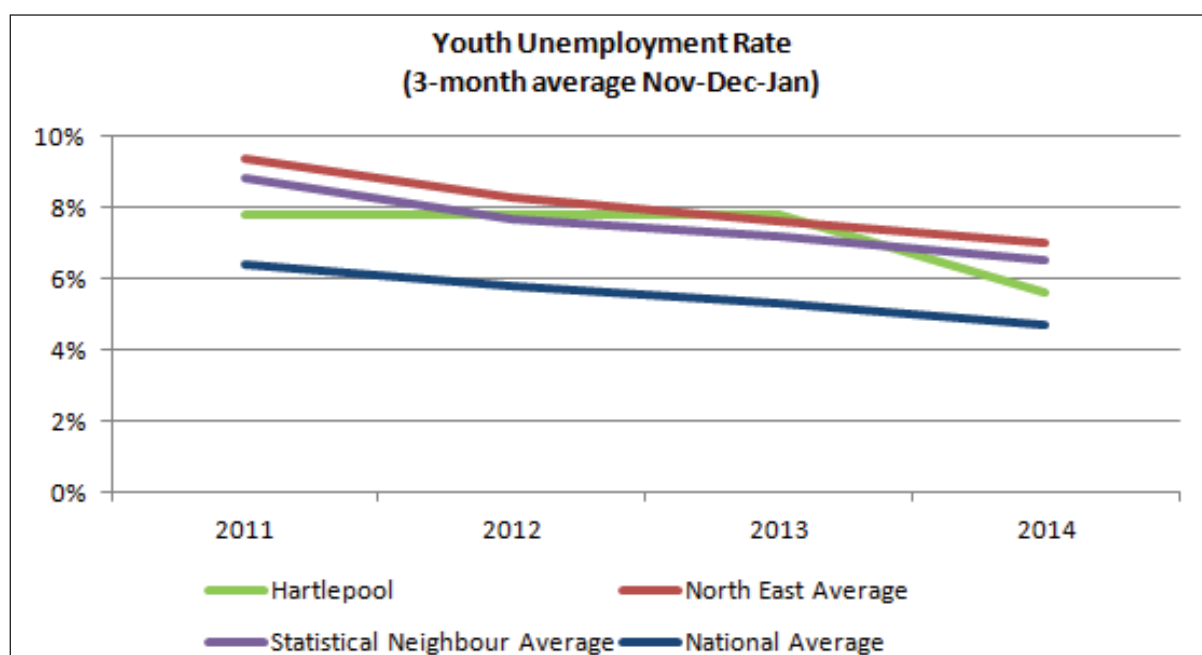
Participation of 16 year olds in education and work-based learning (2012) is in line with national and above regional and statistical neighbour averages. However, there has been a decrease of five percentage points from 2011.

Participation of 17-year-olds in education and work-based learning (2012) is above national, regional and statistical neighbour averages.

The latest available published data for 16-&17- year-olds in education and work-based learning relates to 2012. In Hartlepool, 90% of this cohort was in education and/or work-based learning which is a decrease from 2011 (94%). The percentage of this cohort in full-time education increased slightly to 78%.

Figure 25*Fig. 25 – Source: Destination Sfr*

The youth unemployment rate in Hartlepool remained at 7.8% from 2011 to 2013 and then fell to 5.6% in 2014, an improvement of 2.2 percentage points. Hartlepool has a youth unemployment rate which is below both regional and statistical neighbour averages and is closing the gap bringing the town closer to the national average (4.7%).

Figure 26*Fig. 26 – Source: NCCIS website data*

Ofsted

Inspection outcomes as at 31st March 2015 indicate that in Hartlepool, of the 38 educational establishments inspected by Ofsted:

- 18% are outstanding (7 schools)
- 58% are good (22 schools)
- 21% require improvement (8 schools)
- 3% have serious weaknesses (1 school)

Only three of the seven educational establishments deemed as secondary are good or outstanding. Improving all secondary provision to good or outstanding is a key priority for the local authority.

