

## Report of Director of Children's Services

### Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

**Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

**Subject: An update on progress following the Scrutiny Inquiry into Raising Attainment in Maths and English**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. Between December 2012 and May 2013, the Children and Families Scrutiny Board conducted an inquiry into raising attainment in maths and English as it was evident there are a number of barriers preventing a significant number of children and young people in Leeds from achieving mathematics and English qualifications.
2. The Board conducted its inquiry over five sessions during which written and oral evidence was presented and discussed. The inquiry heard from a range of key stakeholders involved in supporting young people in this area including council services and schools leaders (including those from Teaching School Alliances).
3. This led to the production of a Scrutiny Inquiry Report in September 2013 containing 9 recommendations and a subsequent response from Children's Services in December 2013.
4. The recommendations included a request for an update on progress in April 2014

### Recommendations

5. The Board are requested to note and comment on the progress in raising attainment in Maths and English.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report provides a progress update in relation to the recommendations of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board inquiry into Raising Attainment in Maths and English

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 In June 2012, the Scrutiny Board was presented with an overview of The Leeds Education Challenge, a city-wide campaign to accelerate improvement in learning outcomes for 180,000 children and young people. The presentation highlighted that whilst general attainment is close to national averages, improvement rates are slow. Comparative data also highlighted that Leeds' position when compared to 151 other authorities was particularly low for GCSE attainment at 5 A\*-C, which included English and maths. As a result, the Board resolved to undertake an inquiry into raising attainment in maths and English as it was evident there are a number of barriers preventing children and young people in Leeds from achieving maths and English qualifications.
- 2.2 The purpose of the inquiry was to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:
- The approach of educational establishments to teaching maths and English
  - Leadership, strategies and systems for improvement
  - Teaching methods, skills and capacity
  - Targeted maths and English support for children and young people, monitoring progress, tracking improvement and target setting
  - Assisting parents and carers to support children and young people in maths and English education
- 2.3 During the course of the five sessions the inquiry received a range of written and oral evidence from range of key stakeholders involved in supporting young people in this area including council services and schools leaders (including those from Teaching School Alliances)
- 2.4 This led to the production of a Scrutiny Inquiry Report in September 2013 containing 9 recommendations and a subsequent response from Children's Services in December 2013.
- 2.5 The Scrutiny Inquiry Report also requested an update on progress in April 2014

### 3 Main issues

A progress update to each of the recommendations of the Board is set out below.

#### 3.1 **Recommendation 1 – That the Director of Children’s Services in collaboration with Cluster Partnerships undertakes detailed analysis of schools who are achieving in challenging circumstances to identify the source(s) and reasons for their success which may then assist other schools in similar challenging circumstances. The Director is requested to provide a progress report to the Scrutiny Board at the April 2014 meeting.**

##### 3.1.1 In the autumn term 2013, as part of the annual school review cycle, all LA maintained schools and some academies had an in depth scrutiny of the standards achieved in 2013. This provided an up to date picture of schools in challenging circumstances that had achieved significant success with their young people. We subsequently identified a few of these to be the focus of more in-depth case studies. These schools were:

- A group of primary schools that are part of an EMA Hub project – namely the main hubs schools of Bankside Primary School (Harehills), Beecroft PS (Kirkstall), St. Bartholomew’s PS (Armley) and St Peter’s PS working with a number of partner schools. The majority of the schools are now judged as good or better by Ofsted. **(See Appendix 1a, Case Study 7)**
- Cockburn high School. This school is currently judged as good by Ofsted and is aiming to be outstanding. Levels of pupil progress are very high and the value added score is the highest in the city. **(See Appendix 1a, Case Study 4)**
- The Farnley Academy. This school was judged by Ofsted to be inadequate in 2011 but, as a result of a rapid increase in student achievement over the past three years and a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning, was recently judged as outstanding by Ofsted. **(See Appendix 1a, Case Studies 3a and 3b)**
- The Inner East cluster of 13 primary schools. These schools have made significant progress in terms of pupil outcomes. **(See Appendix 1a, Case Study 8)**

##### 3.1.2 The successes achieved by all the above schools are due in large part to their success in closing the gap between vulnerable learners and their peers.

##### 3.1.3 The second stage of our approach to addressing this recommendation is to ensure that these successes are shared more widely in a number of ways:

- Secondary headteachers and academy principals in Leeds have agreed to adopt a new approach to their cycle of meetings during the year and from March 2014 onwards are now basing their meeting in schools and academies across the city. At each meeting, one school or academy will be invited to share their good practice with the wider group. In March 2014, The Farnley Academy gave a well-received presentation to this group and at subsequent meetings in the

summer term, Cockburn High School and The Rodillian Academy will host similar sessions.

