



Congratulations to all North East schools and students who are receiving their results today. We have been hearing some fantastic stories for individual schools, with many reporting record results this year.

The regional picture

At this stage there is limited data available to show the full regional picture, however figures from the [Joint Qualifications Council](#) show the North East has reflected the national trend with a decline in overall improvement in results. Improvements at grade A in the region have fallen by 1.4 per cent and 2.1 per cent at grade C. Between 2002 and 2012 the North East had the second highest rate of overall improvement at grade A at 6.9 per cent and the highest rate of overall improvement at grade C at 15.7 per cent.

- [GCSE Results day](#) (Northern Echo)

NEW: [Were some North East GCSE pupils robbed of grades?](#) (Journal Live)

NEW: [Students urged to consider options](#) (News Guardian)

NEW: [Photos, reaction and stats from Hartlepool and East Durham schools](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

NEW: [Independent school celebrates bumper crop of GCSEs](#) (Northern Echo)

NEW: [GCSE grades dip but many North-East schools report record exam results](#) (Northern Echo)

NEW: [Record-breaking GCSE results put a smile on faces across the region](#) (Northern Echo)

By Area

Many thanks to all the schools and Councils that sent us their good news stories which we have listed below. To make sure your school is included in our future Updates, please send your news to editor@schoolsnortheast.com

Darlington

Council news:

"Schools in Darlington have maintained a high level of overall attainment with 64.9 per cent of young people achieving five or more GCSEs with A* to C grades including English and Maths. Results from all schools are above the national floor standard of 40 per cent with the Borough's overall figure up by 2.7 per cent. Haughton School saw the greatest increase with a 20.5 per cent improvement on last year."

School news:

- **St Aidan's Academy** - 44 per cent of pupils achieved five GCSE grades A* to C including maths and English. That is a nine per cent improvement on last year.
- **Haughton Academy** - achieved their highest ever results with 65 per cent of students achieving five or more A* - C grades, a 20 per cent increase from last year.
- **Carmel College** - every student achieved 5 or more A* - C grades and 90 per cent including English and maths. Students performance in English and maths was exceptional with 97 per cent A* to C in both English Language (49 per cent with A*/A grades) and English Literature GCSE's and 91 per cent in mathematics (39 per cent with A*/A grades)
- **Hurworth School** - celebrated record-breaking results this year, with 83 per cent of pupils achieving five A* to C grades including maths and English - an 8 per cent improvement on last year and beat the school's previous results record by two per cent.
- **Hummersknott Academy** - 71 per cent gained five A* to C grades, including English and Maths. Over a third of all grades were at A or A* with just under a third of all students achieving five or more A/A* grades.
- **Staindrop School** - Overall, 60 per cent of pupils gained five A-C grades including English and maths. However, 76 per cent celebrated an A-C grade in maths, including 28 per cent who got an A or A*.

Local News Links:

NEW: [Independent school celebrates bumper crop of GCSEs](#) (Northern Echo)

Durham

School news:

- **Durham Gilesgate Sports College** - 88.5 per cent of the students got a C or above in English, 70 per cent got a C or above in Maths and 68 per cent of students recieved 5 A* to C including both English and Maths.
- **Shotton Hall** - best year ever with 79 per cent of students 5+ A* - C GCSEs including English and Maths.
- **The Hermitage Academy** - 82 per cent per cent of candidates achieved at least five passes including English and maths at C and above.
- **Durham Johnston** - 71 per cent achieving 5 A*-C including English and Maths and 89 per cent 5 A*-C. 35 per cent of students have 3 or more A* grades and a 12 per cent (29 students) have more than 9 A* grades. 5 students have 10 A*s and 3 students have 11 A* grades each.
- **Teesdale School** – more than 70 per cent of pupils achieved five A-C grades, including maths and English, for the fifth year running.
- **Durham High School for Girls** - best ever GCSE results with 45 per cent of all grades awarded being at A*, 77 per cent at A*-A and 94 per cent at A*-B.
- **Whitworth Park School and Sixth Form College** - almost a quarter of pupils got three A* or As, around 75 per cent achieved the national benchmark in maths and more than 90 per cent achieved five or more A* to C grades.
- **Greenfield Community College** - 14 per cent increase in pupils gaining five A* to C grades with English and maths, to 69 per cent, 77 per cent gained a C or above in English, and 74 per cent in maths.
- **King James I Academy** - record GCSE examination results. One hundred per cent of students achieved 5 A*-C grades, with a significant improvement on headline measures from 2012 results.
- **St John's School and Sixth Form College** - second best set of results ever.
- **Barnard Castle School** - all time record 15 boys and girls secure all A*s and A grades.90 per cent of pupils achieved A*-C and 100 per cent recorded at least five GSCE passes.
- **Seaham School of Technology** - best set of GCSE results in its history. 71 per cent of students gaining five or more A* to C GCSE passes including English and mathematics, up 14 per cent on last year

Local news links:

[Durham Gilesgate Sports College achieves best GCSE results in its final year](#) (Northern Echo)

Gateshead

Council news:

"Gateshead Council have provisionally reported an overall increase in the number of pupils achieving 5 A* to Cs (including English and Maths) of 0.3 per cent meaning 60.9 per cent of pupils in Gateshead achieve the target."

