



**Evidence for
Excellence in
Education**

Report

A Tale of Eight Regions

**Part 1: A snapshot of the evolving
school system across the Regional
Schools Commissioner areas**

**National Foundation for Educational
Research (NFER)**



A Tale of Eight Regions

Part 1: A snapshot of the evolving school system across the Regional Schools Commissioner areas

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Published in November 2016

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www.nfer.ac.uk

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Registered Charity No. 313392

ISBN: 978-1-911039-28-0

How to cite this publication:

Hillary, J., Easton, C., Bernardinelli, D. and Gee, G. (2016). *A Tale of Eight Regions. Part 1: A snapshot of the evolving school system across the Regional Schools Commissioner Areas*. Slough: NFER.

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About this report

In 2015, NFER published *A Guide to Regional Schools Commissioners* (Durbin *et al.*, 2015). The report explained the background to Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) and presented an analysis of the characteristics and challenges faced by each of the eight RSC regions.

We are returning to RSCs a year on to provide an update of the characteristics of their areas after two years of operation. We have also produced some new analyses of underperforming schools in these areas, and have analysed the structures in which academies are organised and managed across the regions.

We are producing two reports about the work of RSCs.

In this first report, our focus is on how the schools' landscape has changed, by region, since RSCs were introduced. We have examined this in terms of the number and percentage of academies and free schools in each region. The report provides:

- an overview of academies and free schools, and the organisational structures in which they operate in England
- an analysis of changes over the previous 12 months
- a comparative analysis of the differences across the school landscape in RSC areas
- eight individual 'region profiles' (see section 4).

In our second report, to be published in 2017, we will use the latest performance data to explore the future challenges RSCs face in

terms of schools in their areas requiring action. The report will include:

- a summary of changes in attainment by phase across RSC areas over time
- an analysis of the challenges faced by RSCs in terms of schools that are causing concern and switching to academy status
- an assessment of future sponsor capacity compared to the demand for new sponsors.

1 At a glance

Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) have rapidly become an important and powerful part of the English education system since they took up their posts in September 2014. RSCs oversee the growing numbers of academies, have control over large geographical areas and have expanding responsibilities, which include supporting underperforming and coasting schools (see Section 2).

This report is the first of two providing an updated analysis and new insights into the regions' characteristics. Here we explore how regions have changed in terms of the number and proportion of academies and free schools since they were established. This is presented as a comparative 'overview', followed by eight individual 'region profiles'.

Academisation continues to vary by region

Nationally, 67 per cent of secondary schools are now academies compared to only 21 per cent of primaries. However, the extent of academisation remains highly variable between regions. In highly academised regions, RSCs will have a greater focus on existing academy performance while others will need to spread their time more evenly between local authority (LA) maintained schools and academies.

Growth in primary academisation in 2016 has exceeded secondary growth at the national level for the first time since the Academies Act 2010 was passed. Growth in the proportion of schools becoming academies has been steadily falling across both phases in recent years, but the decline in growth in the secondary sector has been steeper.

Differences within region are greater than between regions

There is a wide variation in the proportion of academies across LAs within individual regions. These within-region differences are more striking than the variation between regions.

Proportions of underperforming LA schools becoming sponsored academies vary by region and phase

There are differences in the number of sponsor-led academies between regions. These variations do not appear to be due to the number of underperforming schools or their characteristics. A number of factors may be driving this variation, including a lack of suitable sponsors to take on underperforming schools or different RSC approaches to tackling underperformance. We will examine whether there are differences in attainment outcomes and the availability of sponsors in our next report.

Regional variations in the number of schools in single- and multi-academy trusts exist

As most academy sponsors currently come from within the education sector, RSCs may approach existing single academy trusts (SATs) and multi-academy trusts (MATs) to find additional capacity to support underperforming schools. There are variations between regions in the number of 'good' and 'outstanding' schools in these structures, which may make it more difficult to find sufficient sponsors from within a region. This will be examined further in our second report.

2 What is a Regional Schools Commissioner?

The role and responsibilities of RSCs have increased since they started in September 2014. Their functions now include:

- Identifying and tackling ‘schools that are causing concern’, which covers schools judged by Ofsted as being ‘inadequate’, schools ‘below the floor’¹ and ‘coasting’ schools.
- Approving conversions of underperforming LA maintained schools into sponsor-led academies or brokering a new sponsor or change in sponsor for underperforming academies.
- Identifying and building the sponsor capacity to support more schools to become academies, including encouraging ‘good’ and ‘outstanding’ schools to become academies.
- Approving new free school applications and monitoring their progress.

Schools causing concern

The Education and Adoption Act, which came into force in April 2016, further clarifies RSC roles and responsibilities, including extensions to the role. This includes setting out RSCs’ main powers and duties to address schools that are causing concern in both LA maintained and academy schools.

¹ The floor standard is the minimum standard for pupil attainment and / or progress that the Government expects schools to meet.

The *Schools Causing Concern: Intervening in Failing, Underperforming and Coasting Schools: Guidance for Local Authorities and RSCs*, published in March 2016, set out how the 2016 Act will operate (DfE, 2016a). It specifies the circumstances which would lead to action in a school and the range of interventions available. It also makes it clear that LAs retain duties and powers for formal intervention in maintained schools, while RSCs can act in both academies and maintained schools. Thus, for example:

*The local authority **must notify** the relevant RSC each time they intend to use their intervention powers and **obtain consent** from the RSC before appointing an Interim Executive Board (IEB). The RSC will also notify the local authority before [acting in the case of maintained schools].*

DfE, 2016a

Coasting schools

Coasting schools, and their definition, featured prominently in the debates during the parliamentary passage of the Education and Adoption Bill 2016 (Hansard, HoC. 2015). In October 2016, the Government published a Draft Statutory Instrument setting out detailed definitions of coasting schools (England. Draft Statutory Instruments, 2016). This included a commitment to using three years of performance data to classify a school as ‘coasting’. In November 2016, the Department for Education (DfE) published provisional data on the number and characteristics of coasting schools (DfE, 2016b). In this, DfE said:

Once a school has fallen within the coasting definition, RSCs acting on behalf of the Secretary of State will engage with the school to consider its wider context, and decide whether

additional support is needed to help current leaders improve the school. The Department expects that only in a small minority of cases will RSCs direct a coasting LA maintained school to become a sponsored academy or will move a coasting academy to a new trust.

DfE, 2016b

Multi-academy trusts

Where a sponsor is needed to support an underperforming school, this has tended to focus on identifying a MAT to take responsibility for such a school. Much of the debate about the development of the RSC role has centred on the need to develop the capacity of existing MATs to take on more schools. The capacity of MATs in areas with a concentration of underperforming schools has been highlighted as a challenge, and this has led to concern over the speed of expansion of some MATs (Dickens, 2016). The National Schools Commissioner is developing a health check to support MATs that are preparing to grow to identify the support they need, which is expected to be launched in 2017. Part of the need for the check is to help MATs build the capacity they need to expand. However, the challenge remains that MAT management teams require both the willingness and the skills to help underperforming schools. Our second report will explore the capacity of MATs and their readiness to expand.

School improvement

School improvement, the processes short of formal intervention in a school needing help, is an area of activity divided between the LAs and RSCs. RSCs do not deliver improvement activity themselves - instead they have the power and budget to commission support for a school. In a speech to the Westminster Education Forum in October 2016, the National Schools Commissioner, Sir David Carter,

suggested that he intends to support the development of 'mentor MATs' which can help newly established MATs. He explained that both those delivering and those receiving support to improve should be held to account (Busby, 2016).

Fast-moving landscape

The first two years of RSCs' operation have been characterised by some major political events and shifts in policy. This has caused some turbulence in the education sector. In particular, a new Secretary of State was appointed in July 2016, and is taking a fresh look at education policy. As a result, RSCs are operating in a fast-changing landscape and with an element of uncertainty. However, the Secretary of State remains committed to the Government's academisation programme:

I do want to see all schools over time become academies [...] Our hope and expectation is that schools will want to steadily take advantage of the benefits that academies can bring, but our focus will be on those schools where we feel that standards need to be raised and they need to do a better job of delivering attainment and progress for children.

GB. Parliament. HoC. Education Committee, 2016

The trends identified in this report pre-date many of the political events and policy changes; for example, the Academies Act which led to large numbers of LA schools becoming convertor academies was introduced in 2010. RSCs themselves only took up post in September 2014. Some of the changes observed may have occurred in spite of, rather than as a result of, RSC actions or interventions.

3 What are the characteristics of the RSC regions?

While RSC responsibilities extend to all schools in their region, there is particular interest in the number of academies and how these are distributed across regions and phases. Furthermore, we are interested in how this is changing over time. The key statistics are summarised in this section.

