

Ken
Catholic
Schools'
Partnership



'Academies in Christ'
Part of the Archdiocese of Southwark

English Leader Network

Adi Ahmet

23rd September 2026

Welcome and Opening prayer



We thank you for gathering us here today as educators, united in our commitment to help every child flourish.

As we reflect on the teaching of writing standards across our schools, grant us wisdom, clarity, and creativity. Help us to see the potential You have placed within each pupil and to recognise our responsibility to nurture their gifts with patience, skill, and encouragement.

Bless our decisions, our learning, and our planning. May we listen to one another with respect, share generously from our experience, and remain open to new ideas that will enrich the lives of the children in our care. Guide us in our work so that our teaching inspires confidence, develops understanding, and enables every child to find their voice. May our efforts always be rooted in a desire to serve others and to seek excellence for the glory of God.

We entrust this day to You and ask that Your Holy Spirit be with us, leading us in all we do.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

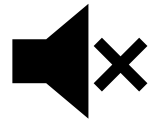
Amen

Online Expectations

Throughout the session please;



Keep your camera on



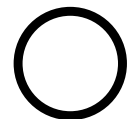
Remain on mute whilst presenter is speaking



Be present, proactive and kind



Questions in the chat box



Anonymise sensitive information.

Agenda

- Kent Data Headlines
- KS2 Moderation themes
- National Updates – Ofsted & DfE
- Additional info

Data Headlines



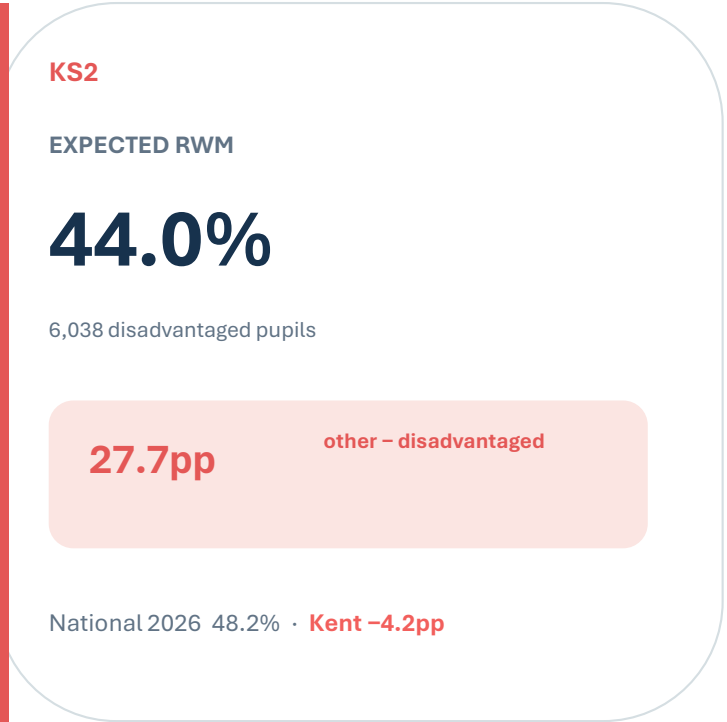
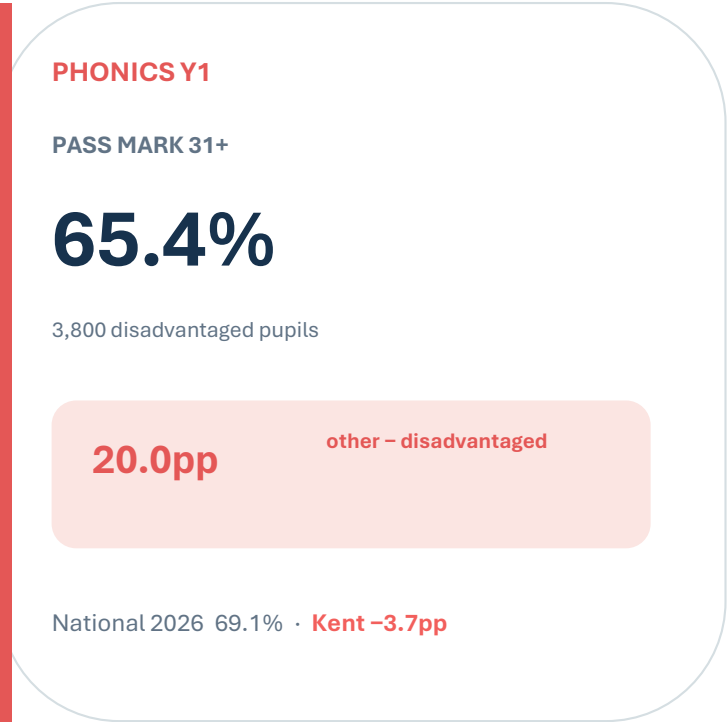
Kent is above for EYFS, is in line at KS2 but is below for phonics

All-pupil headline attainment using 2026 national comparators. Differences show Kent minus national in percentage points.



Kent’s disadvantaged rates trail national by 0.5–4.2 points

Same-year comparison with 2026 national disadvantaged rates. The within-Kent gap remains other pupils minus disadvantaged pupils.



Kent leads neighbours in EYFS and KS2; phonics remains weaker

2024–2026 comparator: EYFS, phonics and KS2 for all pupils and disadvantaged cohorts.

THE 10 COMPARATOR AUTHORITIES

10 statistical neighbours

East Sussex	Staffordshire
Essex	Swindon
Lancashire	Warwickshire
Northamptonshire	West Sussex
Nottinghamshire	Worcestershire

1 · WHOLE COHORT

2026 vs neighbours:
EYFS +1.8pp;
phonics -0.7pp;
KS2 +2.1pp

3 · WHOLE COHORT TREND

2024→26 gains:
EYFS +5.5pp vs +3.4pp;
phonics +2.8pp vs +2.5pp;
KS2 +2.3pp vs +1.5pp.

