



**St Helena
Government**

AUDIT ST HELENA

**PERFORMANCE AUDIT:
BENCHMARKING PRIMARY
AND
SECONDARY EDUCATION**



AUDIT ST HELENA
External Auditors

Performance Audit:
**Benchmarking Primary and
Secondary Education**

July 2020

Audit St Helena is the body that carries out financial and performance audits on behalf of the Chief Auditor.

The Chief Auditor is an independent statutory office with responsibilities set out in the Constitution and the Public Finance Ordinance. Section 29(2) of the Ordinance requires the conduct of performance audits on behalf of the Legislative Council to determine whether resources have been used with proper regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

This report has been prepared in accordance with section 29(2) and published by the Chief Auditor, Phil Sharman. The audit team consisted of David Brown, Damian Burns and Amar Jumbu.

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Abbreviations

ARE	Age-Related Expectations
CFR	Consistent Financial Reporting
EED	Education and Employment Directorate
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FY	Financial Year
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
IT	Information Technology
SAT	Statutory Assessment Test
SHG	St Helena Government
TC	Technical Cooperation
UK	United Kingdom

Key Facts

11.4%

The proportion of SHG's operating expenditure dedicated to education in financial year (FY) 2018/19, £3.9 million out of £34.5 million spent.

11

The total number of Education and Employment Directorate performance indicators at the beginning of FY 2019/20, with all but two related to primary and secondary education.

£2,758

Spending per pupil across St Helena's three primary schools in FY 2018/19, compared to an average of £4,748 in a sample of English schools in comparable areas.

£6,495

Spending per pupil at Prince Andrew School in FY 2018/19, compared to an average of £6,049 in a sample of English schools in comparable areas.

£6,314

Amount spent on broadband each month of FY 2018/19 at each of the three primary schools – a total of £227,000 for the year, which was 22% of all spending on primary education and about 3.5 times the amount spent on broadband at Prince Andrew School.

36%

The percentage of Year 6 students that met age-related expectations (ARE) in both English and Maths for school year 2018/19. At one primary school, only 20% of year 6 students met ARE in both subjects. Overall, 43% of Year 6 students at the three primary schools met ARE in English while 56% did so in Maths, compared to performance targets of 60% for each.

43%

The percentage of Year 11 students at Prince Andrew School that achieved a grade of C/4 or better in both English and Maths for school year 2018/19. The same percentage of Year 11 students at Prince Andrew School achieved a grade of C/4 or better in five GCSEs including English and Maths, compared to a target of 45%.

Summary

1. This report examines the St Helena Government (SHG) Education and Employment Directorate's (EED's) provision of primary and secondary education, in particular the performance of St Helena's primary and secondary schools. The report presents the results of our performance audit, which proceeded along two key lines of enquiry:
 - **What indicators does EED use to monitor performance in primary and secondary schools?**
 - **What do these indicators tell us about how St Helena's primary and secondary schools are performing?**
2. The scope of this report does not include an evaluation as to whether SHG is achieving value for money in its provision of education. Instead, readers may wish to use this report to ask further questions and investigate how performance can improve.
3. We reviewed available financial and performance data through the end of financial year (FY) 2019/20. Our key findings are outlined below, with additional details about our methodology presented in Appendix One.

ST HELENA'S SCHOOLS FOLLOW THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR ENGLAND

4. **EED administers St Helena's lifelong education system, with a special focus on the primary and secondary sector.** According to St Helena's *10 Year Plan 2017-2027*, education is a high priority for the island: one of the plan's five national goals aspires to a well-rounded education for children and young people. Education in St Helena is in EED's remit. The directorate's key responsibilities include the provision of early years foundation, primary and secondary education to students aged 3 to 18, among other services. (paragraph 1.1)
5. **St Helena's school system generally follows the National Curriculum for England, which divides primary and secondary education into four key stages serving specific age groups.** After Nursery and Reception classes for three- and four-year olds, respectively, students begin progressing through the following cohorts that have been set up to administer progressive, standardised exams through age 16:
 - *Key Stage 1 (KS1)*. Years 1-2 – Ages 5-7
 - *Key Stage 2 (KS2)*. Years 3-6 – Ages 7-11
 - *Key Stage 3 (KS3)*. Years 7-9 – Ages 11-14
 - *Key Stage 4 (KS4)*. Years 10-11 – Ages 14-16

(paragraphs 1.5 to 1.7)

6. **St Helena has three primary schools: Harford, Pilling and St Paul's.** In addition to offering Nursery and Reception, these schools serve students in KS1 and KS2, teaching subjects like English, Maths and Science in a manner consistent with England's national curriculum, supplemented with local content as appropriate. Some subjects may be taught to combined year groups in a given primary school (e.g., Year 1 with Year 2) when individual year groups are small enough to warrant it. As in England, each school assesses student performance through standardised exams. (paragraph 1.11)
7. **As the only secondary school in St Helena, Prince Andrew School serves all students in KS3 and KS4.** For their General Certificate of Secondary Education courses (GCSEs), completed during KS4, students are required to take English, Maths, Science and Information Technology along with several electives. After completing their GCSEs, which typically occurs at age 16, students who meet the achievement criteria can remain at Prince Andrew School to pursue 'A-levels' – a higher set of United Kingdom (UK) educational qualifications for 16-18 year olds that are commonly used as entry requirements for universities. Alternatively, students can leave school to seek vocational training, apprenticeships or conventional employment. (paragraphs 1.12 and 1.13)

SPENDING ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IS SUBSTANTIAL AND INCLUDES SIGNIFICANT TECHNICAL COOPERATION RESOURCE

8. **Education accounted for 11.4% of SHG's operating expenditure in financial year 2018/19.** For the most recently audited financial year (2018/19), EED's operating expenditure was £3.3 million of SHG's total operating expenditure (£34.5 million), or 9.6% of SHG's total. However, EED's £3.3 million does not include staff allotments from SHG's Technical Cooperation (TC) budget, which is funded by the UK's Department for International Development to recruit teachers and other specialists from overseas. Once TC funding is added to EED's budget, SHG's FY 2018/19 spending on education rises from £3.3 to £3.9 million, or 11.4% of SHG's total operating expenditure. (paragraphs 1.14 and 1.15, and Figure 1)
9. **Primary and secondary education are important parts of EED's budget, with TC resource and broadband representing significant costs in those sectors.** Spending on primary and secondary education amounted to £2.0 million of EED's £3.3 million in operating expenditure for financial year 2018/19 (59%). TC positions added another £0.5 million to primary and secondary spending, accounting for more than 43p of every £1 spent on teaching staff at Prince Andrew School. Internet access is another significant cost, especially for the primary sector. EED spent £6,314 per primary school per month on broadband in FY 2018/19, which amounted to more than £0.2 million for the year and 22% of all spending on primary education. (paragraphs 1.16 and 1.17, and Figure 1)

10. **St Helena’s school years do not align with its financial years, which creates management challenges for EED leadership.** The directorate tracks budget and expenditure on two different calendars: April through March for financial years and September through August for school years. For example, EED spent FY 2018/19 funds for the first 7 months of the 2018/19 school year (September 2018 through March 2019), but from April 2019 EED spent FY 2019/20 funds for the remaining 5 months of that school year. (paragraph 1.18)

EED MONITORS PERFORMANCE VIA A SERIES OF INDICATORS
FEATURING TARGET PERCENTAGES

11. **EED’s performance indicators for primary and secondary education are derived from the island’s 10 Year Plan and the directorate’s own strategic plan.** At the highest level, EED’s performance indicators for primary and secondary education are derived from the island’s 10 Year Plan, which aims to “meet UK attainment standards by investing in our schools and community college”. This aspiration is memorialised in the directorate’s 2019/22 Strategic Plan under objective 2.1: “Ensure effective investment in human capital through work force development and improved education and training”. This objective, in turn, is actioned as twin strategic priorities focussed on “improving student attainment and achievement at all levels, particularly in the key areas of literacy and numeracy”. (paragraph 2.1 and Figure 4)
12. **Each strategic priority in EED’s plan has associated targets, actions needed to achieve those targets and the intended outcomes of those actions, all of which form the basis of EED’s performance indicators.** Given that the current strategic plan is meant to guide the directorate through three financial years – FY 2019/20 through FY 2021/22 – performance targets are designed to progress over time, with target percentages gradually increasing. In order to track the directorate’s progress against its chosen targets, EED has developed a series of performance indicators that are expressed in terms of target percentages. For example, performance against age-related expectations (ARE) is measured by the percentage of children meeting those expectations in English and Maths across key stages 1, 2 and 3, with a target percentage of 60%. The indicators track administrative performance as well, with target percentages for teacher qualifications and retention. All but two of the eleven indicators relate directly to primary and secondary education. Further, while no performance indicator tracks education, employment and training outcomes for students after leaving secondary education, this could be a subject for future inquiry. (paragraphs 2.2 to 2.6, and Figures 2, 3 and 4)

13. **The FY 2019/20 performance indicators' target percentages are generally aspirational, even ambitious, with the exception of key indicator #2: the percentage of Year 11 students achieving pass grades on five GCSEs including English and Maths, set at 45%.** Given that in recent years England considered 40% to be a floor for this indicator, with school scores below that mark deemed failing, 45% represents a relatively low educational attainment target for St Helena. Performance on this indicator at Prince Andrew School was 22%, 45% and 37% for the three school years from 2015/16 through 2017/18, respectively, which warrants serious reflection by EED. (paragraph 2.7, and Figures 3 and 4)

WE FOUND WEAKNESSES IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS' PERFORMANCE AND EED'S REPORTING FOR THE 2018/19 SCHOOL YEAR