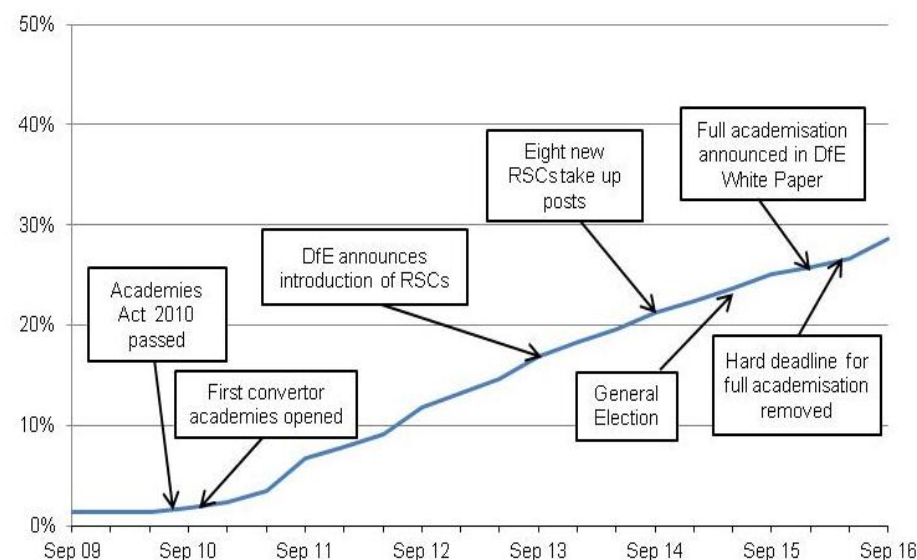
A summary of the key findings are presented here:

- The proportion of academies has increased, but continues to vary considerably by phase and RSC region. The difference in the extent of schools which are academies between the highest and lowest regions has increased over the last 12 months, from 16 to 20 percentage points.
- Growth in academisation in the primary phase in 2016 has exceeded growth in the secondary phase for the first time. Growth in both phases has been slowing down in recent years, with percentage point increases in academisation falling more sharply in the secondary phase, since their peak during the 2011–12 academic year. The primary phase experienced slower growth initially, reaching its peak in 2013–14, and a slower decline since.
- There is a wide variation in the proportion of academies across LAs within regions, which is more striking than the differences between regions.
- There are regional variations in the proportions of underperforming LA schools becoming sponsor-led academies.

- There are variations in the number of schools in SATs and MATs by region; this may make it more difficult for RSCs to find sufficient sponsors from within a region in future.

Overall, there continues to be a steady increase in the number of academies. The proportion of academies has grown from 21 per cent in September 2014 to 29 per cent in September 2016

Figure 3.1 Growth in academisation in state schools in England, September 2009 to September 2016



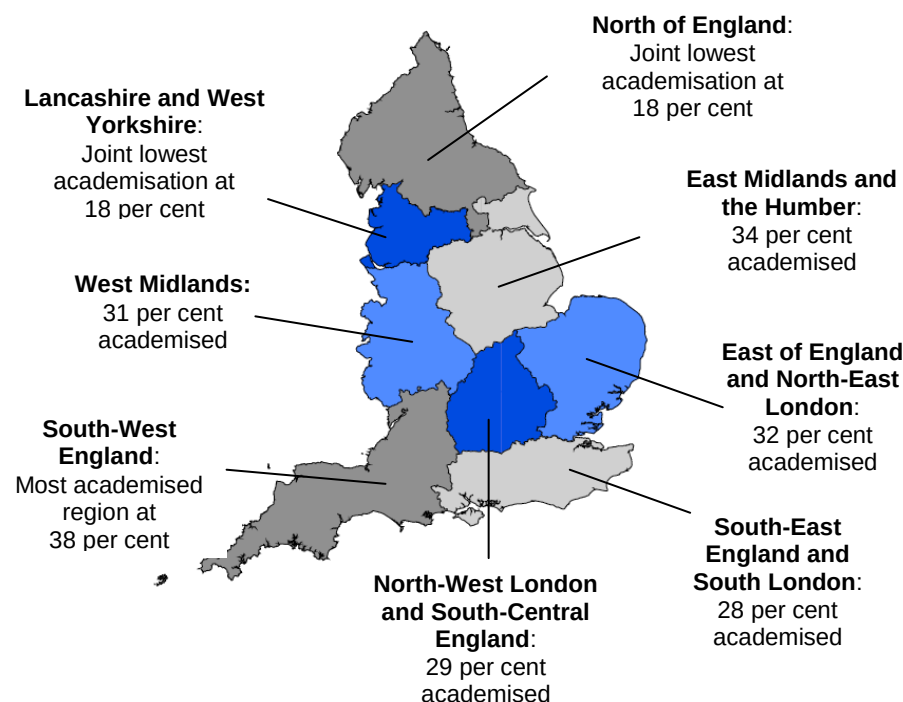
Academy numbers have increased but continue to vary by phase and region

Academy growth in the primary phase has exceeded the secondary phase for the first time

There is considerable variation in the proportion of academies by phase of education (see Appendix A: Data tables). Two-thirds of secondary schools (67 per cent) are academies compared to around one in five primary schools (21 per cent). However, growth in the proportion of primary academies has exceeded growth in the secondary phase for the first time this year, resulting in a slight narrowing of the gap of academisation between the two phases. Interestingly, this is not happening as a result of academisation within the primary sector starting to grow more rapidly. In fact, growth in schools becoming academies has been falling across both phases in recent years. The decline in growth in the secondary sector has been greater (8.4 per cent in 2013 to 2.9 per cent in 2016) than in the primary sector where the decline has been more gradual (4.4 per cent in 2013 to 3.7 per cent in 2016).

South-West England continues to be the most academised region where 38 per cent of schools are now academies. This contrasts with the North of England and Lancashire and West Yorkshire where 18 per cent are academies. The difference in the extent of academisation between the highest and lowest academised regions has increased over 12 months, from 16 to 20 percentage points.

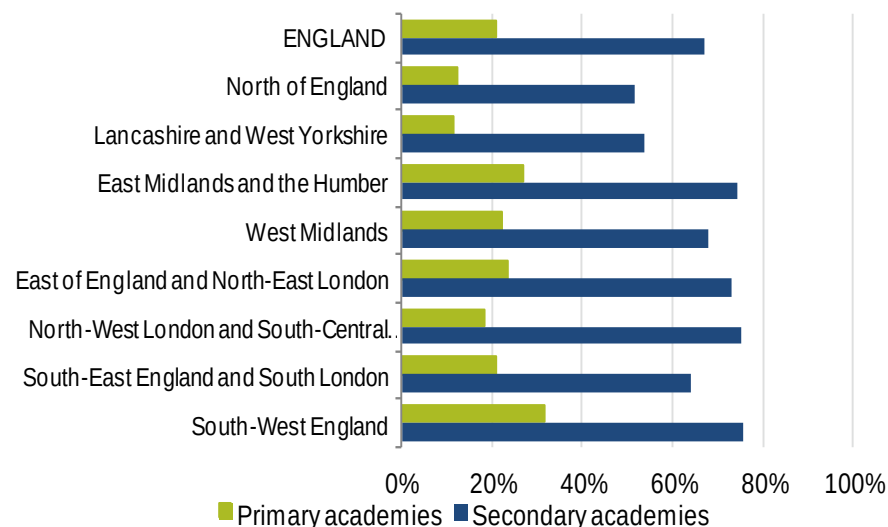
Figure 3.2 Academisation remains highly variable between RSC regions



Regional variations by phase

Within the primary phase, the proportion of academies varies from 12 per cent in the North of England and in Lancashire and West Yorkshire to 32 per cent in South-West England. In the secondary phase, academisation ranges from 52 per cent in the North of England to 76 per cent in South-West England.

Figure 3.3 Proportion of academies by RSC region

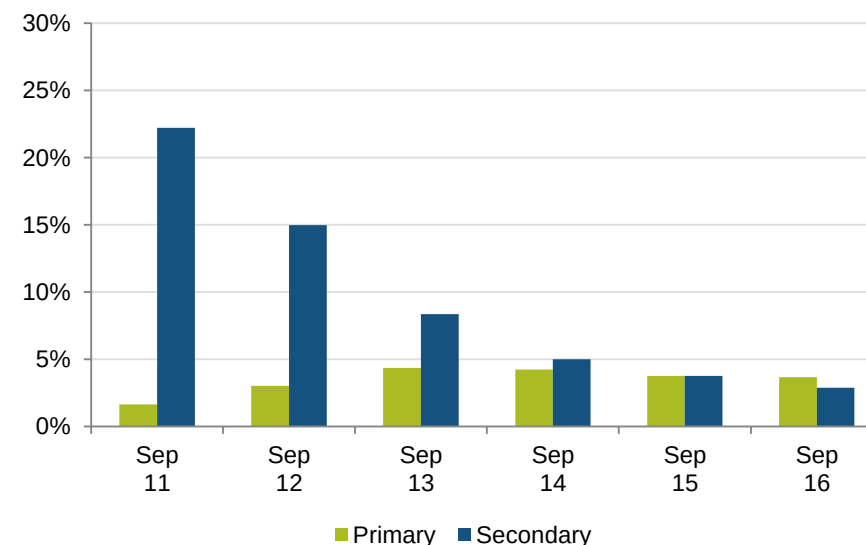


Over the last 12 months, the North of England and Lancashire and West Yorkshire, the two regions with the lowest levels of academisation, grew faster than average in the secondary phase. However, the rate of change in these regions was below average in the primary phase. Conversely, growth in the primary phase has been strongest amongst regions with some of the highest levels of academisation in the secondary phase, namely South-West England and East of England and North-East London.

Growth in academisation in the secondary sector across all regions has decreased over the last two to three years. This is perhaps not surprising; most secondary schools that wanted to become an academy are likely to have converted by now. In the primary phase,

the majority of schools in each region are still LA maintained, so there is more scope for growth.