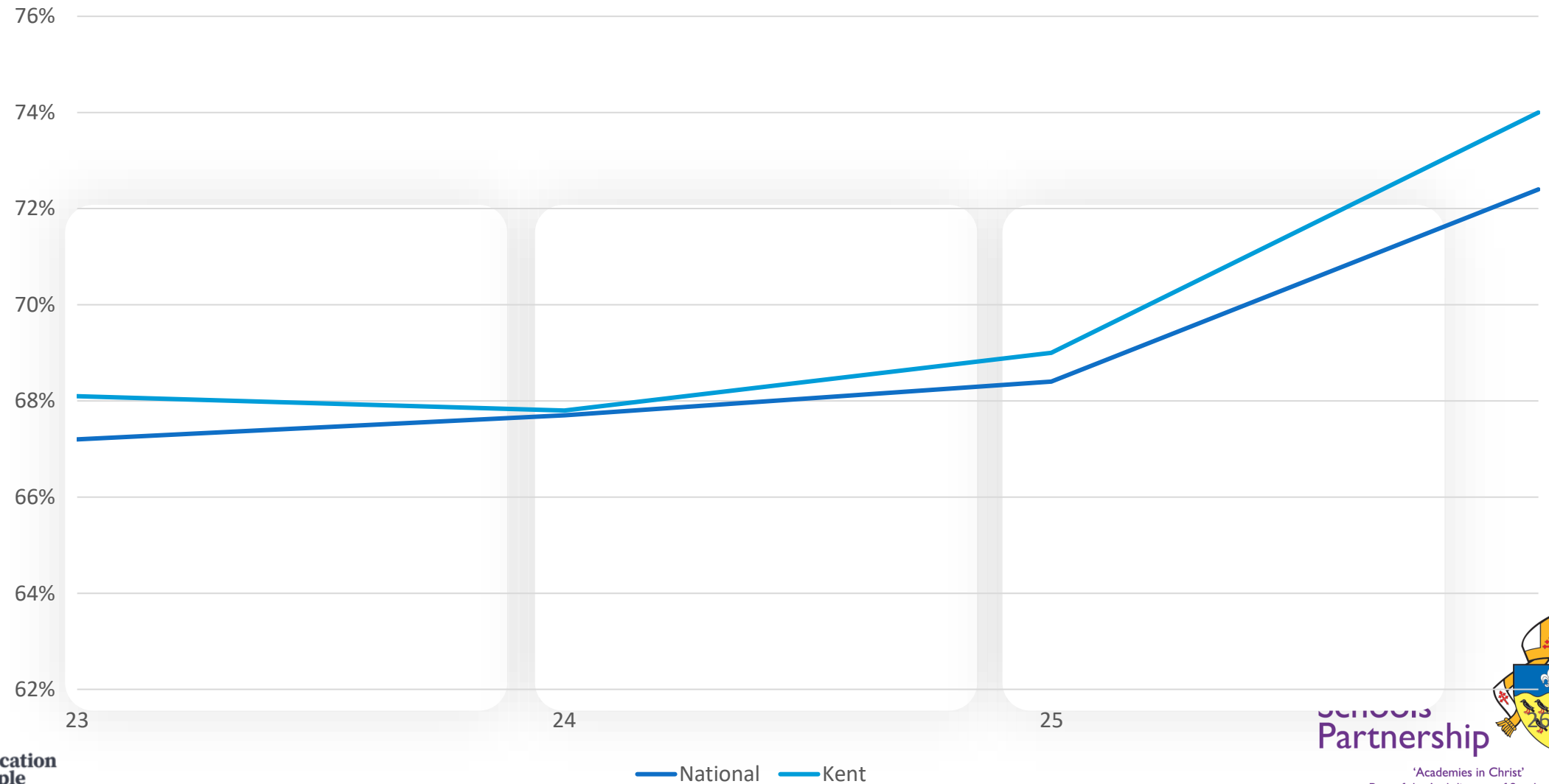
2 · DISADVANTAGE

Gaps are narrower than neighbours:
EYFS: +3.7pp
Phonics: +0.0pp
KS2: +0.9pp

4 · DISADVANTAGE TREND

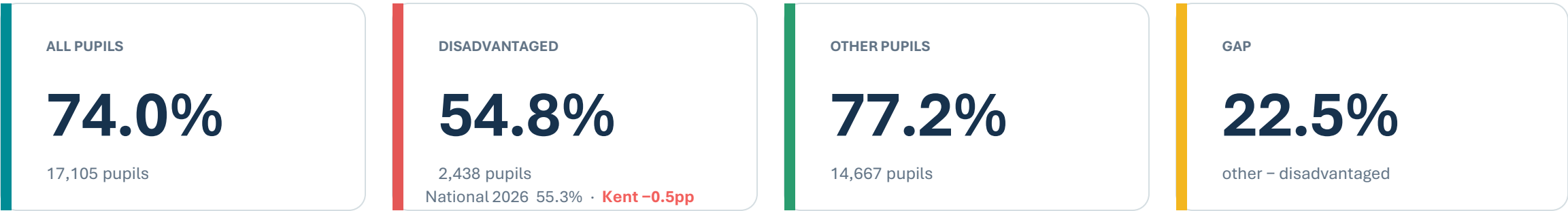
2024→26 gains:
EYFS +3.5pp vs +1.6pp;
phonics +5.9pp vs +1.6pp;
KS2 +5.3pp vs +4.6pp.

GLD attainment



Disadvantaged GLD trails other pupils by 22.5 points

The gap affects 2,438 disadvantaged children and is larger than the distance between the strongest and weakest districts.



