

# News story: Standards continue to rise in England's schools

Standards in England's schools are continuing to rise, with more pupils achieving strong results in English and maths, and more pupils performing well in the EBacc, following [new secondary school data published today](#) (24 January).

Today's data also shows converter academies performing well above the national average and disadvantaged pupils in multi-academy trusts (MATs) making more progress than the equivalent national average.

Today's release has also revealed record EBacc entry and achievement among disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), helping pupils keep their options open as they enter further and higher education.

With progress scores in academies and free schools higher than the national average, today's results provide yet more evidence of what can be achieved as an academy. This follows research published yesterday that showed standards have risen more quickly in sponsored academies than similar council-run schools in many cases, and that over half of pupils in state-funded schools are now taught in academies.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Making sure that all pupils, regardless of their background, are able to fulfil their potential is one of this Government's key priorities and these results show that more pupils across the country are doing just that.

It's been clear for some time that standards are rising in our schools and today's data underlines the role academies and free schools are playing in that improvement, with progress above the national average and impressive outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Also vital to rising standards is the increasing number of pupils entering the EBacc. With a record number of disadvantaged pupils achieving good grades in the EBacc, more pupils will go on to further and higher education with a wider range of options and opportunities.

Statistics released today show:

- The proportion of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above at GCSE in both English and maths has increased, from 42.6% last year to 43.3% this;
- Progress by 16-18-year-olds retaking English and maths has improved in both subjects

- 95.5% of pupils are now entering EBacc science at GCSE, up from 63.2% in 2010, and the number of pupils taking maths and science at A Level has increased, including a rise of around 7% in the number of girls taking at least one of these subjects.

Today's multi academy trust measures highlight four high performing trusts across all three performance measures – Progress 8, EBacc entry and EBacc Average Points Score. STAR Academies, a multi-academy trust consisting largely of Muslim schools in London, the Midlands and the North of England, tops all three measures, while Dixons, Diocese of London and Diocese of Westminster trusts also perform strongly in all three.

The department has also published information relating to languages and the EBacc. This includes a list of secondary schools showing the proportion of pupils in each school entered for the languages pillar of the EBacc, and new research on the destinations of pupils who took the EBacc. The research shows over nine in 10 Oxbridge students entered a GCSE in EBacc languages, with more than three quarters entering both languages and humanities. These pupils studied a broad and balanced curriculum – that includes languages – before going on to highly selective universities.

The data is part of a number of publications from the Department today that show how our secondary schools are performing. It includes the performance tables, which help parents make informed choices about schools in their areas, and see how multi academy trusts are performing.

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## Statement to parliament: Future maritime strategy

I am today announcing the publication of [Maritime 2050: Navigating the Future](#), the government's landmark strategy setting out our vision and ambitions for the future of the British maritime sector.

Our nation depends on the wide range of benefits the maritime sector delivers. It contributes over £14 billion a year to the UK economy and directly supports an estimated 186,000 jobs. Around 95% of British imports and exports are moved by sea. The leisure and marine sectors are vital to our enjoyment of the seas. Our maritime clusters around the UK showcase the diversity of our regional economies, from professional services in London to ship management and educational excellence in Scotland.

We rightly take pride in our maritime past. Maritime 2050 is about looking forward; anticipating the challenges and opportunities ahead and recognising the UK's strengths so we are well placed to capitalise on them. Maritime 2050 looks at these across 7 themes and under each makes short, medium and long-term recommendations:

- UK competitive advantage
- people
- environment
- technology
- infrastructure
- trade
- security and resilience

It highlights multi-billion pound commercial investment in maritime infrastructure at ports and beyond. Our unwavering commitment to safety and security. Our reputation for innovation, paving the way on regulatory frameworks and technology to facilitate smart shipping and autonomy; leading the way in clean maritime growth. But no matter how far advances in ships and technology take us, it sets out how the people graduating from our maritime training and academic institutions will reflect the world around us and continue to be sought after across the globe for their skills.

As the global maritime sector adapts to challenges such as climate change, rapid technological advances and security concerns, Maritime 2050 sets a series of strategic ambitions around which government and the sector will focus its efforts, and core values which we will be guided by.

The partnership between government and the maritime sector has been vital to the development of this strategy. It began in March 2018 with a call for evidence, seeking to reach all branches of the sector, complemented by workshops around the UK to capture the views from across our maritime clusters, and interviews with leaders in industry and academia. Maritime 2050 has also benefited from the advice and scrutiny of an independent panel of 13 internationally respected academics, industry leaders, maritime business services providers and promotional bodies. As a result, Maritime 2050 reflects the depth and breadth of the UK's rich maritime sector.

A copy of Maritime 2050 has been placed in the library of both Houses and is [available on GOV.UK](#), together with the trade and technology route maps setting out in greater detail the steps needed to achieve the UK's strategic maritime ambitions.

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## **Press release: Self Assessment returns: unbelievable excuses and dubious expenses**

As the deadline approaches for submitting returns and paying tax for 2017 to 2018, HMRC reveals some of the most bizarre excuses it has received for not paying on time.

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## **Press release: Justice Secretary announces new female offender funding at Women's Aid speech**

Justice Secretary David Gauke announced in a speech at Women's Aid that community services supporting vulnerable women have been awarded £1.6 million funding, as part of the Government's commitment to reduce the number of women entering the criminal justice system.

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## **Press release: Jailed restaurant owner served with directorship ban**

Previously jailed restaurant owner from Spilsby, Lincolnshire, has been now banned from running companies after she deliberately submitted false tax returns