Figure 3.4 Growth in academies by primary and secondary phases

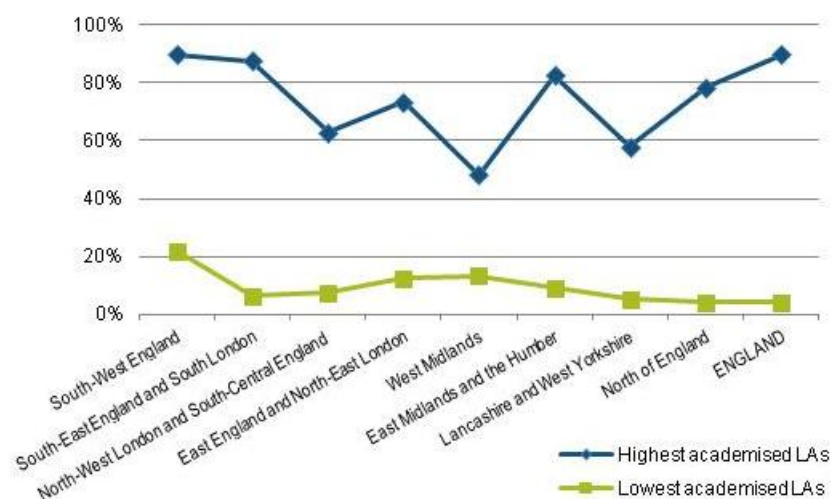


Differences in academisation within regions are larger than variations between regions

While there are large variations between regions, within-region differences are even more striking. Levels of academisation among LAs within the same region vary considerably. For example, South-East and South London has the greatest difference in the proportion of academies within its LAs, ranging from Lewisham where six per cent of schools are academies to 87 per cent of schools in Bromley. The West Midlands has least variation in the proportion of schools which are academies between its LAs: Cheshire West and Chester is

13 per cent academised compared to Stoke on Trent where 48 per cent of schools are academies.

Figure 3.5 Highest and lowest academised LAs within RSC regions



In some regions, there are one or two LAs with high or low proportions of schools that are academised, which is atypical compared the other LAs in their region. Appendix A: Data Tables A4 and A5 show the top and bottom ten academised LAs to illustrate the spread across the RSC regions.

Primary and secondary phase differences

There are differences in the range of academisation between LAs within RSC regions by phase. Only two LAs have more than 80 per

cent of their primary schools as academies but there are 84 LAs that have fewer than 20 per cent of their primary schools academised.

Conversely, in the secondary phase 50 LAs are 80 per cent or more academised, eight of which were fully academised in September 2016. Only four LAs have fewer than 20 per cent of their secondary schools academised.

Growth in academisation by LA is a mixed picture

The growth in academisation across LAs over the last 12 months has been mixed. There has been a positive correlation between overall levels of academisation and growth in the primary phase, with more academised LAs generally experiencing stronger growth. On the other hand, growth in the secondary phase has been more variable. See the Region Profiles in Section 4 for more insights into regional differences in growth across the two phases by regions.

Proportions of sponsored academies vary greatly across regions and by phase

There are large differences in the percentage of schools that are convertor and sponsor-led academies across the regions. These differences are more pronounced in the primary phase.

Sponsor-led academies by region

North of England and Lancashire and West Yorkshire, which have the lowest levels of academisation overall, have much lower proportions of sponsor-led academies (four per cent and six per cent respectively) compared to other regions. Conversely, 12 per cent of schools in the East of England and North-East London are sponsor-led academies.

Figure 3.6 Academisation by academy type: primary phase

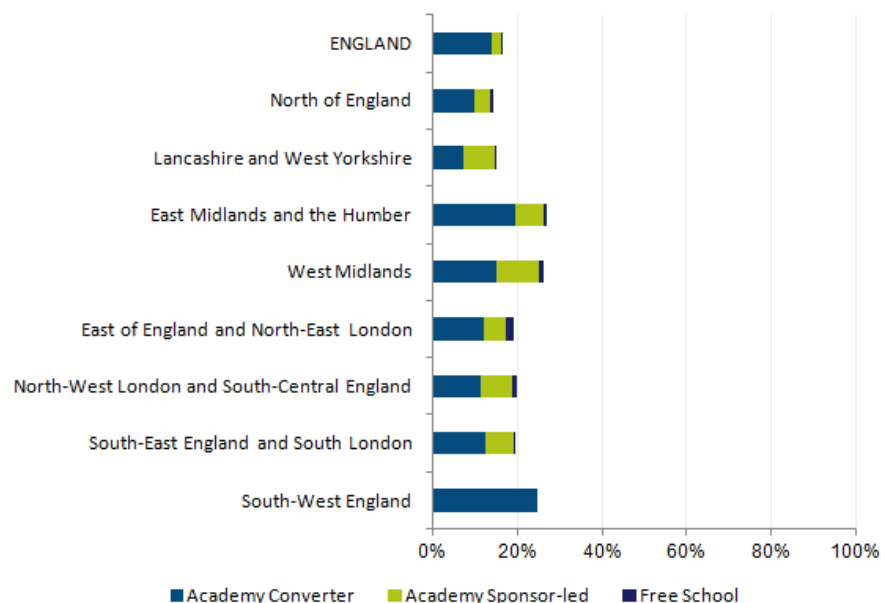
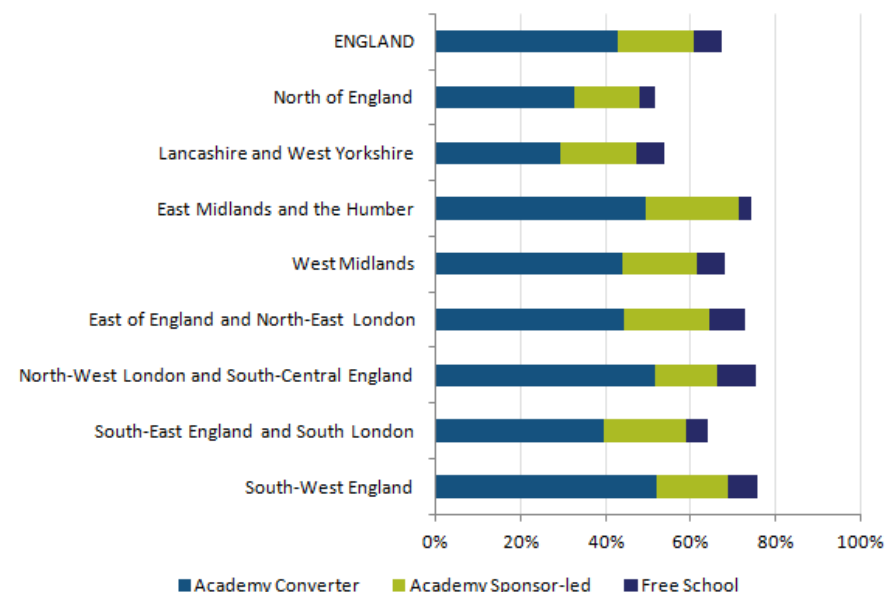


Figure 3.7 Academisation by academy type: secondary phase



As sponsor-led academies are formerly LA maintained schools that were taken over and turned into an academy because they were underperforming, it is important to understand the possible drivers for regional variation between converter and sponsor-led academies in terms of school performance.

Looking at the distribution of schools falling below floor standards does not reveal any clear patterns that would explain why some RSCs have a higher proportion of sponsor-led academies than others. A potential reason for differences across regions could be the lack of sufficient sponsors with capacity to take on more underperforming schools. Our previous report (Durbin *et al.*, 2015)

looked at the availability of new sponsors that had capacity to take on additional schools. This found that the North of England and Lancashire and West Yorkshire both had low numbers of sponsors with capacity to take on extra schools, whereas the East of England and North-East London had more, so this could be a contributory factor. However, there could be other reasons, including variations in the approach being taken by RSCs to tackling underperforming schools.

We cannot tell from this data what the reasons for differences in levels of sponsor-led academies are. However, we have examined what happened to LA maintained schools which fell below the floor in 2013². Although *Schools Causing Concern: Intervening in Failing, Underperforming and Coasting Schools. Guidance for Local Authorities and RSCs* (DfE, 2016a) does not require a LA maintained school falling below the floor to be taken over and turned into a sponsor-led academy, there are nonetheless large and interesting variations in the proportions that did become academies by phase and region. We will be exploring this further in our next report, including looking at what happened to attainment in these schools in subsequent years.

² We used 2013 schools below the floor as it was considered this would allow sufficient time to observe any subsequent actions to help the school.

Table 3.1 Proportion of LA primary schools below the floor in 2013 which are sponsor-led academies in September 2016

	Number of underperforming LA schools in 2013 now a sponsor-led academy	Percentage of LA underperforming schools in 2013 now a sponsor-led academy
North of England	5	8
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	30	20
East Midlands and the Humber	37	31
West Midlands	37	30
East of England and North-East London	55	42
North-West London and South-Central England	26	33
South-East England and South London	45	37
South-West England	23	23
England	258	29

Table 3.2 Proportion of LA secondary schools below the floor in 2013 which are sponsor-led academies in September 2016

	Number of underperforming LA schools in 2013 now a sponsor-led academy	Percentage of LA underperforming schools in 2013 now a sponsor-led academy
North of England	5	39
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	9	53
East Midlands and the Humber	8	53
West Midlands	2	22
East of England and North-East London	10	83
North-West London and South-Central England	2	50
South-East England and South London	7	58
South-West England	1	50
England	44	52

There are variations of schools in SATs and MATs by region

In September 2016, there were 2794 academy trusts in England. Of these, 63 per cent were SATs and 37 per cent were MATs³.

During 2015–16, there has been debate about whether some MATs have expanded too rapidly and overstretched themselves. To improve the RSCs' management of MATs, particularly their expansion, the National Schools Commissioner, Sir David Carter, has developed a four-tier system, as follows:

Starter trusts:	MATs with up to five academies, all of which are in the same region
Established trusts:	MATs with between six and 15 academies in the same region
Regional trusts:	MATs with between 16 and 30 academies, which operate across regions
System trusts:	MATs with over 30 academies which may be located across the country.

There are a larger number of academies in starter and established trusts. There are fewer academies within regional or system trusts.

