

## Hastings Opportunity Area – a quick recap

- The purpose of Opportunity Areas programme was to focus local and national resources on a common goal – to increase social mobility
- Each area received a share of £72 million to support targeted local work, as well as an increased share of other Department for Education (DfE) funded activity
- The programme is overseen by a local Partnership Board of individuals with experience across local government, education, business, health and voluntary and community organisations
- Each area published a plan setting out its priorities and key activities to address them
- The priorities for Hastings were: improving literacy; raising attainment in maths; improving mental health and resilience; and broadening horizons and preparing for work
- Two critical underpinning themes were also identified: teacher quality and attendance

# The Hastings Partnership Board

## Hastings Partnership Board membership

**Richard Meddings** is chair of TSB Bank, Richard is also a Non-Executive Director of HM Treasury and a Trustee at Teach First.





Board members:

- **Lorraine Clarke**, Regional Director, Ark academies trust
- **Victoria Conheady**: Assistant Director, Hastings Borough Council
- **Carole Dixon**: Chief Executive, Education Futures Trust
- **Graham Peters**: Deputy Lieutenant, Chair of Team East Sussex and Vice-Chair of South East Local Enterprise Partnership
- **Richard Preece**: Executive Headteacher / CEO Torfield & Saxon Mount Academy Trust
- **Mark Talbot**, CEO, Diocese of Chichester Academies Trust
- **John Smith**: University of Brighton Head of School of Education and Academy CEO
- **Jessica Stubbings**: Senior Manager, Partnerships and Governance, East Sussex County Council
- **Candice Miller**, Assistant Head of Health, Wellbeing and Partnerships, Sussex NHS Commissioners, NHS Brighton and Hove CCG | NHS East Sussex CCG | NHS West Sussex CCG

The meetings are also attended by the Regional Schools Commissioner and by the DfE Head of Delivery.

# HOA The priorities

## Providing children and young people in Hastings with the essential foundations for success

	<b>Improving literacy</b>	Children and young people in Hastings have the literacy skills they need to make the most of every opportunity and achieve English results in the top half of the country across all key stages.
	<b>Raising attainment in maths</b>	Hastings is known as a centre of excellence for teaching maths and children and young people achieve maths results that place them in the top half of the country at all key stages.
	<b>Improving mental health and resilience</b>	Children and young people experience positive personal and social wellbeing, understand the signs of being emotionally or mentally unwell, and receive excellent support if they need it.
	<b>Broadening horizons and preparing young people for work</b>	Young people are inspired, motivated and equipped for adult life.

## Underpinning themes

**Quality teaching – recruiting and retaining the best teachers and investing in leadership**

**Good attendance from early years to further education**

## Improving literacy

In 2016 literacy standards for Hastings' children were significantly behind that of their peers nationally:

- More than half (54%) of disadvantaged pupils were leaving primary school with a reading level below the expected standard
- Only 65% of Hastings' secondary school pupils achieved a GCSE grade C or above in English, compared with 75% nationally. Fewer than half (48%) of disadvantaged pupils achieved a GCSE grade C or above in English
- Some schools in Hastings were using evidence-based approaches which were improving children's literacy levels. Voluntary and community sector organisations were also active in raising the profile of reading for young people in the town
- Our aim was to build on this, ensuring that every child in Hastings would be successful in reading at age-appropriate levels and given opportunities to engage in and enjoy reading regularly