14. **EED regularly tracks student performance through progress testing and year-end assessments, with results reported to Legislative Council.** EED monitors student performance from Year 2 through Year 9 through computer-based testing each July that assesses progress relative to age-related expectations in line with England's national curriculum. In addition, secondary students completing GCSEs in Years 10-11 take exams at the end of their 2-year programme of study that, along with coursework, are graded on the English scale, with A* or 9 being the highest score (depending on the type of exam); G or 1 the lowest; and C or 4 a standard pass. EED leadership reports the directorate's performance results annually to Legislative Council's Education Committee. (paragraph 3.1)
15. **At the beginning of the most recently completed school year – 2018/19 – EED was accountable for four performance indicators relevant to primary and secondary education (out of five total), but the number soon expanded.** EED came close to its Maths target for students completing KS2 but fell farther short of its target for English. The directorate did not quite meet its 45% target for the percentage of Year 11 students achieving pass grades on five GCSEs including English and Maths. In addition, 60% of students with special education needs had an individual education plan, which means EED missed its target for the third indicator. However, almost two-thirds of the directorate's teachers were qualified at level 4 or above, meaning EED exceeded the target percentage for the final indicator. EED's performance indicators then changed midway through the school year, as performance indicators across SHG were reviewed in preparation for the new financial year. Specifically, in April of the 2018/19 school year – the beginning of the FY 2019/20 financial year – EED's published performance indicators expanded from five to eleven, with nine of those eleven directly related to primary and second education. (paragraphs 3.3 to 3.5, and Figures 5 and 6)

16. EED’s performance against its new FY 2019/20 indicators was mixed and its subsequent reporting to Legislative Council was incomplete. Primary and secondary students generally performed below the target percentages in English and Maths and on the five-GCSE pass grade indicator, but in some cases were not far off the mark. Qualification levels for EED employees ranged from far exceeding the target for teacher trainees to being far below it for teaching assistants, with teachers and school leaders closer to satisfactory. Lastly, EED surpassed its already high target percentage for teacher retention. EED’s 2018/19 school year-end reports to the Education Committee on primary and secondary education covered two of these indicators in detail but included little information about the remaining relevant indicators, even though they had been in place for at least 5 months by that time. (paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7, and Figure 6)

ST HELENA SCHOOLS’ PERFORMANCE FOR 2018/19 WAS BELOW THAT OF SIMILAR ENGLISH SCHOOLS

17. We benchmarked St Helena’s schools to schools from comparable communities in England to provide further context for EED’s performance. We gathered online data from England’s Department for Education to use as benchmarks for St Helena’s primary and secondary schools in the 2018/19 school year. The most comparable performance data we found that was collected in both St Helena and England was:

- *Primary schools.* The percentage of students meeting age-related expectations on both their English and Maths progress tests at the end of KS2 (Year 6)
- *Secondary schools.* The percentage of students achieving pass grades of C/4 or better in both their English and Maths GCSEs at the end of KS4 (Year 11)

We constructed samples of schools from the total population of English primary and secondary schools that would be reasonable comparators to St Helena’s schools. To this end, we consulted a UK index of deprivation to identify 30 primary and 30 secondary schools in rural areas of England. (paragraphs 3.8 to 3.12)

BENCHMARKING TO ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOL DATA

- 18. St Helena's primary schools have similar pupil to teacher ratios as their English counterparts while spending less per pupil.** Harford, Pilling and St Paul's are small schools on their own, however together would form a standard-sized English primary school. The schools have relatively low numbers of pupils enrolled, and their respective ratios of pupils to teachers (indicating average class size) ranged from 16.4 to 22.3 in school year 2018/19; the English sample average was 21.8. Despite the comparable level of teaching resource devoted to each primary student, spending per pupil is significantly lower in St Helena reflecting lower teacher salaries compared to England. This contrasts with what we found for secondary schools, where Prince Andrew School was relatively well funded compared to the English sample, as detailed below. Some of this difference is due to TC resource, which is overwhelmingly devoted to secondary schools. Further, the relatively high cost of subscribing to broadband at each of three primary sites depletes resources that could go toward other priorities. (paragraphs 3.14 and 3.15, and Figure 7)
- 19. But we found evidence of a lack of effectiveness based on the pupil performance data we collected for the year.** We examined the percentage of students who met age-related expectations in both English and Maths at the end of KS2 (Year 6), the last year before students move to Prince Andrew School. Across the three primary schools St Helena's students met Year 6 ARE in both subjects at a lower rate than the schools in our English sample – 36% against an average of 59%. (paragraph 3.16, and Figures 7 and 8)
- 20. Performance was not equal across the three primary schools.** In the 2018/19 school year, two of the primaries had similar results for the percentage of Year 6 students meeting age-related expectations in both English and Maths, with 44% and 46%, respectively. The third primary school performed much worse, with only 20% (3 out of 15) of its Year 6 students meeting ARE in both subjects – this would make it one of the worst performing schools on this metric in not just St Helena but the whole of England. Note that this primary school also had the worst (highest) ratio of pupils to teachers in St Helena. (paragraph 3.17, and Figures 7 and 8)

21. **Some policymakers have suggested that consolidating schools as was done in the secondary sector could lead to a more efficient allocation of resources with better results in the primary sector.** Policymakers have proposed consolidation in the primary sector to pool limited resources like teachers and broadband capacity. For example, subscribing to broadband at each of three primary school locations cost £227,290 in FY 2018/19, or £53 per primary student per month. This was about 3.5 times the £65,730 total cost at single-site PAS (£26 per student per month). We have also seen that (1) small primary school class sizes results in some subjects being taught to combined year groups, (2) there were disparities in pupil to teacher ratios across the three primaries in school year 2018/19 and (3) performance on Year 6 AREs was not consistent across the three schools for that year. While the various benefits and costs of consolidation are outside the scope of this report, the evidence indicates that reform with an eye toward rationalisation is required. (paragraph 3.18)

BENCHMARKING TO ENGLISH SECONDARY SCHOOL DATA

22. **Prince Andrew School (PAS) has a better pupil to teacher ratio than its English counterparts but also spends more per pupil.** PAS is smaller than any secondary school in the English sample and also has a lower pupil to teacher ratio than any of them – 6.4 pupils per teacher compared to an average of 16.5 across the sample. Further, PAS outlays more money per pupil than most of the English schools in our sample, spending almost £6,500 per student in FY 2018/19 compared to the sample average of £6,049. Contrary to the primary sector, broadband accounted for only 5% of this spending. (paragraphs 3.19 to 3.21, and Figure 9)
23. **Despite its low pupil to teacher ratio, students at Prince Andrew School performed worse in their core GCSEs – English and Maths – than schools in some of the most deprived areas of England.** In school year 2018/19, 43% of Year 11 students at PAS achieved a standard pass (C/4) or better in both English and Maths GCSEs, 13 percentage points lower than the sample average of 56%. (paragraph 3.22, and Figures 9 and 10)

LIMITATIONS TO THE BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

24. Readers should exercise caution when interpreting these results and specifically should be mindful that:
- The benchmarking analysis is a snapshot of performance on two key indicators for one school year; we did not attempt to identify year over year trends.
 - Individual pupil performance is not driven only by school or teaching performance. Wider socioeconomic factors, such as household income, parental background and parental involvement, are also influential.

- St Helena's schools, and the wider context in which they operate, differ from England's in important ways. These include types of year-end assessments, access to the internet and level of regulatory scrutiny.
- Low numbers of total students mean that single-year results and multi-year trendlines are sensitive to small changes in pupil performance.

(paragraphs 3.23 to 3.27)

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

25. EED's current suite of performance indicators for primary and second education are generally fit for purpose and more comprehensive than the limited ones that were in place at the start of the 2018/19 school year. They include measurements of progress within year groups as well as assessments at key developmental stages, such as when students leave primary school and when they complete GCSEs. By highlighting performance in English and Maths, the indicators focus on the qualities of literacy and numeracy that are points of emphasis in the directorate's strategic plan and critical to preparing students for future studies and eventual employment. However, to ensure students are developing both qualities in tandem, it would be useful to track the percentage of students who meet performance standards in both English and Maths, as we did in our benchmarking analysis. Further, to provide relevant year over year trend information to policymakers, results against performance indicators related to primary and secondary education should be clearly presented in school year-end reporting for the Education Committee.
26. The island schools' performance in primary and secondary education for school year 2018/19 was uneven when measured against the indicators that were in place as of April 2019. The primary and secondary schools did not meet a number of their percentage targets related to student progress and age-related expectations. While this could imply that the targets were too high, setting ambitious performance goals is good practice in general and the key secondary target is arguably too low. Further, comparison with English schools in our benchmarking analysis suggests that EED's current targets are not unreasonable and, even given the single-year sample, appears to confirm that St Helena's schools have room to improve with respect to student outcomes.

27. To better monitor performance in primary and secondary education, spur improvement and identify efficiencies, SHG should:

- Amend or supplement EED's performance indicators to track the percentage of primary students who meet age-related expectations on both their English and Maths progress tests;
- Amend or supplement EED's performance indicators to track the percentage of Year 11 students who achieve a pass grade (C/4 or better) in both their English and Maths GCSEs and review the overall secondary attainment target percentage;
- Include results for each of EED's performance indicators in the directorate's school year-end reporting for the Education Committee;
- Consider aligning EED's performance indicators with St Helena's school year instead of its financial year; and
- Urgently prioritise an analysis investigating the potential benefits and costs of consolidating primary provision at a single site.

Part One

Introduction and Background

OVERVIEW

- 1.1 According to St Helena's *10 Year Plan 2017-2027*, education is a high priority for the island: one of the plan's five national goals aspires to a well-rounded education for children and young people. Education in St Helena is in the remit of the St Helena Government's (SHG) Education and Employment Directorate (EED). The directorate's key responsibilities include:
 - Provision of early years foundation for three- and four-year olds, followed by primary education for students aged 5 to 11
 - Provision of secondary education for students aged 11 to 18
 - Support for inclusion of learners with special and additional needs to ensure educational opportunity for all
 - Initial training and up-skilling programmes for teachers
 - Training and development opportunities at the Community College, with distance learning forming a key part of the curriculum
 - Promotion of community learning and literacy through the St Helena Public Library
 - Support for the St Helena Research Institute
- 1.2 This report focusses on EED's provision of primary and secondary education, in particular the performance of St Helena's primary and secondary schools. The report summarises the results of our performance audit, which proceeded along two key lines of enquiry:
 - **What indicators does EED use to monitor performance in primary and secondary education?**
 - **What do these indicators tell us about how St Helena's primary and secondary schools are performing?**
- 1.3 The second line of enquiry includes actual outcomes from the 2018/19 school year and a benchmarking analysis that compares performance on key indicators to results from English schools.

