



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 5th February 2026

Educational Performance Deep Dive

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Shirley Reynolds - Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children, Young People, Education, Employment & Skills
Lead Director:	Simon Wellman - Director: Education & Skills
Service Area:	Education and Skills
Report Author:	Rebecca Carey, Head of Service Achievement
Officer Contact Details:	Tel: 01952 380808/380989 Email: rebecca.carey@telford.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	All Wards

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note the performance headlines for pupils and young people for the academic year 2024-25.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present headline and group attainment data for pupils and young people across the borough at each key national assessment point, from the early years through to GCSEs. It provides a clear basis for comparing local performance with national, regional, and statistical neighbour benchmarks. In doing so, the report highlights the achievements of schools throughout the borough and identifies emerging trends.

The analysis of this data along with national directives has informed the priorities for the coming year, supporting strategic planning and targeted improvement activity.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 For context, 36% of primary schools now belong to academy trusts, which is an increase of 6% on the previous year, but is still lower than the national at 46%. Of the 13 secondary schools in the borough, 92% are now in academy trusts, an

increase of 8% on the previous year and this is higher than the national which is 83%. With regards to assuring the quality of education in schools; the local authority holds this responsibility for maintained schools and does this through its quality assurance process. For academies, they are held to account for their performance by the Regional Schools Commissioner; however, the local authority does work alongside its academies in a number of partnership forums including the Education Strategic Partnership.

This report focusses on the educational attainment of pupils and young people for the academic year of 2024-25. From the time that pupils start school, there are a number of statutory points of assessment. Outcomes of these assessments are collected by the DfE and form part of a national dataset which allows for valuable benchmarking at a local and school level as well as for shaping priorities.

Assessment differs between the stages and is made up of the following:

- 3.2 **Good Level of Development (GLD)** is measured at the end of the reception year through the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Profile, in which teachers assess each child's attainment against 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) across seven areas of learning.

Teachers use their professional judgement, drawing on ongoing observations, to determine whether a child has reached the *expected* level of development or is still *emerging* in each goal. A child is considered to have achieved a GLD if they meet the expected standard in all **prime areas**: Communication and Language, Physical Development, and Personal, Social and Emotional Development as well as the **specific areas** of Literacy and Mathematics.

The purpose of GLD is to provide a clear, holistic picture of a child's early learning and readiness for Year 1, helping teachers and schools identify strengths, gaps, and priorities for support.

- 3.3 **Phonics** is measured at the end of Year 1 through the statutory Phonics Screening Check, a short assessment in which pupils read 40 words; a mix of real words and *pseudo-words* designed to test whether they can apply phonic decoding skills rather than rely on memory.

The purpose of the check is to ensure that all pupils have a solid foundation in phonics, enabling them to progress confidently into more complex reading. The inclusion of pseudo-words, each marked with a creature icon, ensures that pupils must use phonics strategies rather than recognition, providing teachers with reliable insights into their decoding ability.

- 3.4 **Standard Assessment Tests (SATs)** are taken at the end of Year 6, pupils are assessed in **reading, writing and mathematics** through a combination of national tests and teacher assessments. Reading and mathematics are evaluated through a one-hour reading comprehension paper and three maths papers covering arithmetic and reasoning. Writing, however, is not tested by exam; instead, teachers make a teacher assessment judgement based on a wide range of work completed across the year.

Educational Performance Deep Dive

The purpose of these assessments is to provide a clear, consistent measure of each child's attainment at the end of primary school, helping schools, parents and secondary teachers understand pupils' strengths and areas for development. They also contribute to national monitoring of school performance and support a smooth transition into Year 7 by informing the level of support and challenge pupils may need.

- 3.5 **GCSEs** are assessed at the end of Year 11 primarily through formal written examinations and are set and marked by external exam boards. Although some subjects include non-examination assessments such as coursework, most GCSE subjects rely mainly on final exam performance to determine a student's grade.

GCSEs graded on a 9–1 scale, replaced the A*–G system and were introduced in 2017. Grade 9 is the highest award, set above the old A*. The scale includes key “anchor points” so that the bottom of grade 7 aligns with the old grade A, grade 4 aligns with the old grade C (a standard pass), and grade 1 aligns with the old grade G. The published benchmark for performance is based on the number and percentage of pupils reaching a scale 5 (a strong pass) in both maths and English.

These assessments serve several purposes: they provide a nationally consistent measure of pupils' knowledge and skills at the end of secondary education, determine eligibility for post-16 pathways such as A-levels, apprenticeships or vocational courses, and provide a reliable data set on pupil progress and school performance.

