



Post-16 Attainment of Level 2 and Level 3 by the age of 19

**Education, Learning and Skills Statement
Kingston upon Hull
2023 – 2024**

Education, Learning and Skills Statement

Kingston upon Hull

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TECHNICAL REPORT: Post-16 Attainment of Level 2 and Level 3 by the age of 19

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides Hull City Council and its internal and external stakeholders with an overview of the proportion of young people in Hull attaining Level 2 and 3 qualifications at the age of 19. The document also contains specific data sets for young people who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and those with special educational needs (with and without statements and Education & Health Care Plans).

It is one of a suite of documents that collectively make up Hull City Council's "Education, Learning and Skills Statement". This is one of a series of independent technical reports which are released at various points over the course of the year when the associated data sets¹ are available to analyse, allowing timely dissemination of intelligence relevant to stakeholders with an interest in the post-16 agenda.

Attainment at Level 3 is seen as the minimum requirement for entry into Higher Education and has demonstrable returns in the labour market. A Department for Education (DFE) Research Report in 2014² confirmed that "men with 2 or more 'A' levels as their highest qualification have lifetime productivity returns of around £90,000 compared to those with 5-7 good GCSEs; for women the figure is around £76,000." This report shows how young people in Hull are performing against those criteria.

The data on attainment at Level 2 or higher qualifications with English and maths also relates to the labour market. The achievement of Level 2 in English and maths is seen as the minimum level for employability and progression to further study at higher levels. The afore-mentioned DFE Research Report² concluded that: "Individuals achieving five or more good GCSEs (including English and maths) as their highest qualification are estimated to have lifetime productivity gains worth around £100,000 on average, compared to those with below level 2 or no qualifications. This is equivalent to around 3 additional years of work (based on the average output of an individual with five or more GCSEs as their highest qualification). Restricting the comparison group to just those with no qualifications boosts the returns to five or more good GCSEs (including English and maths) to £283,000 for men and £232,000 for women." As with the Level 3 indicator, this report shows how young people in Hull are performing against the criteria.

2. HULL YOUNG PEOPLE ATTAINING LEVEL 2

2.1 Percentage of all young people with a Level 2 qualification at the age of 19

In 2023, 78.5% of 19 year olds in Hull achieved a Level 2 qualification compared to 80.6% regionally and 84.3% nationally (Figure 1). This is an increase of 2.5% on 2022 performance of 75.9%. Hull's performance in 2020 for this measure was considerably poorer than regional and national data sets but appears to have been related to that specific cohort of young people. Hull is still lagging behind regional and national performance by 2.2% and 5.8% respectively, although this gap has slightly closed since last year, and the data indicates that Hull is now performing marginally higher than statistical neighbours.

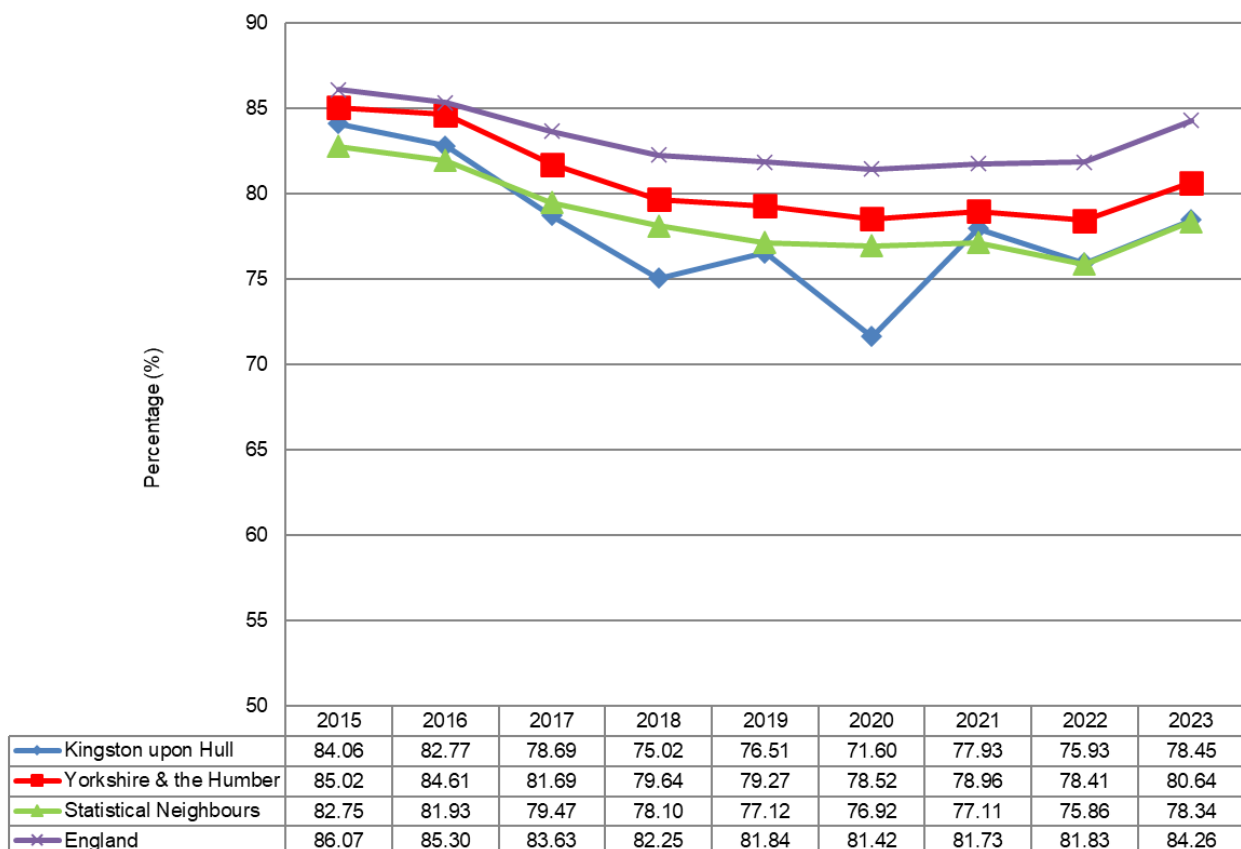


Figure 1: Percentage of all young people with a Level 2 qualification at the age of 19.