Overall, the percentage of schools that are deemed as good or outstanding in Hartlepool is 76.3% (83.3% of primary schools, 40% of secondary schools and all special schools).

Figure 27

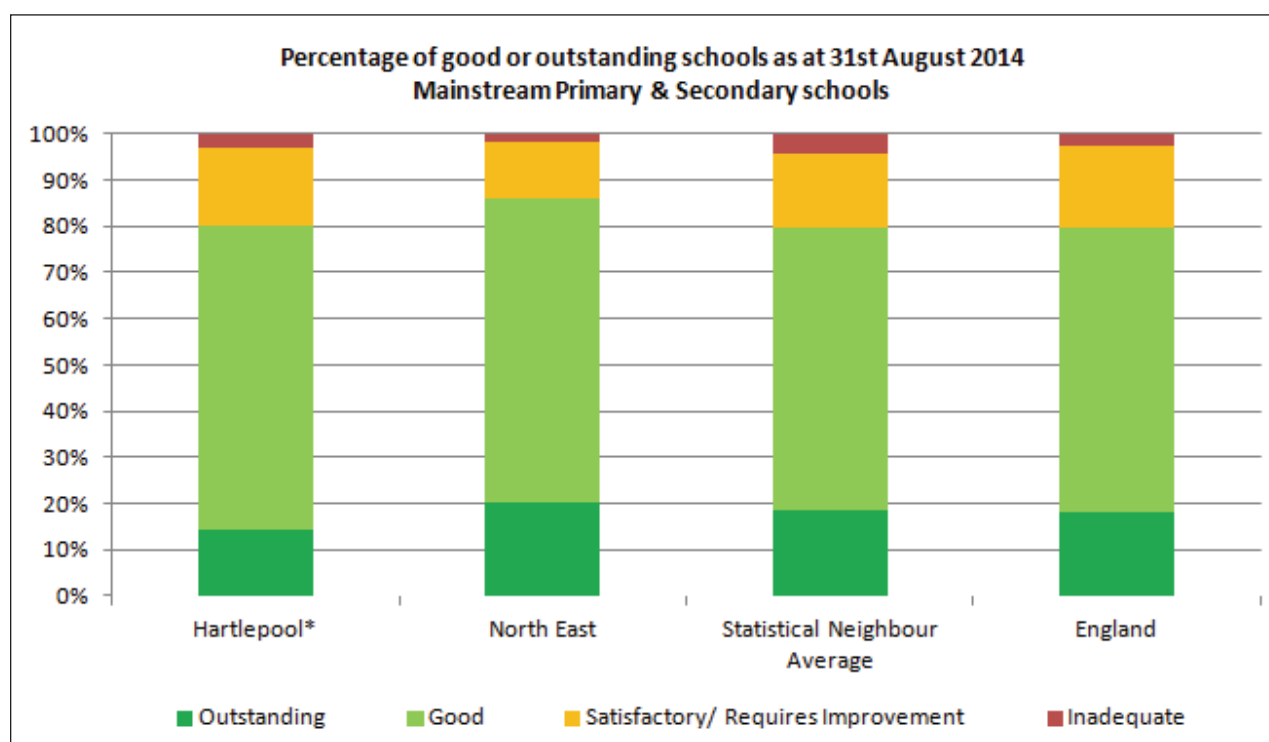


Fig. 27 – Source: Maintained Schools Inspections & Outcomes as at 31 August each year (school level data)

The percentage of primary schools in Hartlepool judged to have good or outstanding leadership and management is 86.7%. This is above the national average of 84.1%. For quality of teaching 86.7% of primary schools were judged as good or outstanding. This is also above the national average of 81.7%.