School news:

- **Charles Thorp Comprehensive School** - 75 per cent of Year 13 grades were A*-B and best ever score for 5 good GCSEs at 85 per cent.
 - **Thomas Hepburn** - 4 per cent point increase on last years results.
-

Hartlepool

Council news:

"Young people in Hartlepool have achieved some of the best-ever GCSE results in the town's history. Early indications are that the number of Hartlepool students achieving five or more A*-C passes has improved even more, with over 79 per cent achieving five or more A*-C grades – an increase of more than a fifth since 2006.

58.2 per cent of pupils have achieved five or more A*-C passes (including English and maths) this year – up 9.4 per cent on last year. The percentage of students achieving A*-C grades in English rose by 8.2 per cent to 63.7 per cent and in maths there was an increase of 3.4 per cent to 71.6 per cent. Nationally, the results for both subjects have seen a slight decline in 2013."

School news:

- **Dyke House Sports and Technology College** - 38 per cent increase from 2012 with 75 per cent of students achieved 5 or more A* to C grades, including English and Maths.
- **English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College** - record GCSE results with 83 per cent of students achieving 5 A*-C grades, including English and Maths.

Local news links:

[GCSE reaction from all Hartlepool schools](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

Middlesbrough

School news:

- **Thornaby Academy** - best ever results - 99 per cent of year 11 students gained five or more A*-Cs. Including English and maths, the rate was 51 per cent - a 13 per cent increase on 2012.

- **Unity City Academy (UCA)** - highest ever number of A* and A grades at GCSE level with an increase of nine per cent on last year's results.
- **St Peter's Catholic College** - all pupils achieved at least six A* to C grades topping last year's figure of 100% gaining at least five A*-C grades. Of those, 84 per cent secured at least eight A* to Cs.
- **Acklam Grange School** - best ever GCSE results, with 60 per cent of Year 11 students achieving five or more A*-Cs grades including core subjects English and maths. This is an increase of 6% on 2012 and 13% over two years.

Local news links:

[All pupils at St Peter's Catholic College earn at least six A*-C grades](#) (Gazette Live)

[Unity City Academy to challenge low pass rates in English](#) (Gazette Live)

NEW: [41% of all exam entries at Yarm School result in A*](#) (Gazette Live)

NEW: [All pupils at St Peter's Catholic College earn at least six A*-C grades](#) (Gazette Live)

Newcastle

Council news...

"Schools including All Saints College, Gosforth Academy, Heaton Manor, Walbottle and Walker Technology College have reported an overall improvement of more than 3 per cent on last year's results, while Walker surpassed last year's results by a margin of 12 per cent.

Early indications are that Gosforth Academy has achieved the highest in the city this year with 78 per cent of its students achieving the 'gold standard' of five GCSEs grade A* to C (inc English and maths), followed closely by Sacred Heart, St Cuthbert's and St Mary's, all achieving more than 70 per cent."

School news:

- **Central Newcastle High School** - high numbers of top results with 60 per cent of girls have gained at least seven A* or A grades at GSCE and nearly 40 per cent of girls achieving all A*s and As in every subject.

Northumberland

School news:

- **Cramlington Learning Village** - a total of 12 students achieved more than 100 As and A*s between them.
- **James Calvert Spence College** - 100 per cent of students scored A* to C grades in biology, chemistry and physics.
- **King Edward VI School** - 73 per cent of pupils achieved five or more A* to C grades, including English and Maths. 12 per cent of students obtained nine or more A* or A grades.
- **Duchess's Community High School** - at GCSE level, more than 75 per cent of the grades were at A* to C while more than a quarter were A* and A. More than 30 students achieved seven or more A*/A grades and nine of these managed A*/A across the board.

Local news links:

[Success for GCSE students in Cramlington](#) (News Post Leader)

NEW: [Blyth students celebrate top GCSE results](#) (News Post Leader)

NEW: [Students in Ashington celebrate GCSE results success](#) (News Post Leader)

[GCSE results improve at Berwick Academy](#) (Berwick Advertiser)

[GCSE joy for Amble pupils](#) (Northumberland Gazette)

[Students join the A-list with some top exam grades](#) (Morpeth Herald)

[KEVI gives a strong GCSE showing](#) (Morpeth Herald)

[Another round of excellent results](#) (Northumberland Gazette)

North Tyneside

Council news...