³ Note that some MATs only have one academy currently, but have been set up as a MAT with the intention of expanding in the future.

Table 3.3 Number of SATs and MATs (split by MAT classification)⁴

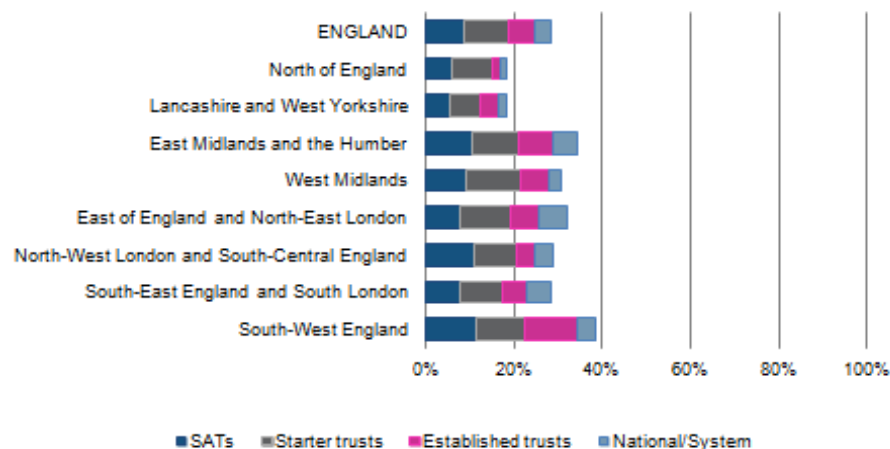
Classification	Number of Trusts	Number of academies	Number of pupils (000s)
Single Academy Trusts (SATs)	1763	1763	1023
Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs)			
Starter Trusts	853	2003	899
Established Trusts	150	1193	420
Regional Trusts	17	355	128
System Trusts	11	452	185
Total	2794	5766	2655

A more detailed breakdown of the table above is shown in Appendix A: Data Tables, Table A6.

The profile of SATs and the different MAT groupings vary across the regions. South-West England, East Midlands and the Humber and West Midlands have the highest percentage of academies within starter and established trusts. The North of England has the lowest number of academies within starter and established trusts.

⁴ There are a small number of starter and established MATs which cross RSC region boundaries. This is especially true in regions that include London boroughs. We have included them in the relevant size grouping in the table above.

Figure 3.8 Proportion of schools in RSC regions which are a SAT or in a MAT



challenges from projected increases in pupil numbers. We will also identify MATs that appear ready to expand and potentially sponsor additional underperforming schools. This will be split by the MAT groupings to show where there is more potential for MATs to grow. We will also explore capacity for expansion against demand for sponsors.

It is important to look at the distribution of SATs and MATs across RSC regions. As RSCs have responsibility for finding new sponsors for underperforming schools and most sponsors currently come from within the education sector, it is likely that RSCs will approach high-performing SATs and academies in MATs to support underperforming schools. As there are variations between regions in the number of 'good' and 'outstanding' schools in these structures, this may make it more difficult to find sufficient sponsors from within a region. This will be examined further in our second report.

Our second report

In our next report, we will build on this analysis and look at the future challenges that RSCs will face in the short term from coasting schools and schools falling below the floor, as well as the longer-term

4 Region profiles

North of England

Lancashire and West Yorkshire

East Midlands and the Humber

West Midlands

East of England and North-East London

North-West London and South-Central England

South-East England and South London

South-West England

North of England has the joint lowest level of academisation (with Lancashire and West Yorkshire) amongst RSC regions but growth in the secondary phase during 2015–16 is just above the national average.

1. Growth in academisation in the primary phase was the joint lowest of all RSCs over the last 12 months.
2. The region has by far the lowest number of academies in SATs and starter/established trusts.
3. Growth among the highest academised LAs in this region has been strong, particularly within the primary phase. This was largely due to Middlesbrough, which has had the second highest growth (23 per cent) amongst all LAs over the last 12 months.
4. This region has the country's least academised LA (North Tyneside at four per cent) and the fourth most academised LA nationally (Darlington at 78 per cent).

Key facts: 18 per cent of state schools in the region are academised.

12%

of **primary** schools are academies

2.1

percentage point increase since September 2015

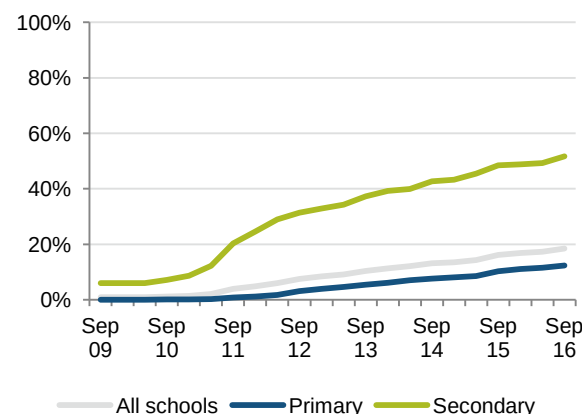
52%

of **secondary** schools are academies

3.2

percentage point increase since September 2015

Growth in academisation was stronger than average in the secondary phase but continues to be weaker in the primary.

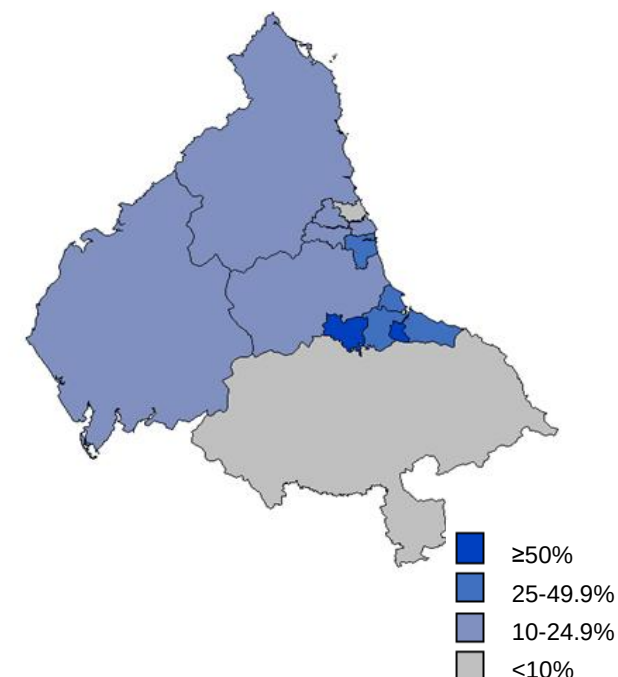
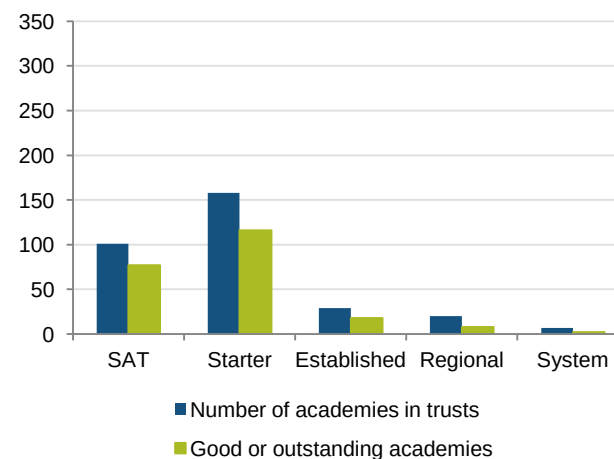


Growth over the last 12 months was high among the top five academised LAs in the primary phase, while it was above average for both the top five and bottom five in the secondary phase.

	Primary	Secondary
Top 5 academised LAs	7.8%	3.6%
Bottom 5 academised LAs	0.8%	4.0%

The level of academisation varies greatly by LA; Although there are two LAs where more than 50 per cent of schools are academies, three of the four largest LAs in the region have fewer than 15 per cent of schools academised.

The region has the lowest number of academies in starter/established trusts of all RSCs, but almost three-quarters of these are good or outstanding.



Lancashire and West Yorkshire has the joint lowest level of academisation (with North of England) but has seen the largest growth in secondary academies since September 2015.

1. Overall, growth in academisation across the whole region was below the national average and amongst the lowest of all RSC regions over the last 12 months.
2. The region has the second lowest number of academies in SATs and third lowest in starter/established trusts.
3. Growth among the top five academised LAs has been strong, particularly within the secondary phase which had the largest growth among the top five academised LAs in all regions.
4. The level of academisation between LAs has the smallest variation compared with other areas, from 58 per cent in Blackpool to five per cent in Bury, the only LA in England with no secondary academies.

Key facts: 18 per cent of state schools in the region are academised.

