



What does this mean for upcoming education reforms?

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40% of pupils are below target after first year

Pippa Crerar City Hall Editor

NEARLY 40 per cent of children in London are failing to meet expected standards by the end of their first year at school, figures show.

In some London boroughs almost half of all five-year-olds are below the target set out in the Government's early years framework.

It means nearly 40,000 young children across the capital in 2014 were under-performing in areas including literacy, communication and maths.

The stark figures set out just how dramatically children's future life chances are already determined before they even start school.

According to the House of Commons data, there are 14 London boroughs in which at least two in five children are below standard.

In Hillingdon, nearly half of children are not making the grade. The borough, on 47 per cent, was followed by Tower Hamlets on 45 per cent, and Camden, Lambeth, Croydon and Kensington & Chelsea all on 44 per cent.

Across the capital, 32 per cent of five-year-olds (33,140) failed to meet literacy targets, 26 per cent (26,990) did not make the grade on maths and 22

per cent (23,420) were below target on communication and language.

A further 18 per cent, or 18,890 young children, failed on personal, social and emotional development (PSE).

Islington and Lambeth were the worst-performing boroughs for literacy, with 39 per cent of children not up to the expected standard.

The gender gap was already evident with 38 per cent of boys behind in literacy, compared with 25 per cent of girls. Boys lagged behind girls in all measures. The largest gap was in PSE – 24 per cent of boys were below target compared with 12 per cent of girls.

Labour mayoral candidate Tessa Jowell, who released the House of Commons data, said it demonstrated the pressing need for the Sure Start early years programme to be restored.

Dame Tessa said: "We should all be shocked and galvanised to action by these figures which tell a story of nearly 40 per cent of London children beginning on a path that will take them to a lifetime of inequality."

"What is even more shocking is that this waste of potential can be prevented by support for very young families and children in the first 1,000 days of their life."

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This news article was reported in the Thursday 11th June 2015 edition of the Evening Standard.

This is the context in which new education reforms are advancing, surely a bad omen for the mass of children who, if you choose to look, will be failed by the education system that we put them in.

When national systems fail the responsibility moves to communities and families to work cooperatively. Is your family still on the path that will take our descendants deeper into "a lifetime of inequality"?

Check out our review of the **GCSE Maths 2015 reforms**, this is a flagship subject reform that parents and teachers need to think through carefully and respond to properly.

We are forming creative learner co-operatives to open up pathways to the highest quality of learning experience.

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