"North Tyneside students are celebrating their best ever set of GCSE results today with 64 per cent of students achieve five or more GCSEs at grade A* - C including English and maths, up from 62 per cent last year."

School news...

- **Churchill Community College** - best ever results with 69% of students achieving five A*-C grades including English and Maths. 100% of students achieved five A*-C grades for the second year running.
- **Marden High School** - best ever results with 80% of students gaining five A* - C grades including English and Maths.
- **Longbenton Community College** - 64% of students achieved five or more A* - C grades with English and maths.
- **George Stephenson High School** - 60% of students secured five or more A*-C grades including English and Maths.

Local news links:

[Best ever GCSE results for borough students](#) (News Guardian)

[Headteacher praises pupils for GCSE results](#) (News Guardian)

Stockton

Council news...

"Schools and colleges across Stockton are celebrating as at least 57 per cent of students have achieved A* to C grades including English and maths; this is in-line with the best-ever results for Stockton. The highest results in Stockton Borough are at All Saints Academy who have each achieved 87 per cent A*-C including English and maths."

School news:

- **North Shore Academy** - last year, 22 per cent of students achieved five or more A* - C grades including English and maths and this year, that number has risen to 53 per cent.
- **Teesside High School** - 86 per cent of pupils achieved at least five A*-C grades - with 100 per cent of results in music being at A*-B grades.
- **Yarm School** - 41 per cent of all GCSE entries securing an A* grade and a record 90 per cent success rate for grade B and above.

Local news links:

[41 per cent of all exam entries at Yarm School result in A*](#) (Gazette Live)

South Tyneside

Council news:

"South Tyneside schools have reported another set of fantastic results with 91.9 per cent of students gaining five good A* - C passes or equivalent – slightly up on last year's figure of 91.1 per cent.

The number of students achieving five top grades including the core subjects of English and Maths has stayed the same at 58.2 per cent."

School news:

- **South Shields Community School** – 97 per cent five or more GCSEs at A* to C pass rate. Thirty-five per cent of pupils left with five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and maths. The school also celebrated its highest amount of A*s, with five pupils getting As across the board, and its best-ever maths results.
- **Boldon School** - percentage of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C was 45.5 - slightly up on last year.
- **Whitburn C of E Academy** - percentage of pupils leaving with five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C was 87.1. The percentage leaving with five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including maths and English, was 76.3 - up one per cent on last year.
- **Jarrow School** - a five per cent improvement on last year's overall pass rate, which has risen from 57 per cent to 62 per cent.
- **St Joseph's Catholic Academy** – record GCSE results with an overall pass rate for A* to C grades, including core subjects maths and English at 70 per cent.

Local news links:

[Exam results day for GCSE students](#) (Shields Gazette)

["Amazing" GCSE results for South Shields Community School](#) (Shields Gazette)

[Record GCSE results at St Joseph's Academy](#) (Shields Gazette)

[GCSE success for Whitburn youngsters](#) (Shields Gazette)

Sunderland

Council news:

"The 'Gold Standard' of five or more GCSEs including English and mathematics has been achieved by 60 per cent of the students this year. Last year's 'Gold Standard' was 63 per cent and in 2011 it was 55 per cent.

There has been an increase of 26 percentage points in the proportion of city students achieving the 'Gold Standard' since 2006."

School news:

- **St Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy** - Seventy per cent have achieved five or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics.
- **Washington School** - second successive year of good results for the school which came out of special measures a year ago. Fifty per cent got five or more A* to C grades with maths and English and 97 per cent got five or more A* to C grades.

Local news links:

[Good GCSE results expected for Sunderland](#) (Sunderland Echo)

Redcar and Cleveland

Council news:

"For the sixth year in a row results have continued to improve. The number of students in the Borough's secondary schools and academies that have achieved five or more GCSE, A* to C grades including Maths and English has risen again to 55.3 per cent.

The number of students achieving five or more GCSE, A* to C grades, has also continued to rise and this year stands at 84.0 per cent. Results show that 95.9 per cent of students achieved five or more GCSE, A* - G grades and 97.7 per cent of students achieved at least one Level 1 qualification by the end of secondary school."