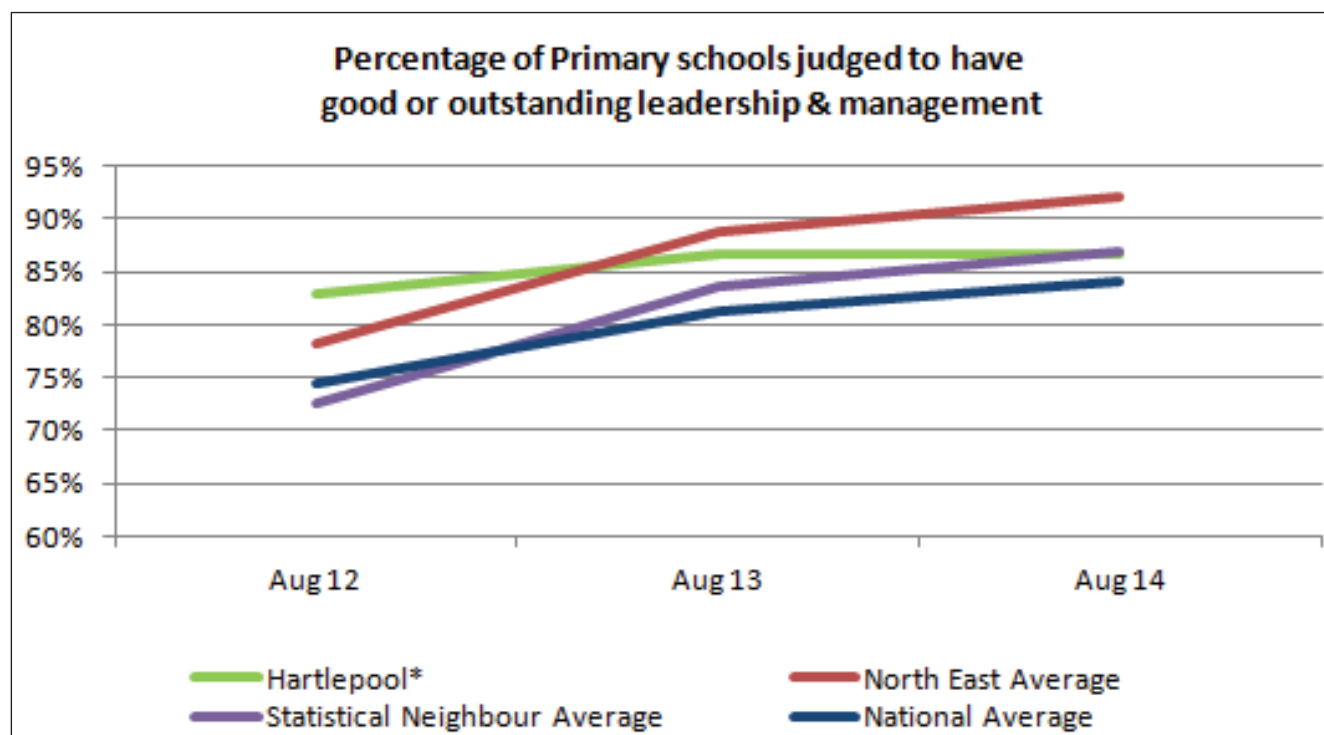
Figure 28

Fig. 28 – Source: Maintained Schools Inspections & Outcomes as at 31 August each year (school level data)

