

School data-what is available and what does it tell you?

DAGB conference on the topic of “Using School Data Effectively” was held on 15th March 2018 at Saltwells EDC. The session was presented by Paul Charman, Managing Director, FFTAspire. In addition, Paul is a governor at two schools in Worcestershire.

FFT had developed a Governor dashboard in conjunction with NGA about 5 years ago, and this information can be used when looking at data produced by the DfE. Dudley purchase access to FFT on behalf of schools, access can be requested via Duncan Gregory. About 70% of primary schools currently use this resource.

RaiseOnline has been replaced with “Analyse School Performance” (ASP) and an Inspection Data Summary (IDSR) report from OfSTED. This gives Governors two sets of data to look at and understand, although the IDSR data is biased towards the needs of OfSTED Inspectors. Paul recommended that Governors concentrate on ASP; access to this is online and can be requested via your Headteacher. Your Headteacher should be able to provide you with a copy of the school performance summary.

The ASP shows progress data (positive = greater than other schools; negative = less progress than other schools) for the whole cohort and broken down by pupil groups. For primary schools, data refers to progress and attainment in reading, writing and maths; attainment is based on the school results, local authority average and national average. The ASP is much shorter and easier to understand than the previous RaiseOnline, but Governors need to understand what the data means. Your Headteacher should be able to provide you with a copy of the school performance summary.

For secondary schools the data refers to progress 8 and attainment 8 (ie 8 subjects). Secondary Governors should also look at the number of pupils attaining grade 5 and above as DfE have said this is the expected standard going forward (which compares to a high C the previous grading structure).

For progress data a score of 0 would mean that the school data is in line with all schools nationally.

Paul emphasised that Governors should be asking to see the ASP data and asking questions around this – even more so if OfSTED inspection is imminent as questions will be asked related to the performance of the school and how well this is understood. Data published in the ASP will also be published on the GOVUK website under “compare school performance” but this will not provide the same level of detail.

IDSR is a lengthier document than ASP, so Governors should ask Headteachers for a summary of this, key messages coming from it and the areas to investigate (which may be positive or negative for the school) identified in the report.

Good practice would be to have ASP and IDSR as an annual agenda item for an appropriate committee, and to ascertain the main areas of improvement arising from these documents.

FFTAspire provide a data analysis tool which simplifies the presentation of the data included in ASP and IDSR.

The overview for KS2 attainment and progress shows average scaled score for reading and maths compared to national data. This was shown as “green” and “red” where data shows a positive or negative figure. The data is further analysed to show higher performing and lower performing areas broken down by various groups. This gives a good indication of areas of strength and weakness. The overview for KS4 looks at progress 8 and attainment 8 (grade 4 and above) and higher/weaker areas by subject.

The attainment and progress data are averaged over four years and compared to national. This is valuable for Governors as improvements may need to be even better to match national; a drop-in attainment may be a reflection of what has happened in all schools. The performance summary shows “green” and “red” areas; in order to be an outstanding school both progress and data have to be good (green). If there are areas of progress or attainment showing as “red”, Governors need to be challenging their Headteacher and asking what will be done to improve these results.

Progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils is explained in depth in the FFTAspire report. Attainment and progress is compared to not disadvantaged in the school or nationally; this helps to identify any gaps. Progress for disadvantaged pupils will be an area that OfSTED will look at carefully, and **Governors should look at the evidence and ask questions related to this. Governors should be asking their Headteacher questions related to monitoring progress and predicting attainment. FFTAspire provide benchmark estimates based on prior attainment.**

Governors need to be confident in predictions related to results – particularly year 6 and year 11. Where would the pupils be expected to be? What evidence is there to support predictions? Further training can be found at: Elearning.fft.org.uk