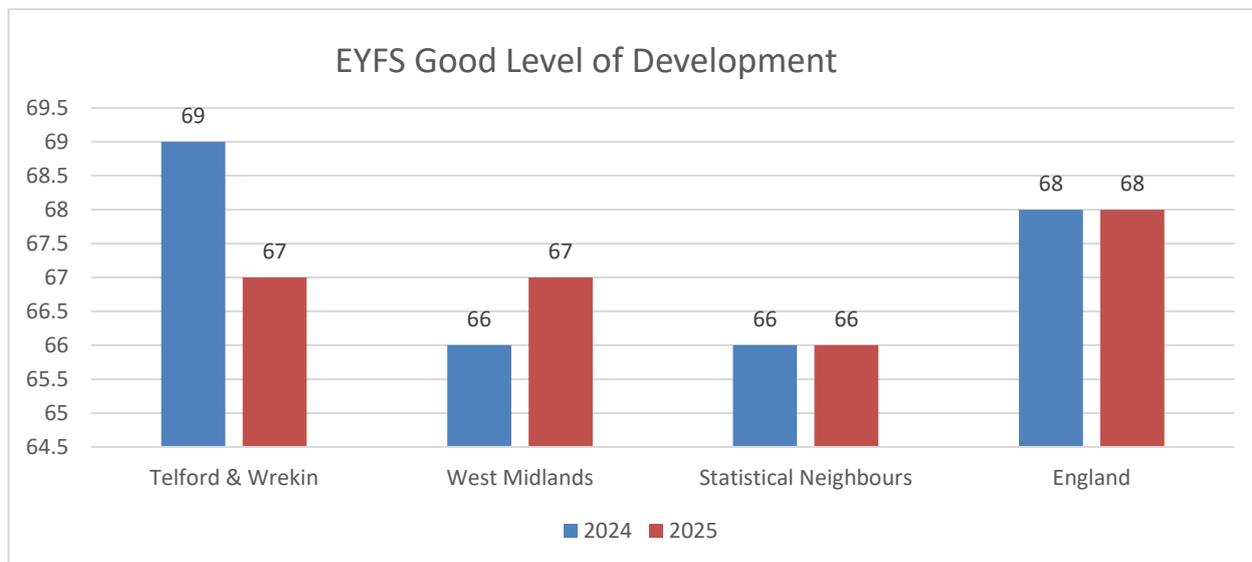
4.0 Summary of main proposal

- 4.1 Table 1 - Headline data for the academic year shows the following:

Region	Early Years Foundation Stage Age 5 – end of reception (GLD)	Phonics – Year 1 %	Key stage 2 Age 11 – end of primary	Key stage 4 Age 16 – end of secondary		
	% at Expected standard	Pass	% at expected standard	% achieved grade 4 in English and Maths	% achieved grade 5 in English and Maths	Attainment 8 (Top score =90)
TW	67	80	64	58	39	44.1
West Midlands	67	79	62	62	41	44.6
Statistical Neighbours	67	80	63	63	44	44.2
England	68	80	62	65	46	46.2