School news:

- **Nunthorpe Academy** - 71 per cent rate of 5 A* - C GCSEs which include English and Maths.
- **Thornaby Academy** - 99 per cent gained five or more A*-Cs. Including English and maths, the rate was 51 per cent - a 13 per cent increase on 2012.
- **Laurence Jackson School** - 20.7 per cent of all grades were an A* or A – the best ever – with numerous students attaining 10 or more A* and As. The number achieving five A*-C grades remained above 80% for the second year running.

Local news links:

[99 per cent of Thornaby Academy pupils get five or more A*-C grades](#) (Gazette Live)

The National Picture

The national picture is summarised in this release by [Ofqual](#) with the headline statistics including:

- 1.3 percentage points drop in the proportion achieving A*-C, to 68.1 per cent.
- 0.5 percentage points drop in the proportion of GCSEs awarded A* is down this year by from 7.3 per cent to 6.8 per cent
- 4.2 per cent increase in the total number of GCSEs taken this year compared with 2012

- 39 per cent increase in the number of GCSEs taken by those aged 15 years and younger
- Girls continued to outperform boys at A*-C (72.3 per cent compared to 63.7 per cent) and A* (8.3 per cent compared to 5.3 per cent) across all subjects
- Science results experiencing the biggest fall in top results with 53.1 per cent of science entries awarded between an A* and a C, down from 60.7 per cent last year.
- Entries for the separate sciences continued to climb, with Biology increasing 5.0 per cent; Chemistry 4.4 per cent; and Physics 2.1 per cent
- Dramatic rise in the number of entries for GCSE languages - French, German, Spanish entries up 16.9 per cent compared with last year
- Significant rises in the number of entries for Geography (up 19.2 per cent) and History (up 16.7 per cent).

Comment

Commentators are attributing the national decline in results to the increase in early entries and the impact of tougher science syllabus and exams, highlighting that results for English and Maths actually went up slightly among students taking the exam at 16.

The Ebacc has been credited with the increase in take up of humanities and languages with **Education Minister Elizabeth Truss** stating:

“Today’s results show that the EBacc has not just arrested the decline in the study of academic subjects at GCSE – it is reversing it. It is very pleasing to see the increase in these important subjects – the ones that will keep pupils’ options open in the future. I am particularly delighted to see a languages revival – with an increase in the number of entries to French, German and Spanish GCSEs after years of decline”

Shadow Education Minister, Stephen Twigg criticised the increase in early entries and called on Education Secretary Michael Gove to take action on this issue:

“There has been a big increase in the number of young people taking two or more exams in the same subject. This is bad for standards, school budgets and learning. Michael Gove needs to get a grip on the multiple entry exam practice that is distorting standards.”

Employers organisation, the CBI, said they were ‘astonished’ by the ‘sheer scale of multiple and early entries and argues this practice as turned schools in ‘exam factories’;

“Employers don’t want exam robots – they want young people who are academically stretched, rounded and grounded. Turning schools into exam factories and cramming two years’ syllabus into one benefits no one. A GCSE should be an assurance of ability, not a consolation prize for surviving months of continual testing and retesting” said Katja Hall, Chief Policy Director at the CBI. She also questioned the relevance of high-stakes exams at 16 and criticised the perverse incentives created by the existing league table system.

Brian Lightman, General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders said that piecemeal changes to the exams over several years have meant it was “impossible to compare grades from year to year” and called on the Government to “not rush into further changes” a sentiment echoed in the press releases of the teaching unions.

From the Twittersphere...

Twitter has been buzzing with fantastic good news stories from our local schools. Follow us @SCHOOLSNE to stay up to date.

- **SCHOOLS NorthEast @SCHOOLSNE:** Loving all the 'best ever results' tweets from NE schools - keep them coming!
 - **SCHOOLS NorthEast @SCHOOLSNE:** Great comment from our Trustee [Bernard Trafford in @tes](#) "Ignore the GCSE fuss, bank the grades and move on"
-

Further reading

- [GCSE top grade numbers set to fall](#) (Independent)
- [Record fall in top grades as 'tough' exam reforms take effect](#) (Telegraph)
- [Top grades fall for second year](#) (BBC News)
- [Thousands of pupils get GCSE results](#) (BBC News)
- [Science grades fall after papers are made tougher](#) (Guardian)
- [Record fall 'due to efforts to counter grade inflation'](#)(Guardian)
- [Heads warn of GCSE result 'turbulence'](#) (Telegraph)
- [extra time' rule overhauled to stamp out abuse](#) (Telegraph)
- [Top grades expected to fall this year](#) (Telegraph)
- [Heads warn of GCSE 'grade turbulence'](#) (BBC News)
- [Schools prepare for worst over predicted fall in GCSE grades](#) (Guardian)
- [GCSE double entry - wise move or test overload?](#) (Guardian)