1 in 2

disadvantaged children reach GLD

2026 provisional

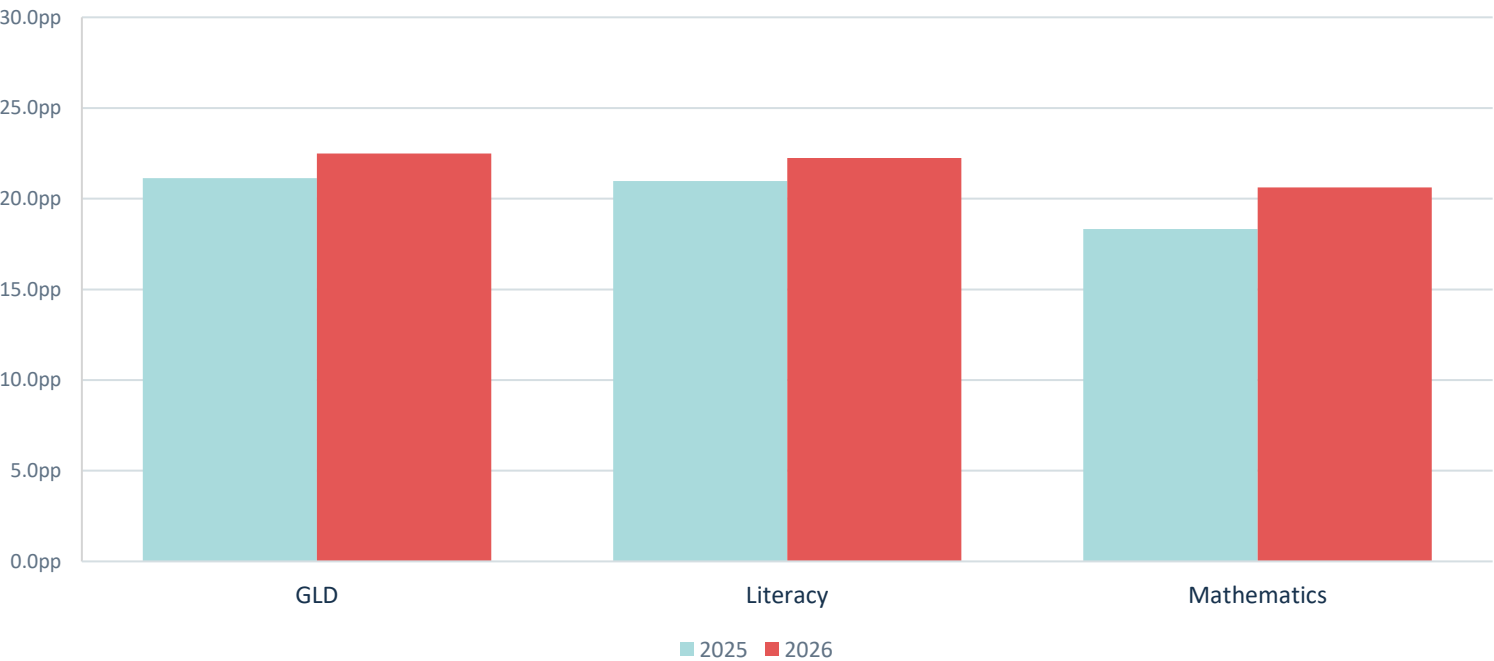
Why this matters

The gap is not confined to one area of learning: literacy and mathematics show especially large differences, and both widened against the 2025 data.



The EYFS disadvantaged gap widened in 2026

Percentage-point gap: non-disadvantaged minus disadvantaged.



CHANGE IN GAP

GLD +1.4pp

Literacy +1.3pp

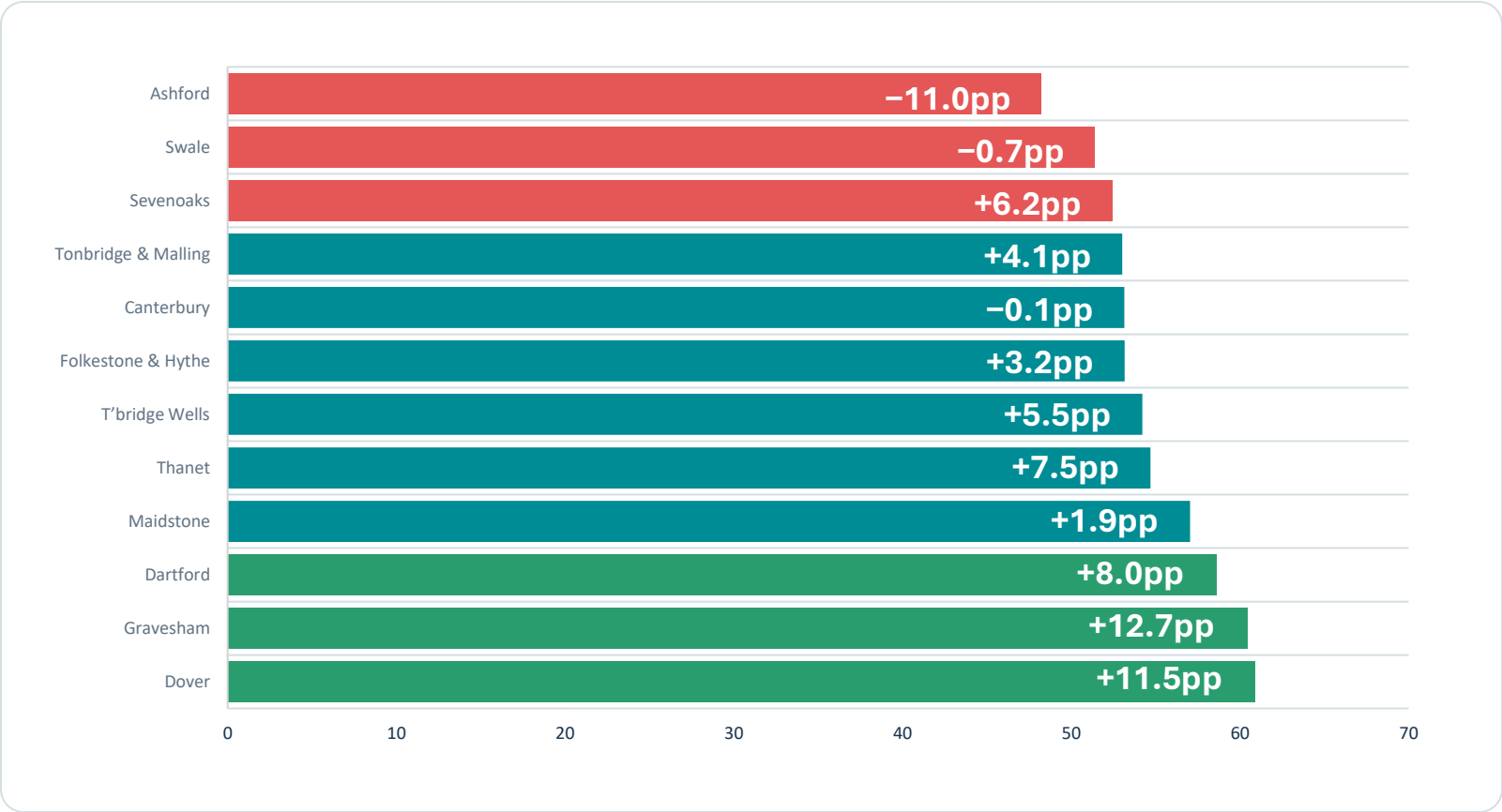
Mathematics +2.3pp

2025 published: overall +0.6pp vs national; FSM gap 1.6pp wider.