# Improving literacy



By 2020, at least 85% of pupils meet the expected standard in phonics

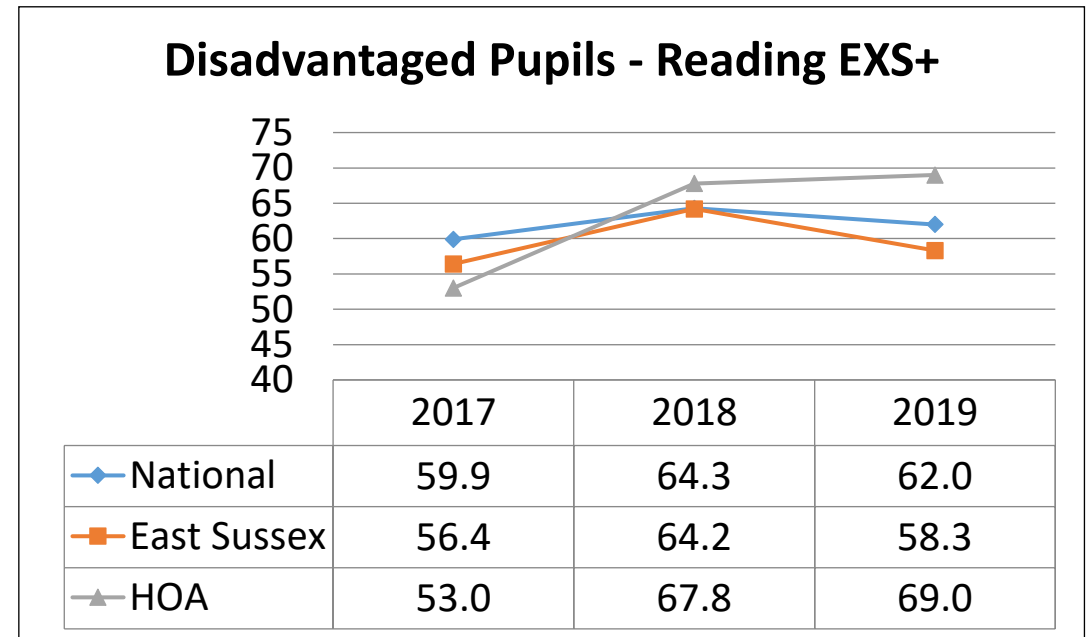
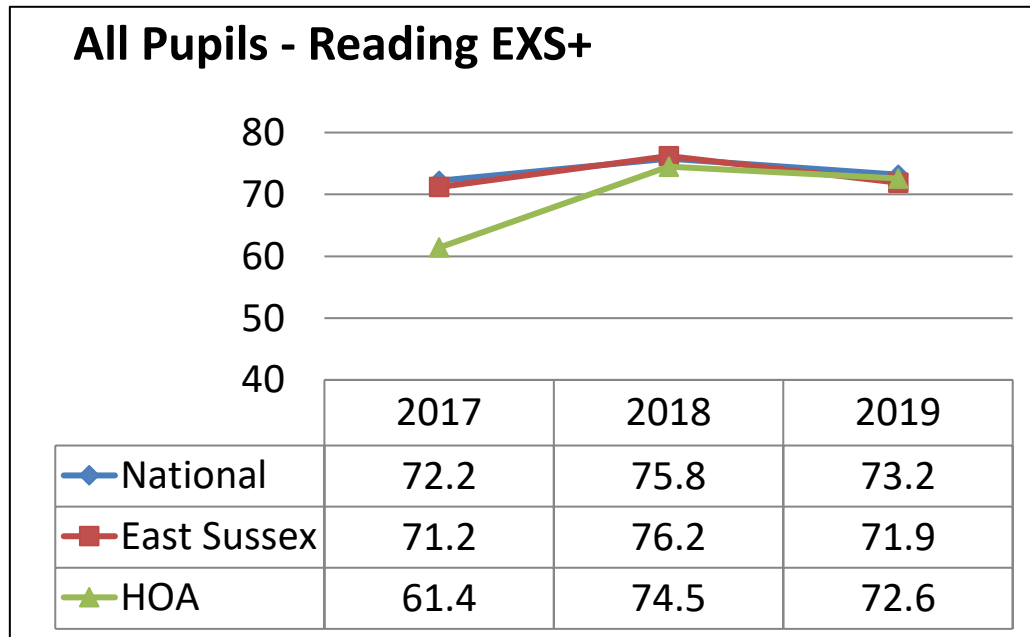
By 2020, pupils in Hastings are in the top half of the country in reading and English at all key stages, with disadvantaged pupils making more progress than disadvantaged children nationally.

