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Cambridge News > News > Home > Primary pupils fall well below national average

Print page 

Primary pupils fall well below national average

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PRIMARY pupils' performances in the three Rs have dropped dramatically in Cambridgeshire, new Government figures suggest.

Scores in reading, writing and arithmetic in the county all deteriorated in 2009, the Department for Children, Schools and Families has revealed.

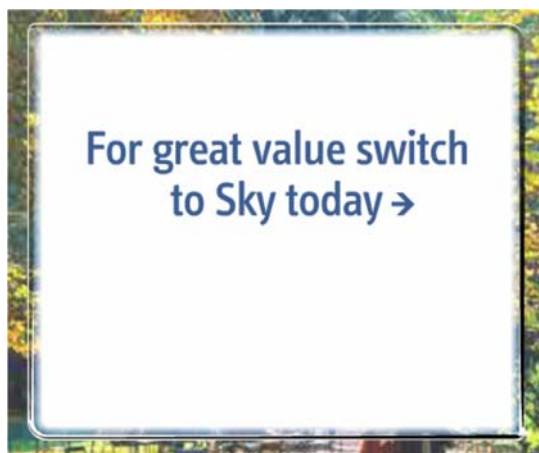
The news comes as a new report from Cambridge University academics voiced broad concerns about the state of primary school education.

The new figures from the Department for Children, Schools and Families found results dropped in all 13 areas in which pupils were assessed, and Cambridgeshire's marks in all categories were below the national average.

Categories pupils were assessed on included reading, writing and calculating, as well as social and emotional development.

The Cambridge Primary Review, the most comprehensive review of early years education for 40 years, has concluded that formal schooling should not begin until the age of 6.

It found children respond better to play-based learning at a young age, arguing that, in the current education system, "quality is too variable, and too many staff are underqualified or poorly paid".



The review, six years in the planning and writing, also called for SATs exams at the end of primary school to be scrapped, and criticised the testing system for making the entire curriculum too narrow.

The report, published today (Friday, 16 October), said: "As children move through the primary phase, their statutory entitlement to a broad and balanced education is increasingly but needlessly compromised by a 'standards' agenda which combines

high-stakes testing and the national strategies' exclusive focus on literacy and numeracy."

The authors also said that since 1997 the New Labour Government had become too involved in the education system.

Nansi Ellis, head of education policy and research at the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) union, said: "The report reflects and strengthens the views of the profession that central direction of the curriculum, national testing and inspection devastate the innovative, challenging and high quality teaching that children need."

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