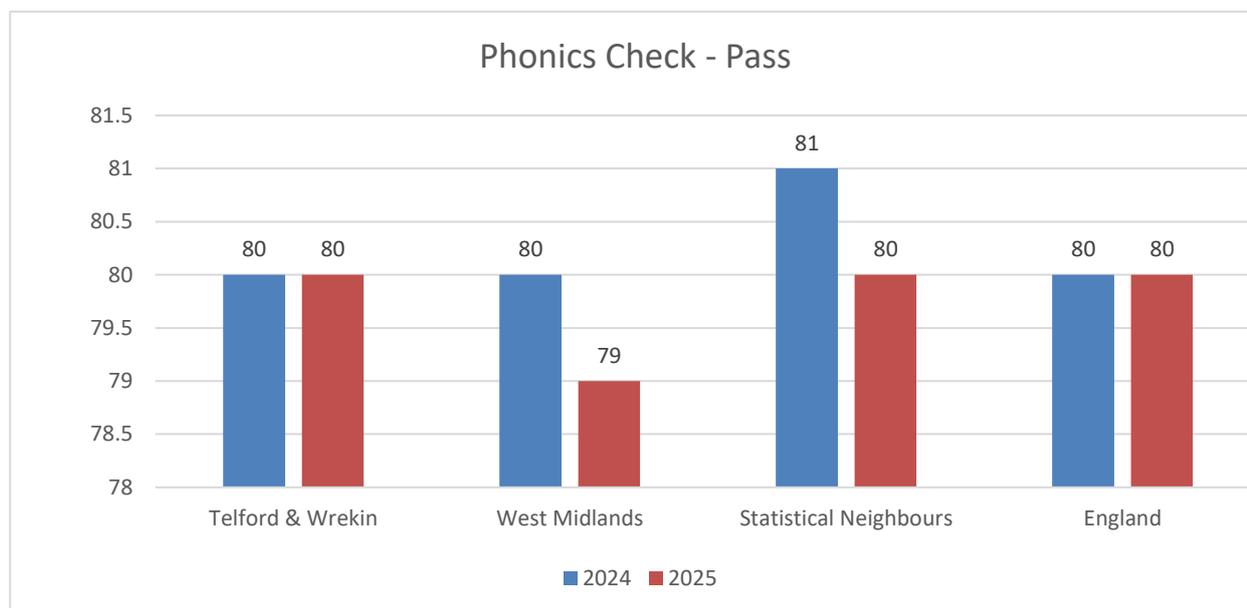
Educational Performance Deep Dive

4.2 Early Years Foundation Stage Good Level of Development %



67% of children reaching a good level of development (GLD) for 2024 is broadly in line with national. Schools have targeted intervention to support the transition of pupils from early years into KS1 (Year 1) to support where pupils have not met early learning goals and GLD. More than three quarters of all pupils met the expected standard for the early learning goals of PSE and Communication and language.

4.3 Phonics Attainment %

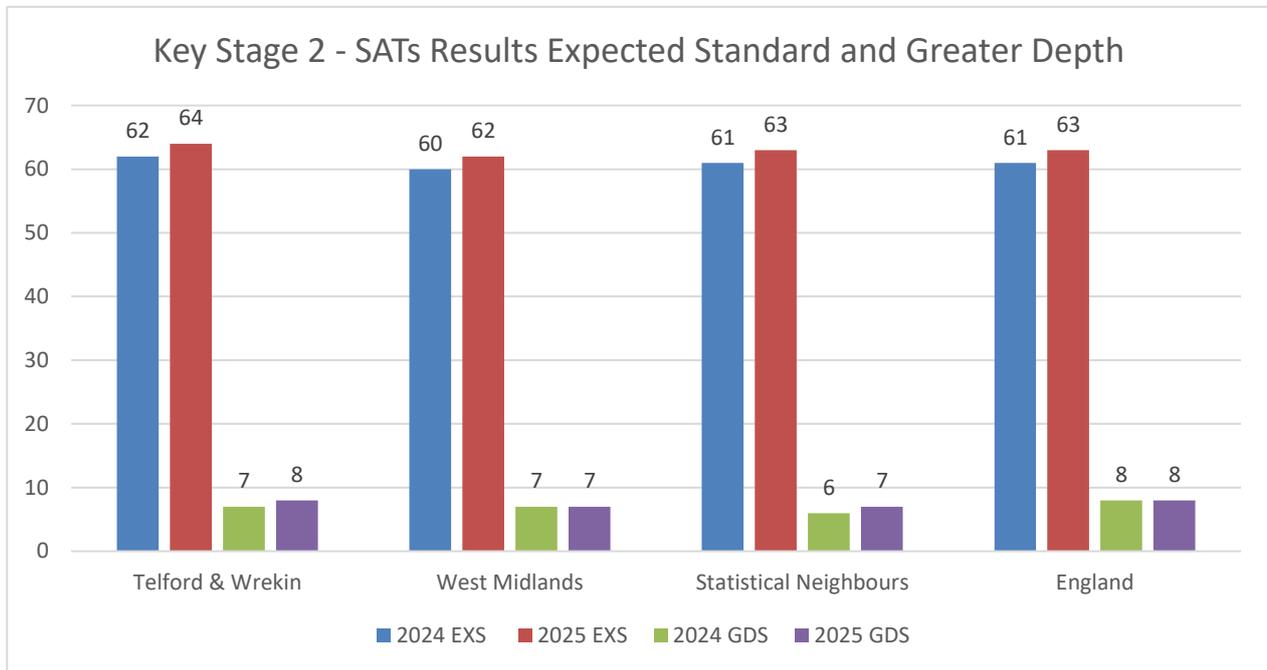


80% of children have passed the phonics check in Telford and Wrekin and this is in line with the regional and the national average. This is a test taken by children in year 1. Schools deliver a DfE approved phonics programme. Knowledge of phonics is an important early skill in the development of early reading skills.