## What did we do?

- Early Years Projects – to support young children’s speech and language development
- Literacy Fund – schools to develop evidence based programmes to support improvements in literacy for all pupils, improve teacher skills and confidence
- Funded a Hastings Wide Literacy Campaign

## What was the impact?

- All schools in Hastings, are implementing evidence based literacy programmes;
- Trusts/schools in Hastings are implementing **common programmes** and **sharing learning** resulting in **greater collaboration** across schools, pupils experiencing ‘common practices’ across schools and greater focus on literacy
- Improvements in literacy – significant improvements at Key Stage 2



### What was the impact?

- Schools continued to implement programmes, throughout partial school closures
- Schools reporting positive impact of programmes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils e.g.
  - At **Ark Castledown**, children engaged in the programme made on average 4 months progress in their reading levels from term 2 to term 4, with children with reading ages in the lowest 20% making between **5.6 to 12 months** progress. 33% of disadvantaged children made at least expected progress, despite lockdown.*
  - At **West St Leonards**, which began implementing Daily Supported Reader in September 2020, for year 1 pupils 60% of pupils made 6 or more terms progress, with 78% making 4 terms progress or more; the lowest 20% of readers, made 2 or 3 terms progress.*
- Secondary schools reporting positive impact, not just of the programmes, but on the overarching culture of the school regarding reading e.g.
  - Ark Alexandra**: 30 students from Year 7 identified as being in the lowest 20% in respect of reading age. **25 have made at least 6 months' progress in reading towards their chronological reading age** and 2 pupils have made 2 years progress towards their chronological reading age over the year.*
  - 16** students have made such significant progress that by July 21, they were reading at their chronological reading age and able to access the full curriculum.*
- Positive engagement with Get Hastings Reading, which refocused activities due to Covid e.g.
  - 5994 books were distributed to 2956 disadvantaged children and their families .*
  - Secondary schools received visits from two written word professionals who delivered a workshop focused on the world of work and the importance of literacy.*
  - 5 primary schools received Storytelling courses 'Tales from the Tipi' and supporting activities based on texts identified as appropriate to the targeted children*

## Raising attainment in maths

In 2016, achievement in maths in Hastings was low across all key stages:

- At KS2, only 59% of pupils achieved the expected standard in maths compared with 70% nationally.
- Fewer than half (48%) disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in maths at KS2
- At secondary school, disadvantaged pupils achieved more than half a GCSE grade lower than their peers in maths
- Pupils made less progress in maths than their peers nationally at all four mainstream secondary schools in Hastings

## Raising attainment in maths

### What did we do?

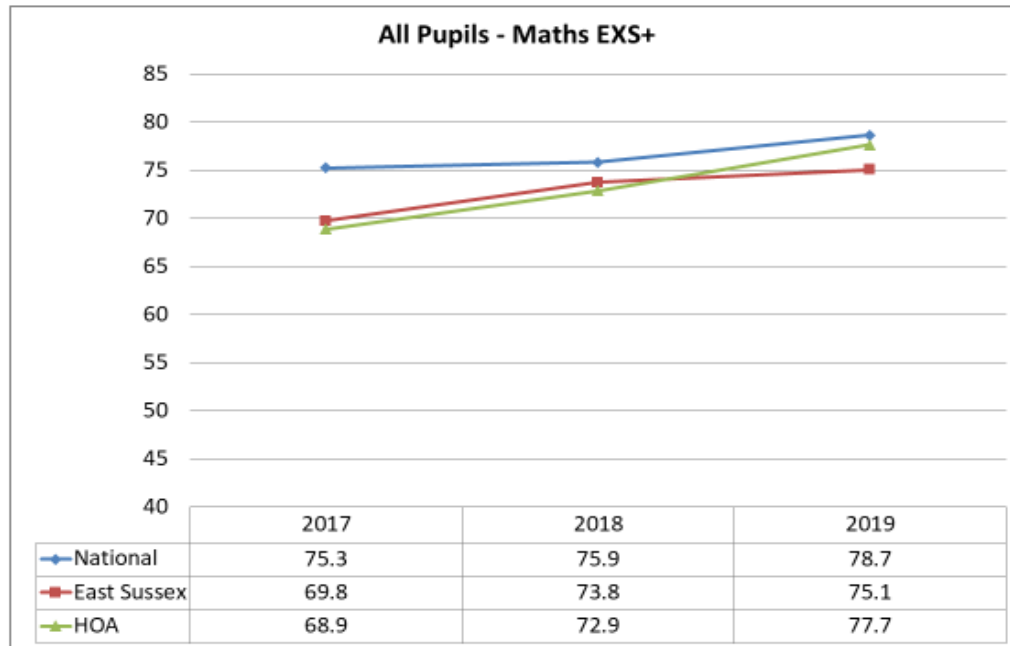
- Funded the Hastings Maths project to work with 16 schools and the College, to provide expert support and coaching in delivering Maths Mastery Approaches
- Funded 4 schools in Hastings, to access additional support from the Sussex Maths Hub, to provide expert support and coaching in delivering Mastery Approaches
- Supported schools to deliver a number of Maths competitions