2.2 Percentage of those with a Level 2 qualification not eligible for a FSM at the age of 19

After an increase in 2021, followed by a small fall in 2022, there has been an increase in 2023 with 82% of 19 year olds (who were not eligible for a FSM in Hull) achieving a Level 2 qualification compared to 84.8% regionally and 87.5% nationally (Figure 2). This was an increase of 2.6% on 2022 performance of 79.3% and is the highest percentage for this indicator since 2017. However, Hull is still lagging behind regional, national and statistical neighbours performance by 2.8%, 5.6% and 2% respectively.

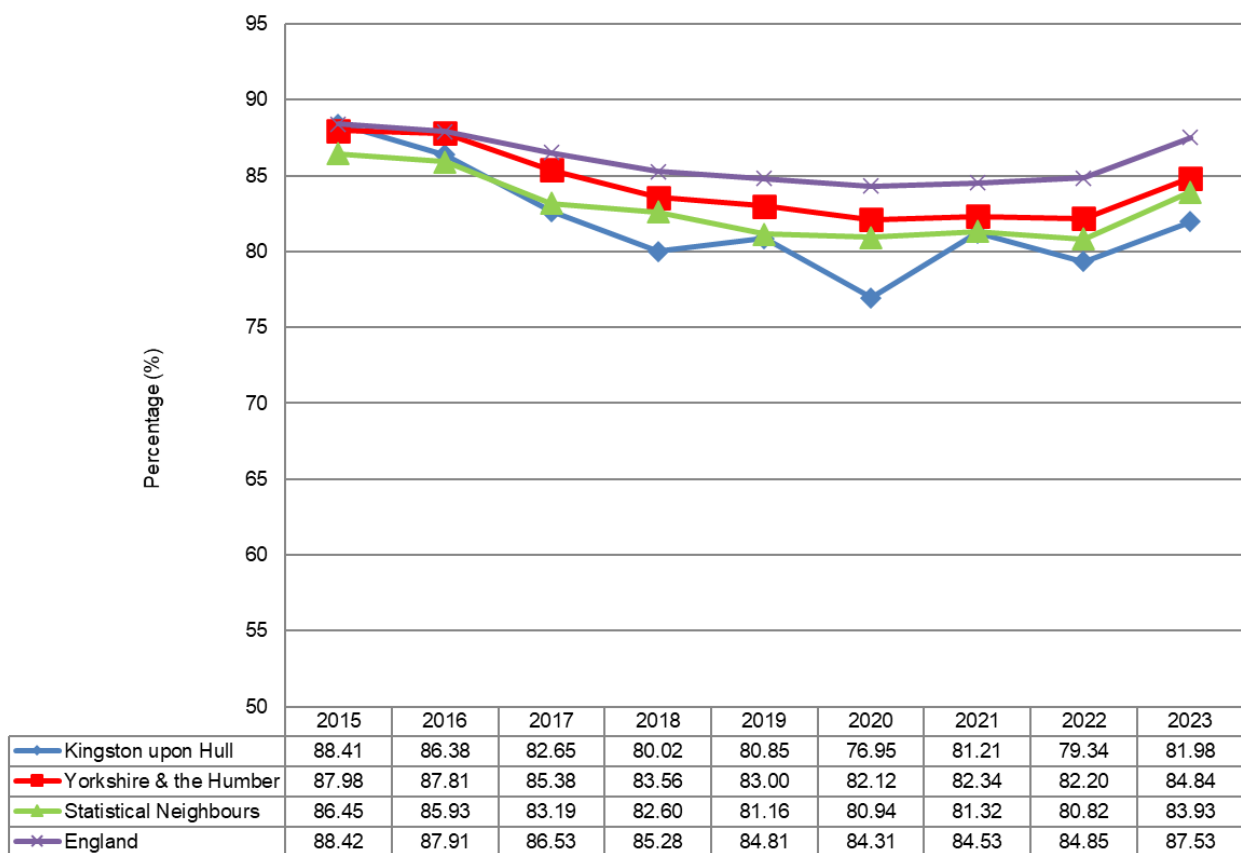


Figure 2: Percentage of those with a Level 2 qualification not eligible for a FSM at the age of 19.

2.3 Percentage of those with a Level 2 qualification eligible for a FSM at the age of 19

Following a big dip in performance in Hull in 2020, there was a big increase in 2021 followed by a slight drop in 2022 to 62.7%. There has been a significant increase in 2023 to 67.3% of 19 years olds eligible for a FSM achieving a Level 2 qualification, compared to 61.7% regionally, 66.9% nationally and 60.6% statistical neighbours (Figure 3). Hull is now out-performing regional, national and statistical neighbours by 5.6%, 0.4% and 6.8% respectively.

