

GCSE Pupils' Results Improve Throughout Suffolk

S.C.C. has reported further improvements in GCSE results. This is rather better than this year's national results. To be confirmed, reports show 63% of pupils achieved the new threshold of A to C grades in English and Maths, up from 59% in 2015.

Local schools' benchmark results:

- Claydon High School – 70% achieved the new threshold
- Stowmarket High School – 45% achieved the new threshold
- Stowupland High School – 61% achieved the new threshold

'A' Level Success as Pass Rates Rise

Suffolk pupils' overall pass rate for 'A' levels continues to rise. Almost 3,000 pupils were entered, the resulting figures, to be verified, show that:

- 98.5% of pupils achieved A to E
- 76% of pupils achieved A to C

Since the launch of 'Raising the Bar' in 2012, 'A' level results have improved year on year and 82% of schools are now being judged 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. Over the last year this percentage nationally has increased by 3%, and Suffolk by 6%. This means that Suffolk schools are improving twice as fast as those across the country.

However, we must remain concerned about the 18% of secondary schools who do not meet Ofsted standards, and the need to 'Raise the Bar' for the 'E' category results.

S.C.C.'s Future Plans for Schools' Expansion

Proposals are in place to tackle the present and future shortage of places in schools across the County, in view of the expected major growth in the population over the next few years.

Primary schools could be expanded in all parts of the County, and new schools built, not only in the areas of Ipswich and Lowestoft but also in the rest of Suffolk. High schools will also need to be considered for expansion or new build.

Bosmere School, in Needham Market, has the playing field of the former middle school earmarked for its possible future expansion.

The proposals are expected to be considered by the relevant scrutiny committee early in September. It is to be hoped that the challenge will not be resolved by the provision of temporary mobile classrooms but by planning for permanent buildings in keeping with the existing use of the sites.

Delayed Transfer of Hospital Patients to Care Homes

Suffolk County Council, whilst devolving care homes to the private sector, retains responsibility for the well-being of residents in them. However, S.C.C.'s policy of not permitting new residents to take up places in care homes should they not be deemed satisfactory by the Care Quality Commission has resulted in the delayed transfer of some patients from hospital to care homes. Both the West Suffolk and Ipswich hospitals have highlighted the issue.

S.C.C. and N.H.S. providers are meeting together early this month to address the issue. S.C.C. has committed £180,000 to fund a new supported early discharge project. Proper support for patients at the point of transfer must remain the prime objective.

Suffolk Rail Conference

Suffolk County Council will be hosting the Suffolk Rail Conference on the 24th October 2016 at The Legends Suite, Ipswich Town Football Club.

The conference will provide an opportunity for delegates to discuss rail issues and speak directly to Abellio Greater Anglia (recently awarded the new rail franchise) about the rail improvements that are required to support Suffolk's growing economy. A series of interest groups have also been included in this year's programme to allow for discussions and ideas about key rail topics.