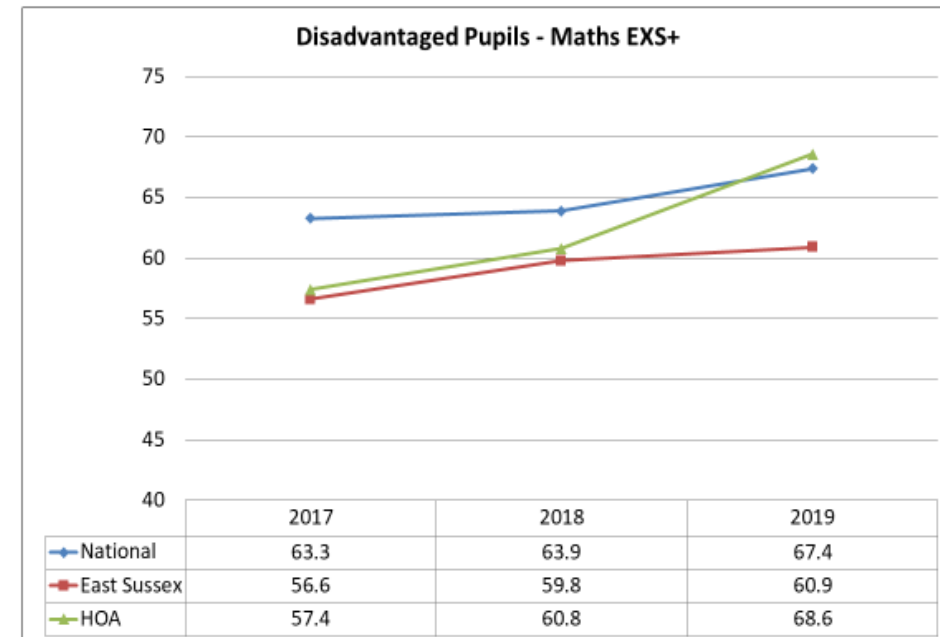
## What was the impact?

- Prior to Covid, across Hastings, there were significant improvements in numbers of pupils achieving expected standard in Maths, particularly at Key stage 2

Hastings Opportunity Area – Key Stage 2 results



Hastings Opportunity Area – Key Stage 2 results



- Improvements in secondary demonstrate positive trajectory. In 2017, 55.5% of Hastings' pupils achieved a grade 9-4 in maths at GCSE, below both the East Sussex and national average. This had increased to **60.4%** by 2019, although still below both the local and national average.