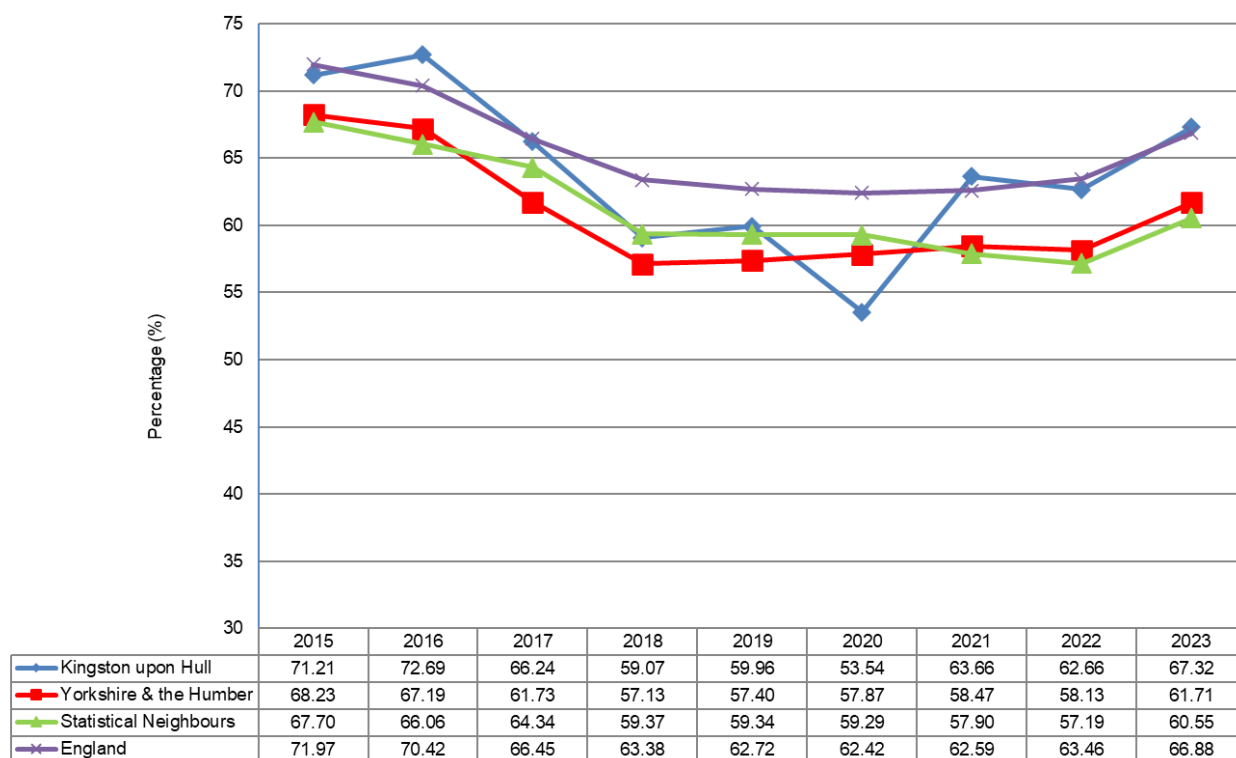


Figure 3: Percentage of those with a Level 2 qualification eligible for a FSM at the age of 19.

2.4 Percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 2 with a special educational need or disability (without statements or EHC plans)

Historically, 2020 saw a big dip in performance followed by a 18.6% improvement in 2021 then a small fall in 2022. This was followed by an increase of 2.5% in 2023 with 58.5% of 19 year olds in Hull with a special educational need or disability (without statements/EHCP's) achieving a Level 2 qualification. This is now slightly higher than the regional average and statistical neighbours (by 0.8% and 0.3% respectively) but still significantly lower than the national average by 7.5%.

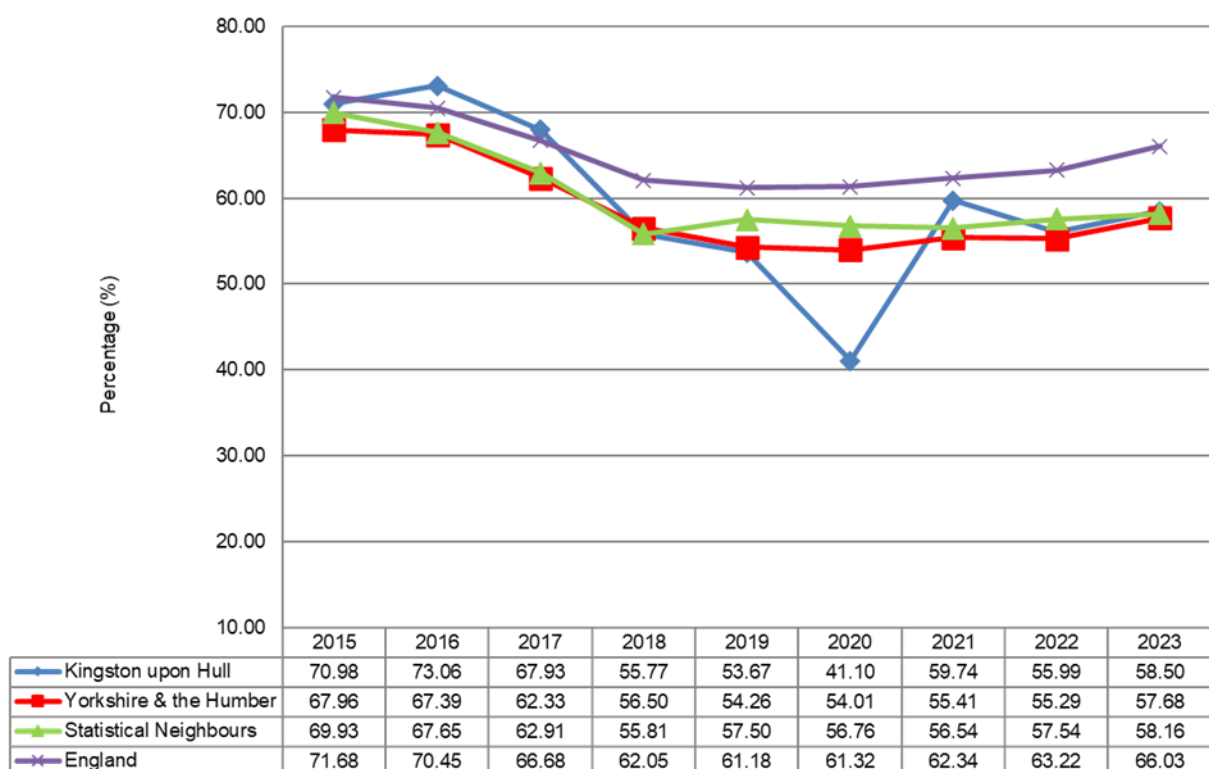


Figure 4: Percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 2, by special educational need (SEN) status in Year 11 (SEN without statements or EHC plans).