- 1.4 The scope of this report does not include an evaluation as to whether SHG is achieving value for money in its provision of education. Indeed, there is no inspectorate of education in St Helena equivalent to the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills in the United Kingdom (UK) that would routinely report on school performance and inspect educational provision at local authority level. Accordingly, readers and policymakers may wish to use this report to ask further questions about the education system in St Helena and investigate how performance can improve.

EDUCATION IN ST HELENA

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR ENGLAND

- 1.5 St Helena's school system generally follows England's national curriculum, which divides education provision into four tiers: primary education, secondary education, further education (sixth form or college) and higher education (university). Both primary and secondary education are compulsory. School years begin each September and end in August, with holidays of various lengths throughout the year.
- 1.6 In the national curriculum, primary schools serve children aged 3 to 11. After Nursery and Reception classes for three- and four-year olds, respectively, compulsory schooling begins at age 5. Primary students are allocated into year groups (e.g., year 3, year 10) and 'key stages'. The latter are cohorts that have been set up to administer progressive, standardised exams during a child's education based on the child's age. Key stages for primary school are as follows:
- *Key Stage 1 (KS1)*. Years 1-2 – Ages 5-7
 - *Key Stage 2 (KS2)*. Years 3-6 – Ages 7-11
- 1.7 Secondary schools serve children aged 11 to 18. Students continue to be assessed at key stages until they complete Year 9. After this milestone they begin their General Certificate of Secondary Education courses (GCSEs), which confer UK education qualifications and culminate in a set of exams at the end of Year 11.
- *Key Stage 3 (KS3)*. Years 7-9 – Ages 11-14
 - *Key Stage 4 (KS4)*. Years 10-11 – Ages 14-16
- 1.8 English students typically choose between five and nine GCSE subjects to study during Years 10-11, with English Language, English Literature, Maths and a Science course being mandatory. A new grading scheme has been implemented for GCSEs where 9 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest, replacing the former scale that ranged from A* to G. A '4' is considered a 'standard pass' on the new scale, equivalent to a C on the old scale.

- 1.9 After English students complete their GCSEs, they have the option of leaving school to seek apprenticeships, vocational training or other qualifications, or remaining in school to complete 'A-levels' if they meet the achievement criteria. A-levels – also known as key stage 5, sixth form or college – are a higher set of UK educational qualifications for 16-18 year olds that are commonly used as entry requirements for universities.
- 1.10 Finally, after students who choose to take A-levels have completed them, they have the option of seeking employment or pursuing additional education at university.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLING IN ST HELENA

- 1.11 St Helena has three primary schools: Harford, Pilling and St Paul's. In addition to providing Nursery and Reception, these schools serve students in KS1 and KS2, teaching subjects like English, Maths and Science in a manner consistent with England's national curriculum while supplementing it with local content like the island's history and its indigenous animals.¹ Some subjects may be taught to combined year groups in a given primary school (e.g., Year 1 with Year 2) when individual year groups are small enough to warrant it. As in England, each school assesses student performance through standardised exams.
- 1.12 As the only secondary school in St Helena, Prince Andrew School (PAS) serves all students engaged in KS3, GCSEs and A-levels. For their GCSEs, students are required to take courses in English, Maths, Science and Information Technology. After completing their GCSEs, which typically occurs at age 16, students who meet the achievement criteria can stay at Prince Andrew School to pursue A-levels while others must leave school to seek training or employment. One key difference from the English system is that St Helena allows students to leave education altogether at age 16, while in England 16 year-olds may leave school but must remain in some form of education or training until age 18.
- 1.13 A-levels are taught by teachers at Prince Andrew School and through online courses. After completing A-levels, students can pursue an advanced degree online or at an overseas university, or seek employment at home or abroad, depending on their career interests and prospects.

EDUCATION BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

- 1.14 According to SHG's published budget for the current financial year (FY 2020/21), EED's spending is expected to account for £3.4 million out of £43.2 million in operating expenditure² for SHG as a whole, or 7.8%. For the most recently audited financial year (FY 2018/19), EED's actual spending amounted to £3.3 million out of £34.5 million in operating expenditure for SHG, or 9.6%.

¹ English schools began teaching the current version of the national curriculum in 2014. St Helena adopted this version in 2016.

- 1.15 However, these EED totals do not include staff allotments from SHG's Technical Cooperation (TC) budget, which is funded by the UK's Department for International Development. TC personnel are specialists, such as teachers, who are typically recruited from overseas. Funding for their relocation, salary and allowance costs is included in the overall budget for SHG's Corporate Human Resources office rather than in the individual budgets of directorates where the TCs are posted. In EED, as in many directorates, TC funding support is significant and should be taken into account when assessing the total funding level to give a complete picture of resources available to the directorate. Once TC costs are added to the EED total, SHG's FY 2018/19 spending on education rises from £3.3 to £3.9 million, or 11.4% of SHG's total operating expenditure.
- 1.16 Primary and secondary education at the island's four schools accounted for 59% of EED's own spending in FY 2018/19 and is budgeted for 61% in FY 2020/21. In addition, as with EED as a whole, these sectors benefit from considerable TC resource from the Corporate Human Resources budget. **Figure 1** presents the budgeted and actual expenditure for primary and secondary education in FY 2018/19 and for teaching staff at the four schools broken out by funding source (EED budget or TC support). As shown in the table, TC funding supported a significant fraction of the £2.5 million spent on primary and secondary education as a whole – and in the case of teaching staff at Prince Andrew School, more than 43p of every £1 spent.

² We use the term 'operating expenditure' to mean SHG's recurrent expenditure across all departments excluding pensions and benefits.

FIGURE 1. BUDGETED AND ACTUAL EXPENDITURE FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION BY FUNDING SOURCE, FY 2018/19

	EED	TC ¹	Total (EED + TC)
Budget			
Primary education	991,000	57,253	1,048,253
Secondary education	962,000	458,006	1,420,006
Total budget for primary and secondary education	1,953,000	515,259	2,468,259
Expenditure			
Primary education	987,465	57,253	1,044,718
Secondary education	966,165	458,006	1,424,171
Total expenditure on primary and secondary education	1,953,630	515,259	2,468,889
Expenditure by SHG on primary and secondary teaching staff			
Primary teaching staff ²	542,063	0	542,063
Secondary teaching staff	554,401	424,001	978,402
Total expenditure on primary and secondary teaching staff	1,096,464	424,001	1,520,465
Source: Audit St Helena analysis of EED and Corporate Human Resources data			
Notes:			
1. For the purposes of this table, TC budget is the same as TC expenditure – the total cost of the TC positions that Corporate HR allotted to EED for FY 2018/19.			
2. For primary teaching staff, the EED amount includes £30,432 spent on teacher trainees.			

- 1.17 Like personnel costs, internet access is a significant expense for primary and secondary education. In FY 2018/19 EED spent almost £76,000 on broadband at each of the three primary schools, for a total of £227,290 – £6,314 per school per month. This represented 22% of total spending on primary education (including TC costs). Broadband at PAS cost almost £65,730 in FY 2018/19, which represented 5% of total spending on secondary education (including TC costs).
- 1.18 The fact that school years do not align with financial years presents a management challenge for EED, as the directorate must track budget and expenditure on two different calendars: April through March for financial years and September through August for school years. There is no 'school year' budget as such, just two consecutive financial year budgets with a school year that overlaps part of each. For example, EED spent FY 2018/19 funds for the first 7 months of the 2018/19 school year (September 2018 through March 2019), but from April 2019 EED spent FY 2019/20 funds for the remaining 5 months of that school year.

Part Two

How EED Monitors Performance in Education

STRATEGIES, OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

- 2.1 At the highest level, EED's performance indicators for primary and secondary education are derived from the island's 10 Year Plan, which aims to "meet UK attainment standards by investing in our schools and community college" within the overarching goal known as "Altogether Better for Children and Young People". This aspiration is memorialised in the directorate's 2019/22 Strategic Plan under objective 2.1: "Ensure effective investment in human capital through work force development and improved education and training". This objective, in turn, is actioned as twin strategic priorities focussed on "improving student attainment and achievement at all levels, particularly in the key areas of literacy and numeracy" for both primary and secondary students (strategic priorities 1A and 1B, respectively).
- 2.2 Each strategic priority in EED's plan has associated *targets*, *actions* needed to achieve those targets and the intended *outcomes* of those actions. For example, for strategic priority 1A (primary students), the targets, actions and intended outcomes for FY 2019/20 are shown in **Figure 2**.

FIGURE 2. EED'S TARGETS, ACTIONS AND INTENDED OUTCOMES FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS

Targets	Actions needed to achieve targets	Intended outcomes of actions
60% meeting age-related expectations in English and Maths overall	Increase the number of teachers in schools to enable horizontal teaching in the core subjects for all year groups	Increased attainment and achievement in school evidenced by:
60% meeting age-related expectations English and Maths, Year 6	Support the teaching of core subjects with appropriate resources	On-line testing showing targeted percentage of children meeting age-related expectations has been achieved
Improved IT skills and knowledge, including e-safety	Implement new primary IT curriculum to improve skills and digital competencies	On-line testing showing an increase in the number of children making expected progress
Performance in literacy and numeracy is tracked through primary school and appropriate interventions implemented as required	Continue to offer appropriate Continuing Professional Development opportunities for staff, e.g., through UK-based short term placements, virtual consultancy and on-island expertise	More children being able to access age-appropriate learning materials
Primary students are well-prepared to access the secondary curriculum at Prince Andrew School	Continue to use test data to inform teaching and learning	Students are more confident and competent in navigating the digital world
	Work closely with parents as partners in their children's learning and keep them aware and informed of their child's learning and progress	Positive results from Pupil Attitudes to Self and School Survey
		Parents are better equipped to support their children's learning

Source: EED
Note: Some text has been edited for clarity.