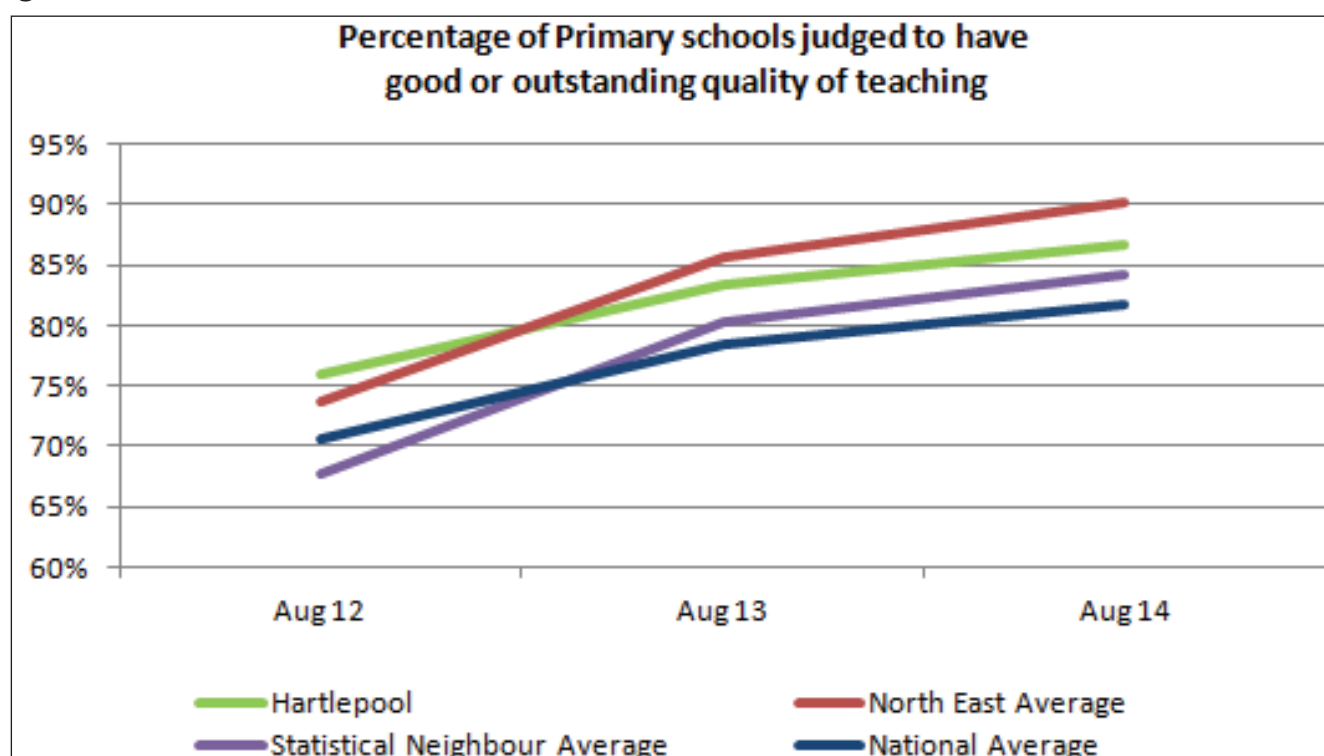
Figure 29

Fig. 29 – Source: Maintained Schools Inspections & Outcomes as at 31 August each year (school level data)

The percentage of secondary schools in Hartlepool judged to have good or outstanding leadership and management is 60% and quality of teaching is 40%. Both of these figures are below the national average.

