

To:

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All Headteachers and Chairs of Governors

Date: 22 January 2015

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Dear Headteacher and Chair of Governors

A Good Education for Every Norfolk Learner

I hope that 2015 has started well and that your improvement plans for 2014-15 are moving ahead quickly.

We now have a clear view of the educational outcomes for Norfolk children and young people at every key stage in 2014 and a view of how this performance compares nationally. I have been delighted to see excellent improvements in a number of Norfolk schools but I also know that we all remain concerned that Norfolk's standards of achievement in general are not yet good enough.

I know that raising standards in your schools continues to be at the heart of your work. Many of you are transforming the quality of provision and outcomes for your pupils including through active engagement with the approach to self-improvement 'Norfolk to Good and Great'. Many more of you contribute significantly to improving Norfolk schools through system leadership. The exponential growth in school collaboration across the county in the last year means that nearly 40% of Norfolk schools are now in some form of partnership, federation or trust arrangement with other schools. All of this leads me to feel optimistic about our continued improvement.

The achievement of Norfolk children remains below the national average at most key stages. Improvement is evident – but we are not closing the gaps with national performance, especially for Pupil Premium pupils.

The impact of the Local Authority Strategy to support school improvement is rigorously monitored by the Norfolk Education Challenge Board which has Headteacher and Governor representatives and is chaired by Professor David Woods. It is the view of the Board that we must have an accurate picture of predicted outcomes for 2015. This decision has the support of the Chairs of our Headteacher and Governor Associations.

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Many of you already provide half-termly data for us and will know that we make good use of this to maintain a collective picture of progress towards better standards. In order to enhance our capacity to monitor the progress across the county towards better outcomes for all Norfolk children we will be requesting data each half term from every Norfolk school as of this term. For those schools that have not previously submitted data to us can I reassure you that:

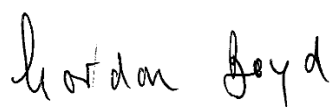
- we ask for data that you are likely to be reporting routinely to Governors
- the method of collection is electronic (through Perspective Lite)
- we will give you good notice of the collection dates
- we will write back to each individual school to respond to the data submission

With this in mind, Chris Snudden will contact all schools currently risk assessed as E and F schools (Good or Outstanding) and will be requesting regular predictions for 2015 for the current year 6 and Year 11.

Norfolk's collective aspiration to have 'A Good School for Every Norfolk Learner' continues to underpin the Local Authority's arrangements for supporting school improvement. This evolves into 'A Good Education for Every Norfolk Learner' as more of our education work in the Norfolk focuses on the individual pupil. This will become clearer as we establish our new Education Inclusion Service where we will bring together our crucial role in supporting institutions across the county to be both inclusive and high achieving for our most vulnerable learners. Our Local Authority Pupil Premium Strategy and Toolkit will be published in February 2015 and will offer challenge, support and guidance by bringing together research and effective practice, useful tools and strategies for school leaders and governors.

Thank you for all you're doing to promote the highest standards of education for all of our children and young people. Please do stay in touch with my team and, in particular, please contact Chris Snudden if you would like to discuss this letter in greater detail.

With best wishes



Gordon Boyd
Assistant Director, Education