2.5 Percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 2 with a special educational need or disability (with statements or EHC plans)

In 2023, 25.8% of Hull's 19 year olds with a special educational need or disability (with statements or EHCP plan) achieved a Level 2 qualification compared to 26.1% regionally, 30% nationally and 25.5% statistical neighbours (Figure 5). This is a substantial increase on 2022 performance but does not yet match 2021 performance. However, the increase means that the gap has closed between Hull and the comparator data which now sees the Hull average as slightly higher than statistical neighbours, broadly in line with regional data but still lagging behind national data by 4.2%.

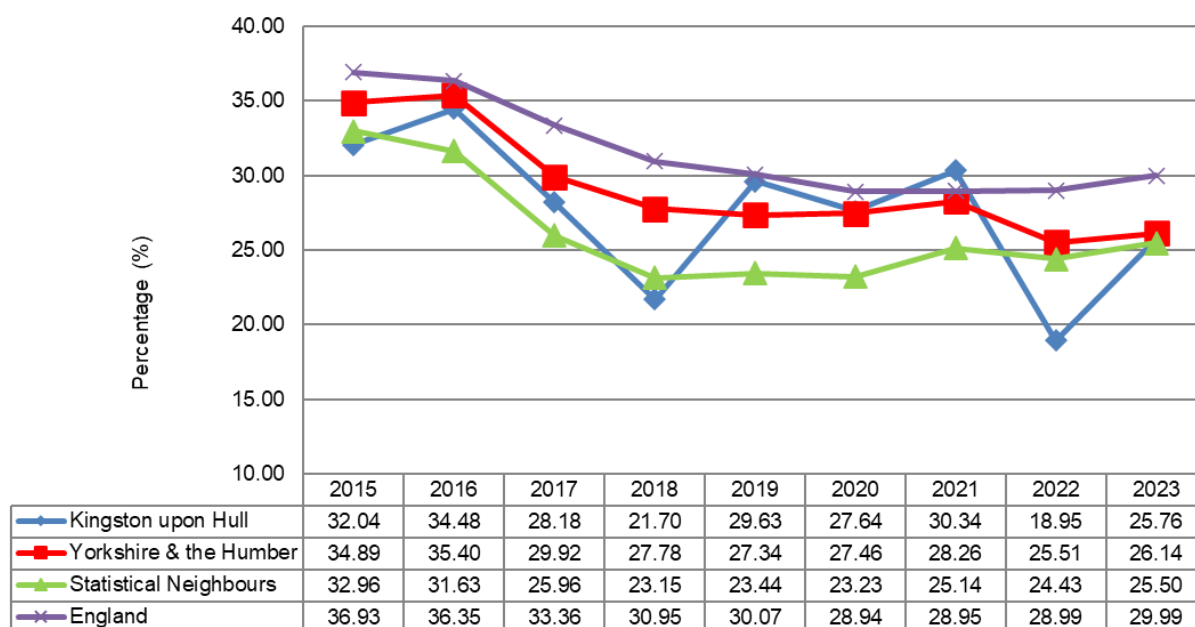


Figure 5: Percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 2, by special educational need (SEN) status in Year 11 (SEN with statements or EHC plans).

3. HULL YOUNG PEOPLE ATTAINING LEVEL 3

3.1 Percentage of all young people with a Level 3 qualification at the age of 19

In 2022, 44% of Hull’s 19 year olds achieved a Level 3 qualification compared to 52.5% regionally, 58.8% nationally and 47.6% statistical neighbours (Figure 6). This is a small decrease on 2022 performance (which was the highest level since 2018). Although Hull is still lagging well behind regional and national averages, the gap has closed between Hull and statistical neighbours (in 2022 the gap was 4.1% and this has now fallen to 3.6%).

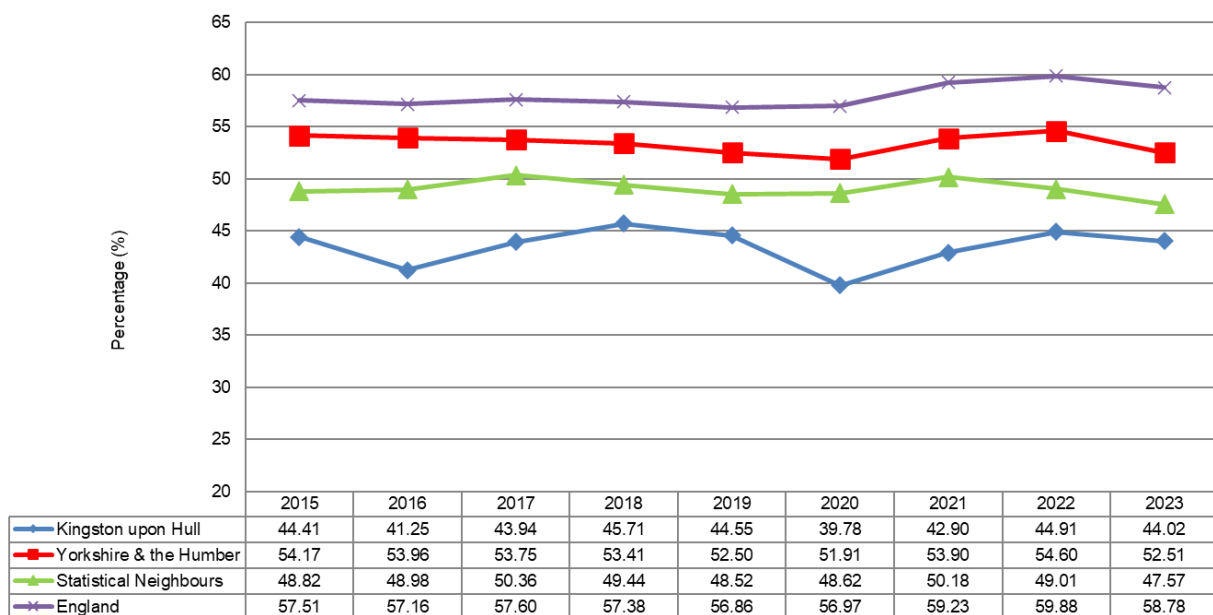


Figure 6: Percentage of all young people with a Level 3 qualification at the age of 19.