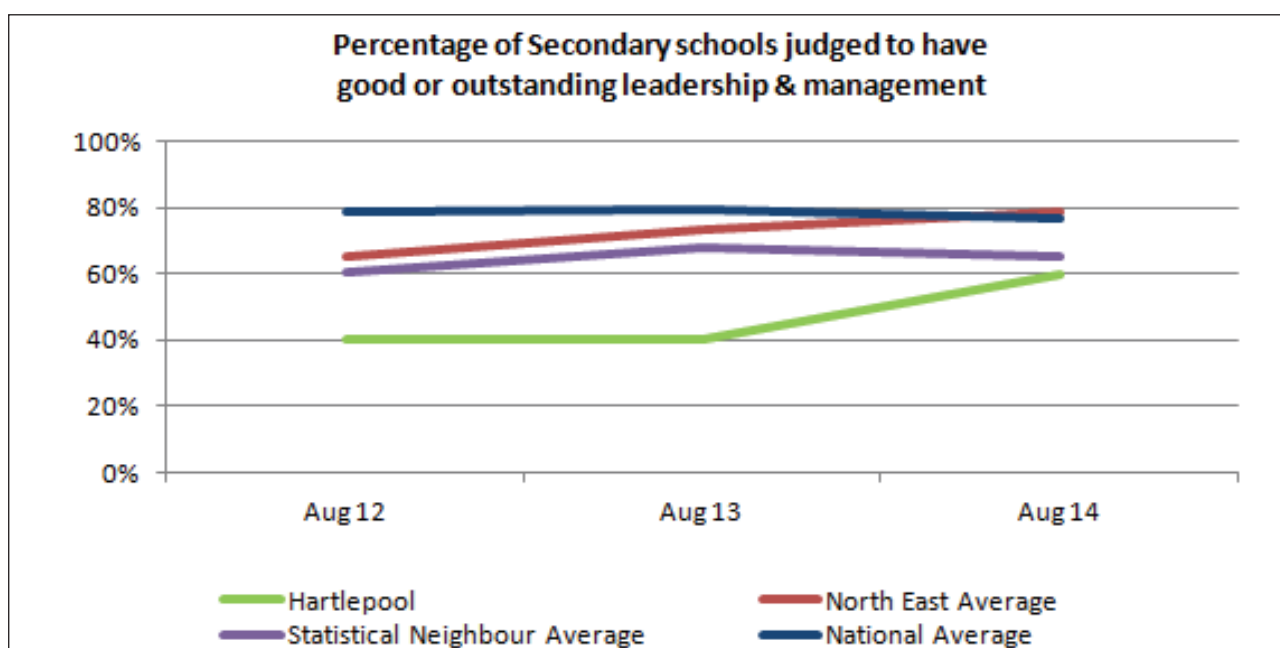
Figure 30

Fig. 30 – Source: Maintained Schools Inspections & Outcomes as at 31 August each year (school level data)

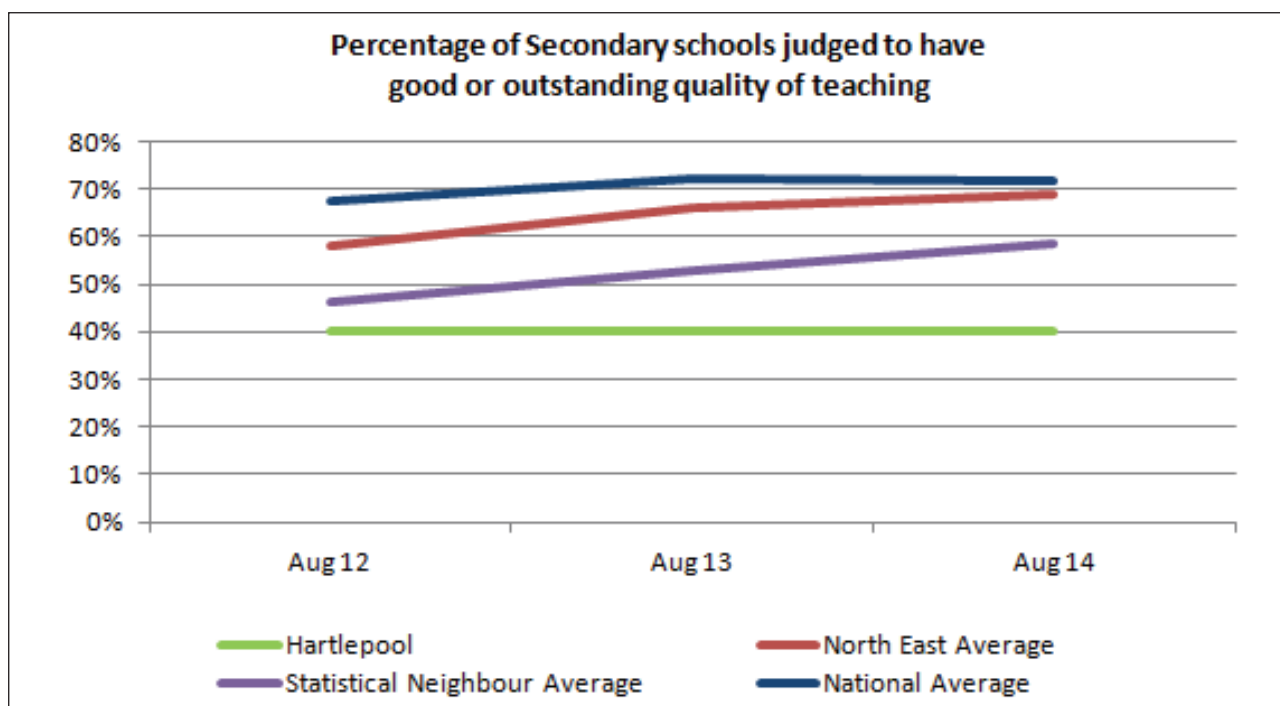
Figure 31

Fig. 31 – Source: Maintained Schools Inspections & Outcomes as at 31 August each year (school level data)

Using data from the January 2015 School Census 73% of pupils in Hartlepool were in good or outstanding provision. This breaks down to primary 86%, secondary 49% and 100% in special. The Pupil Referral Unit was judged as Requires Improvement.

