



**Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP**  
Secretary of State

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Paul Whiteman, General Secretary, NAHT  
Geoff Barton, General Secretary, ASCL

21<sup>st</sup> June 2022

Dear Paul and Geoff,

You have raised concerns about the publication of school and college level performance measures for 2021/22 at key stage 4 and 16-18.

I appreciate how hard your members are working, often in challenging circumstances, to support young people to take GCSE, AS and A level exams this year and to achieve grades that will help them to progress. With GCSE, AS and A level exams returning, it is important we move back to publicly available data about exam results in a school or college, for transparency and as a starting point to support parents and students when choosing schools or post-16 institutions. I know you understand and support the need for transparency about our education system.

At the same time, I recognise the significant pressures on schools and colleges due to the pandemic and I am clear that the circumstances around this year's data are very different. While performance data for 2021/22 will provide transparent and consistent information about what results were achieved in a school or college in 2021/22, it will be more difficult than in a normal year to use this data to start explaining why that has happened, or provide the broader context around a school or college's outcomes, given the uneven impact of the pandemic on students and schools/colleges.

### **Using the 2021/22 school and college data**

We have said in performance measures guidance that we will strongly discourage users of the data from drawing simplistic conclusions based on direct comparisons with performance data from earlier years, and that we will also advise caution when comparing a school or college's performance with national or local authority averages, or with other schools and colleges.

For example, if performance data shows that 35% of pupils in a school achieve a grade 5 or above in English and maths, parents and other users will want to consider – cautiously, and as a first step - how this figure relates to local and national averages for 2021/22, but without drawing firm conclusions solely on that basis. The school's figure then provides a starting point for discussion with the school. Talking to the school is a vital step to understand the broader context around this figure, and how it might have been impacted by the school and its pupils' experience of the pandemic.

## **Changes to the Compare School and College Performance (CSCP) website**

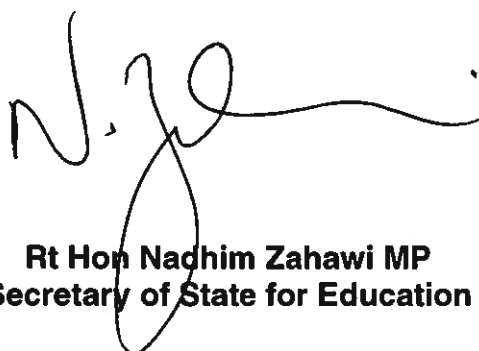
To support appropriate use of the 2021/22 data, we plan to make changes to the performance measures website and the way we present school and college level data for 2021/22. We will be carrying out further work and testing over the coming months on these changes for this year, which will include:

- removing the “all schools and colleges” and local authority comparison tables (we will continue to show local authority and national averages for each performance measure on the individual school or college pages);
- changing the name of the website to reduce the emphasis on comparison between institutions;
- stopping displaying pre-pandemic data (2018/19 and earlier) on the school/college pages, including for Key Stage 2, and move these data to the usual archive with a link on the website; and
- changing the way we present progress measures, by removing the coloured “bandings” to discourage simplistic conclusions being drawn about a school or college’s overall performance.

I am confident that these changes for 2022, alongside the guidance provided with the data, will mean we have transparent and consistently presented information about what is happening in our schools and colleges. They will also support parents and other users to understand that results from 2021/22 should be treated cautiously and as a starting point for discussion with a school or college to understand the broader context around the data.

My officials will continue to work with you as we implement these changes, so that we present the school and college level data for 2021/22 clearly, and support parents and other users to interpret it appropriately.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Zahawi', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

**Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP**  
**Secretary of State for Education**