- 2.3 Audit St Helena's 2014 report *Delivering Government Objectives* contained recommendations aimed at improving SHG's key performance indicators (KPIs). We assessed these recommendations during our follow up audit published June 2020 and concluded that the EED had designed KPIs that are easy to monitor and useful as part of the directorate's main activities.
- 2.4 Given that the current strategic plan is meant to guide the directorate through three financial years – FY 2019/20 through FY 2021/22 – performance targets are designed to progress over time. For example, for strategic priority 1B (secondary students), the FY 2019/20 target was for 60% of Years 7-9 students to meet age-related expectations (ARE) in English and Maths. According to the plan, the target percentage is then intended to increase to 65% for FYs 2020/21 and 2021/22.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 2.5 In order to track the directorate's progress against its chosen targets, EED has developed a series of performance indicators that are expressed in terms of target percentages. For example, performance against age-related expectations is measured by the percentage of children meeting those expectations in English and Maths across key stages 1, 2 and 3, with a target percentage of 60%. The indicators track administrative performance as well, with target percentages for teacher qualifications and retention. The performance indicators for FY 2019/20 are shown in **Figure 3**; note that all but two of the indicators (#9 and #10) relate directly to primary and secondary education. The development of selected primary and secondary school-related performance indicators from the island's 10 Year Plan down through EED's strategic plan is diagrammed in **Figure 4**.
- 2.6 Performance indicators #9 and #10 assess the percentage of training needs met by the Community College and university students supported by government scholarships, respectively. However, there is no performance indicator that tracks outcomes for students after leaving secondary education. In England, the Department for Education annually reports the 'NEET' rate – not in education, employment or training – for various post-secondary age groups of interest, such as 16-17 and 18-24. While this is out of scope for our report, it could be the subject of future inquiry to determine if a similar indicator would be useful and if so, which directorate is best placed to collect and report such information.
- 2.7 The performance indicators' target percentages are generally aspirational, even ambitious, with the exception of indicator #2: the percentage of Year 11 students achieving pass grades on five GCSEs including English and Maths. In FY 2018/19, the target for this indicator was 45%. During this financial year the next year's target was 50% according to SHG's published performance updates, but it dropped to 45% at the beginning of FY 2019/20. It may appear that the target is reasonable given reported performance on this indicator was 22%, 45% and 37% for the three school years from 2015/16 through 2017/18, respectively. Further, EED leadership told us these percentages are not aspirational targets but rather predicted levels of achievement based on the past performance of each student entering Year 11. Still, in recent years the English government considered 40% to be a floor for this indicator, with school scores below that mark deemed failing. As such, the expectations and educational attainment for secondary students in St Helena seem too low and warrant serious reflection by EED in terms of system-level educational design and effectiveness.

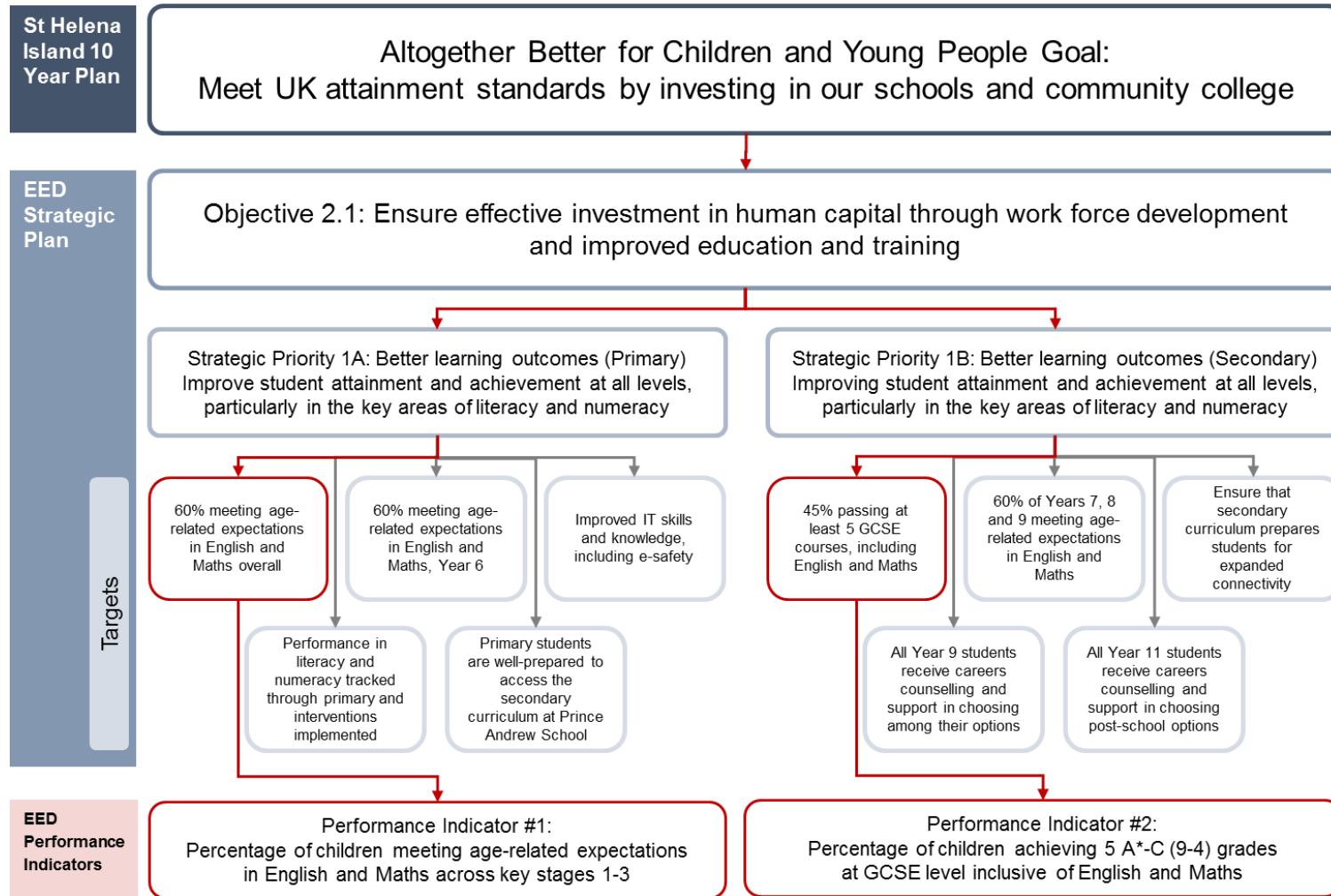
FIGURE 3. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, DESCRIPTIONS AND TARGET PERCENTAGES FOR FY 2019/20

Indicator	Description	Target %
1	Percentage of children meeting age-related expectations in English and Maths across key stages 1-3	60%
2	Percentage of children achieving 5 A*-C (9-4) grades at GCSE level inclusive of English and Maths	45%
3	Percentage of children making progress in English and Maths in the respective year groups from Years 2-11	75% of each year group
4	Percentage of teachers qualified to at least Level 4 in Teaching and Learning or other relevant qualification	75%
5	Percentage of teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants qualified to at least Level 3 in Supporting Teaching and Learning or other relevant qualification	50%
6	Percentage of school leaders (Heads and Deputy Heads) qualified to at least Level 4 in School Leadership and Management	60%
7	Percentage of teacher trainees qualified to at least Level 4 in Teaching and Learning or other relevant qualification	60%
8	Percentage of children on the Special Education Needs and Disability Register who meet the targets set on their Individual Education Programme	75%

	Indicator	Description	Target %
9	Percentage of training needs met through training and course opportunities provided by the Community College	The St Helena Community College is tasked with meeting the training and development needs of the workforce on St Helena. The Community College will liaise with Corporate HR and Enterprise St. Helena to (1) identify training and up-skilling needs and (2) offer training and courses to meet these needs.	60%
10	Percentage of students supported financially whilst on the Scholarship Scheme	The directorate offers scholarships to Year 13 students to enable them to take their learning to a higher level. The number of scholarships offered depends on the budget allocated and whether the student can meet the criteria set by the Scholarship Committee.	100%
11	Percentage retention of teaching staff in primary and secondary schools	Retaining of teaching staff in schools showing rate at which teachers are staying or leaving the schools.	85%

Source: SHG Corporate Services
Note: Some text has been edited for clarity.

FIGURE 4. DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR ST HELENA'S PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS



Source: Audit St Helena analysis of SHG and EED documents
 Note: Some text has been edited for clarity.

Part Three

School Performance Results

HOW ST HELENA'S PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS PERFORMED IN THE 2018/19 SCHOOL YEAR

- 3.1 EED regularly tracks student performance through progress testing and year-end assessments, with results reported annually to Legislative Council's Education Committee. EED monitors student performance from Year 2 through Year 9 via computer-based testing each July that assesses progress relative to age-related expectations in line with England's national curriculum. In addition, secondary students completing GCSEs in Years 10-11 take exams at the end of their 2-year programme of study that, along with coursework, are graded on the English scale, with A* or 9 being the highest score (depending on the type of exam³); G or 1 the lowest; and C or 4 a standard pass.
- 3.2 EED's official performance data is collected by SHG's Performance Manager and verified by the government's Internal Audit office. After Internal Audit's verification, the Performance Manager publishes EED's data along with that of other directorates on SHG's website.
- 3.3 At the beginning of the most recently completed school year (2018/19), EED was accountable for five performance indicators – four related to primary and secondary education and one related to the Community College, as published by SHG's Performance Manager. These indicators along with their associated targets and school year-end results appear in **Figure 5**.

³ Prince Andrew School offers the International GCSE (IGCSE) in English, which is designed to be (1) taken worldwide, (2) comparable in difficulty to the standard GCSE and (3) graded on the traditional scale of A* to G. Beginning in 2017, a new grading scale of 9-1 was phased in for standard GCSE subjects, such as Maths and other courses taught at PAS; IGCSEs are still graded A* to G.