The percentage of teachers with a least one period of sickness is higher than both the regional and statistical neighbour averages but remains below national average. Over half of all teachers had at least one period of sickness in 2012-13.

Figure 32

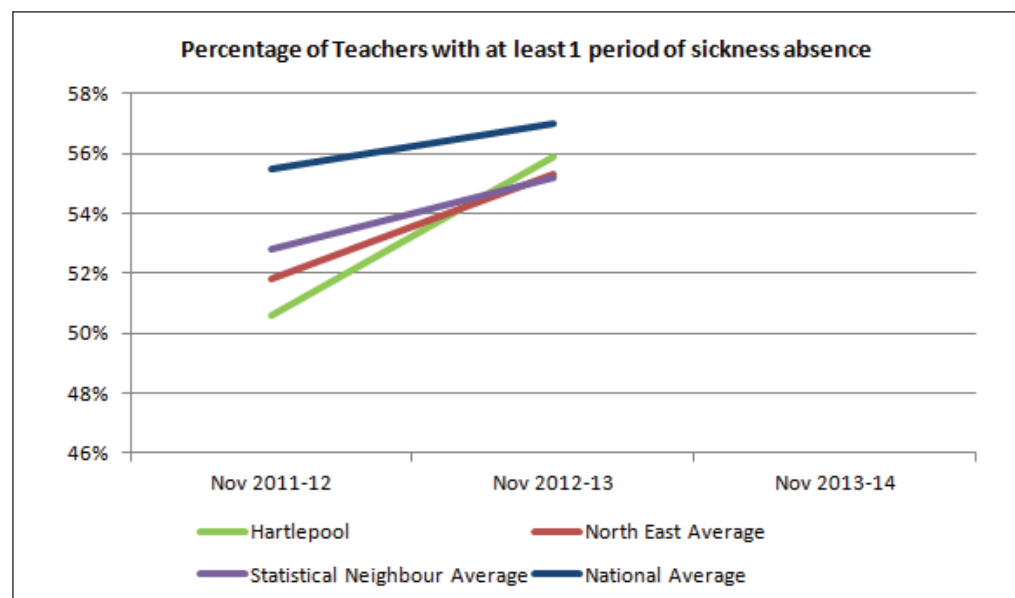


Fig. 32 – Source: School Workforce Census SfR

The average number of days lost due to sickness of teachers has reduced in 2012-13. Whilst the average number of days remains higher than the national average, the gap is closing.