District EYFS disadvantaged 2026 picture

Gravesham and Dover rose by more than 11 points; Ashford fell from first to twelfth.



BIGGEST GAINS SINCE 2025

1. Gravesham

+12.7pp · 47.8% → 60.4%

2. Dover

+11.5pp · 49.4% → 60.9%

3. Dartford

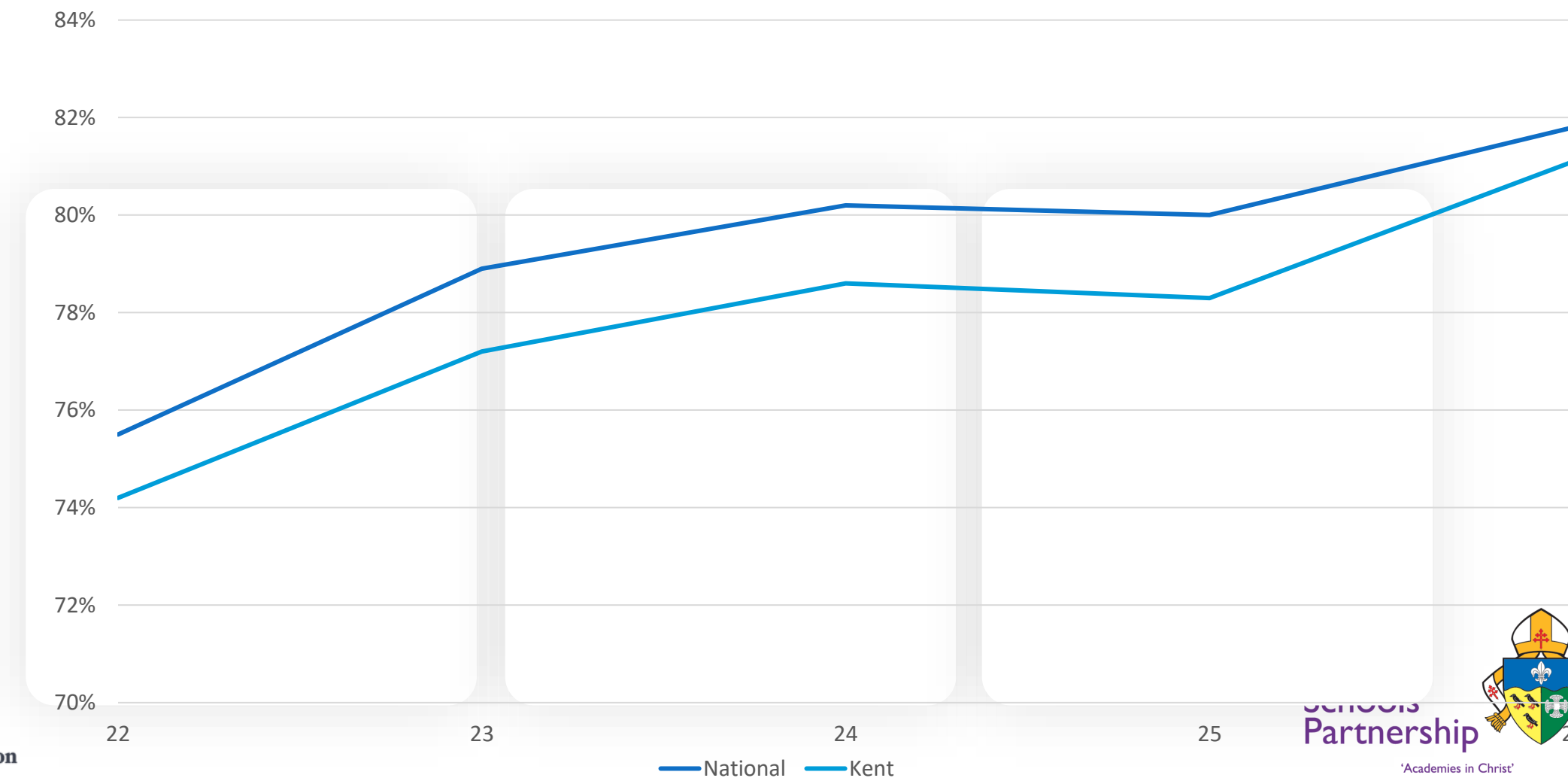
+8.0pp · 50.6% → 58.6%

Priority contrast

Ashford: -11.0pp · 59.2% → 48.2%

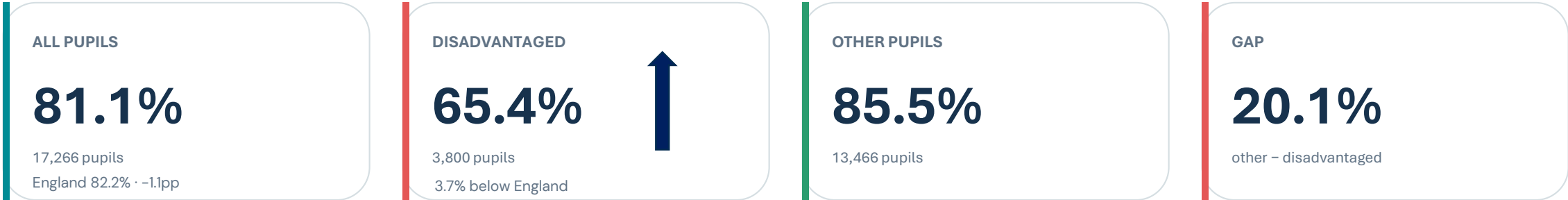


Phonics attainment



The disadvantaged Year 1 phonics gap is 20.0 points

Current 2026 outcomes use a pass mark of 31.