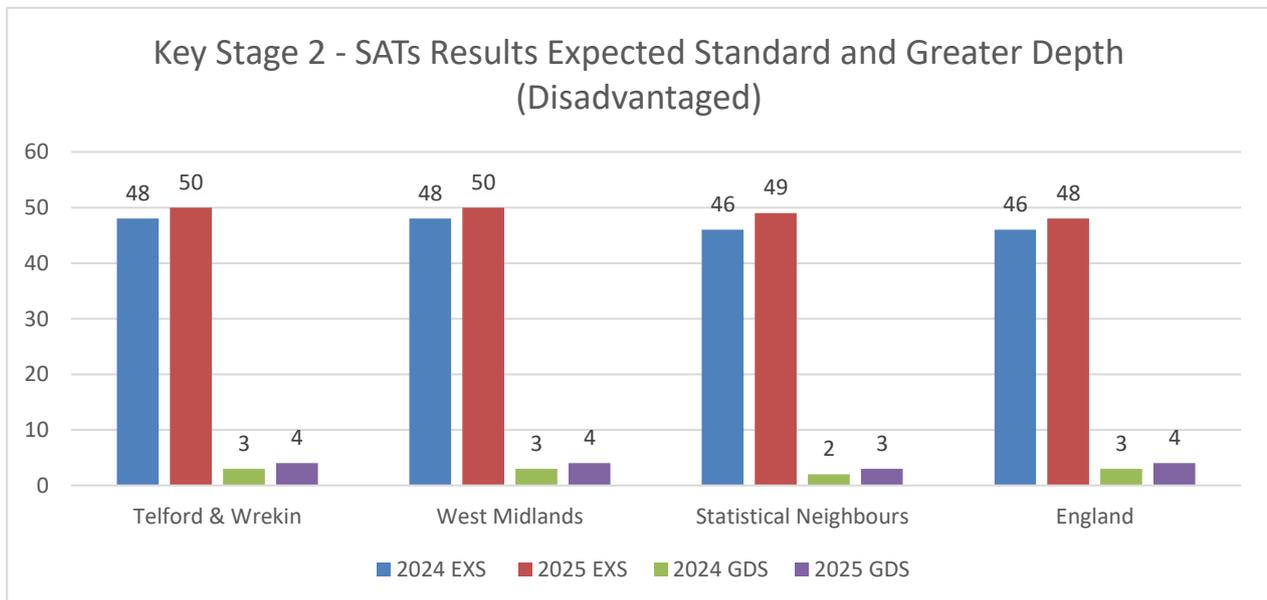
Educational Performance Deep Dive

4.4 Key Stage 2 Standard Attainment Tests (SATs)

Reading, Writing and Mathematics Combined Outcomes % - All Pupils

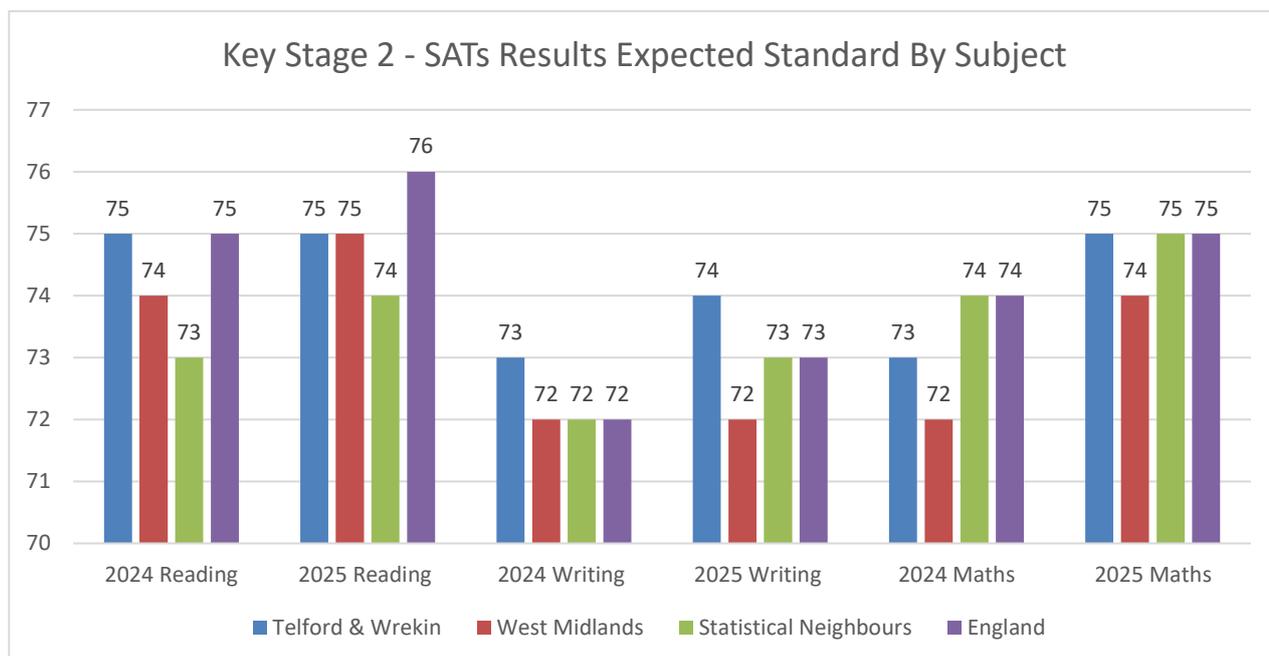


Reading, Writing and Mathematics Combined Outcomes % - Disadvantaged



Educational Performance Deep Dive

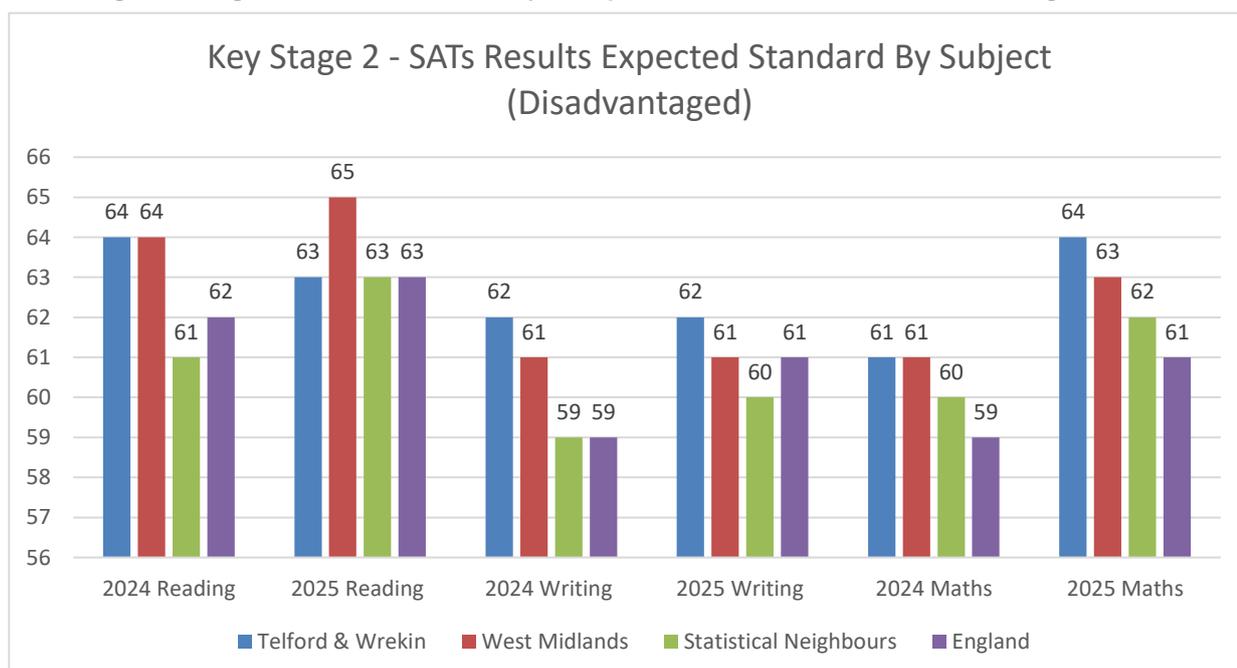
Reading, Writing and Mathematics by Subject Outcomes % - All Pupils



Of those pupils that reached the expected standard, there are those that reach a grade classified as 'greater depth' and the percentages of those are below in the table.

Greater Depth %	2024 Reading	2025 Reading	2024 Writing	2025 Writing	2024 Maths	2025 Maths
Telford & Wrekin	29	32	14	13	21	24
West Midlands	27	32	12	11	23	25
Statistical Neighbours	26	31	11	11	22	24
England	29	34	13	13	24	27