Figure 33

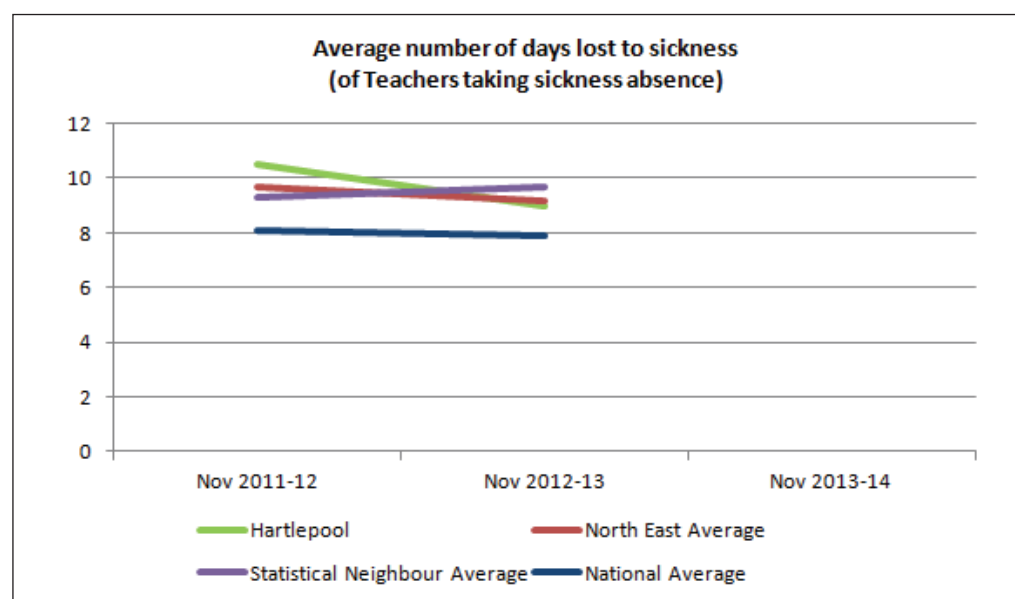


Fig. 33 – Source: School Workforce Census SfR

Transition

In 2014, 80% of Hartlepool primary school pupils transferred to their partner secondary school. However, each secondary school received Year 7 pupils from multiple primary schools, with some dealing with more than 20 individual primary schools.

Figure 34

Secondary School	Cohort*	Number of Hartlepool primary schools pupils came from
Catcote	15	8
Dyke House	254	25
English Martyrs	247	23
High Tunstall	158	16
Manor	229	16
St Hild's	132	9

*Includes pupils from primary schools outside of Hartlepool

Fig. 34 – Source: Local Admissions to schools data

The issue is also experienced across the primary schools with most schools dealing with several different secondary schools. Pupils transferring to at least two different secondary schools. Three primary schools had pupils transferring to five or more secondary schools. (96.8% of primary schools in Hartlepool)

Number of secondary schools cohort transferred to*	% of primary schools
2+	96.8%
3+	74.2%
4+	32.3%
5+	6.5%
6+	3.2%

Figure 35

* Excludes out of area primary schools

Fig. 35 – Source: Local Admissions to schools data

A further breakdown by primary school is shown in the following table:

Primary School	No. of Y6 Pupils in 2004	% of pupils transferring to their linked secondary school	Number of Hartlepool secondary schools cohort transferred to
Barnard Grove	45	84.4	5
Brougham	27	96.3	2
Clavering	39	82.1	4
Eldon Grove	52	84.6	3
Eskdale	17	88.2	3
Fens	59	88.1	4
Golden Flatts	17	52.9	4
Grange	49	95.9	3
Greatham	11	90.9	2
Hart	12	58.3	3
Holy Trinity	32	84.4	3
Jesmond Gardens	34	97.1	3
Kingsley	60	51.7	4
Lynnfield	42	76.2	6
Rift House	26	34.6	4
Rossmere	45	93.3	3
Sacred Heart	51	96.1	3
Springwell	6	N/A	2
St Aidan's	32	75.0	2
St Bega's	19	78.9	3
St Cuthbert's	34	100	1
St Helen's	31	83.9	4
St John Vianney's	23	95.7	2
St Joseph's	22	81.8	3
St Peter's Elwick	13	61.5	2
St Teresa's	38	92.1	2
Stranton	40	75.0	4
Throston	55	63.6	4
Ward Jackson	18	83.3	3
West Park	44	70.5	3
West View	46	65.2	3
Out of Area Primary	16	N/A	5
Overall percentage transferring to their partner secondary school*	80%*		

* Excludes out of area primary schools and Springwell Special School Fig. 36 – Source: Local Admissions to schools data