FIGURE 5. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EDUCATION IN PLACE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 2018/19 SCHOOL YEAR (SEPTEMBER 2018)

	Indicator	Target percentage	School year-end results (Aug 2019)
1	Primary education – percentage of Year 6 pupils assessed as meeting age-related expectations	English 60% Maths 60%	English 43% Maths 56%
2	Secondary education – percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSE A*-C including English and Maths (or 9-4 on the new scale)	45%	43%
3	Percentage of students on Special Education Needs Register with an active Individual Education Plan	100%	60%
4	Percentage of teachers qualified to Level 4+	50%	63%
5	St Helena Community College provides a range of general, technical/vocational, professional and higher education programmes to meet the needs of the local economy	<i>Not related to primary or secondary education</i>	

Source: EED and SHG Corporate Services
Note: Some text has been edited for clarity.

- 3.4 As shown in the table, for school year 2018/19, EED came close to its Maths target for students completing KS2 but fell farther short of its target for English. The directorate nearly met its target for the percentage of Year 11 students achieving pass grades on five GCSEs including English and Maths, but as noted in paragraph 2.7, that target was relatively low. In addition, 60% of students with special education needs had an individual education plan, which means EED missed its target for the third indicator. However, almost two-thirds of the directorate's teachers were qualified at level 4 or above, meaning EED exceeded the target percentage for the final indicator.
- 3.5 As with tracking budget and expenditure, the non-alignment of financial and school years also presents a management challenge for monitoring and reporting performance. Given that SHG performance indicators are reviewed in preparation for each new financial year, one effect of this non-alignment is performance indicators that can change midway through a school year. For example, during the 2018/19 school year EED's published performance indicators for primary and second education expanded from the four (out of five) in **Figure 5** above to the nine (out of 11) in **Figure 6** below. Note that these are the same current indicators described in **Figure 3** in Part Two, now paired with the actual results EED reported for the 2018/19 school year.

FIGURE 6. PERFORMANCE DATA REPORTED BY EDUCATION INDICATOR FOR THE 2018/19 SCHOOL YEAR

Indicator	Target percentage	Reported results
1 Percentage of children meeting age-related expectations in English and Maths across key stages 1-3	60%	KS 1-2: 56% achieved ARE in English 49% achieved ARE in Maths KS3: 53% achieved ARE in English 63% achieved ARE in Maths
2 Percentage of children achieving 5 A*-C (9-4) grades at GCSE level inclusive of English and Maths	45%	43%
3 Percentage of children making progress in English and Maths in the respective year groups from Years 2-11	75% of each year group	Primary (Years 1-6): 54% made expected or greater progress in English 61% made expected or greater progress in Maths Year 7: <i>See note 2</i> Year 8: 50% made expected or more progress in English 72% made expected or more progress in Maths Year 9: 49% made expected or more progress in English 90% made expected or more progress in Maths Year 10: <i>See note 3</i> Year 11: English 88% Maths 64%
4 Percentage of teachers qualified to at least Level 4 in Teaching and Learning or other relevant qualification	75%	63% (increased to 68% as of March 2020)

	Indicator	Target percentage	Reported results
5	Percentage of teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants qualified to at least Level 3 in Supporting Teaching and Learning or other relevant qualification	50%	9% (increased to 13% as of March 2020)
6	Percentage of school leaders (Heads and Deputy Heads) qualified to at least Level 4 in School Leadership and Management	60%	56%
7	Percentage of teacher trainees qualified to at least Level 4 in Teaching and Learning or other relevant qualification	60%	100%
8	Percentage of children on the Special Education Needs and Disability Register who meet the targets set on their Individual Education Programme	75%	Not reported; new Inclusion Manager has been recruited
9	Percentage of training needs met through training and course opportunities provided by the Community College	<i>Not related to primary or secondary education</i>	
10	Percentage of students supported financially whilst on the Scholarship Scheme	<i>Not related to primary or secondary education</i>	
11	Percentage retention of teaching staff in primary and secondary schools	85%	93% retained from 2018/19 school year to 2019/20 school year

Source: SHG Corporate Services

Notes:

1. Some text has been edited for clarity.
2. According to EED, Year 7 progress statistics were logged on a different platform. This has been corrected for the purposes of future reporting.
3. According to EED, Year 10 progress cannot be determined because those students are in the first year of their 2-year GCSE study and have not covered the whole syllabus. This portion of the indicator will be excluded going forward.

- 3.6 As shown in **Figure 6**, EED’s performance against its new indicators was mixed in the 2018/19 school year. Primary and secondary students generally performed below the target percentages in English and Maths and on the five-GCSE pass grade indicator, but in some cases were not far off the mark. However, it is difficult to assess student progress (indicator #3) given the cumulative manner of reporting for Years 1-6 and the missing Year 7. Qualification levels for EED employees range from far exceeding the target for teacher trainees to being far below it for teaching assistants, with teachers and school leaders closer to satisfactory. It should be noted that the target percentage for teacher qualifications at level four or above increased from 50% in FY 2018/19 (as shown in **Figure 5**) to 75% in FY 2019/20 (as shown in **Figure 6**). Lastly, EED surpassed its already high target percentage for teacher retention.
- 3.7 We reviewed EED’s 2018/19 school year-end reports to the Education Committee on primary and secondary education. The directorate’s reporting covered the first two indicators in detail but included little information about the remaining relevant indicators, even though they had been in place for at least 5 months by that time. In addition, EED assessed itself against a lower performance target for the percentage of Year 11 students achieving pass grades on five GCSEs including English and Maths, which was identified as 45% in SHG’s monthly performance updates. Instead, the directorate incorrectly reported this target as 40%, and thus claimed that its result of 43% had met the target.

BENCHMARKING ST HELENA’S PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE TO RESULTS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS

CHOOSING SCHOOL DATA FOR COMPARISON

- 3.8 EED leadership told us they informally compare their students’ performance to UK averages, which is consistent with the 10 Year Plan’s goal to “meet UK attainment standards by investing in our schools”. We attempted to do the same in a more formal way in order to provide further context for performance in St Helena’s primary and secondary schools during the 2018/19 school year. To do so, we consulted the online performance reporting database for England’s Department for Education. It contains numerical data at the institutional level for all of England’s primary and secondary schools, with each school assigned a unique six-digit identifier. We queried the database for the closest variables we could find to St Helena’s existing performance indicators for primary and secondary students. The most comparable performance data we found that is collected in both St Helena and England was then used to construct the following indicators for the purposes of our analysis:
- *Primary schools.* The percentage of students meeting age-related expectations on both their English and Maths progress tests at the end of KS2 (Year 6)
 - *Secondary schools.* The percentage of students achieving pass grades of C/4 or better in both their English and Maths GCSEs at the end of KS4 (Year 11)

- 3.9 Note that each indicator is similar to but not exactly the same as an existing EED performance indicator. For primary schools, we are interested in the percentage of Year 6 students that met ARE in *both* English and Maths – not each subject individually, as is the case with EED’s current indicator. For secondary schools, we are interested in the percentage of all Year 11 students who achieved pass grades in *both* English and Maths GCSEs – not just those who also passed at least three more GCSEs, as is the case with EED’s current indicator. In each case we requested and received additional outcome data from EED to support our analysis.
- 3.10 We also located the English Department for Education’s portal for school financial reporting. Known as the Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) framework, it “provides a standard template for schools to collect information about their income and expenditure by financial years”. As with England’s school performance reporting database, the CFR assigns schools unique identifiers at the institutional level. This makes it possible to link schools’ financial data with their performance data. We used this linked data to construct the following value for money indicators for our analysis of primary and secondary schools:
- Annual expenditure
 - Number of pupils
 - Number of teachers (excluding teaching assistants)
 - Pupil to teacher ratio
 - Expenditure per pupil ratio
- 3.11 In addition to England, we attempted to locate reasonable comparators to St Helena among the UK’s other overseas territories and in remote countries such as Montserrat. We abandoned this exercise once it became clear that the performance and budget data available online was neither complete enough nor accompanied by sufficient context to support a reasonable analysis given the scope of our audit. In addition, it was our judgement that important differences relative to St Helena in the other school systems’ curriculum as well as how those systems are governed, administered and funded were too vast to be properly mitigated.

- 3.12 Having determined that data from the English schools was the most comparable, reliable and readily available, we constructed samples of schools from the total population of English primary and secondary schools that would be good comparators to St Helena's schools. For this analysis, we opted to choose schools in areas comparable to St Helena, rather than try to determine specific schools with similar internal characteristics. To this end, we consulted the UK Ministry for Housing, Community and Local Government's English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (IoD2019) to identify the most deprived communities in England, then selected 30 that were not in cities (rural areas). The IoD2019 ranks communities by deprivation taking into account income levels, employment levels, education and skills, health, crime, access to housing and services, and living environment: we assumed St Helena would rank poorly against several of these criteria.⁴ Having constructed a list of 30 deprived communities, we then selected a state primary and secondary school in each community, resulting in a list of 30 primary and 30 secondary schools to compare to St Helena's.
- 3.13 The following two sections highlight our main findings from the benchmarking analysis. Our complete sample and associated data are presented in Appendix One.

BENCHMARKING TO ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOL DATA

- 3.14 Harford, Pilling and St Paul's are small schools on their own, however together would form a standard-sized English primary school. At the beginning of the 2018/19 school year, none of the three schools had more than 134 students, whereas our sample of English primary schools all had more pupils than this apart from one. Most of the sample (22 out of 30) had more than 300 students; the average for the sample was 379. Adding all of St Helena's primary schools together for 2018/19 gives us 358 students: a school of this size would not be uncommon in a rural area of England. **Figure 7** summarises our results for the St Helenian and English primary schools, with performance on our Year 6 ARE indicator in the final column. Note that at EED's request we have anonymised the primary schools in our remaining discussion of 2018/19 performance – they are listed in no particular order as Primary 1, 2 and 3.

⁴ The IoD2019 assessed deprivation across 32,844 English communities with an average population of 1,500 residents. The 30 communities we selected had degree of deprivation rankings between 1 and 677 out of those 32,844.