3.2 Percentage of those with a Level 3 qualification not eligible for a FSM at the age of 19

In 2023, 47.6% of Hull's 19 year olds who were not eligible for a FSM achieved a Level 3 qualification compared to 57.1% regionally, 62.8% nationally and 53.5% statistical neighbours (Figure 7). This is a 1% decrease since 2022 and the data continues to indicate a significant gap with Hull lagging well behind statistical neighbours, regional and national performance by 5.8%, 9.5% and 15.2% respectively.

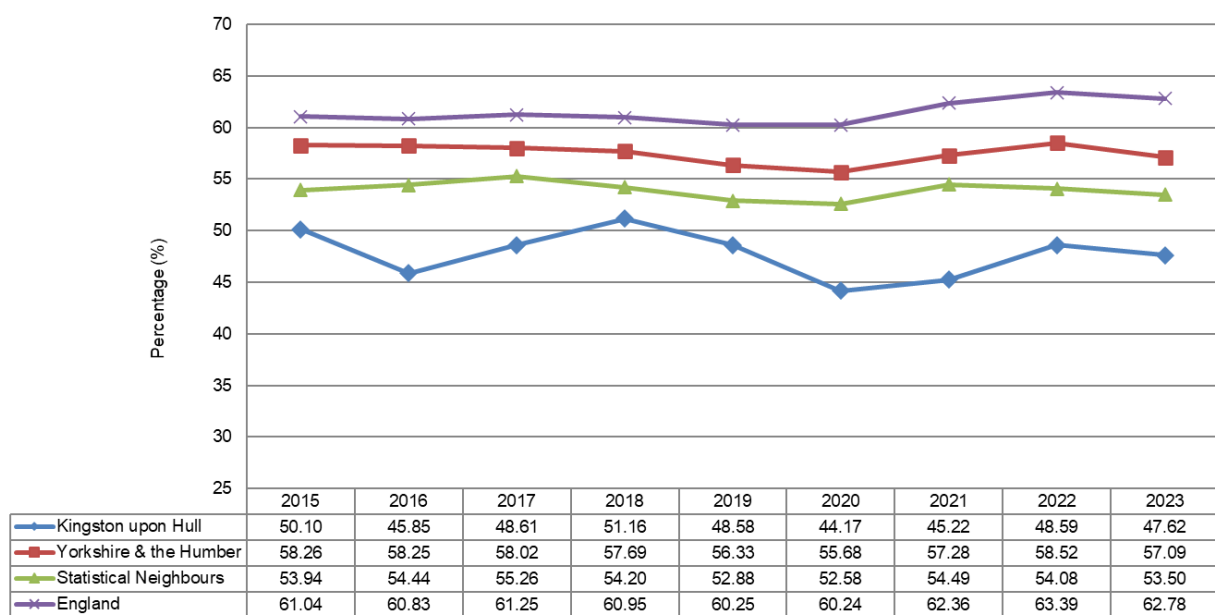


Figure 7: Percentage of those with a Level 3 qualification not eligible for a FSM at the age of 19.

3.3 Percentage of those with a Level 3 qualification eligible for FSM at the age of 19

Historically, 2020 saw a dip in performance in Hull followed by a substantial increase in 2021 then a small fall in 2022. In 2023, there has been an increase of 2.1% with 32.7% of 19 year olds eligible for a FSM achieving a Level 3 qualification, compared to 31.8% regionally, 37.6% nationally and 28.6% statistical neighbours (Figure 8). Hull continues to out-perform statistical neighbours and has increased the gap to 4.1%. Hull is also now higher than the regional average by 0.9% but continues to lag behind the national average by 4.9% (although this gap has closed since 2022 when the difference was 7.9%).