12%

of **primary** schools
are academies

2.1

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

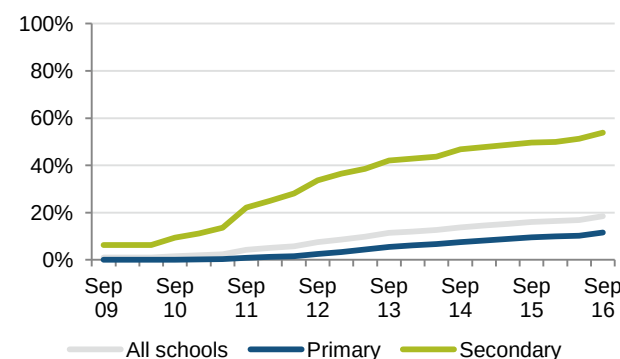
54%

of **secondary** schools
are academies

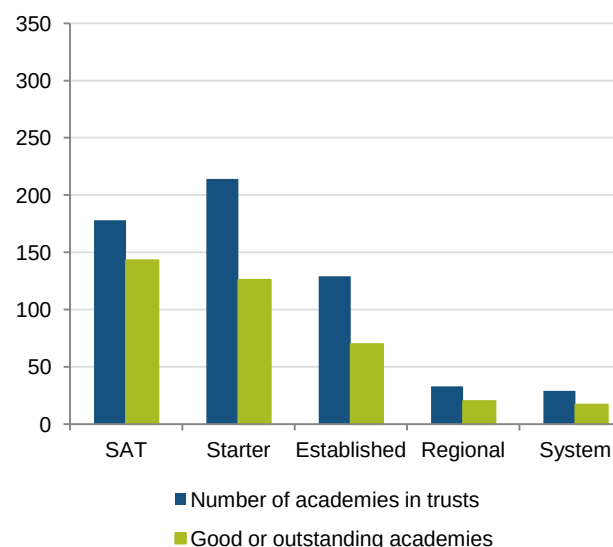
4.2

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

Academisation continues to be low compared to other regions despite growing the fastest in the secondary sector in the last 12 months.



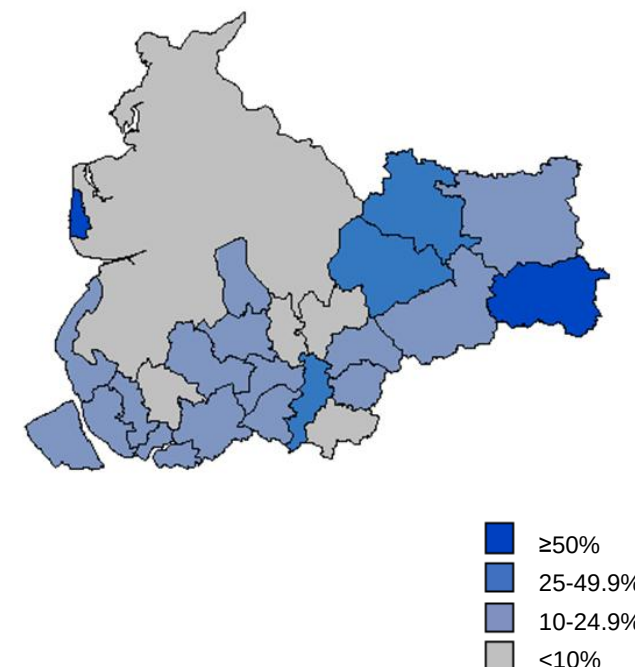
The region has below average numbers of academies in starter/established trusts, and just over half are good or outstanding.



Growth was the highest in the secondary sector among the most academised LAs but low in the primary phase.

	Primary	Secondary
Top 5 academised LAs	3.9%	6.9%
Bottom 5 academised LAs	0.1%	2.5%

The level of academisation varies by LA; five LAs have fewer than ten per cent of their schools academised while two LAs have over 90 per cent of their schools academised in the secondary phase.



The East Midlands and the Humber has the second highest level of academisation amongst RSC regions, although growth has slowed in the twelve months to September 2016.

1. Academy growth was less than the national average in the secondary sector, but was in line with the primary sector national average.
2. The region has a large number of good and outstanding SATs who could potentially become a MAT and take on sponsorship of underperforming schools in future.
3. Academisation growth over the last 12 months is a mixed picture with the highest academised LAs growing faster in the primary sector and the least academised LAs growing faster in the secondary sector.
4. The level of academisation varies markedly between LAs, from 82 per cent in North-East Lincolnshire to nine per cent in East Riding of Yorkshire.

Key facts: 34 per cent of state schools in the region are academised.

27%

of **primary** schools
are academies

3.7

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

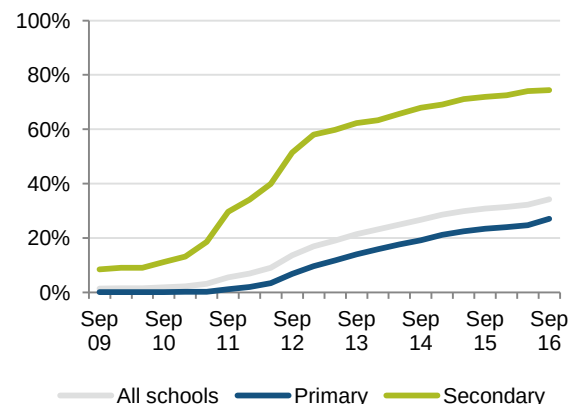
74%

of **secondary** schools
are academies

2.4

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

Although the level of academisation in the region is high, the rate of growth has slowed.

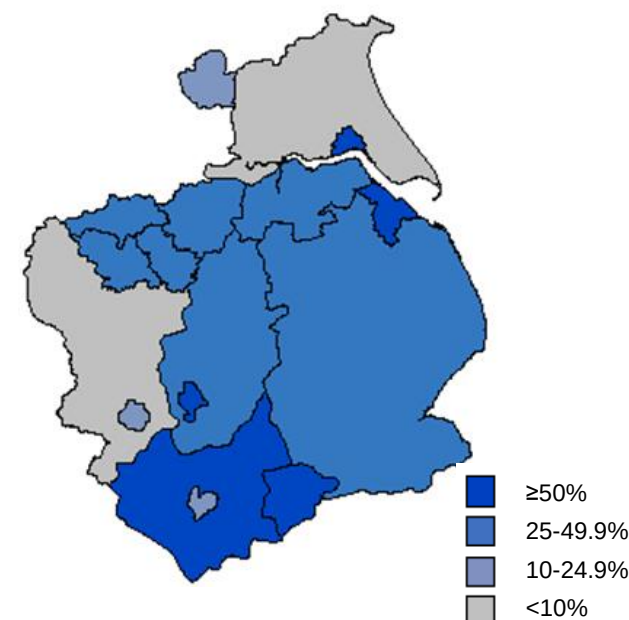
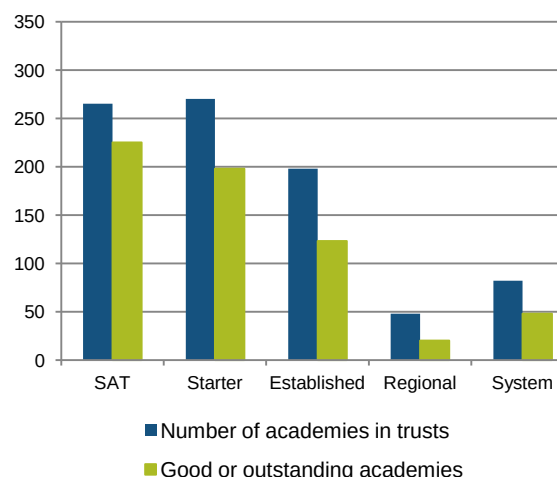


Growth in the secondary sector has been strongest amongst the lowest academised LAs, but the opposite is true in the primary sector.

	Primary	Secondary
Top 5 academised LAs	4.3%	0.8%
Bottom 5 academised LAs	2.2%	4.8%

The level of academisation varies by LA; five LAs have 50 per cent or more of their schools academised while two have fewer than 10 per cent.

The region has the second highest number of academies in starter/established trusts, many of which are good or outstanding.



West Midlands continues to have relatively consistent levels of academisation across its LAs. Growth in academisation was broadly the same across the primary and secondary phases over the last 12 months.

1. The West Midlands is one of two regions where growth has been stronger than the national average in both the primary and secondary phases.
2. The region has amongst the highest number of good and outstanding academies amongst SATs and starter/established trusts.
3. Growth among the highest academised LAs in this region has been a little greater than in the lowest academised LAs in both phases, leading to a slight widening of the range between the highest and lowest LAs.
4. Levels of academisation across LAs ranges from 13 per cent in Cheshire West and Chester to 48 per cent in Stoke on Trent.

Key facts: 31 per cent of state schools in the region are academised.

22%

of **primary** schools
are academies

4.2

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

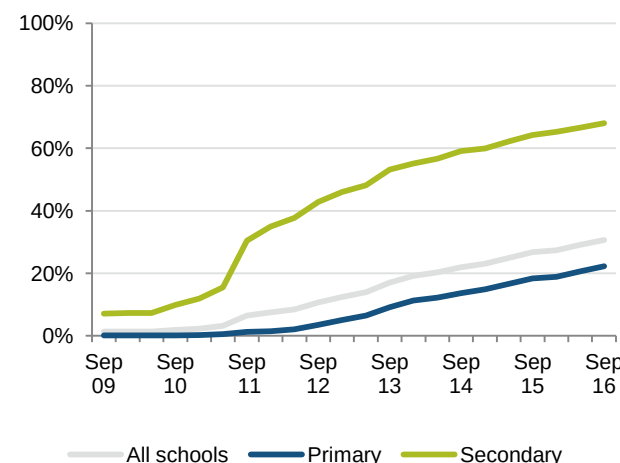
68%

of **secondary** schools
are academies

3.9

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

Academy growth in the secondary phase was amongst the highest when compared with other regions, but was in line with the national average in the primary phase.