- Despite Covid and partial school closures, schools continued to engage positively with the Maths Programmes.
- **The Hastings Maths Project.** In year 4, all 16 schools which took part in the Hastings Maths Project actively participated in the programme. During the academic year, 228 SLE (Specialist Leader of Education) visits took place across the 16 schools.
  - 86% of participating schools reported that they felt very confident or confident (5) in delivering a maths mastery approach in their school
  - 78% of subject leaders said that they and other teachers within their school were confident or very confident in delivering mastery approaches in their schools
  - Schools reported that pupils were more enthused and engaged, and loss of learning has been reduced:
    - *“Children maintaining their levels of attainment”* **The Baird Academy**
    - *“The Interventions are more targeted and specific to pupil needs to allow them to reach their full potential”.*  
**Ark Little Ridge Primary Academy**
- **The Sussex Maths Hub.** 3 schools accessed support for Mastery approaches
  - *“Fantastic support from the project, always on hand for advice, support and guidance”.* **Sandown primary school**
  - *“Hastings Maths Project funding has allowed us to invest in more manipulatives, helping all classes follow a ‘concrete-pictorial-abstract’ (CPA) approach”* **St Leonards CofE Primary Academy**
  - *“Staff understand Maths Mastery and its approach. Staff understand the benefits of Teaching for Mastery.”*  
**Sacred Heart School**

### What did we do?

- The majority of schools in Hastings (all the secondaries and 14 primaries completed an initial self-review of their provision), engaged with a programme of support and training to further develop and embed whole school approaches to promoting children and young people's mental health
- Funding expanded i-ROCK service from three days a week to five days a week and enabling i-ROCK to deliver interventions with young people. Enhanced service up and running
- Developed a model for an emotional well-being service for 9-14 year olds (key work service) and implementing in Hastings secondary schools and primary schools with greatest level of need
- Expanded parenting support work so that those schools with greatest level of need in Hastings access parenting support (group work, one to one support , seminars on key parenting issues) for parents/carers requiring early support

### What was the impact of the Emotional Well-being key work service?

- During 2018-20:
  - 338 pupils accessed additional one to one support from key workers for emerging emotional well-being issues (approx. 17% of the 9-14 age group in the targeted schools).
  - 82% of those accessing this support demonstrated an improvement in previously self-reported anxiety levels
  - 82% reported an improvement in previously self-reported anxiety and depression levels.
  - 206 pupils accessed support through group work
  - 890 (largely secondary school pupils) accessed support through drop-in sessions at their school

The service was well received by schools, pupils, and their families, with almost universally positive feedback around key workers' skills and adaptability, the integration of the service and added value into schools.

- During 2020-21, emotional well-being key work team offered one to one support to 162 children and young people
  - 82 children and young people completed Pre and post RCADs (Revised Children's Anxiety and Depression Scale) between August 2020 and July 21. RCADs is a self-reporting questionnaire relating to anxiety and depression:
    - 71 out of 82 young people showed an improvement in anxiety
    - 73 out of 82 showed an improvement in anxiety and depression

An important focus for the team, as a result of the partial-school closure, was the delivery of virtual support for schools, children and their families. Schools responded well to the virtual offer and in some cases, this was vital, particularly for those children isolating at home with their families. Flexibility was welcomed by schools.

### What was the impact?

- 17 schools engaged in work to train and support staff have greater confidence in respect of children and young people's mental health; this included staff resilience training in 5 schools to over 320 staff members, support for Pupil Voice work in 6 schools and staff well-being training in 2 schools.
- Boingboing delivered 11 online twilight training sessions for primary schools on a range of emotional well-being issues, sharing resources with 38 staff members, alongside a tool kit of mental health resources.
- 13 schools engaged with a programme of bespoke support to develop good quality PHSE resources, lessons and learning to promote mental health and emotional well-being.
- Feedback from schools has been very positive.
  - *The training revised what we feel we know. My knowledge and understanding of the subject has been organised and reinforced. I feel more confident now that it is important to support each other at work'* **Dudley Infants**
  - *Thank you so much for your visit this morning - it has really helped me to get some clarity about where we need to go'* **Hollington Primary Academy**
  - *'We now feel more confident to support students that are suffering with issues around food and eating. The session gave us ideas as a school on ways to promote 'body positive campaigns' which will support individuals with coping strategies and provide more education to the wider community. Thank you for informing us of further resources available for us...we will positively put this training into practice on a daily basis'* **The Hastings Academy'**
- MHFA England delivered Mental Health First Aid training at 24 schools and at the college, with 80 Hastings school staff and an additional 7 school support staff now trained as Mental Health First Aiders.