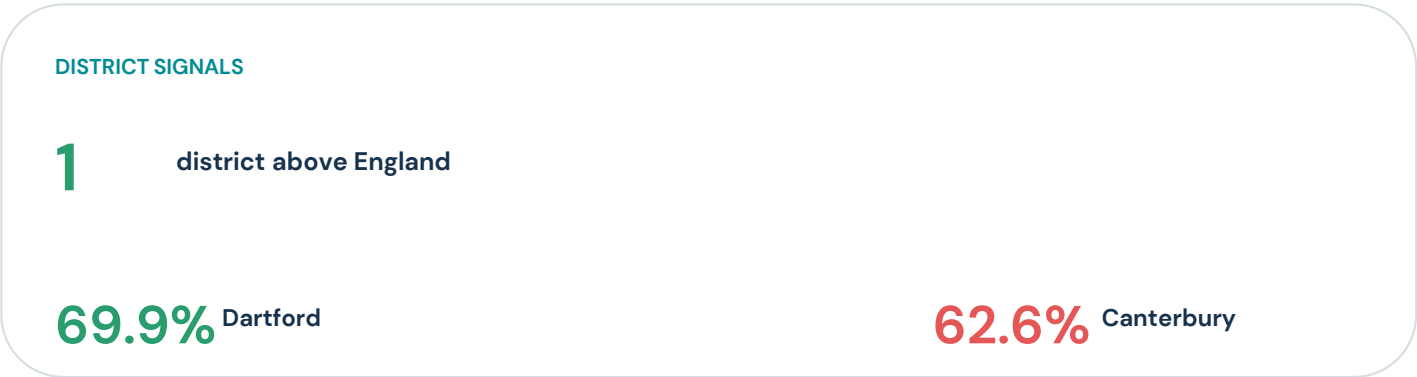


CURRENT SCALE

2 in 3

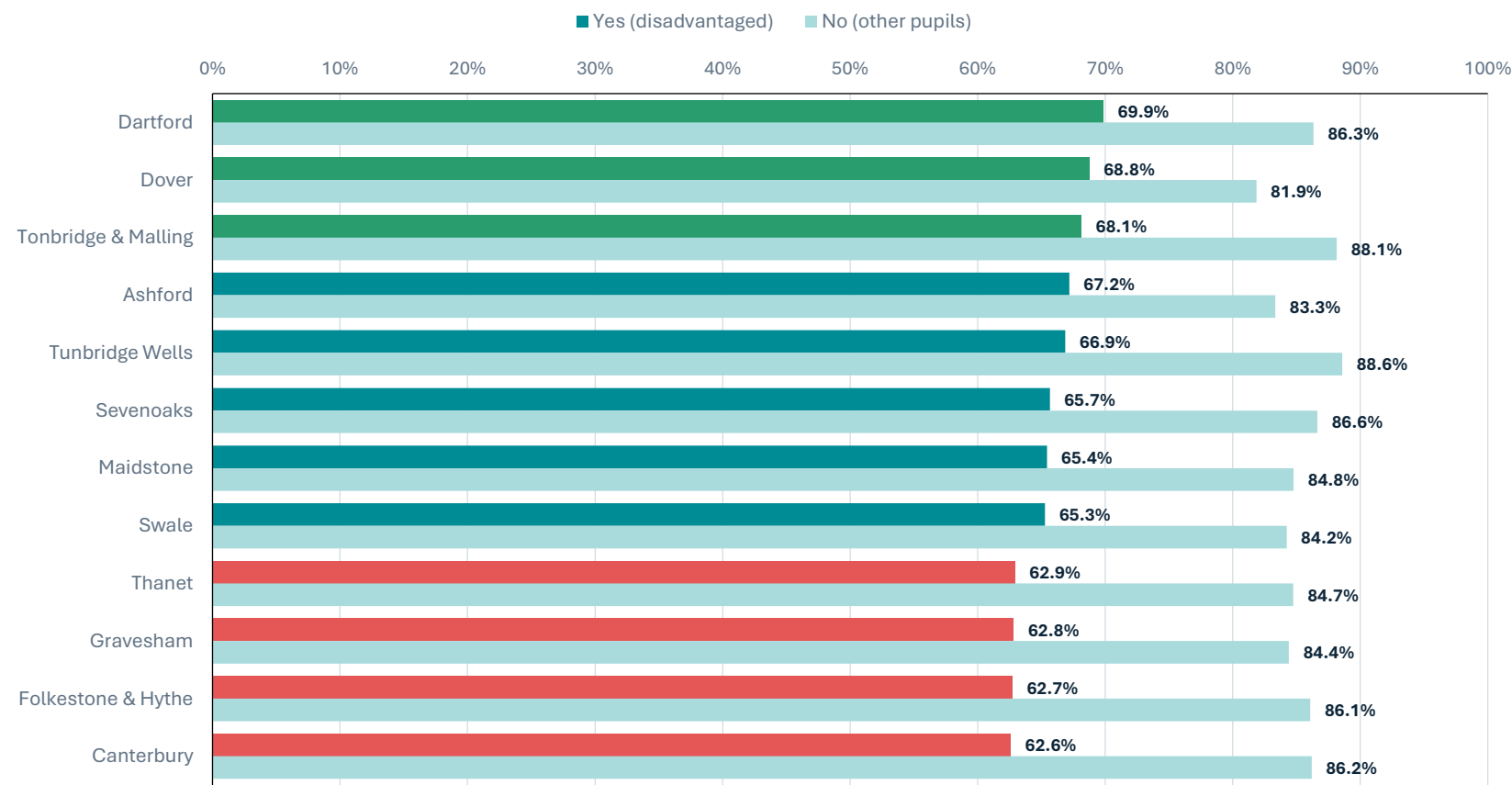
disadvantaged pupils reach the 2026 pass mark

65.4% · provisional



Dartford, Dover and Tonbridge & Malling lead disadvantaged phonics

FSM6 outcomes span 7.3 points; No–Yes gaps range from 13.1 to 23.6 points.