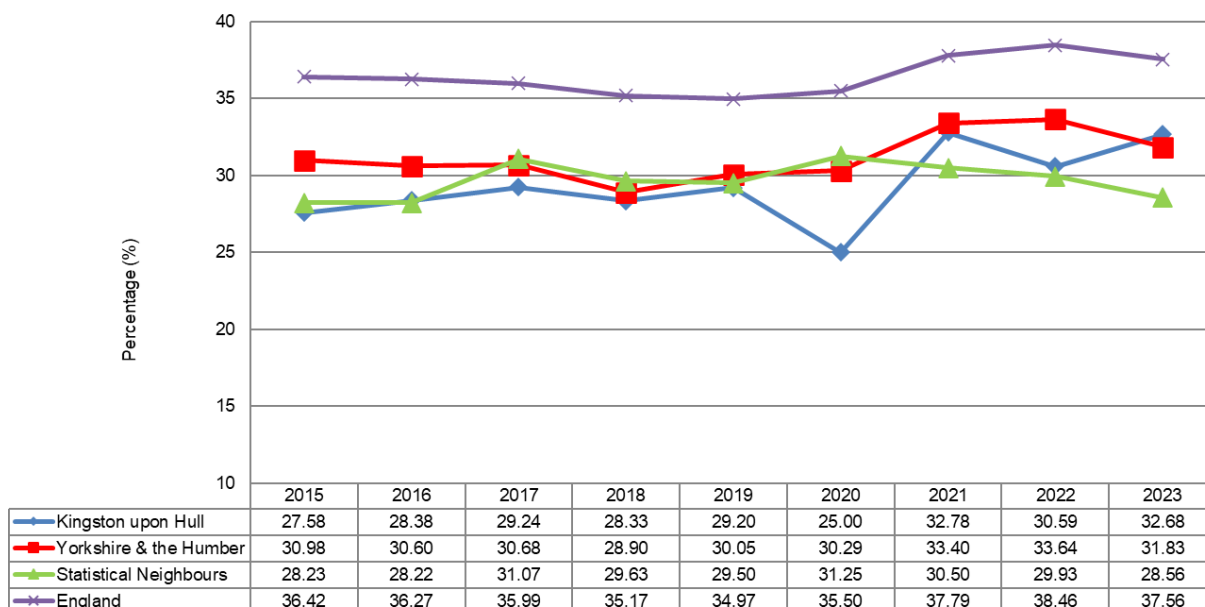


Figure 8: Percentage of those with a Level 3 qualification eligible for FSM at the age of 19.

3.4 Percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 3 with a special educational need or disability (without statements or EHC plans).

Historically, 2020 saw a big dip in performance in Hull with only 14.4 % of 19 year olds with a special educational need or disability (without statements or EHC plans) achieving a Level 3 qualification. This was followed by a significant increase in 2021 and then a small decrease in 2022. In 2023, there has been a 3% increase with 29.4% of 19 year olds in Hull with a special educational need or disability (without statements/EHCP's) achieving a Level 3 qualification. This is broadly in line with the regional average, 2.8% higher than statistical neighbours but 6.5% lower than the national average.

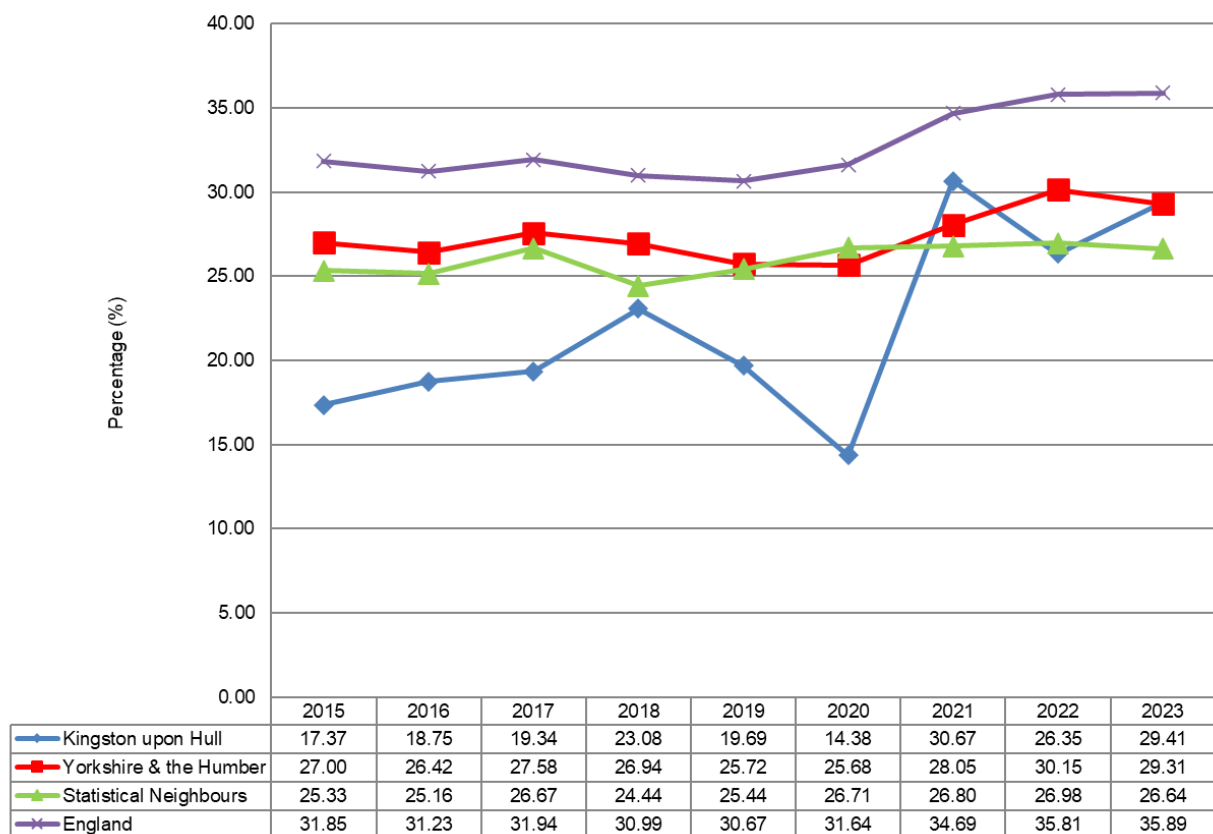


Figure 9: Percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 3, with a special educational need or disability (without statements or EHC plans)

3.5 Percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 3 with a special educational need or disability (with statements or EHC plans).

After a general upward trend between 2017 and 2020, there was a small decrease in 2021 followed by a further fall in 2022. There has been a slight increase in 2023 with 9.9% of Hull's 19 year olds with a special educational need or disability (with statements or EHC plans) achieving a Level 3 qualification compared to 12% regionally, 13.7% nationally and 12.1% statistical neighbours (Figure 10). The data shows that Hull continues to lag behind regional, national and statistical neighbours performance by 2.2%, 3.9% and 2.2% respectively although this gap has closed slightly since the previous year.