FIGURE 7: SUMMARY OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

	Number of pupils	Number of teachers	Pupil to teacher ratio	Annual expenditure (£m)	Spend per pupil (£)	Met ARE in English and Maths
Primary 1	115	7	16.4	0.32	2,807	44%
Primary 2	134	6	22.3	0.34	2,507	20%
Primary 3	109	6	18.2	0.33	3,016	46%
<i>St Helena primaries combined</i>	358	19	18.8	0.99	2,758	36%
English sample average	379	17.7	21.8	1.80	4,748	59%

Source: Audit St Helena analysis of SHG and English school data

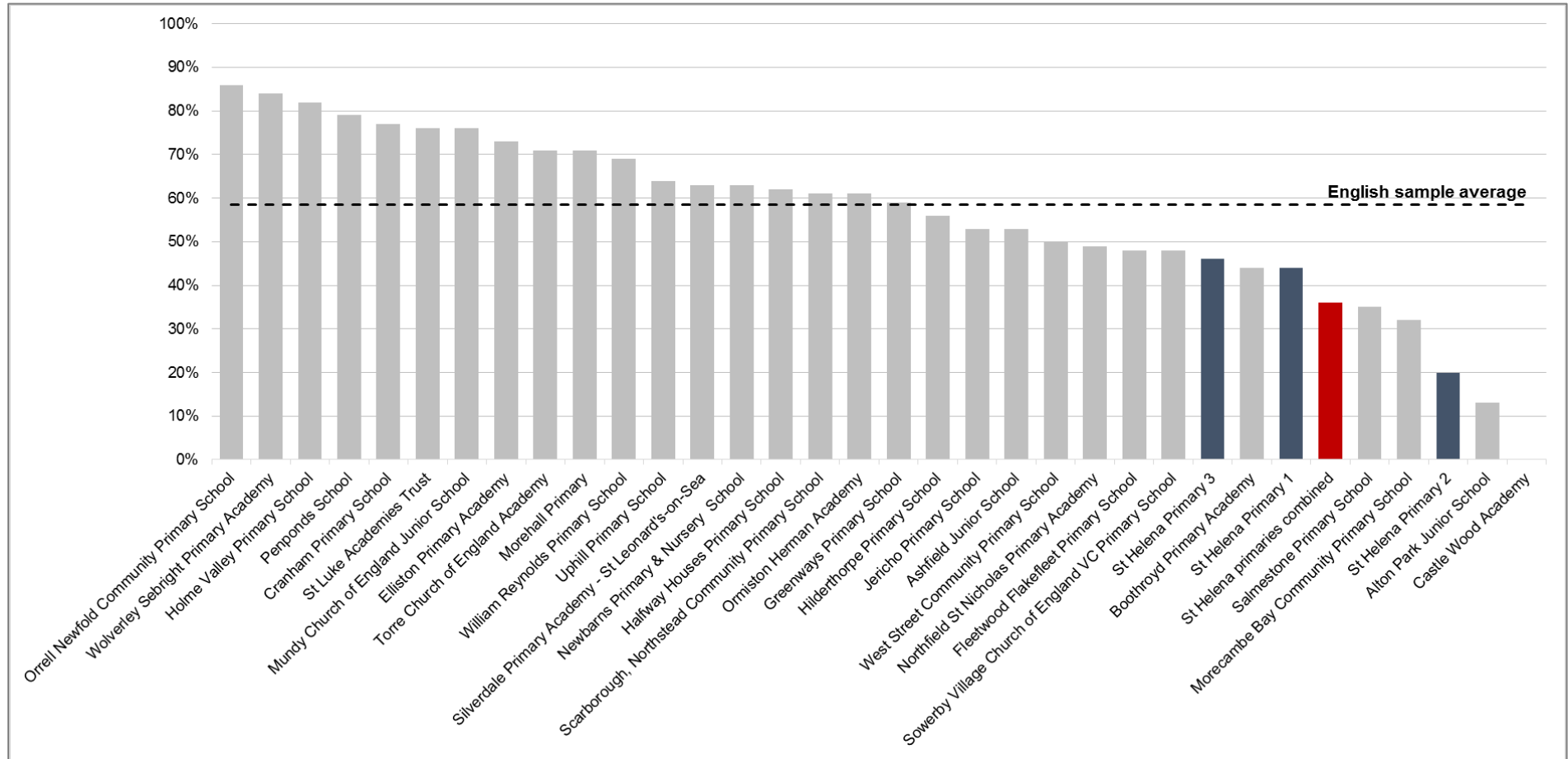
Note: The St Helena schools' annual expenditures include the cost of teacher trainees at each school (£30,432), but not the apportioned costs of TC education and training advisors shared across schools (£57,253) for better comparability with the English school data.

- 3.15 St Helena's primary schools have relatively low numbers of pupils enrolled and fairly similar ratios of pupils to teachers⁵ compared to the English sample average. This means that St Helena's schools effectively have similar class sizes as schools in the English sample, though there was a range across St Helena's three primaries in school year 2018/19. Despite the comparable level of teaching resource devoted to each student in St Helena, spending per pupil is significantly lower reflecting lower teacher salaries compared to England. This could suggest that poor performance starts at inefficiently funded primary schools. For example, in FY 2018/19 there was negligible TC teaching resource dedicated to primary education despite more than £1 million spent on that sector. Further, the relatively high cost of subscribing to broadband at each of three locations depletes resources that could go toward other priorities.
- 3.16 We found evidence of a lack of effectiveness based on the pupil performance data we collected for the year. We examined the percentage of students who met age-related expectations in both English and Maths at the end of KS2 (Year 6), the last year before students move to Prince Andrew School. Across the three primary schools St Helena's students met Year 6 ARE at a lower rate than the schools in our English sample – 36% against an average of 59%. (The whole of England average is even higher, at 63% for the year.) Recall that one of the performance targets in EED's strategic plan was that primary students would be "well-prepared to access the secondary curriculum at Prince Andrew School".

⁵ We counted only classroom teachers in calculating this ratio, not head teachers or teaching assistants.

- 3.17 Looking at the primary schools individually provides another interesting snapshot. In the 2018/19 school year, Primary 1 and Primary 3 had similar results for the percentage of Year 6 students meeting ARE in both English and Maths, with 44% and 46%, respectively. However, Primary 2 performed much worse, with only 20% (3 out of 15) of its Year 6 students meeting ARE in both English and Maths – this would make it one of the worst performing schools on this metric in not just St Helena but the whole of England. (Note that Primary 2 also had the highest ratio of pupils to teachers in St Helena.) **Figure 8** presents results for the Year 6 ARE metric across the St Helenian and English primary schools.
- 3.18 Some policymakers have suggested that consolidating schools as was done in the secondary sector could lead to a more efficient allocation of resources, such as through pooling of teachers and broadband capacity, which might then produce better results in the primary sector. For example, subscribing to broadband at each of three primary school locations cost £227,290 in FY 2018/19, or £53 per primary student per month. This was about 3.5 times the £65,730 total cost at single-site PAS (£26 per student per month). We have also seen that (1) small primary school class sizes results in some subjects being taught to combined year groups, (2) there were disparities in pupil to teacher ratios across the three primaries in school year 2018/19 and (3) performance on Year 6 AREs was not consistent across the three schools for that year. While the various benefits and costs of consolidation are outside the scope of this report, the evidence indicates that reform with an eye toward rationalisation is required.

FIGURE 8: PERCENTAGE OF YEAR 6 STUDENTS MEETING AGE-RELATED EXPECTATIONS IN BOTH ENGLISH AND MATHS



Source: Audit St Helena analysis of SHG and English school data

BENCHMARKING TO ENGLISH SECONDARY SCHOOL DATA

3.19 Prince Andrew School is much smaller than a typical English secondary school. At the beginning of the 2018/19 school year it had 214 students – less than half as many students as the smallest school in our sample (564 students), one-fifth as many as the sample average (1,050) and one-ninth as many as the largest school (1,924). **Figure 9** summarises our results for PAS and the English secondary schools, with performance on our Year 11 GCSE indicator in the final column.

FIGURE 9: SUMMARY OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

	Number of pupils	Number of teachers	Pupil to teacher ratio	Annual expenditure (£m)	Spend per pupil (£)	A*-C (9-4) in English and Maths GCSEs
Prince Andrew School	214	33.7	6.4	1.4	6,496	43%
English sample average	1,050	64	16.5	6.4	6,049	56%

Source: Audit St Helena analysis of SHG and English school data

Notes:

1. One of PAS's teachers worked part time.
2. PAS's annual expenditure does not include the apportioned cost of the TC training advisor shared across schools (£34,006) for better comparability with the English school data.