STRONGEST DISTRICTS

1. Dartford

Disadv. 69.9% · Other 86.3%
Gap 16.4%

2. Dover

Disadv. 68.8% · Other 81.9%
Gap 13.1%

3. Tonbridge & Malling

Disadv. 68.1% · Other 88.1%
Gap 20.0%

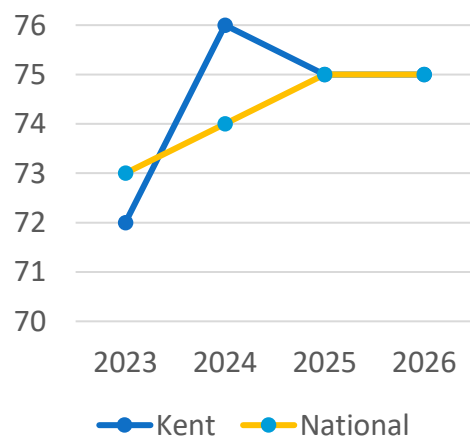
PRIORITY CONTRAST

Canterbury · Disadv. 62.6%
Other 86.2% · gap 23.6%

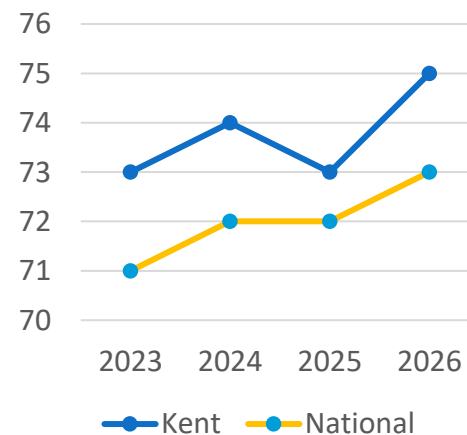


KS2 Subjects over time

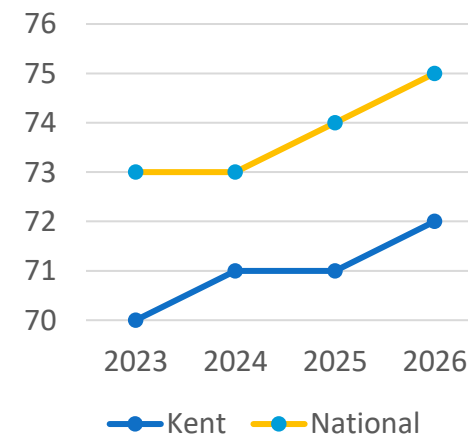
Reading



Writing



Maths



Disadvantaged KS2 trails other pupils by 27.7 points

The gap affects 6,038 disadvantaged children and is larger than the distance between the strongest and weakest districts.