### What did we do?

- Appointed two enrichment managers to work with schools and local communities to maximise impact of the broadening horizons strand
- Provided funding direct to all schools and colleges so that they can expand their extra-curricular offer – a number of schools delivered holiday schemes. Funding allocated according to number of children/young people in receipt of pupil premium funding in the schools. Enrichment managers working with schools to implement this
- Delivered grant programmes for Hastings including Summer enrichment programme and Hastings wide programmes, delivered in Hastings' most deprived communities.
- Delivered programme of free activities to schools including Hastings Opportunity Days, Visits to Canary Wharf, Kidzania, Universities, Speakers for schools

### What was the impact 2018-20:

- More than 450 programmes involving 42 different activities were delivered across Hastings schools, with over 25,000 places taken up and approximately 6,000 children engaged in additional enrichment activities through schools
- 26 community providers delivered 64 programmes, involving 44 different activities , such as performing and creative arts, sports, cooking, outdoor and adventurous activities
- 600 children from 10 schools visited Kidzania (an indoor careers based theme park for children to try different job experiences)
- 17 schools had visits from motivational speakers (a range of speakers who have overcome barriers to success) who addressed between them more than 6,600 students..  
*'It was the best assembly we have ever had' Carly Welsh, Principal, **The Baird***

### Hastings Opportunity Days.

- Over 50 local employers and businesses took part in the Hastings Opportunity Day , delivering hands on sessions and discussions relating to routes into employment. Over 680 year 10s and 11s took part in the Day in 2018 and 2019

### What was the impact 2020-21

- Programme had been refocused during year 3 to address impact of Covid.
- During year 4 we reprioritised the Broadening Horizons Programme, to enable children impacted by national lockdowns and partial school closures to re-engage with positive activities and with school:
  - We funded 11 schools and 10 community groups to deliver a **transition programme** over the summer.
  - 19 schools and 4 groups accessed funding to deliver **online enrichment activities** and learning for children and young people during partial school closure periods;
  - **6 community providers delivered term time enrichment activities** for pupils in deprived areas
  - HOA supported the delivery of the Holiday and Activity Fund in Hastings and the Summer Holiday Transitions Programme:
    - 5 schools and 12 community organisations were engaged to deliver a wide variety of activities over the Easter period. Over 600 disadvantaged children were involved in programme.
    - 15 providers were also involved in delivering a Summer holiday activities and food fund programme, providing 4 weeks of activities across the town.
    - 1,036 eligible children took part in the programme for at least one week.
  - Supported Summer holiday enrichment in Hastings most deprived wards
  - Delivered 'on-line' Hastings Opportunity Day



### What was the problem?

As a town, the number of pupils excluded from school either as suspensions or permanent (PEX) exclusion was much higher than the local authority and national averages.

- In 2016-17, East Sussex had a suspension rate of 11.56%, significantly higher than the national average of 9.4%.
- In 2016-17, Hastings had the highest suspension rate within East Sussex, at 30.73%.
- In 2016-17 22 pupils were permanently excluded from schools in Hastings. This increased to 25 in 2017-18
- In 2018, 67% of all permanent exclusions across East Sussex were from Hastings schools, with one school not carrying out any permanent exclusions that year.