Appendix 4

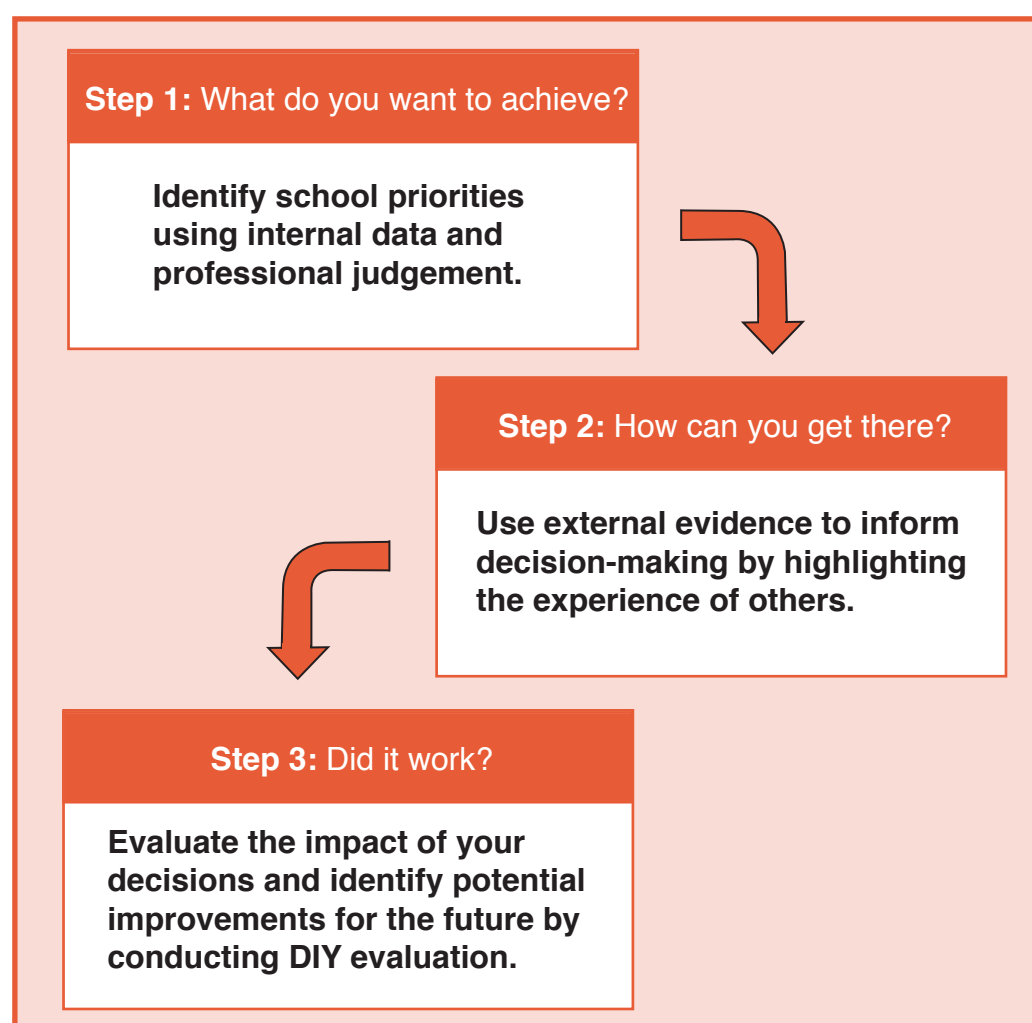
Using Evidence to Support Improvement

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has a national remit to help improve the educational opportunities for disadvantaged pupils and is working to develop robust evidence of the benefits of a wide range of educational interventions and innovations.

Their findings are summarised in the Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit (see: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/toolkit-az/>) as well as in the project reports from the hundred or so interventions they have trialled (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects/>).

Their model of professional evidence use (see below) sets out the importance of using evidence from research as a solution to an identified challenge or problem, based on internal data about pupils' learning needs.

EEF's Model of Evidence Use



The model also acknowledges the importance of evaluating change to ensure an approach or intervention is effective in achieving its goals. To help with this the EEF has also published a DIY Evaluation Guide which provides advice for schools on how to evaluate new strategies as robustly as possible. The research indicates that many changes in schools initially feel positive but have little lasting impact on learning, so this part of the process is essential whether innovation is based on research or other sources.

NOTES



Child & Adult Services

A First Class Education for Every Hartlepool Learner

EDUCATION COMMISSION REPORT

Education Commission Report - A First Class Education for Every Hartlepool Learner - September 2015