



Schools reject GCSE failures claim colleges

- GCSE English and maths now required
- Schools not letting pupils continue at 16
- Policy change driving 'poor behaviour'

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Teenagers are being prevented from continuing into their schools' sixth forms after failing to get C grades and above in English and maths at GCSE, leading college groups have warned.

Government changes now require students between 16 and 19 to continue to study English and maths, unless they have already achieved at least a GCSE grade C in the subject.

James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges' Association, said: "Our enrolment survey published this week has shown a 14.6 per cent increase in the number of students starting a course at a sixth-form college without a GCSE in maths at grade A*-C.

"This is an astonishing finding, given there was a national increase of 4.8 per cent in the proportion of young people awarded an A*-C in GCSE maths this summer."

He said the survey "suggested that the new funding condition had led many school and academy sixth forms to become more selective."

Meanwhile, the 157 Group, which represents large further education colleges, said: "We have heard from several of our members that this [students not being able to continue in their school's sixth form] is happening in their localities; that young people are being turned away because they don't have grade C - and that it is made a condition of entry before they have arrived.

"It seems sadly inevitable that it might have happened and is another example of what is often said to be an unintended consequence of policy change driving poor behaviour.

"It feels like it is a symptom of competition where there doesn't need to be competition. What should be done is working together to make sure every person gets into the right place. Students are potentially being ill-advised . . . which means that guidance issue is back on the table."

Brian Lightman, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), said that difficulties with this year's GCSEs following changes in the syllabus might be to blame.

"The volatility in GCSE exams . . . has affected a very significant number of young people this year who have received lower results than schools would have expected.

"I am very concerned to hear about a number of examples where this has led to them not being able to continue with their education because they haven't passed the English exam. We are still investigating why those results have dipped in the way they have. "A lot of schools have appealed and we are hearing a significant number of grades have been changed. At the moment the only option for the students is to retake English unless a college will accept them."

A DfE spokesperson said it was unable to comment on specifics as it had not been presented with evidence of where this was happening.

Commissioner in the North

Janet Renou



P14



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Party conference round-up

Brett Wigdortz

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How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Spot the difference
to WIN an ACADEMIES WEEK mug



	8			4				9
	1		9					6
	5					8	2	
5			7		4	1	8	
7								4
	4	6	8		9			5
	3	5					4	
2					5		9	
4				8			1	

Difficulty:
EASY

Last Week's solutions

3	5	9	6	1	2	8	7	4
7	8	6	3	9	4	2	1	5
2	4	1	7	8	5	3	9	6
8	7	4	5	2	3	9	6	1
6	1	2	9	4	7	5	8	3
9	3	5	1	6	8	4	2	7
5	2	7	8	3	6	1	4	9
1	6	8	4	5	9	7	3	2
4	9	3	2	7	1	6	5	8

Difficulty:
EASY



			7			5		
				4		6	1	
				9				8
4						1		
	6	9						4
							7	9
2	4		1				5	
	8				3	7		1
		1		8	7		2	

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

9	6	2	1	5	4	7	8	3
5	1	8	3	7	6	2	9	4
7	4	3	9	2	8	1	5	6
6	9	7	2	4	3	5	1	8
4	3	1	5	8	9	6	2	7
2	8	5	7	6	1	3	4	9
8	2	6	4	3	5	9	7	1
3	5	9	8	1	7	4	6	2
1	7	4	6	9	2	8	3	5

Difficulty:
MEDIUM



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