### What did we do?

Working closely with secondary headteachers in the town, we developed a shared approach to preventing exclusions across Hastings, with a focus on pupils engaged in persistently challenging behaviour. The HOA working with schools:

- facilitated meetings of secondary school principals to share learning, and develop a shared criteria for permanently excluding pupils, taking forward school to school transfers where appropriate
- provided funding for schools to develop models of 'inclusive practice' for those pupils most at risk of disengagement and exclusions
- provided funding for schools to develop models of pastoral support for pupils at risk of disengagement/non-attendance at school

### What was the impact?

- Exclusions data published by DfE demonstrates a significant reduction of exclusion rates in Hastings since the programme began, although rates remain much higher than local authority and national averages.
- Suspensions : In 2017/18, the number of suspensions was 40.45% of numbers on pupils on role in Hastings secondary schools reducing to 30.08% in 2018/19 and to 18.70% in 2019-[20](#) .
- Permanent Exclusions: In 2017/18, 25 pupils were permanently excluded across Hastings schools, reducing to 16 pupils being permanently excluded in 2018/19 and 5 in 2019-[20](#) .
  
- Hastings secondary schools have developed, innovative, 'in-school' approaches to inclusion for core groups of vulnerable pupils, that offer pupils a bespoke curriculum, focused literacy and maths and a holistic approach to meeting their needs.
  
- Schools partial closure in February 2020 led to a reduction in the number of pupils both experiencing suspensions and permanent exclusions across all schools.
- However, during this year, the rates of permanent exclusions across Hastings schools continued to demonstrate improvements in comparison with East Sussex and National data. The rates of suspensions across Hastings schools, however remained disproportionately high in comparison to rates in East Sussex and nationally.

## Improving Attendance

This is an area that was of significant concern across Hastings schools. Primary schools in 2016 had lowest level of overall attendance across any LAD. A number of schools have very high persistent absence rates and lower overall attendance rates

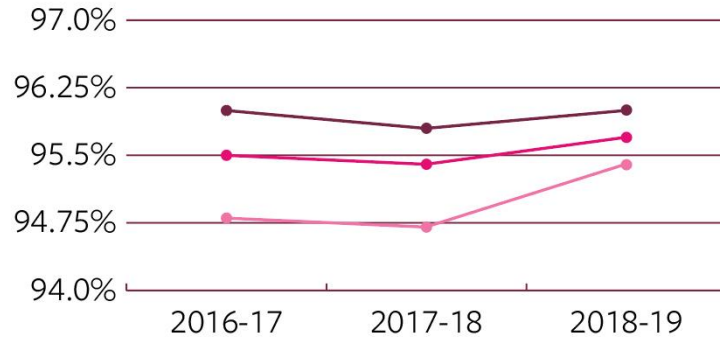
### What did we do?

- Developed a Hastings Wide Approach to promoting attendance including a Hastings Wide Charter that all schools have signed up to
- Implemented an Attendance Fund, for schools and partnerships to implement projects to improve attendance which included:
  - transport and breakfast club projects (3 schools),
  - attendance key workers (5 schools),
  - additional pastoral staff in schools, including family mentors and school based social workers to work with and support families who may be struggling (2 schools)
  - additional educational welfare support workers and other specialist staff to support schools promote good attendance (3 schools); and
  - funding towards alternative provision for those children who struggle to attend school (2 schools).
- Additional support for ESBAS, to provide enhanced support for Hastings schools around attendance including rolling out the fast track prosecution pilot across Hastings schools
- Developing with schools and families an attendance campaign, a positive campaign to promote attendance
- Ongoing monitoring, support and co-ordination of the Hastings wide approach, to review impact.

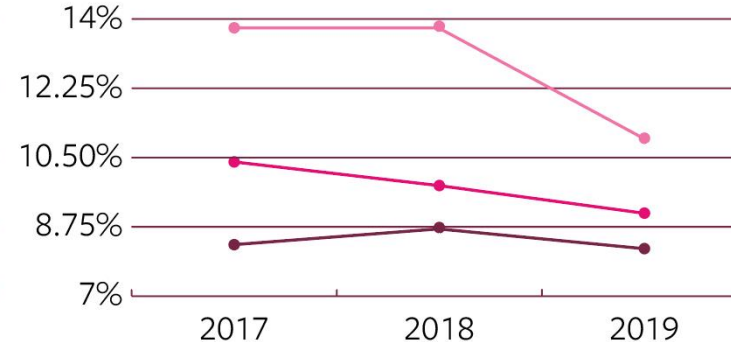
## Improving Attendance.