Reading, Writing and Mathematics by Subject Outcomes % - Disadvantaged



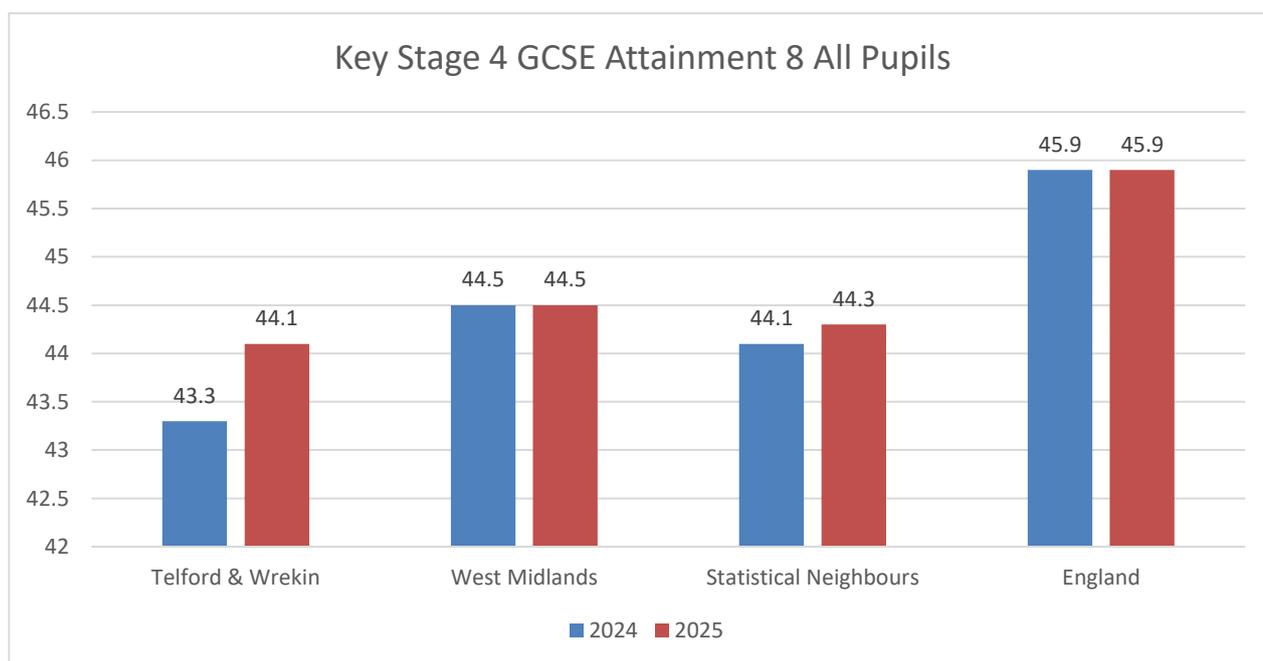
Educational Performance Deep Dive

Greater Depth %	2024 Reading	2025 Reading	2024 Writing	2025 Writing	2024 Maths	2025 Maths
Telford & Wrekin	19	21	6	6	11	15
West Midlands	19	23	6	7	14	16
Statistical Neighbours	17	20	5	5	12	14
England	18	21	6	7	13	15

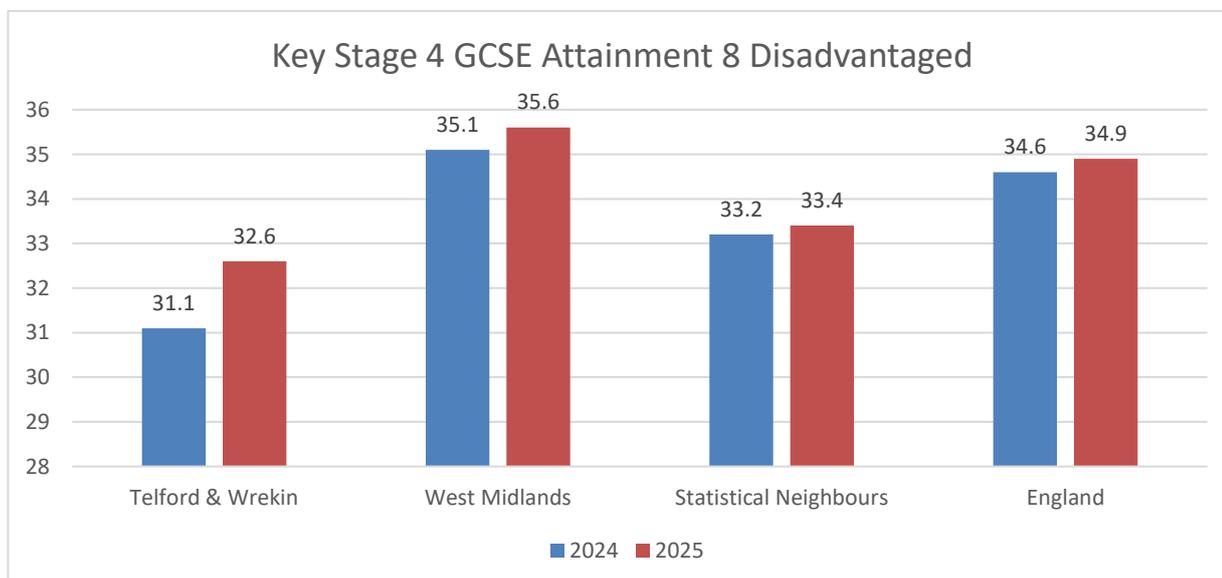
The numbers of pupils reaching the expected standard and greater depth within the expected standard in RWM at the end of KS2 is in line with national figures for all and disadvantaged pupils.