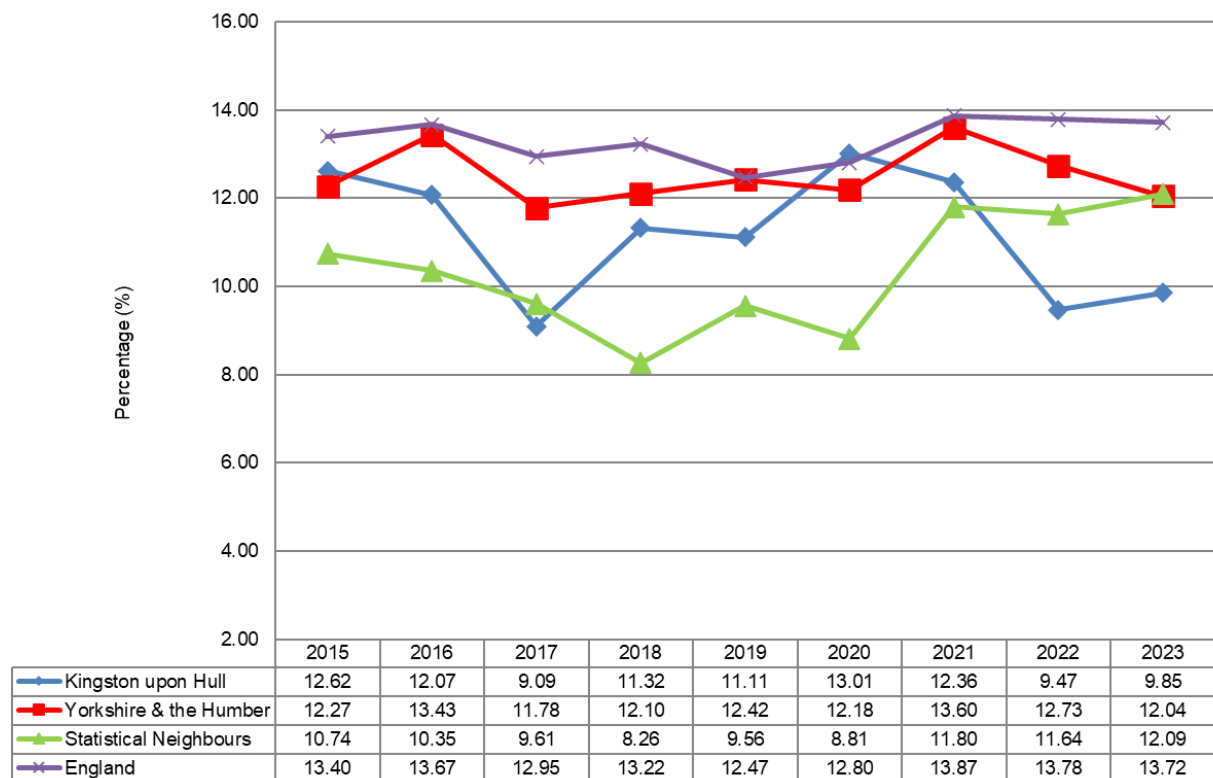


Figure 10: Percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 3, by special educational need (SEN) status in Year 11 (SEN with statements or EHC plans).

4. SUMMARY

4.1 Level 2:

In relation to young people in Hull achieving a level 2 by the age of 19, Hull is still lagging behind regional and national performance by 2.2% and 5.8% respectively but is now performing marginally higher than statistical neighbours. Young people in receipt of free school meals continue to perform well and Hull is now out-performing regional, national and statistical neighbours by 5.6%, 0.4% and 6.8% respectively. Young people not in receipt of free school meals continue to lag behind all comparators.

In 2020 young people in Hull achieving a level 2 by the age of 19 with a special educational need (without a statement or EHCP) were performing well below regional, statistical neighbour and national averages. This trend was significantly reversed in 2021 but then followed by a decrease in 2022 and a small increase in 2023 which now sees Hull slightly higher than the regional average and statistical neighbours (by 0.8% and 0.3% respectively) but still significantly lower than the national average by 7.5%.

From 2019 to 2021, the performance of Hull young people with special educational needs (with statements or EHC plans) was good relative to our comparators. Although, 2022 observed a substantial fall from 30.3% to 18.9%, this was followed by an increase of 6.8% in 2023 and Hull's performance is now slightly higher than statistical neighbours, broadly in line with regional data but still lagging behind national data by 4.2%.

4.2 Level 3:

In 2023, 44% of Hull's 19 year olds achieved a Level 3 qualification which is a very small decrease on 2022 performance. Although Hull is still lagging well behind regional and national averages, the gap has closed between Hull and statistical neighbours.

Young people in receipt of free school meals continue to out-perform statistical neighbours and Hull is now higher than the regional average but continues to lag behind the national average, however the gap is now closing. For those young people not in receipt of free school meals, the data continues to indicate a significant gap with Hull lagging well behind statistical neighbours, regional and national performance.

In 2020 young people in Hull achieving a level 3 by the age of 19 with a special educational need (without a statement or EHCP) were performing well below regional, statistical neighbour and national averages. In 2021, this trend was significantly reversed with Hull performing at its highest level since 2013 and better than both the regional and statistical neighbours comparators, although still lower than the England average. There was a slight fall in 2022, followed by a 3% increase in 2023 with 29.4% of 19 year olds in Hull with a special educational need or disability (without statements/EHCP's) achieving a Level 3 qualification. This is broadly in line with the regional average, 2.8% higher than statistical neighbours but 6.5% lower than the national average.

The performance of young people with special educational needs (with statements or EHC plans) had been relatively consistent (and broadly in line with regional, national and statistical neighbour averages) until 2022 when performance dipped to 9.5%. There has been a slight increase in 2023 but the data shows that Hull continues to lag behind regional, national and statistical neighbours performance respectively although the gap has closed slightly since the previous year.

