



**North Yorkshire County Council
Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee
13 December 2018**

Schools, educational achievement and sustainability

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the local educational landscape and the factors which affect school sustainability in the Skipton and Ripon Constituency Committee area.

2.0 Local educational landscape

- 2.1 The picture for Skipton and Ripon Primary Schools is somewhat different than that for the whole of North Yorkshire in that there have been fewer Academy conversions (7% compared to 22%). The Secondary numbers are closely aligned with the conversion rate for the County as a whole.

Summary of Schools' status – November 2018

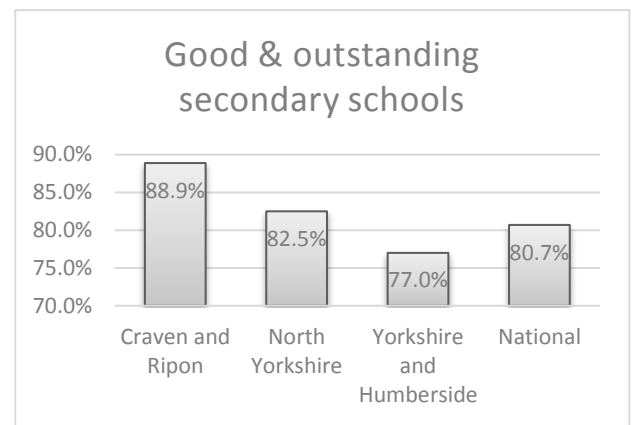
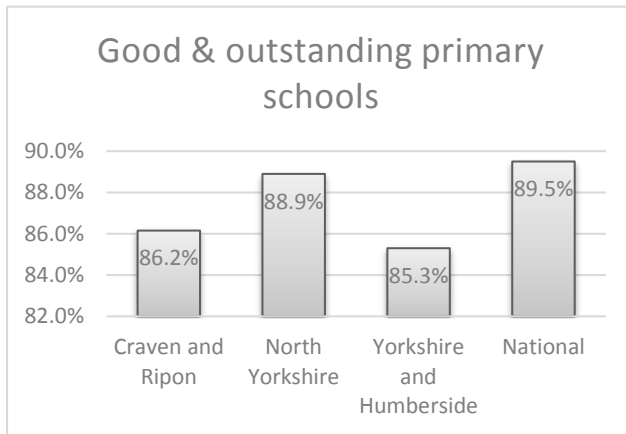
	NYCC		Skipton and Ripon	
LA Maintained Primary	238	78%	62	93%
LA Maintained Secondary	25	60%	5	56%
LA Maintained Special	9	90%	1	11%
LA Maintained PRU	4	80%	1	25%
	276	76%	69	88%

	NYCC		Skipton and Ripon	
Primary Academies	67	22%	5	7%
Secondary Academies	17	40%	4	44%
Special Academies	1	10%	0	0%
PRU Academies	1	20%	0	0%
	86	24%	9	12%

3.0 School standards

3.1 School Ofsted judgements

In the constituency area 86.2 per cent of primary schools are judged good or outstanding by Ofsted, which is above the region, but below the North Yorkshire and national benchmarks. Performance is stronger for secondary schools with 88.9 per cent judged good or outstanding which is above all benchmarks.



There are 2 primary schools judged inadequate and 8 primary schools judged requires improvement. There is 1 secondary school judged inadequate and none judged requires improvement.

3.2 Attainment overall

Both primary and secondary attainment in the constituency is above all benchmarks. The following sections provide detail on:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile – assessment at the end of reception (4-5 year olds)
- Key Stage 2 – assessment at the end of primary school (10-11 year olds)
- Key Stage 4 – assessment at the end of secondary school (15-16 year olds)

3.3 Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

In 2018 72.9% of children in the constituency area achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD). The level of performance has remained relatively static over the last three years. Performance remains above all benchmarks, but these benchmarks are improving at a faster rate.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile %GLD	Skipton and Ripon	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and Humberside	National
2016	72.4%	70.0%	67.3%	69.3%
2017	72.4%	71.6%	68.7%	70.7%
2018	72.9%	72.5%	69.4%	71.6%

3.4 Key Stage 2

In 2018 64.9% of children in the constituency area achieved the expected level or above in reading, writing and maths (RWM) combined which is above all benchmarks. The level of performance has increased by 7.9% since 2016, which is a slower rate than all benchmarks.