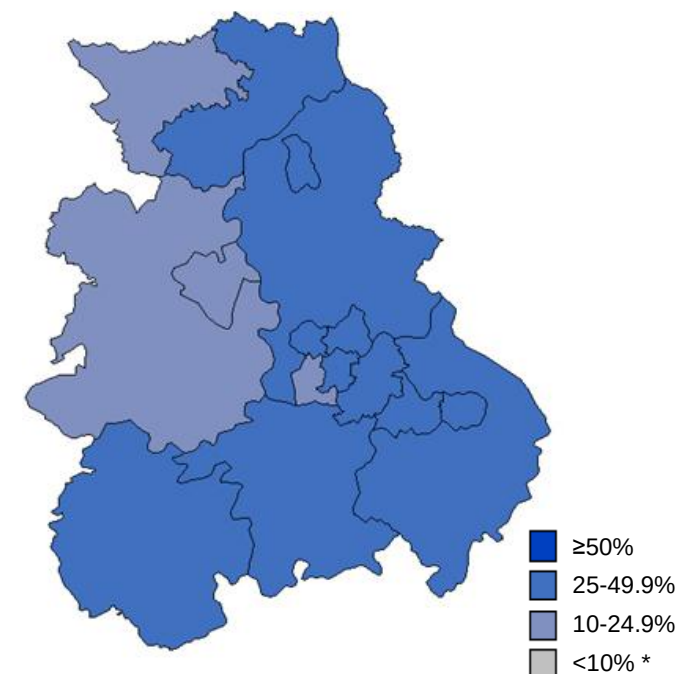
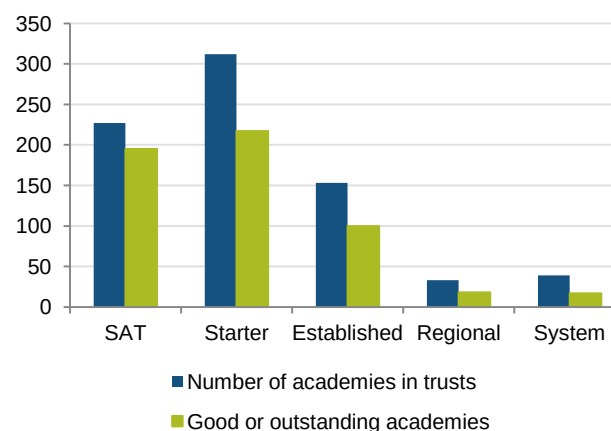


Growth has been higher among the most academised LAs in both phases, while the lowest academised LAs grew at a slower rate.

	Primary	Secondary
Top 5 academised LAs	5.1%	3.3%
Bottom 5 academised LAs	2.4%	2.2%

The level of academisation among LAs varies the least compared with other RSC regions: The most academised LA in this region has fewer than half of its schools with academy status.

The region has above average numbers of academies in starter/established trusts, and over two-thirds of these are good or outstanding.



* There are no LAs with <10 per cent academisation.

The East of England and North-East London has a high degree of academisation that is relatively consistent across the region.

1. Growth in academisation was high across the region over the last 12 months, particularly in the primary sector which grew by over five percentage points.
2. The region has the lowest proportion of its academies in SATs or in starter/established trusts.
3. Growth among the highest academised LAs has been fast in both the primary and secondary sectors while the least academised LAs have grown faster in the secondary sector.
4. Academisation is relatively consistent amongst most LAs with most having between 15 to 30 per cent of schools academised. Tower Hamlets is the lowest at 13 per cent while Thurrock is by far the highest at 73 per cent.

Key facts: 32 per cent of state schools in the region are academised.

24%

of **primary** schools
are academies

73%

of **secondary** schools
are academies

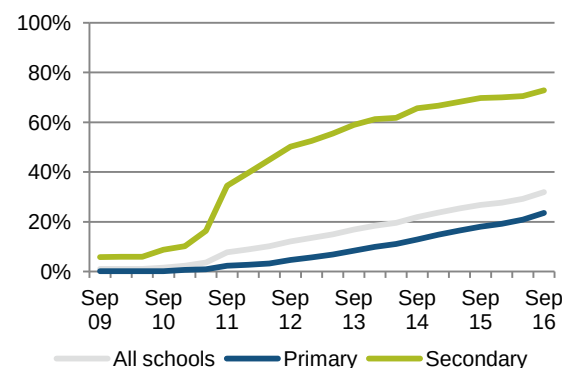
5.6

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

3.1

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

The region was one of two where academisation grew faster than average in both the primary and secondary sectors.

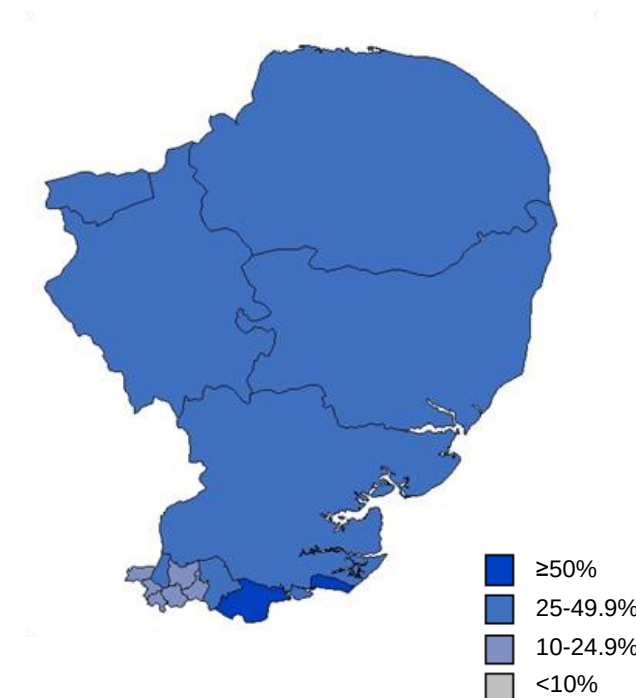
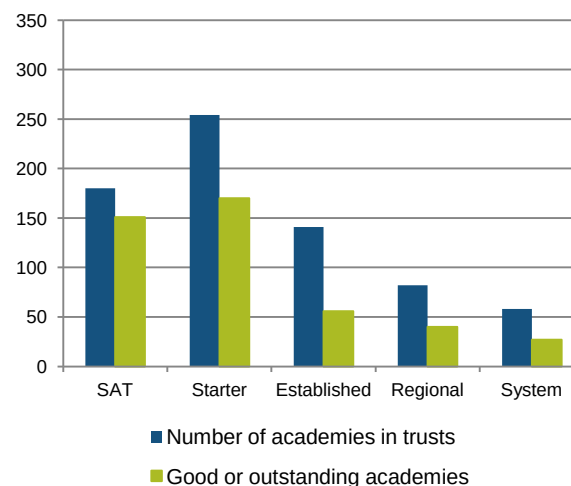


Growth in the primary sector has been very fast amongst the highest academised LAs, but is steadier in the secondary sector.

	Primary	Secondary
Top 5 academised LAs	7.1%	3.9%
Bottom 5 academised LAs	1.8%	4.1%

The level of academisation varies by LA; all LAs have more than ten per cent of their schools academised.

The region has an average number of academies in starter/established trusts, and just over half are good or outstanding.



North-West London and South-Central England has the largest gap in levels of academisation of all RSC regions between both phases, and this has grown further in the last 12 months.

1. Growth in academisation in the secondary phase is consistent with the national average over the last 12 months. Growth in the primary phase is below average.
2. The region has both the highest number of academies in a SAT and the highest proportion of its academies in this type of structure when compared to other regions.
3. The top five academised LAs grew slightly above average in the secondary sector, but slightly below in the primary sector over the last 12 months. The five least academised LAs did not grow in the primary sector.
4. Levels of academisation in this region's* LAs ranges from eight per cent in Camden and Bracknell Forest to 63 per cent in Slough.

*This excludes the City of London

Key facts: 31 per cent of state schools in the region are academised.

18%

of **primary** schools are academies

2.2

percentage point **increase** since September 2015

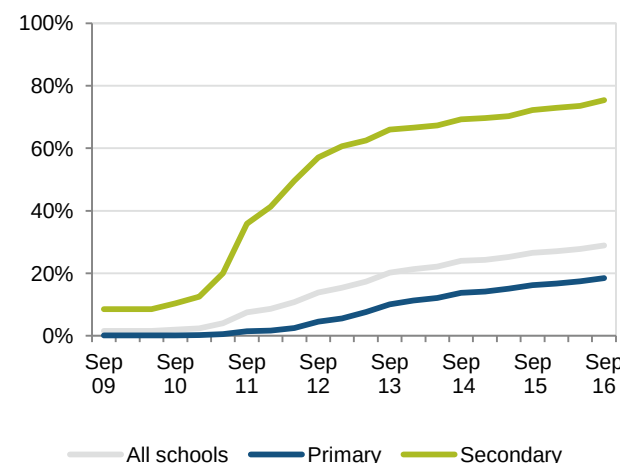
75%

of **secondary** schools are academies

3.2

percentage point **increase** since September 2015

Growth in academisation in the secondary phase was above average compared with other regions.