ALL PUPILS

62.9%

19,030 pupils

DISADVANTAGED

44.0%

6,038 pupils
National 2026 48.2% · **Kent -4.2pp**

OTHER PUPILS

71.7%

12,992 pupils

GAP

27.7%

other – disadvantaged

2 in 5

disadvantaged children reach
Combined expectation

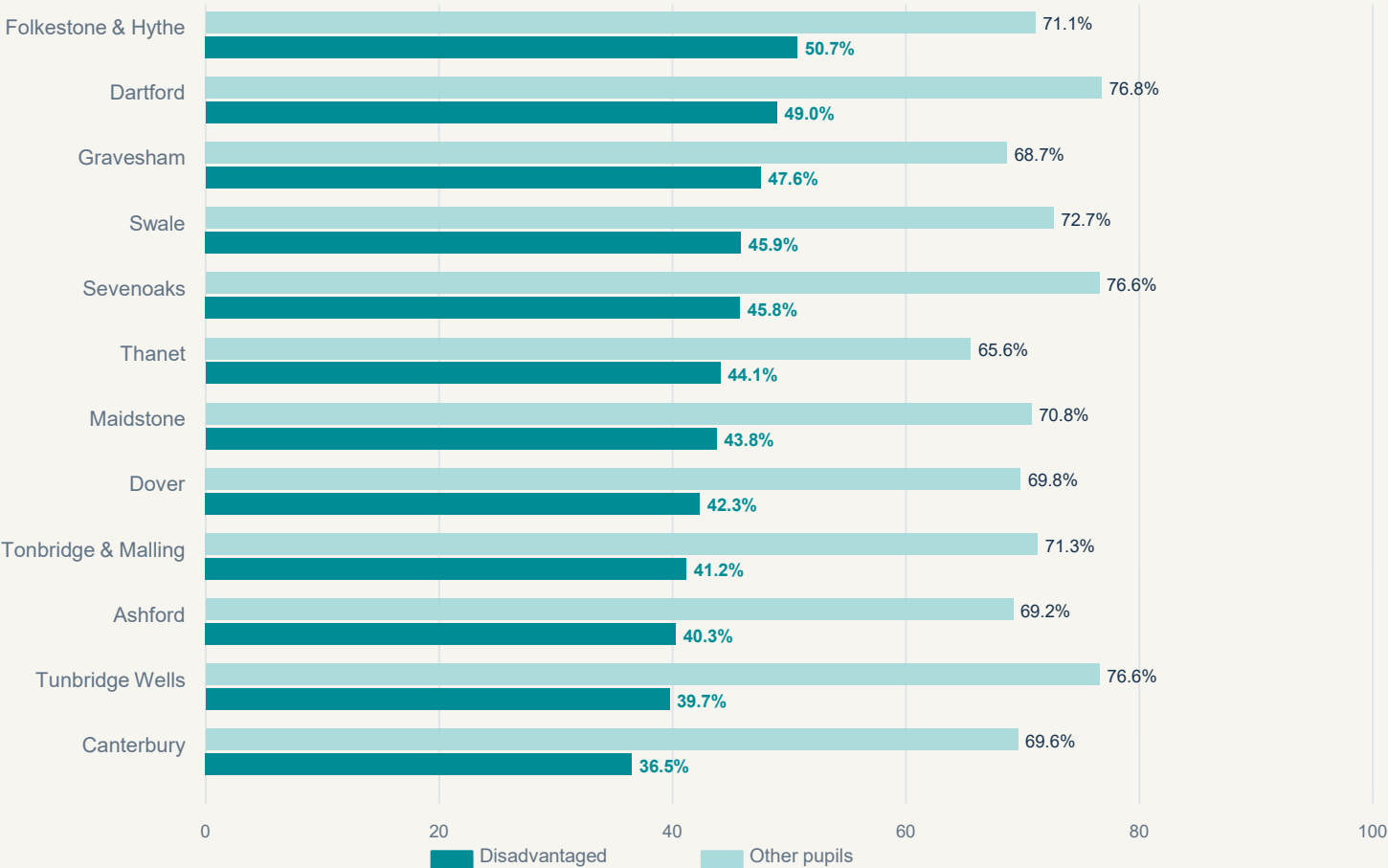
2026 provisional

Why this matters

The disadvantage gap is evident across every KS2 subject. It is widest in grammar, punctuation and spelling at 25pp followed by mathematics at 24pp. The reading gap is smaller but remains substantial at 22.4pp.

Folkestone & Hythe, Dartford and Gravesham lead disadvantaged RWM

Disadvantaged RWM outcomes span 14.2 points; local gaps range from 20.4 to 36.9 points.



STRONGEST DISTRICTS

1. Folkestone & Hythe

Disadv. 50.7% · Other 71.1%
Gap 20.4pp

2. Dartford

Disadv. 49.0% · Other 76.8%
Gap 27.8pp

3. Gravesham

Disadv. 47.6% · Other 68.7%
Gap 21.1pp

PRIORITY CONTRAST

Tunbridge Wells

Disadv. 39.7% · Other 76.6%
Gap 36.9pp, the widest in Kent

Key Take-aways

- The absolute focus in schools needs to be on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in all areas
- Aligns with national priority
- Phonics still an area more generally that is lagging in Kent

KS2 Moderation themes



Developing fluency in core writing knowledge

- Important if pupils are to achieve more complex KS2 demands
- Automaticity is the goal
- Low stakes assessment – retrieval and fluency practice
- Not something that can be left until Year 6
- Secure foundational knowledge for every year group

Reducing cognitive load to support writing

- High cognitive load will impact the quality of writing
- Support through high-quality texts
- Familiarity can be beneficial
- Scaffolds vs independence (6.2 of Teacher Assessment Guidance)

Understanding the Pre-Key Stage standards

- WTS not the default standard if EXS not met
- Important to understand the requirements of each standard
- PK6 does not equal weak or unreadable writing
- Understanding of the PKS standards can support teacher planning for progress

Securing Working Towards the Expected Standard

- WTS should still show secure fundamentals
- WTS as a worthwhile place to be
- Formative assessment – identifying areas that are not yet secure
- Not just focusing on EXS requirements
- Not lowering expectations – building secure foundations

Providing opportunities to demonstrate integrated dialogue

- 'Integrate dialogue in narratives to convey character and advance the action'

- More than just punctuating speech

- Needs to be planned for

- Editing a useful tool in this area – reflection questions:

Could my characters say less while still allowing the reader to understand what is happening?

What could be implied through narrative description or reported speech rather than spoken directly?

Supporting pupils to achieve the Greater Depth Standard

- GDS as a very high bar
- Not just about being the best writer in class
- Explicit, careful teaching needed
- Exemplification: Leigh – secure EXS
- Important to develop clear understanding of GDS statements
- Importance of reading
- Not always about separate groups

Planning ahead for writing evidence to support teacher assessment

- Know your scheme and adapt where necessary
- Timing – Spring and Summer terms often offer best evidence
- Plan ahead for a balanced range of evidence

Making the most of writing examples

- STA exemplification and standardisation materials available
- Useful to support assessment, but also as teaching tools
- Use with children – useful for modelling, discussion, editing

The value of moderation for assessment and teaching

- Are your processes robust enough?
- Is moderation used formatively?
- All year groups?

National Updates: Ofsted, DfE, STA



Ofsted

- No changes to requirements or expectations around inspection
- Key English themes remain:
 - Securing strong foundations for all (EYFS, KS1 and KS2 where needed)
 - Progress and achievement for pupils with barriers to learning
 - Spoken language and vocabulary development

Ofsted – Securing Strong Foundations

- Early writing – transcription focus
- Assessment and intervention
- Identification and intervention in KS2

- Pledge to ensure every primary school in the country has a dedicated library
- National Literacy Trust – 'Libraries for Primaries'

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/programmes/primary-school-library-programmes/>

Task for next session:

- Collect your school data:
 - EYFS GLD
 - Year 1 Phonics
 - Year 2 Phonics retakes
 - End of KS2 Reading and Writing
 - ALL v DISADVANTAGED

Consider: For your pupils eligible for pupil premium, what are the main barriers to learning? What is stopping them from achieving better?

What's coming up...