4.5 Key Stage 4 GCSEs

Attainment 8 Score All Pupils

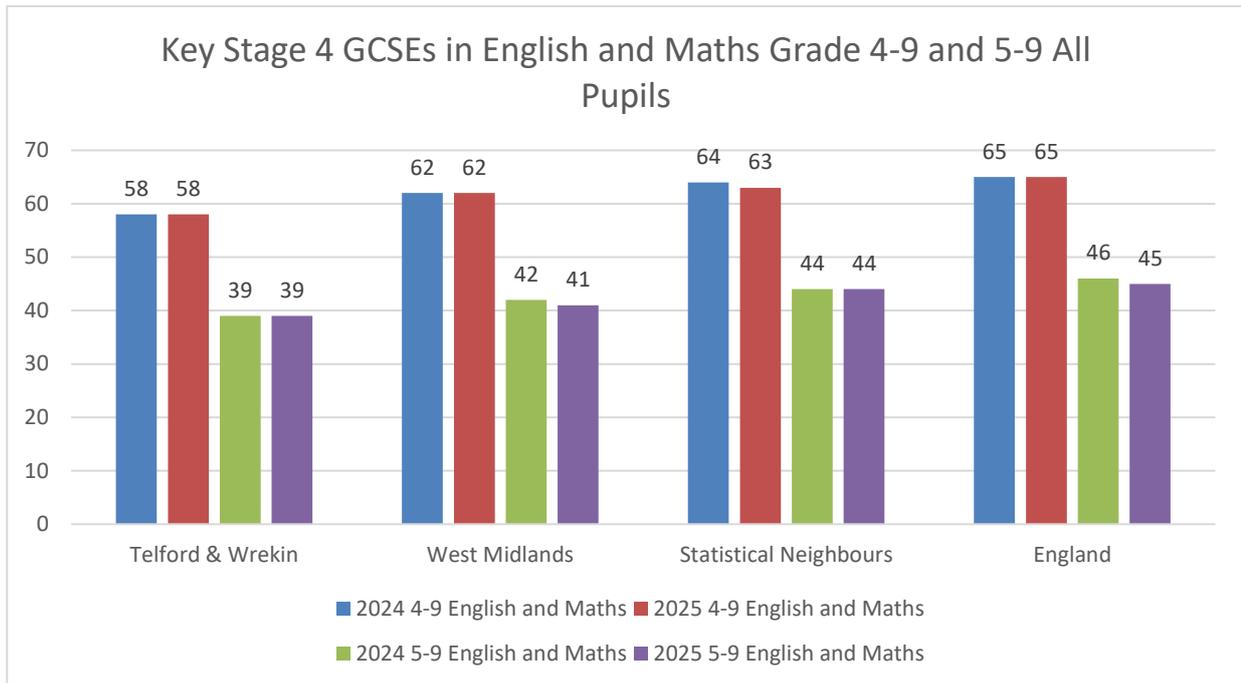


Attainment 8 Score Disadvantaged

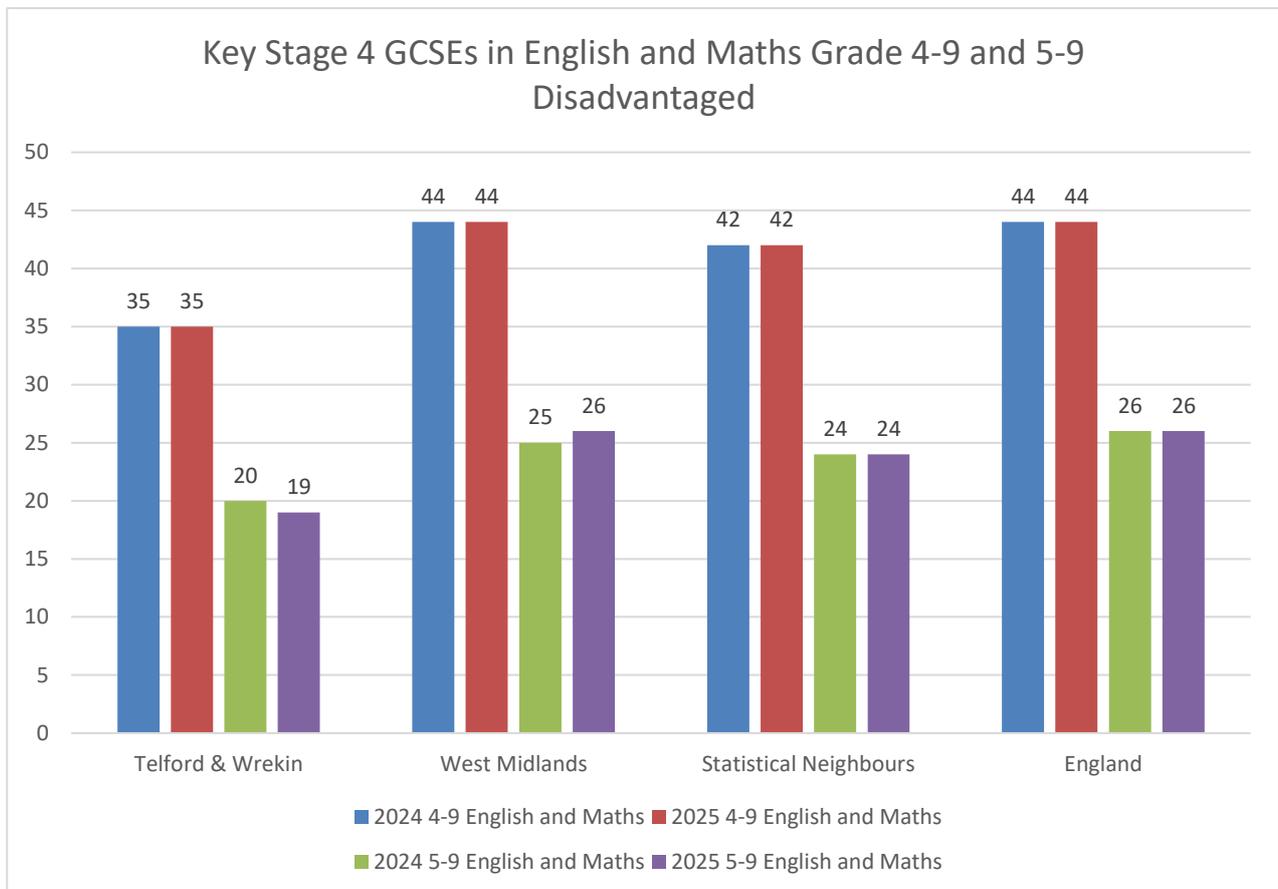


Educational Performance Deep Dive

Key Stage 4 GCSEs English and Maths grades 4-9 and 5-9 All Pupils



Key Stage 4 GCSEs English and Maths grades 4-9 and 5-9 Disadvantaged



Educational Performance Deep Dive

Telford and Wrekin Attainment 8 score the is in line with the regional average and slightly below national. Attainment 8 scores are lower in the LA for disadvantaged pupils than the national. The number of pupils achieving a grade 4 or above and a grade 5 or above in both English and Maths are marginally below national.

Pupils achieve better in the borough, regionally and nationally in English than in Maths, with results higher at both 4-9 and 5-9. This does impact on the English and Maths combined results.

4.6 **Priorities**

- Best Start in Life - the DfE has set a target that by 2028, 75% of all children should reach a good level of development at the end of reception year. However, alongside this target, it has set individual local authority targets for which Telford and Wrekin's is 78%. In order to work towards achieving this, the local authority must submit a plan which will focus on develop from 0-5 and is being led by health and key partners, one of which is education.
- Continue to reduce the gap in attainment between Disadvantaged and non-Disadvantaged pupils. This is key focus area on all quality assurance visits in maintained schools to seek assurance from leaders about the provision in place for those in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and the effectiveness of individual school Pupil Premium Strategies.
- Improving outcome at the end of KS4
This has been adopted as a Telford Strategic Partnership board priority
 - Improve the English and Maths outcomes for all pupils at grades 5 and above.
 - Improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and reduce the gap to national for attainment.
 - Improve the attainment of Maths at grades 4 and above and 5 and above. Schools are working with a number of providers including the DfE Maths Hub to look at strategies both to support transition in Maths from primary to secondary and improve preparations for GCSEs from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4.

5.0 **Alternative Options**

5.1 There are no alternative options given the educational achievement of children and young people are measured annually

6.0 **Key Risks**

6.1 Improving GCSE outcomes across the borough will bring significant long-term benefits to all wards, strengthening both individual life chances and community prosperity. Higher attainment at Key Stage 4 is closely linked to increased participation in further education, apprenticeships and employment, helping more young people progress into skilled and sustainable careers. This, in turn, supports reduced youth unemployment and enhances the local skills base, making the borough more attractive to employers and investors.