5. IMPACT ON HULL YOUNG PEOPLE

For decades, Level 2 qualifications have provided people with essential workplace skills, as well as critical core skills such as literacy, numeracy and digital skills. They have in many cases formed a springboard to further education and progression, often into Higher Education. Level 2 qualifications have also provided many people with the foundations to specialise in crucial vocational sectors such as construction, transport, healthcare, hospitality and catering. In Hull, too many young people leave secondary education without a level 2 or equivalent (e.g. 5 (or more) GCSEs at grades 9-4/A*-C). Currently Hull ranks only 141st out of 151 Local Authorities (was 142nd in 2022) for the percentage of young people achieving a full level 2 qualification, including English and Maths by the age of 19.

This low starting point means that Hull ranks 137th (was 134th in 2022) for the number of young people achieving a full level 2 or equivalent by the age of 19. The challenge is then exacerbated when we look at the gap at level 3. Hull currently ranks 147th (was 148th in 2022) for the number of young people achieving a full level 3 or equivalent by the age of 19.

As a result of relatively low levels of educational attainment at 19, Hull ranks 129th for the number of 15 year old pupils from state funded schools entering higher education by the age of 19. However, this is a significant improvement over last year when Hull ranked 143rd

There may be many reasons why Hull's overall level 2 and 3 achievements by the age of 19 performance lags behind our comparators, these may include:

- Secondary school achievement rates
- Hull's relatively low skilled economy where the gap widens further at level 4 and above
- Low aspirations emerging from 2nd / 3rd generational benefit dependant families
- Multiple areas of deprivation
- High levels of young people who are NEET
- High percentage of children growing up within low-income families
- Relatively high levels of young people are choosing the 'employment without training' option when leaving secondary education (DFE data for April 2024 confirms that 3.8% of Year 12 and 13 Hull young people are in 'employment without training' compared to 2.2% in England and 2.6% in Yorkshire and Humber).
- Skills supply and demand mismatch
- Patchy careers education and information, advice and guidance
- Higher volumes of young people educated in Alternative Provision / Pupil Referral Units

For those young people with an EHCP, the level 2 picture seems to have improved with Hull ranking 96th at level 2 (compared to 135th in 2022) although the level 3 picture has remained relatively static with Hull ranking 111th at level 3 (compared to 112th in 2022).

The performance of those young people eligible for FSM continues to be a strength. For those young people eligible for a FSM achieving a level 2 by the age of 19, Hull ranks 60th (compared to 62nd in 2022) and 81st for those eligible for a FSM achieving a level 3 (compared to 104th in 2022). Again, there may be many reasons why Hull young people perform well in these areas however it is felt that Hull's long-term experience / knowledge of supporting vulnerable client groups is at the foundation of our success. In addition, Hull's young people may also benefit from economies of scale and additional funding directed to support these groups.

Internal HCC GCSE data suggests, (see table over the page – figure 11) the city's attainment 8 scores have fallen since the high point seen in 2021. With this lower starting point, we can expect to see a potential decrease in future performance of young people achieving a level 2 and level 3 @ 19. On a positive note, as our comparators are also declining at a faster rate than ourselves, it is expected we may see a closing of the gap.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change from previous year
Kingston upon Hull, City of	42.60	43.30	43.90	45.90	47.50	44.30	43.00	-1.30
Statistical Neighbours	42.91	42.22	41.70	45.21	46.08	43.47	40.78	-2.69
Yorkshire and The Humber	45.40	45.10	45.40	48.30	49.10	46.90	44.70	-2.20
England	44.60	44.50	44.70	48.10	48.90	47.00	44.70	-2.30

Figure 11: HCC internal attainment 8 data

Successive studies have shown the relationship between low levels of qualification and: the increased likelihood of being unemployed; increased duration of unemployment; reduced chances of recovering from unemployment; reduced access to certain kinds and levels of jobs; reduced levels of earnings; and a reduction in the likelihood of acquiring additional qualifications. To buck this trend, improvements in achievement needs to begin within Hull’s secondary schools, supported by a strong and progressive post 16 provision offer which meets local / regional needs. This will then set a solid foundation for increased progression into Higher Education, leading to improvements in Hull’s skills levels at level 4 and above.

In support of the above and working through the ‘Local Skills Improvement Plan’ (LSIP), FE Providers will need to work even closer together with local employers. This work will see local provision better matched to local labour market needs. Better alignment of supply and demand has the potential to significantly drive-up skills levels locally. Devolution will also provide better opportunities to commission provision which meets local need.

6. QUALIFICATION LEVEL GUIDE

Below you will see a guide which highlights the range of qualification levels available in the UK and the respective qualifications which are currently available at each level. In relation to this report, the below highlights where Level 2 and Level 3 sits within the hierarchy of levels and qualifications. For the purposes of this report a Level 2 is equivalent to 5 (or more) GCSEs at grades 9-4/A*-C or equivalent (eg. Level 2 vocational qualification) and a Level 3 is equal to 2 (or more) A levels or equivalent (eg. Level 3 vocational qualification).

Level	Qualification / educational route				
8	Doctorate (PhD)			NVQ 8	
7	Masters degree (MA)			Degree apprenticeship / NVQ 5, 6, 7	
6	Bachelors degree BA or BSc				
5	Foundation degree FdA or FdSc	Higher National Diploma (HND)		Higher apprenticeship / NVQ 4	
4	Higher National Certificate (HNC)				
3	A levels Grades A-E	International Baccalaureate	T Levels	BTEC diploma BTEC certificate	Advanced apprenticeship / NVQ 3
2	GCSE Grades 4-9 (C, B, A or A*)			BTEC first diploma	Intermediate apprenticeship / NVQ 2
1	GCSE Grades 1-3 (D,E,F or G)			Foundation diploma / entry level qualifications	Traineeship / NVQ 1
	Academic route		Vocational route	Applied / work route	

Figure 12: Qualification level guide.

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