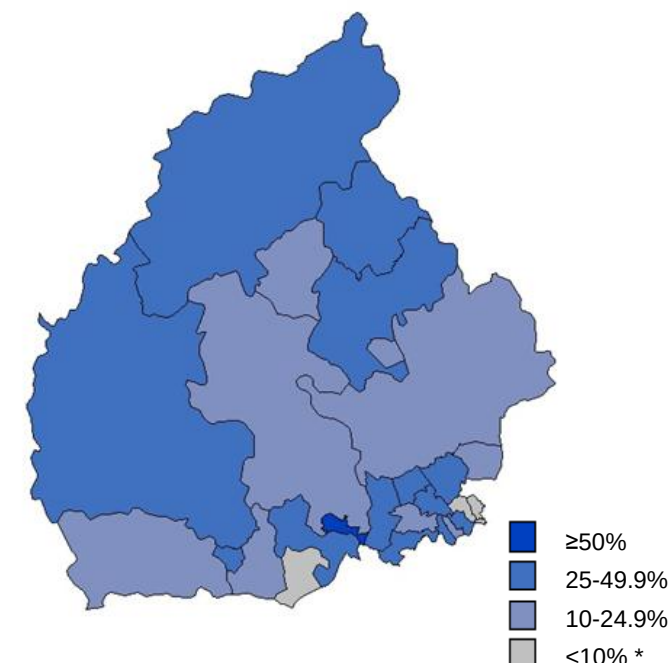
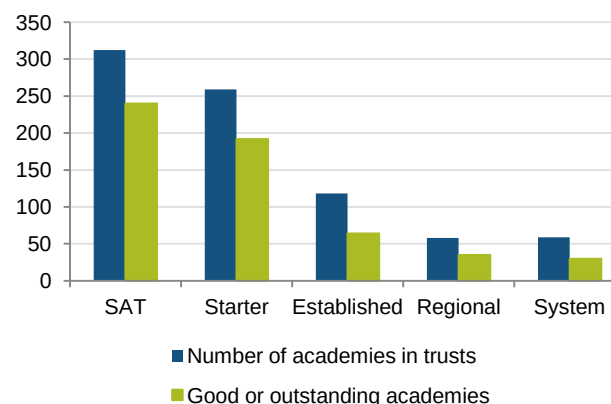


Growth has been greatest in the secondary sector in highly academised LAs and is in line with the national average for the least academised LAs. Growth in the primary phase is below average.

	Primary	Secondary
Top 5 academised LAs	3.2%	4.3%
Bottom 5 academised LAs	0.0%	2.8%

The level of academisation by LA varies little overall, compared with other RSC regions. However, in the primary phase all but one LA has fewer than 50 per cent academised. In the secondary phase, nearly half of LAs are over 80 per cent academised.

This region has the highest number of academies in SATs, but lower than average starter/established trusts.



* There are no LAs with <10 per cent academisation.

South-East England and South London

3067 schools

1,083,861 pupils

531 primary
academies

339 secondary
academies

South-East England and South London has more academies than other regions, but is proportionally one of the lower academised regions. Growth in academisation has been slowing in each of the last two years.

1. Growth in academisation across both the primary and secondary phases is below the national average.
2. Just over half of academies are in starter or established trusts. Of these, fewer than two-thirds are good or outstanding.
3. Over the last 12 months, the top five academised LAs in the primary sector grew by nearly ten per cent, but these LAs did not grow in the secondary phase, largely because three are already over 90 per cent academised.
4. Academisation in this region's LAs ranges from six per cent in Lewisham to 87 per cent in Bromley. London LAs have higher proportions of academies compared with non-London LAs.

Key facts: 28 per cent of state schools in the region are academised.

21%

of **primary** schools are academies

3.4

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

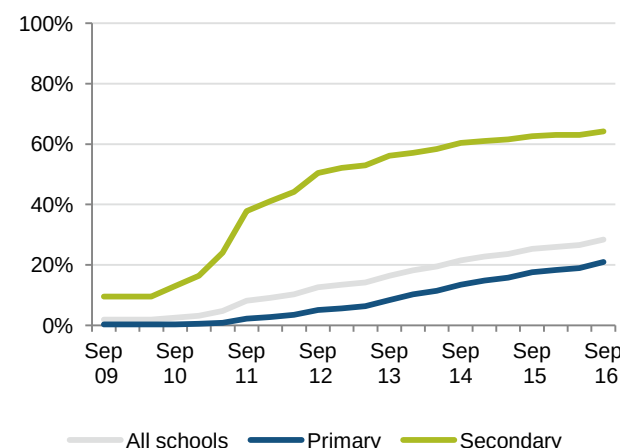
64%

of **secondary** schools are academies

1.6

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

Growth in academisation in the primary and secondary phases was below the national average over the last 12 months.

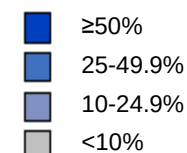
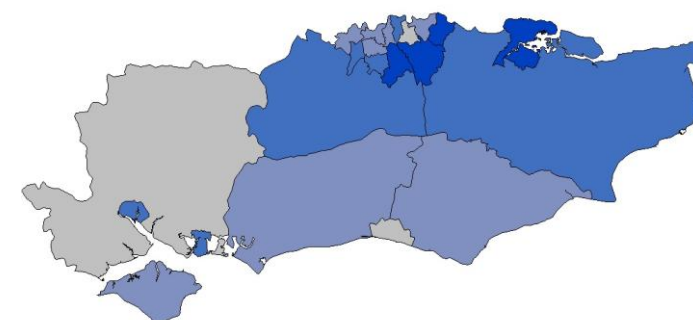
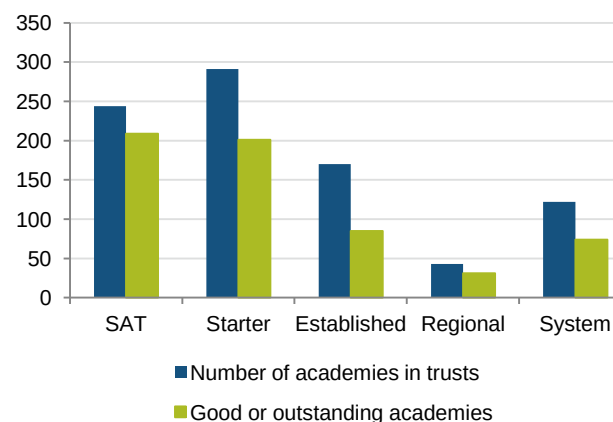


Growth has been fastest in the primary phase in highly academised LAs. There has been little growth in the secondary phase by either the five most or least academised LAs.

	Primary	Secondary
Top 5 academised LAs	9.2%	0.0%
Bottom 5 academised LAs	0.2%	0.8%

The proportion of academies in LAs in this region varies the most compared with other RSC regions: three of the LAs have fewer than ten per cent of their schools academised while in one LA, Bromley, 87 per cent of its schools are academies.

About one in seven academies in the region are in a system trust, the highest proportion of all RSC regions.



South-West England has the highest level of academisation amongst RSC regions. It has seen the largest growth in primary academies since September 2015 but the lowest in the secondary sector.

1. Although the region has had the strongest growth in the last 12 months, this has mostly been in the primary sector, resulting in a narrowing of the gap between the two sectors.
2. The region has a large number of good and outstanding academies among SATs who could potentially expand and sponsor underperforming schools in the future.
3. The highest academised LAs have grown by 14 per cent in the primary sector and are mostly responsible for the growth seen across this region in the last 12 months.
4. Academisation varies widely between LAs in this region*, from 90 per cent in Bournemouth, the most academised LA in the country, to 22 per cent in South Gloucestershire.

*This excluded Isles of Scilly

Key facts: 38 per cent of state schools in the region are academised.

32%

of **primary** schools
are academies

7.2

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

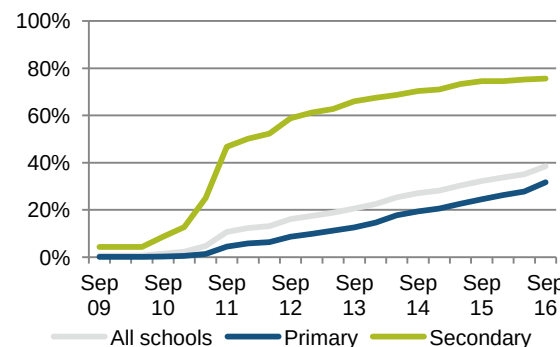
76%

of **secondary** schools
are academies

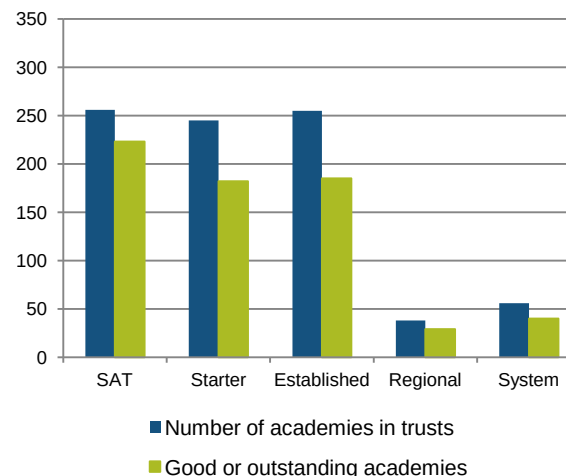
1.1

percentage point
increase since
September 2015

Growth in academisation was strongest among all RSC regions in the primary sector, but weakest in the secondary.



South-West England has the highest number of academies in established trusts, three-quarters of which are good or outstanding.

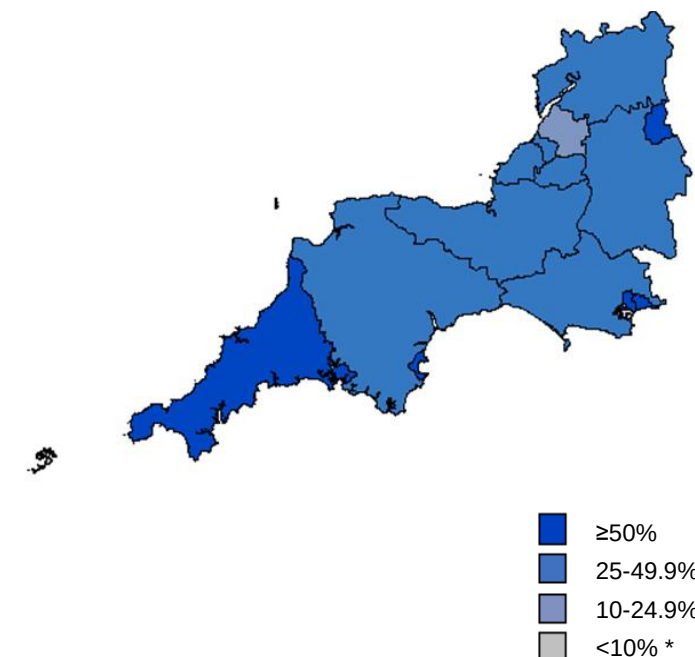


The highest academised LAs in the primary sector have grown very fast. Conversely there has been little growth in the secondary sector.

