What do we know?

Summary

Outcomes for pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 (KS4) are higher on average for Lincolnshire pupils, compared to the national and regional average.

This is in part due to Lincolnshire offering selective education, similar authorities also have relatively higher outcomes. The existence of Grammar schools provide a significant challenge to nearby non-selective schools to meet Government targets for achievement.

Lincolnshire is showing steady rates of improvement for key measures of performance by the end of KS4.

The gap in achievement between "key vulnerable groups" and their peers is wider in Lincolnshire than the national average.

Changing Government priorities provide a challenge to set mid to long term forecasts, and for schools to react to new measures of success.

Facts and figures

Percentage of pupils achieving 5+A* to C including English and Mathematics GCSES at the end of KS4:

For 2008/09:
- Lincolnshire 56.1% +/- 1.0%
- England 50.9%
- East Midlands 49.9%

For 2009/10:
- Lincolnshire 59.2% +/- 1.0%
- England 55.3%
- East Midlands 53.7%

2009/10 Performance by Gender for Boys:
- Lincolnshire 55.7%
- England 51.7%
The proportion of Lincolnshire pupils achieving 5 or more grade A* to C GCSEs or equivalent including GCSE English and Maths, increased by 3% in 2010, and is higher than the regional and national average. Girls outperformed Boys, which is reflected nationally. The gender difference is slightly narrower in Lincolnshire, compared to national and regional figures.

GCSE entries in English and Maths achieving grades A* to C by pupils at the end of KS4 in maintained schools, for 2008/09:

- Lincolnshire 56.6%
- England 51.5%

For 2009/10, these figures were:

- Lincolnshire 59.2%
- England 55.3%

A greater proportion of pupils achieved a good grade in GCSE English and Maths than the national figure, there has been a steady improvement in this figure since 1999.

The Coalition Government introduced a new KS4 Performance indicator in 2010, the English Baccalaureate. This measures the percentage of pupils achieving grade A* to C in GCSE English, Maths, Science, Humanities and Language. Lincolnshire’s figure is higher than the national average.

Percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate in 2009/10:

- Lincolnshire 18.2%
- England 15.1%

A Note on Data: Headline performance data are calculated and reported by the Department for Education. Provisional data are made available in the October following the Summer Examinations, with final data published the following January. Lincolnshire County Council has access to pupil-level data from October onwards, enabling more detailed analysis including geographical.

**Trends**

Data is on the Lincolnshire Research Observatory (LRO) for Academic years 2007/8 to 2009/10. Historical data can be found on the Department for Education (DfE).
The current rate of improvement for the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more grade A*-C GCSEs or equivalent, including English and Maths, is improving at approximately 2.7% per year. This would give a figure of 72.2% by 2015. However, a changing emphasis from the Coalition Government towards the English Baccalaureate will impact on schools' curriculum offer and therefore this measure.

It is likely that outcomes measured in terms of English Baccalaureate achievement rate will quickly increase as schools react to this new measure in terms of curriculum provision.

Mid to long term projections cannot be made due to the political influence on educational outcome measures.

**Targets**

Lincolnshire Local Authority schools are encouraged to set aspirational targets but they are no longer a statutory requirement.

Pupils achieving 5+ A* to C grade GCSES or equivalent, including English and Maths


This indicator remains in the Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP) and Local Area Agreement (LAA). Therefore they will be reset as part of the annual CYPP and LAA target setting activities. Targets for English Baccalaureate achievement rates will also be created.

**Performance**

In 2009/10 the target for the proportion of pupils achieving 5+A*-C grade GCSEs or equivalent, including English and Maths was missed by 2.5%

Five schools fell below the National Floor Standard of 35% in 2010. Of these five, either structural solutions or recovery plans are in place.

The Academy Conversion programme continues at pace, with 15 Secondary Academies in Lincolnshire as on 1st April 2011. Academies operate independently of Lincolnshire County Council.