Key Stage 2 % Ex+ RWM	Skipton and Ripon	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and Humberside	National
2016	57.0%	51.3%	49.8%	53.4%

2017	61.3%	59.0%	58.3%	61.1%
2018	64.9%	62.1%	61.7%	64.4%

3.5 Key Stage 4

In 2018 the Attainment 8 score of children in the constituency area, which measures the achievement of a pupil across eight qualifications, was 53.7. This level of performance is significantly above all benchmarks.

KS4 Average Att8 Score	Skipton and Ripon	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and Humberside	National
2016	57.6	51.8	48.9	50.0
2017	56.7	49.6	45.4	46.3
2018	53.7	48.3	45.2	46.6

The Progress 8 score, which measures a pupil's progress from the end of primary school to the end of secondary school, was 0.36 which is also significantly above all benchmarks (0 is the national average).

KS4 Average Progress Score	Skipton and Ripon	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and Humberside	National
2016	0.30	0.04	-0.03	0.00
2017	0.45	0.17	0.03	0.00
2018	0.36	0.13	-0.01	0.00

4.0 School finance

4.1 Schools in Financial Difficulty – the countywide position

As of March 2018 the overall position for North Yorkshire Schools was:

- 52 schools with accumulated deficits totalling £4.4M
- This was an increase of £1.9M from 2017/18
- Deficits range from £1k (small primary) up to £968k (special school)
- Average primary school in deficit is £23k
- Average secondary school in deficit is £338k
- Of the 52 schools, 29 are predicting that their position will deteriorate
- 23 schools are projected to improve their position, but only 13 are projected to get back into surplus

4.2 School Projections

- 223 LA maintained schools (79%) are projecting an in-year deficit in 2018/19
- 26 schools will move from a surplus balance to a deficit balance by March 2019
- Nearly 20% of LA maintained schools are in deficit – that is projected to rise to nearly half by 2019/20 and two out of every three by March 2021

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Number of Schools in Deficit	30	54	65	138	187
Value of Deficit	£2.8M	£4.4M	£7.6M	£16.0M	£30.6M

Proportion of schools in deficit	11%	19%	23%	49%	67%
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4.3 Funding

- Concern around overall quantum of funding given cost pressures (e.g. Apprenticeship Levy, National Living Wage)
- North Yorkshire secondary schools are placed 122 out of 150 local authorities in terms of funding. On average, a school in North Yorkshire will receive £4,897 per pupil in 2018-19 compared to £7,840 per pupil in Hackney. Comparing the funding for a 1,500 pupil secondary school in Hackney with one in North Yorkshire, this equates to a difference in funding of £4.4m
- For primary schools, a North Yorkshire school will receive on average £4,034 compared to £5,887 in Hackney.
- Concern over impact of high needs financial pressures on school budgets
- North Yorkshire has a number of schools that, geographically, are vital in serving their local communities. Reductions in sparsity funding and general financial pressures, particularly on smaller secondary schools, are concerning.

4.4 Schools in Financial Difficulty – Skipton and Ripon

62 primary schools, 5 secondary schools, 2 special schools

2018/19	2020/21
13 schools projecting to be in deficit by March 2019; 19% schools in Skipton and Ripon	48 schools projecting to be in deficit by March 2021; 70% schools in Skipton and Ripon
11 primaries; 1 secondary; 1 special	44 primaries; 2 secondaries; 2 special
Total projected value of deficits = £2.09M	Total projected value of deficits = £6.27M
Projected average primary deficit = £25k; Projected average secondary deficit = £465k	Projected average primary deficit = £73k; Projected average secondary deficit = £465k

5.0 School sustainability

5.1 The sustainability of schools is largely influenced by three key factors which are usually closely related to each other:

- Falling pupil rolls
- School standards
- Financial difficulty

Where school closures have regrettably occurred in North Yorkshire all of these factors have been relevant. Of the 8 closures in North Yorkshire over the last 3 years 5 have been in the constituency area, namely Skipton and Ripon.

5.2 Falling pupil rolls

The picture in the constituency area mirrors that in the rest of the County namely projected growth and new housing in the urban areas contrasting with declining numbers and little new housing in the rural locations. There are several social and economic reasons for this including the availability and price of housing and

employment factors. Currently we have several areas where the numbers on roll are falling and we have surplus capacity in the School system. Examples are:

	Places available	Number on roll 2018/19	Surplus capacity 2018/19
North Craven Outer	718	550	168
Settle	210	181	29
Skipton Outer	1253	1051	202
	2181	1782	399
Nidderdale Outer	266	225	41
Masham	151	135	16
Pateley Bridge	119	93	26
	536	453	83

5.3 School standards

Where school standards are declining in an individual school, especially where there are other choices available to parents, there can be a swift negative impact on pupil rolls. As members will note in section 3 above the general performance of schools in the constituency area is good but Members will be aware of Schools where standards is not at the expected level and this translates to lower pupil numbers. When a School is Inadequate by Ofsted it is subject under the current legislation to become a Sponsored Academy. In some cases where a Sponsor cannot be found this can result in a School closure as happened with Burnt Yates CE Primary School in 2018.