Improved outcomes also contribute to narrowing inequalities between wards, ensuring that children regardless of where they live can access similar opportunities and positive future pathways. Over time, these gains help build healthier, more resilient communities, with better economic stability, higher aspirations, across the whole borough.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 The proposals outlined in this report support the following Council priorities:
- Every child, young person, and adult lives well in their communities
 - Everyone benefits from a thriving economy

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. The local authority's statutory duties, regarding moderation of Key Stage 2 national curriculum tests for maintained schools, are funded through a combination of government grant and de-delegated funds agreed annually with the local Schools Forum.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 Educational Outcomes impacts on all Wards across the borough.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 Working on strategies to improve the number of pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of reception provides young people the best starting point to reach their full potential throughout their school life.

GCSE outcomes have wide ranging health, social and economic benefits for the borough. Higher educational attainment is strongly linked to better long-term health outcomes, as individuals with stronger qualifications are more likely to access stable employment, higher incomes and healthier living conditions and give young people greater confidence, purpose and opportunity. Economically, a more skilled local workforce attracts investment, supports business growth and increases productivity, helping to secure sustainable economic development across the borough.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 Improved academic achievement has important Equality and Diversity implications, as strong educational outcomes help to reduce long-standing disparities between different groups of pupils. Higher attainment can help break cycles of disadvantage, narrow gaps between protected characteristic groups, and promote greater social mobility across the borough.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 There are no direct climate change and environmental implications arising from this report.

14.0 Appendices

14.1 None.

15.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Director	30/01/2026	30/01/2026	SW
Legal	02/02/2026	02/02/2026	RP
Finance	02/02/2026	02/02/2026	TD