Lincolnshire performs above the national and regional averages for all KS4 outcomes and is a top quartile performer, being 1st or 2nd against statistical neighbours.
What is this telling us?

Summary

Lincolnshire continues to be a high performing authority in terms of outcomes at KS4, but will have to react to the changing success measures introduced by the Coalition Government. The rural nature of Lincolnshire means that provision is spread across many, relatively small, secondary schools. Coupled with a selective education system, this provides localised challenges to provide pupils of differing ability with a broad curriculum. The results for Lincolnshire schools demonstrate that this has been largely achieved, and that schools react effectively to the changing educational agenda.

Local views

Consultation with parents and the wider community is undertaken each time organisational changes to school provision are proposed. This has been significant due to the Academy Conversion process, and the closure/federation of schools due to changing pupil populations.

There is regular consultation with Head Teachers and Governing bodies to discuss future service development

National and local strategies

National strategies from central Government have now gone, and have not been replaced by the new administration.

The developing national policy giving greater autonomy for schools to improve performance and Academies, results in the Local Authority having no statutory engagement on performances. Services to Academies are being offered in a traded form. This means that schools and, more immediately, Academies will buy in services from the Local Authority and their partners, that previously were delivered without charge. It will also allow schools to outsource service and support historically provided by Authorities to other providers. The Education White Paper describes this policy in greater detail.

Current activity and services

Individual plans for schools below or at risk of falling below the new Government Floor Standards have been developed and submitted to the Department for Education.

A restructure of the Emotional and Behaviour Support Service and Alternative Provision is taking place with a view to meeting the individual needs of vulnerable pupils.

Key inequalities

Outcomes for "vulnerable groups" - proportion achieving 5+A*-C GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths

Outcomes for pupils with English as Additional Language (EAL)

- Lincolnshire 41%
England 53%

Achievement gap compared to English speaking peers

- Lincolnshire 18%
- England 2%

Relatively small numbers of pupils with EAL and a fluctuating population may impact on the scale of the “gap”, EAL pupils in Lincolnshire tend to be Eastern European (Poland, Latvia, and Lithuania)

Outcomes for pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

- Lincolnshire 26%
- England 31%

Achievement gap compared to non-FSM pupils

- Lincolnshire 35%
- England 28%

The gap in achievement between pupils eligible for FSM and their peers is wider in Lincolnshire than nationally.

Outcomes for pupils with identified Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- Lincolnshire 23%
- National 21%

Achievement gap compared to non-SEN pupils

- Lincolnshire 48%
- National 45%

Outcomes for pupils with SEN are higher than the national average. However, the gap in achievement compared to their non-SEN peers is wider than the national picture.

**Key gaps in knowledge and services**

In rare circumstances there has been an inability to form good working relationships with individual schools, especially those who are academies, or seeking to become an academy.

**Risks of not doing something**

Pupils with lower outcomes by the end of KS4 tend to end up “Not in Education, Employment or Training” (NEET) or in employment with no further opportunities for training.
A good basic education is fundamental to a person's ability to make a positive contribution to society. Failure to provide this education has significant social and financial consequences.

**What is coming on the horizon?**

The Academy Conversion programme has seen several schools move away from Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) control, with more schools planning to convert over the next few months. This limits the influence LCC has over school performance.

A change in government has brought about a change in emphasis on academic qualifications over vocational courses and the introduction of the English Baccalaureate measure typifies this shift, which is a challenge for some schools within a selective authority.

The impact of the Wolf Report into vocational education is yet to be fully assessed. However, it is likely to impact on Lincolnshire’s secondary modern schools ability to retain pupils, and therefore their financial viability.

**What should we be doing next?**

Working intensively with all schools (maintained by the LCC or otherwise), to ensure needs of all children are being met in the most effective ways.

As schools become more autonomous bodies charged with school improvement responsibility, local partners need to be in a position to provide or broker the services they need to realise this expectation.