- Prior to Covid, there appeared to be significant improvements in attendance rates and reductions in persistent absence rates across Hastings primary schools in particular:

Overall attendance - Primary



Persistent absence - Primary



● National ● East Sussex ● HOA

- And schools were clear that work at an individual school level was having an impact.
  - **Christchurch C of E Primary Academy's** overall attendance rates were 93.9% in 2017-18 and persistent absence rates were 20.4%. The impact of their attendance project, which included a school attendance bus and breakfast club resulted in an improvement of overall attendance rates to 95.3% in 2018/19 and a fall in persistent absence rates to 10.3% during this period.
  - **St Leonards CE Primary Academy** implemented a HERO Project - an attendance Keyworker assigned to individual families to create bespoke attendance improvement plans. Whole school attendance was 94.40% in 2017/ 18 and rose to 95.3% by term 4 of 2019/ 20.
  - 'Our whole school approach to improving attendance has made a huge difference to a cohort of pupils who needed that little bit of extra support and encouragement to make some positive changes, enabling them now to make the most out of every school day.' Ross Maryan - Deputy Headteacher
- Currently schools are facing significant challenges, with many schools experiencing high persistent absence rates as a result of Covid 19.

### What did we do?

- During year 4, we funded a specific programme of work on recovery; Academy Trusts and schools could use this funding, to address the needs within their schools.
- Trusts and schools welcomed the capacity to develop solutions that addressed the challenges of their schools.
- All schools engaged in the programme and used funding to:
  - Deliver one to one and group work support for identified pupils;
  - Deliver 'whole school approaches' to improving literacy, focusing on improving literacy of pupils with low literacy levels;
  - Deliver additional mental health support to pupils;
  - Deliver additional enrichment activities for pupils
- Schools reported the positive impact of these initiatives, particularly for disadvantaged pupils
  - **Sandown Primary** school extended their school day for year 4 and year 6 pupils, to provide extra catch-up sessions for children focusing on maths, literacy, transition and anxiety issues. The results of the SATS exams delivered by the school produced results that exceeded their expectations: with 88% of children reading age related expectations in English, 83% in Maths. As the Principal said: 'Surprisingly with everything that has gone on many children have developed far greater independence and attendance has been high. The small groups have created better relationships between children and tutors which we believe has contributed to this.'

## Overall Impact

- Greater collaboration across Trusts, schools and other partners – at all levels:
  - Partnership Board
  - Focused activity around core issues – Attendance, Improving literacy, Inclusion/reducing exclusions
  - Greater partnership between schools and community providers – particularly within most disadvantaged communities
- Focus on improving teacher skills and confidence – improved morale and retention across Hastings schools
- Testing out impact of Place Based Approaches – to challenging issues. Despite challenges, size and make up of Hastings, has enabled and supported focused and ‘sector led’ improvement programme with high rates of sign up and support from schools and partners.

## Next Steps – Year 5

- Focus on sustainability - drawing on and developing existing structures to promote sustainability:
  - **Secondary school programme**, led by 2 mainstream Trusts and Chair of Area 3 Group of secondary schools;
  - **Transitions programme** – led by Ark Alexandra Principal and CEO EFT – linked to wider ESCC programme and testing out new ways of working across Hastings and Area 3 schools;
  - **Emotional Well-being key worker service** – ‘handing over’ to NHSE funded Mental Health Support Teams
  - **Maths and Literacy focus** – on further embedding in schools and building sustainable networks
- Board – reviewing models of sustainability for year 5 onwards
- Significant challenges:
  - Covid
  - Attendance
  - Children and families mental health and emotional well-being
  - Inclusion and SEN
  - Maintaining momentum in a challenging environment