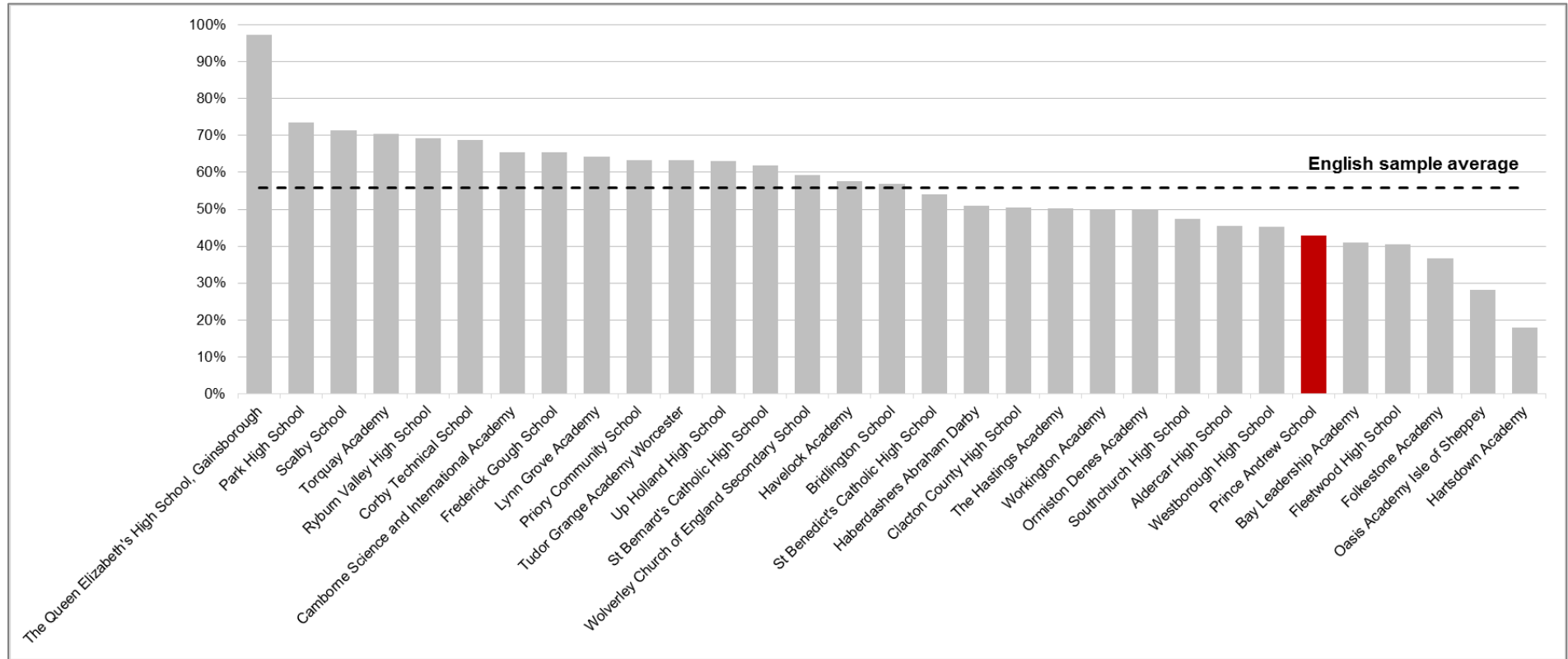
3.20 Despite the relatively small number of students, PAS has a robust teaching workforce as measured by its full-time equivalent (FTE) resource of 33.7. Although it is smaller than any school in the English sample, PAS has a lower pupil to teacher ratio than any of them – 6.4 pupils per teacher compared to an average of 16.5 across the sample.

3.21 Further, PAS outlays more money per pupil than most of the English schools in our sample, spending almost £6,500 per student in FY 2018/19 compared to the sample average of £6,049. While this is not a large difference, it does indicate that PAS is not underfunded relative to English schools. This finding contrasts with what we observed for primary education, where spending per pupil at each of St Helena's three schools is below the English sample average. Moreover, as detailed in Part One, broadband accounted for just 5% of total spending on secondary education as compared to 22% of total spending on primary education.

3.22 Despite PAS's low pupil to teacher ratio, Year 11 students there performed worse in their core GCSEs – English and Maths – than schools in some of the most deprived areas of England. For school year 2018/19, 43% of students at PAS achieved a standard pass (C/4) or better in both English and Maths GCSEs, 13 percentage points lower than the English sample average of 56%.⁶ **Figure 10** presents results for this metric at Prince Andrew School and for the English secondary schools.

⁶ We calculated this percentage the same way that EED did when reporting to the Education Committee: number of students achieving pass grades out of total students in Year 11 (12 out of 28, or 43%). For further context, EED leadership told us that 2 of the 28 students did not sit the exams. If we count only the students who sat the exams, the percentage achieving pass grades would increase to 46%.

FIGURE 10: PERCENTAGE OF YEAR 11 STUDENTS ACHIEVING A PASS GRADE OF C/4 OR BETTER ON BOTH ENGLISH AND MATHS GCSEs



Source: Audit St Helena analysis of SHG and English school data

LIMITATIONS TO THE BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

- 3.23 Paragraphs 3.14-3.22 provide a window into St Helena's primary and secondary school performance for the 2018/19 school year. We did not investigate the reasons for the below average results against our chosen indicators, nor did we investigate whether these findings represent a consistent trend over a number of years, as both were outside the audit's scope. Instead, this analysis is intended to illustrate some of the potential performance and value for money issues at the schools for further discussion and investigation. However, readers should exercise caution when interpreting these results and in particular should be mindful that:
- 3.24 **The benchmarking analysis is a snapshot of one school year; we did not attempt to identify year over year trends.** Our findings are limited to performance on two key indicators for the 2018/19 school year. Further investigation would be required to determine whether (1) primary and secondary performance consistently lags our English school samples, and (2) there is a consistent difference in performance among St Helena's primary schools.
- 3.25 **Individual pupil performance is not driven only by school or teaching performance.** The analysis assumes that the main indicator of school performance is individual pupil performance, and to that end we use assessment and examination results as a benchmarking indicator. However, we should note that there are other ways to measure school performance and, more importantly, that school performance is not necessarily the main determinant of individual pupil performance. Wider socioeconomic factors, such as household income, parental background and parental involvement, are also influential.
- 3.26 **St Helena's schools, and the wider context in which they operate, differ from England's in important ways.** Ideally the analysis would benchmark against similar territories with similar economic and geographical indicators such as population size, human development indices, GDP per capita and remoteness. As noted in paragraph 3.11, we were unable to acquire reliable data from other territories and so used poor, rural communities in England to benchmark against St Helena. In addition to the macroeconomic differences, English schools have very different characteristics, learning environments and regulatory regimes. For example:
- English schools take different standardised tests than their St Helena counterparts to assess primary students' achievement against age-related expectations. Specifically, England's national curriculum specifies Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) to measure student progress in English and Maths at the end of Year 6. Both assessments are written, and both rely in part on teacher judgements to derive student scores. Assessments in St Helena, on the other hand, are taken as online progress tests with teacher judgement playing no part in a student's score. It should be noted, however, that scores on these online tests are scaled to correspond to written SAT scores and purport to be reliable indicators of performance on SATs.

- It is common for English schools to have unlimited broadband in the classroom and most pupils are assumed to have unlimited broadband at home. This is not the case in St Helena, but study programmes created in England and used at Prince Andrew School often assume this level of access.
- English schools are subject to strict inspections on an annual basis by their regulator, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. St Helena has no such regulator.

3.27 **Low numbers of total students mean that results are sensitive to small changes in pupil performance.** Minor improvements or declines in performance can have a significant impact on the percentage achievement documented in a given year. For example, 13 Year 6 students took online progress tests at St Helena Primary 3 at the end of the 2018/19 school year, with six achieving age-related expectations in both English and Maths. If two more of the 13 students had achieved ARE in both subjects, the performance indicator result would have jumped from 46% to 62% – exceeding the English sample average of 59%. The same is true for longitudinal analysis of individual age groups, where a small number of students performing better or worse in the following year's group can have an outsize effect on resulting percentages and the year over year trend. This 'small sample' problem is compounded when the composition of, e.g., Year 3 at a given primary school differs substantively from one school year to the next, such as by having more or fewer students with special education needs.

Appendix One

Audit Approach and Sampling Results

OUR AUDIT APPROACH

1. We conducted this performance audit from November 2019 through July 2020. Our work proceeded along two key lines of enquiry:
 - **What indicators does EED use to monitor performance in primary and secondary schools?**
 - **What do these indicators tell us about how St Helena's primary and secondary schools are performing?**
2. To answer these questions, we reviewed and analysed documents from EED and SHG, including information about school enrolment, staffing, performance and budgeting for financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20, and the 2018/19 school year contained therein. We also interviewed accountable officials in EED and other relevant SHG offices, such as Internal Audit and Performance Management. In addition, we researched overseas school systems as part of a benchmarking analysis that ultimately compared St Helena's primary and secondary schools to samples of their English counterparts. Finally, while we did review relevant academic literature for certain key topics, our scope did not include consultation with educational specialists beyond those at EED.
3. As discussed in Part Three, our benchmarking analysis relied upon three UK sources: the Department for Education's online portal for school financial reporting, known as the Consistent Financial Reporting framework; the department's online performance reporting database; and the Ministry for Housing, Community and Local Government's English Indices of Deprivation 2019. **Figures 11** and **12** present detailed financial and performance information for our English samples alongside that of St Helena's primary and secondary schools. **Figure 13** presents additional information about the Indices of Deprivation.

OUR BENCHMARKING SAMPLES AND HOW ST HELENA SCHOOLS COMPARE

FIGURE 11: OUR SAMPLE OF ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS TOGETHER WITH ST HELENA PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SORTED BY STUDENT PERFORMANCE

School	Type	Number of pupils	Number of teachers	Pupil to teacher ratio	Annual expenditure (£ m)	Spend per pupil (£)	Met Year 6 ARE in English and Maths
Orrell Newfold Community Primary School	Community school	451	18.2	24.8	1.81	4,003	86%
Wolverley Sebright Primary Academy	Academy converter	152	7.8	19.5	0.28	1,826	84%
Holme Valley Primary School	Community school	419	20.4	20.5	1.72	4,115	82%
Penponds School	Academy converter	116	5.9	19.7	0.60	5,181	79%
Cranham Primary School	Academy converter	417.5	24.6	17.0	2.20	5,260	77%
St Luke Academies Trust	Academy sponsor led	327	14	23.4	1.32	4,037	76%
Mundy Church of England Junior School	Voluntary controlled school	189	6.7	28.2	0.87	4,596	76%
Elliston Primary Academy	Academy converter	329.5	16.1	20.5	1.58	4,807	73%
Torre Church of England Academy	Academy converter	336.5	15.2	22.1	1.71	5,088	71%
Morehall Primary	Academy sponsor led	186	20.2	9.2	0.84	4,516	71%
William Reynolds Primary School	Community school	421.5	20.2	20.9	2.18	5,163	69%
Uphill Primary School	Community school	314	13.7	22.9	1.39	4,434	64%
Silverdale Primary Academy - St Leonard's-on-Sea	Academy converter	627	17.4	36.0	2.63	4,199	63%
Newbarns Primary & Nursery School	Community school	430	18.7	23.0	1.87	4,346	63%
Halfway Houses Primary School	Academy converter	545.5	24.1	22.6	2.15	3,949	62%