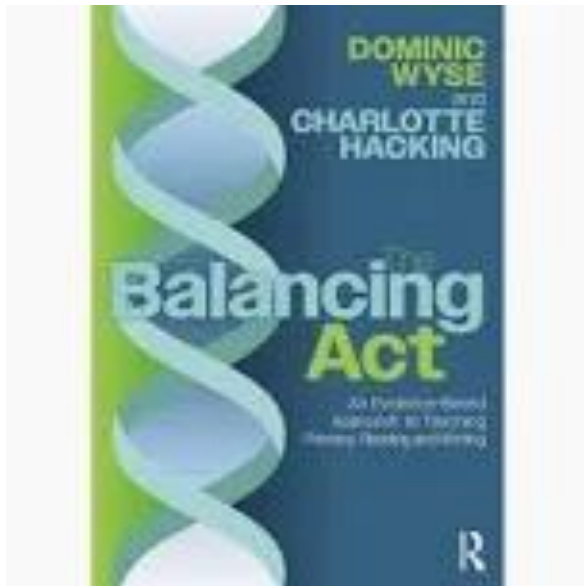
Kent English Conference

15th October 2026

Ashford International Hotel

Charlotte Hacking - Keynote

- Teacher and teacher engagement lead at the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Pedagogy
- Former Learning and Programme Director at CLPE



Victoria Dilly - Keynote

➤ CEO of the School Library Association



Workshops

- Reading for Pleasure – Christine Cork and Rachel Stone, senior lecturers CCCU
- Supporting reading fluency – Kent English Hub
- Writing in the EYFS (nurturing early writers through play, talk and texts) – Polly Sharman, Senior Improvement Adviser and EYFS lead
- Oracy – Lizzie Williams, Improvement Adviser
- Getting the most from an author visit – Emma Rosen, author and teacher



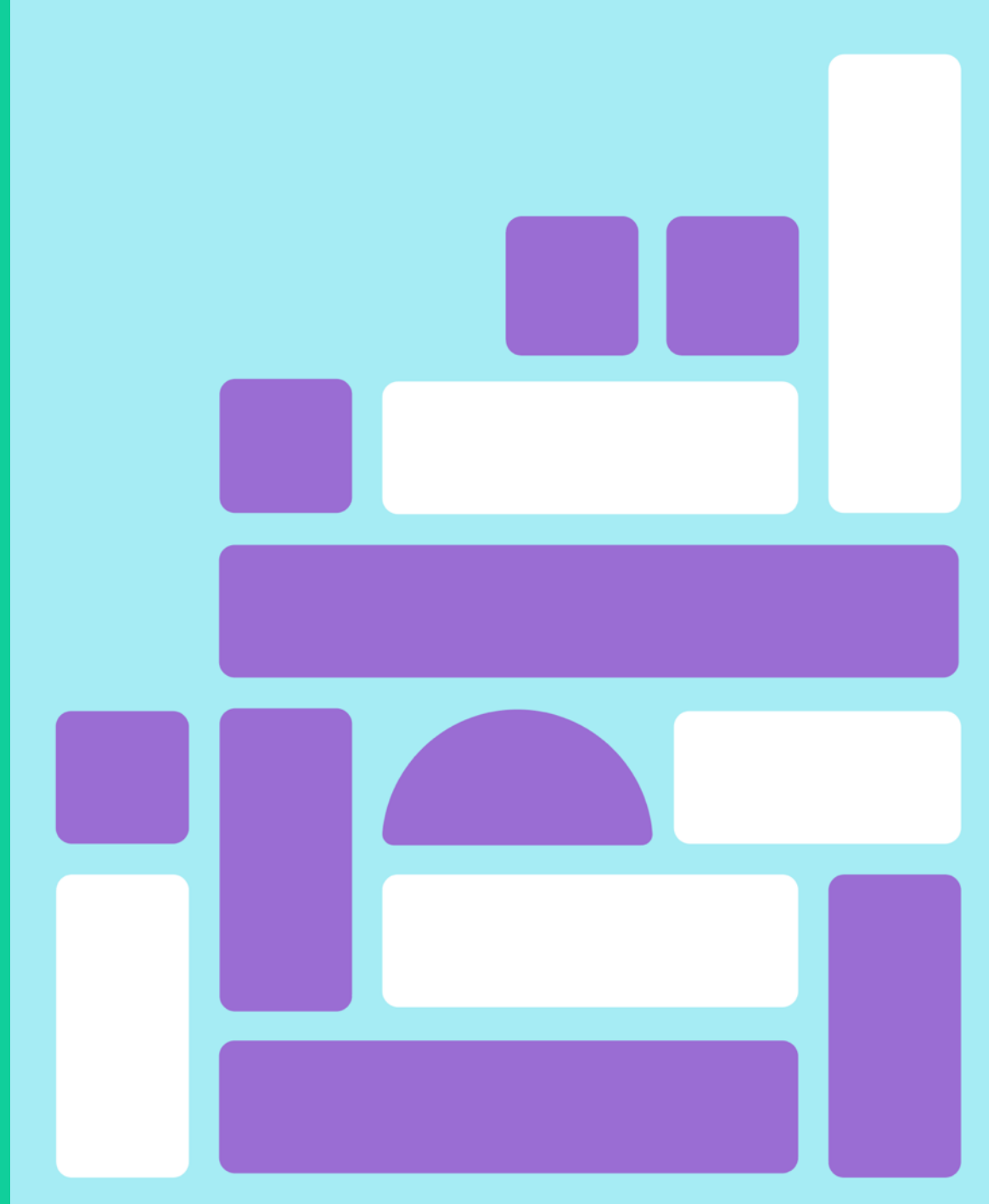
The Big Writing Challenge



➤ <https://sekgroup.org.uk/support/sek-schools/the-big-writing-challenge-kent/>

English CPD available

- Courses
- Training



Autumn/Spring CPD

- Introduction to English Leadership for New Leaders – #1 5th Nov 1.15pm
- Strong Foundations in English – 30th Sep 9.30–12pm
- Key Stage Two Moderator Training – 4th November Canterbury
 - 6th November Ashford
 - 7th January Aylesford
- Moving from WTS to EXS in Writing KS2 – 4th March, full day in-person
- Developing a Whole-School Approach to Handwriting – 3rd Feb 3.30pm
- Phonics Screening Check Training – 18th March 1pm–2.15pm
- Raising Achievement through Vocabulary Development – 10th March 1.30pm

Next English Network briefings

- English Leader Network – January 20th 2027 3.30pm
- English Leader Network – April 21st 2027 3.30pm

What do you want to see?

- Any particular areas that you would like covered in these sessions?
- Any areas that you think it would be beneficial for some more structured CPD?

Thank you!

Adi.Ahmet@theeducationpeople.org



Evaluation

Thank you for taking the time to attend this session.

To enable us to continually improve and develop our CPD provision, please can we ask you to take 5 minutes to complete our feedback form, which you can access here:

<https://bit.ly/3CxCbf4>