5.4 Financial difficulty

- 5.4.1 The local authority recognises that it is facing greater financial risk due to an increasing number of schools falling into financial difficulty. This is largely due to:
- School closures: any deficit balances revert to the local authority
 - Sponsored academy conversions: when a school becomes a sponsored academy, the deficit remains with the LA.
 - Increasing numbers of schools with in-year deficits
 - Increasing numbers of schools falling into an accumulated financial deficit position
 - Reducing collective accumulated balances

When a school gets into financial difficulty, the local authority does not normally write-off the deficit balance of any school; the presumption is that all financial deficits will remain a liability of the Governing Body until paid back. North Yorkshire has more small schools (<50) than anywhere else in the country and we will aim to continue to ensure that rural schools remain viable and sustainable. Furthermore, the view of the local authority is that some schools are strategically, geographically important in serving their local communities. However, it is imperative that school deficits are tackled through effective financial management to avoid building up large deficits. It is as a responsible local authority providing strategic oversight that necessary action must be taken to ensure that all maintained schools operate as financially viable and sustainable entities.

- 5.4.2 In Autumn 2017 the Department for Education (DfE) announced national changes to the school funding formula which will eventually see all school budgets set using a new national funding formula. However, for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years a 'soft' approach is being undertaken where the funding which local authorities receive is

based on the new formula but with transitional arrangements. North Yorkshire County Council has adopted an approach of calculating school budgets using these principles for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years. At this stage, the DfE has not yet stated when the national funding formula will be fully implemented and the transitional arrangements will cease. The transitional funding arrangements guarantee a minimum level of funding for schools but they also cap the level of funding gain which a school can experience.

Within this context, a number of factors can influence the financial position of a school including:

- class operating structure;
- staffing levels deployment and recruitment;
- staff salary levels and national living wage implications;
- apprenticeship levy;
- utilisation of specific grants e.g. Sports Grant;
- contracts and classroom resource spending decisions;
- historic spending decisions;
- pupil numbers, and;
- levels of external income.

A combination of the factors outlined above may lead to a financially challenging environment although it is unlikely that there is a “one size fits all” solution to addressing deficit positions. However, it is possible to bring the rigour of a consistent framework to work with schools in a fair and transparent manner.

5.4.3 Where a school has short-term financial issues that can be managed over time and return the school to a surplus position, a licensed deficit can be an effective tool; a school effectively overspends with no adverse cash-flow impact and the school Governing Body approves a plan to ensure that the deficit is repaid. This mechanism is set out in the North Yorkshire LMS Procedure Rules and is usually accompanied by a recovery action plan. The LA has undertaken light-touch monitoring of recovery plans and provided some support to individual schools. Interim measures taken to reduce financial pressure have often involved one-off exceptional costs that the local authority has provided from accumulated DSG reserves. However, with depleted DSG reserves, this support is no longer available.

5.4.4 In response to the significant financial challenges the LA is introducing a new financial management framework to provide schools with an appropriate level of challenge and support to help them set a balanced budget and if this is not achievable, to help prepare a recovery plan that sets out the actions that the school will need to take to achieve a sustainable financial position. Ultimately, as a matter of final recourse, the LA – through its role of providing strategic financial leadership - may review school organisation arrangements to secure financially sustainable and high-quality education provision.

6.0 Selection testing

6.1 Members may also be interested in an education issue which solely relates to Skipton and Ripon. NYCC currently administers the selection testing process for two of our Schools Ermysted’s Grammar School and Ripon Grammar School. Up to testing in September 2108 candidates undertook the test on 2 separate occasions with their best scores considered. The costs of administering the tests including materials and staffing arrangements are significant. Members will be aware that NYCC, like our schools, is facing a challenging budgetary situation. The decision has been taken to reduce to a single test from September 2019 onwards roughly halving our expenditure. NYCC will continue to meet our statutory duty regarding an appropriate testing scheme and the current content and format of the testing will be unaffected. The two selective schools,

the local primary schools and the parents of perspective candidates (current year 5 pupils) were all informed during November or early December.

7.0 Recommendation

- 7.1 That Members note the report and consider how they can influence the factors that affect School sustainability in the Skipton and Ripon area.

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