School	Type	Number of pupils	Number of teachers	Pupil to teacher ratio	Annual expenditure (£ m)	Spend per pupil (£)	Met Year 6 ARE in English and Maths
Scarborough, Northstead Community Primary School	Community school	632	29.3	21.6	3.01	4,757	61%
Ormiston Herman Academy	Academy sponsor led	336	16.2	20.7	1.75	5,217	61%
English sample average	n/a	379	17.7	21.8	1.80	4,748	59%
Greenways Primary School	Academy converter	948	50.6	18.7	4.77	5,028	59%
Hilderthorpe Primary School	Community school	356.5	19.4	18.4	2.02	5,652	56%
Jericho Primary School	Community school	388	15.9	24.4	1.70	4,384	53%
Ashfield Junior School	Community school	250	10.7	23.4	1.22	4,875	53%
West Street Community Primary School	Community school	210.5	8.2	25.7	1.21	5,728	50%
Northfield St Nicholas Primary Academy	Academy sponsor led	425	23.2	18.3	2.24	5,273	49%
Fleetwood Flakefleet Primary School	Community school	470	19	24.7	2.34	4,988	48%
Sowerby Village Church of England VC Primary School	Voluntary controlled school	160	7.8	20.5	0.99	6,162	48%
St Helena Primary 3	n/a	109	6	18.2	0.33	3,016	46%
Boothroyd Primary Academy	Academy converter	611.5	25.6	23.9	3.19	5,217	44%
St Helena Primary 1	n/a	115	7	16.4	0.32	2,807	44%
St Helena primaries combined	n/a	358	19	18.8	0.99	2,758	36%
Salmestone Primary School	Academy sponsor led	338.5	17.6	19.2	1.40	4,136	35%
Morecambe Bay Community Primary School	Community school	333	16.3	20.4	1.96	5,882	32%

School	Type	Number of pupils	Number of teachers	Pupil to teacher ratio	Annual expenditure (£ m)	Spend per pupil (£)	Met Year 6 ARE in English and Maths
St Helena Primary 2	n/a	134	6	22.3	0.34	2,507	20%
Alton Park Junior School	Academy converter	487	19.9	24.5	2.25	4,622	13%
Castle Wood Academy	Academy sponsor led	166	9.2	18.0	0.81	4,867	0%

Source: Audit St Helena analysis of SHG and English school data

Note: The St Helena schools' annual expenditures include the cost of teacher trainees at each school (£30,432) but not the apportioned costs of TC education and training advisors shared across schools (£57,253) for better comparability with the English school data.

FIGURE 12: OUR SAMPLE OF ENGLISH SECONDARY SCHOOLS TOGETHER WITH PRINCE ANDREW SCHOOL, SORTED BY STUDENT PERFORMANCE

School	Type	Number of pupils	Number of teachers	Pupil to teacher ratio	Annual expenditure (£m)	Spend per pupil (£)	A*-C (9-4) in English and Maths GCSEs
The Queen Elizabeth's High School, Gainsborough	Community school	1220	68.2	17.9	6.2	5,060	97%
Park High School	Academy converter	1513	97.3	15.5	9.9	6,563	74%
Scalby School	Academy converter	979	52.4	18.7	5.8	5,926	71%
Torquay Academy	Academy sponsor led	1373	85.6	16.0	8.0	5,805	71%
Ryburn Valley High School	Academy converter	1469	96.4	15.2	8.7	5,897	69%
Corby Technical School	Free schools	564	37.4	15.1	3.3	5,805	69%
Camborne Science and International Academy	Academy converter	1532	96.2	15.9	8.7	5,648	66%
Frederick Gough School	Community school	1322	80.6	16.4	6.9	5,232	65%
Lynn Grove Academy	Academy converter	1045	58.5	17.9	4.7	4,487	64%
Priory Community School	Academy converter	1330	67.6	19.7	12.2	9,201	63%
Tudor Grange Academy Worcester	Academy sponsor led	1058	68.4	15.5	5.8	5,502	63%
Up Holland High School	Community school	756	44.6	17.0	4.1	5,487	63%
St Bernard's Catholic High School	Voluntary aided school	729	40.5	18.0	4.1	5,613	62%
Wolverley Church of England Secondary School	Voluntary controlled school	675	49.4	13.7	4.4	6,452	59%
Havelock Academy	Academy sponsor led	978	46.6	21.0	5.0	5,105	58%
Bridlington School	Voluntary controlled school	971	74.6	13.0	7.0	7,212	57%
English sample average	n/a	1050	64.2	16.5	6.4	6,049	56%

School	Type	Number of pupils	Number of teachers	Pupil to teacher ratio	Annual expenditure (£m)	Spend per pupil (£)	A*-C (9-4) in English and Maths GCSEs
St Benedict's Catholic High School	Voluntary aided school	1070	57.7	18.5	5.6	5,276	54%
Haberdashers Abraham Darby	Academy sponsor led	1068	64.6	16.5	6.4	6,035	51%
Clacton County High School	Academy converter	1622	98.8	16.4	10.0	6,152	50%
The Hastings Academy	Academy sponsor led	886	44.6	19.9	5.1	5,712	50%
Workington Academy	Academy sponsor led	816	51.5	15.8	4.7	5,803	50%
Ormiston Denes Academy	Academy sponsor led	873	58.7	14.9	6.2	7,144	50%
Southchurch High School	Academy sponsor led	577	37.4	15.4	3.9	6,704	47%
Aldercar High School	Community school	571	31.2	18.3	4.1	7,093	46%
Westborough High School	Foundation school	898	75.7	11.9	6.1	6,758	45%
Prince Andrew School	n/a	214	33.7	6.4	1.4	6,496	43%
Bay Leadership Academy	Academy sponsor led	740	43.4	17.1	4.3	5,854	41%
Fleetwood High School	Foundation school	869	56	15.5	5.3	6,120	41%
Folkestone Academy	Academy sponsor led	1923.5	106.5	18.1	9.9	5,159	37%
Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey	Academy sponsor led	1405	74.5	18.9	8.1	5,781	28%
Hartsdown Academy	Academy converter	660	60	11.0	6.0	9,102	18%

Source: Audit St Helena analysis of SHG and English school data

Note: PAS's annual expenditure does not include the apportioned cost of the TC training advisor shared across schools (£34,006) for better comparability with the English school data.

THE ENGLISH INDICES OF DEPRIVATION 2019

FIGURE 13: THE DEPRIVED AREAS SAMPLED FROM THE ENGLISH INDICES OF DEPRIVATION 2019

LSOA code (2011)	LSOA name (2011)	Local authority district code (2019)	Local authority district name (2019)	Index of Multiple Deprivation rank	Index of Multiple Deprivation decile
E01021988	Tendring 018A	E07000076	Tendring	1	1
E01013139	North East Lincolnshire 002C	E06000012	North East Lincolnshire	22	1
E01026383	West Lindsey 004E	E07000142	West Lindsey	24	1
E01030258	Waveney 007D	E07000244	East Suffolk	25	1
E01025117	Lancaster 009C	E07000121	Lancaster	33	1
E01026625	Great Yarmouth 006D	E07000145	Great Yarmouth	39	1
E01012948	East Riding of Yorkshire 005C	E06000011	East Riding of Yorkshire	44	1
E01024609	Swale 001A	E07000113	Swale	48	1
E01024676	Thanet 003A	E07000114	Thanet	67	1
E01032332	Worcester 002D	E07000237	Worcester	72	1
E01025584	Wyre 001F	E07000128	Wyre	96	1
E01019143	Barrow-in-Furness 008C	E07000027	Barrow-in-Furness	99	1
E01015842	Southend-on-Sea 014D	E06000033	Southend-on-Sea	136	1
E01020972	Hastings 005A	E07000062	Hastings	147	1
E01032471	Wyre Forest 009C	E07000239	Wyre Forest	148	1
E01014831	North Somerset 021C	E06000024	North Somerset	156	1

LSOA code (2011)	LSOA name (2011)	Local authority district code (2019)	Local authority district name (2019)	Index of Multiple Deprivation rank	Index of Multiple Deprivation decile
E01010964	Calderdale 012B	E08000033	Calderdale	212	1
E01019663	Erewash 001C	E07000036	Erewash	227	1
E01013278	North Lincolnshire 016A	E06000013	North Lincolnshire	250	1
E01014118	Telford and Wrekin 023D	E06000020	Telford and Wrekin	409	1
E01026968	Corby 006G	E07000150	Corby	440	1
E01019301	Copeland 005F	E07000029	Copeland	451	1
E01027806	Scarborough 006B	E07000168	Scarborough	574	1
E01018870	Cornwall 055B	E06000052	Cornwall	577	1
E01015256	Torbay 008C	E06000027	Torbay	590	1
E01024504	Shepway 014A	E07000112	Folkestone and Hythe	614	1
E01019113	Allerdale 009C	E07000026	Allerdale	620	1
E01025493	West Lancashire 014A	E07000127	West Lancashire	658	1
E01011140	Kirklees 019C	E08000034	Kirklees	661	1
E01025227	Pendle 007B	E07000122	Pendle	677	1

Source: UK Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government

Note: LSOA refers to Lower Layer Super Output Area, which is a geospatial statistical unit used in England and Wales for reporting small area statistics. LSOAs – essentially neighbourhoods or other small communities – are part of the ONS coding system created by the Office for National Statistics. There are 32,844 LSOAs in England, with an average population of 1,500.

Appendix Two

Recommendations Summary

Number	Recommendation
1	Amend or supplement EED's performance indicators to track the percentage of primary students who meet age-related expectations on both their English and Maths progress tests
2	Amend or supplement EED's performance indicators to track the percentage of Year 11 students who achieve a pass grade (C/4 or better) in both their English and Maths GCSEs and review the overall secondary attainment target percentage
3	Include results for each of EED's performance indicators in the directorate's school year-end reporting for the Education Committee
4	Consider aligning EED's performance indicators with St Helena's school year instead of its financial year
5	Urgently prioritise an analysis investigating the potential benefits and costs of consolidating primary provision at a single site