	Primary	Secondary
Top 5 academised LAs	14.1%	-0.4%*
Bottom 5 academised LAs	3.7%	1.4%

* The only change amongst the top 5 academised LAs in the last 12 months was the closure of a free school

The level of academisation varies by LA; over a third of the LAs in the region have more than 50 per cent of their schools academised.



* There are no LAs with <10 per cent academisation.

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Appendix A: Data tables

Number and percentage of academies by region and phase

Table A1: Number of state schools by RSC region and school type (primary and secondary phases, excludes post-16)

2016		All schools									
RSC region	LA maintained schools		Academy Converters		Academy Sponsor-led		Free Schools		All Schools	All Academies	Academies Overall
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	N	%
North of England	1394	82	230	13	72	4	13	1	1709	315	18
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	2573	82	344	11	189	6	50	2	3156	583	18
East Midlands and the Humber	1654	66	607	24	238	9	18	1	2517	863	34
West Midlands	1726	69	505	20	219	9	40	2	2490	764	31
East of England and North-East London	1522	68	395	18	267	12	53	2	2237	715	32
North-West London and South-Central England	1981	71	525	19	188	7	93	3	2787	806	29
South-East England and South London	2197	72	527	17	287	9	56	2	3067	870	28
South-West England	1361	62	636	29	184	8	30	1	2211	850	38
TOTAL	14,408	71	3769	19	1644	8	353	2	20,174	5766	29

Note:

N = number

Table A2: Number of state schools by RSC region and school type (primary phase)

2016											
Primary											
RSC region	LA maintained schools		Academy Converters		Academy Sponsor-led		Free Schools		All Schools	All Academies	Academies Overall
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	N	%
North of England	1266	88	143	10	32	2	3	0	1444	178	12
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	2337	88	194	7	97	4	16	1	2644	307	12
East Midlands and the Humber	1556	73	418	20	155	7	6	0	2135	579	27
West Midlands	1579	78	303	15	138	7	10	0	2030	451	22
East of England and North-East London	1419	76	227	12	191	10	20	1	1857	438	24
North-West London and South-Central England	1855	82	261	11	113	5	45	2	2274	419	18
South-East England and South London	2008	79	318	13	184	7	29	1	2539	531	21
South-West England	1278	68	459	25	126	7	7	0	1870	592	32
TOTAL	13,298	79	2323	14	1036	6	136	1	16,793	3495	21

Note:

N = number

Table A3: Number of state schools by RSC region and school type (secondary phase, excludes post-16)

2016											
RSC region	Secondary										
	LA maintained schools		Academy Converters		Academy Sponsor-led		Free Schools		All Schools	All Academies	Academies Overall
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	N	%
North of England	128	48	87	33	40	15	10	4	265	137	52
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	236	46	150	29	92	18	34	7	512	276	54
East Midlands and the Humber	98	26	189	49	83	22	12	3	382	284	74
West Midlands	147	32	202	44	81	18	30	7	460	313	68
East of England and North-East London	103	27	168	44	76	20	33	9	380	277	73
North-West London and South-Central London	126	25	264	51	75	15	48	9	513	387	75
South-East England and South London	189	36	209	40	103	20	27	5	528	339	64
South-West England	83	24	177	52	58	17	23	7	341	258	76
TOTAL	1110	33	1446	43	608	18	217	6	3381	2271	67

Note:

N = number

Ten most and least academised LAs by region

Six regions have at least one LA featuring in the top ten most academised LAs nationally. None of the top ten LAs is in the West Midlands or Lancashire and West Yorkshire.

Table A4: Ten most academised LAs and their RSC region

LA	Level of academisation %	RSC region
Bournemouth	90	South-West England
North-East Lincolnshire	82	East Midlands and the Humber
Darlington	78	North of England
Thurrock	73	East of England and North-East London
Bromley	87	South-East and South London
Torbay	74	South-West England
Rutland	70	East Midlands and the Humber
Poole	70	South-West England
Kingston upon Hull	65	East Midlands and the Humber
Slough	63	North-West London and South-Central England

The ten least academised LAs, which all have fewer than ten per cent of their schools academised, are split across four RSC regions.

Table A5: Ten least academised LAs and their RSC region

LA	Level of academisation %	RSC region
North Tyneside	4	North of England
Bury	5	Lancashire and West Yorkshire
Lancashire	6	Lancashire and West Yorkshire
Lewisham	6	South-East and South London
St Helens	6	Lancashire and West Yorkshire
Camden	8	North-West London and South-Central England
Brighton and Hove	8	South-East and South London
Bracknell Forest	8	North-West London and South-Central England
Rochdale	9	Lancashire and West Yorkshire
Hampshire	9	South-East and South London

Profile of academies in MAT groupings

Table A6: Profile of academies in MAT groupings

Classification	Trusts			Schools			Pupils		
	Number of Trusts	Percentage of all Trusts %	Percentage of all MATs %	Number of academies and free schools	Percentage of all schools in Trusts %	Percentage of all schools in MAT %	Number of pupils in academies and free schools (000s)	Percentage of all pupils in schools in Trusts %	Percentage of all pupils in schools in MATs %
Single-Academy Trusts	1763	63		1763	31		1,023,410	39	
Starter Trusts	853	31	83	2003	35	50	899,054	34	55
Established Trusts	150	5	15	1193	21	30	419,549	16	26
Regional Trusts	17	1	2	355	6	9	127,608	5	8
System Trusts	11	0	1	452	8	11	185,490	7	11
Total	2794			5766			2,655,111		

Appendix B: Methodology

Methodological notes for report	
Academisation by RSC region and local authority	Numbers and percentages of schools by type and phase in each RSC region or local authority are based on data from Edubase, reflecting school status as of 16 September 2016. This is to reflect the full picture of academisation at the start of the current academic year, and to allow records to reflect any change in status as of, or shortly after, 1 September. The analysis includes all mainstream state-funded primary, secondary and all-through schools. All-through schools are grouped together with secondary schools for analysis by phase. The analysis excludes post-16 institutions (i.e. further education colleges, sixth form centres and sixth form colleges, 16–19 Academies and Free Schools), special schools and alternative provision. Long-term trends are based on term-by-term snapshots derived from the same edubase extract, reflecting the number and type of school reported to be open at each point in time. The three term-by-term snapshots per academic year are based on data from September, January and May, from 2009–10 to 2015–16, plus September 2016.
School performance	Numbers and percentages of schools below floor standards are based on data from the DfE performance tables for the academic years 2012–13, 2013–14 and 2014–15. This data includes school type at the start of the corresponding academic year. For the purpose of the analysis, current academies have been matched to their predecessors to link attainment and change in status over time.
Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs)	Data on academy trusts is available from Edubase and reflects the status quo as of 16 September 2016. The size of MATs was calculated based on the total number of institutions recorded as being part of a trust, including post-16 institutions, as well as special schools and alternative provisions. However, post-16 institutions, special schools and alternative provisions have been excluded from the analysis. Therefore, the reported number of trusts excludes those consisting entirely of post-16 institutions, special schools or alternative provisions. Also, the number of schools and pupils in each trust excludes those same institutions. The number of pupils in each trust category is based on the latest available data from the January 2016 school census. Therefore, it does not reflect the number of pupils on roll in the current academic year. While we have matched recent academies to the records of their predecessors, new provisions for the current academic year are necessarily not accounted for.

Methodological notes for region profiles	Total number of schools by region, primary, secondary and all-through only, excludes post-16 institutions, special school and alternative provision. Source: Edubase, 16 September 2016.	Total number of pupils by region, KS1 to KS4 only, excludes special school and alternative provision pupils. Source: School-level data from January 2016 census.	Total number of primary academies by region, includes Free Schools, excludes special schools and alternative provision. Source: Edubase, 16 September 2016.	Total number of secondary academies by region, includes all-through academies, Free Schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools, excludes special schools and alternative provision. Source: Edubase, 16 September 2016.
All analysis based on national data available in September 2016.	Quarterly rates of academisation by region, for primary schools, secondary schools (including all-through schools) and all schools. Academies include Free Schools, UTCs and Studio Schools. Analysis excludes post-16 institutions, special schools and alternative provision. Source: NFER analysis based on data from Edubase, 16 September 2016.	Average percentage point variation in the proportion of academies by phase, for the five most academised and five least academised LAs in each region, based on overall academisation. Secondary phase includes all-through academies, Free Schools, UTCs and Studio Schools, and excludes special schools and alternative provision. Source: NFER analysis based on data from Edubase, 16 September 2016.		
	Academy Trust categories based on classification developed by Sir David Carter. The classification of each trust is based on total number of schools reported, including post-16 institutions, special schools and alternative provisions. Analysis of number of schools and percentage by Ofsted category excludes post-16 institutions, special schools and alternative provisions. Calculated percentages by Ofsted rating include schools for which an Ofsted rating was not yet available (i.e. new provisions such as free schools or sponsor-led academies). Source: NFER analysis based on data from Edubase, 16 September 2016, and Ofsted's school inspection outcomes, 31 August 2016.	Primary, secondary and all-through academies as a percentage of all schools, by local authority includes Free Schools, UTCs and Studio Schools and excludes post-16 institutions, special schools and alternative provision. Source: Edubase, 16 September 2016.		

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ISBN: 978-1-911039-28-0