- It is intended that some of the programmes linked to the work of the Closing the Gap team (such as the primary EMA Hub school programme) will be rolled out to more schools. In addition, the successes of the primary schools identified above will be shared more widely through the various networking opportunities that exist, for example the deputy headteachers', maths and literacy subject leaders' networks.
- There are a number of headteachers of schools in challenging circumstances who are National or Local Leaders of Education. We are ensuring that these colleagues are deployed effectively to support other similar schools. Examples here include NLEs from Rodillian (supporting John Smeaton Academy), Swinnow Primary School (previously supporting Hillcrest) and Morley Victoria (supporting Burley St. Matthias). In addition, Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) based in schools in challenging circumstances are increasingly being deployed to support colleagues in other schools (e.g. SLEs from Cockburn High School have supported City of Leeds School). [See also Recommendation 7 and Appendix 5]

**3.2 Recommendation 2 – That the Director of Children’s Services undertakes an investigation and detailed analysis to identify the underlying issues that create barriers to achievement in Maths and English for vulnerable children in Leeds. The Director is requested to provide a progress report to the Scrutiny Board at the April 2014 meeting.**

3.2.1 We have taken a three-fold approach to addressing this recommendation. Firstly the Learning Improvement and Children’s Performance teams have undertaken a ‘deep dive’ of 2013 data to ensure that there is an up-to-date picture of the current achievement levels in maths and English for vulnerable learners at all key stages (Early Years Foundation Stage profile and Key Stages 1,2 and 4). Secondly, research has taken place to clearly identify the underlying issues that create barriers to achievement in Maths and English for vulnerable children in Leeds. We have then identified some key actions going forward which are intended to address the issues. It is also important to state that the term ‘vulnerable children’ can be applied to many different cohorts of children - for the purposes of this analysis, the vulnerable groups whose outcomes in Maths and English have been studied in detail are children in receipt of free school meals, looked after children, children with a statement of SEN and children with English as an additional language. The following paragraphs sum up the main findings – more detail can be found in **Appendix 2 (2a, 2b and 2c).**

3.2.2 Data tabled in **Appendix 2a** suggests that the vulnerable group who most underachieve in Maths and English at all key stages are those who are in receipt of free school meals. This gap is wider in Leeds than the gap seen nationally. At key stage 4, there is a sub-cohort of white boys in receipt of free school meals whose attainment in the two subjects is significantly below that of every other FSM cohort except for Gypsy Roma boys.

- 3.2.3 There is a gap between the achievement of children in Leeds for English and Maths who are looked after and those who are not. However, this gap is not hugely different from the disparity seen nationally. The outcomes for pupils with English as an additional language are lower than for those whose first language is English but the gap is not as large as that for pupils in receipt of FSM suggesting that social deprivation is a bigger barrier to achievement than not having English as a first language. Pupils with SEN performed well compared to pupils with SEN nationally, but those who are School Action did not.
- 3.2.4 Research into why vulnerable children in Leeds underachieve compared to their peers nationally suggests the following reasons may be significant. Firstly, there are a number of families in Leeds who experience multiple disadvantage and this adversely affects the outcomes for their children in school. There are eight Leeds' schools where the number of children in receipt of free school meals is over 50%. Of these schools, six are judged to be inadequate or requiring improvement and seven of them have academy status. Absence and persistent absence appear to be key issues in Leeds with the data indicating a worse picture in Leeds than at a national level, with vulnerable children more likely to be absent from school. Historically low attainment at primary level in Leeds is a trend that has continued into secondary level which then makes it harder for the gap to be closed between vulnerable cohorts and those who are not at Key Stage 4. Budgetary pressures in education in Leeds, as at national level, will also have had a greater impact on the achievement of vulnerable children in Leeds. These are detailed at greater length in **Appendix 2b**.
- 3.2.5 Many barriers to achievement lie "outside the school gates." An important strand of the refreshed learning strategy for Leeds is to continue to explore the relationship between "in school" and "beyond school" factors. This is an extremely complex area which relates to the impact, history and development of the wider social, economic and cultural context of the school. Not all of these areas will be open to influence by schools or the local authority. However, it is important that the Leeds strategy includes a focus on understanding the full scope and potential of work with cluster partners, parents, families, and communities to unlock areas where action will impact on educational outcomes as well as on the wider health and well-being of the community. Nor is it simply about what is in and out of school. Some of the most complex areas are where in and out of school factors meet. For example, how and to what extent classroom practice and interaction relates to wider factors. All of these areas require further work and a detailed examination of what impacts on particular schools, and what is likely to work in particular areas.
- 3.2.6 Due to the size of the free school meal pupil cohort and the extent of the attainment gap between that cohort and the non-FSM cohort, we have ensured that LA school improvement priorities have continued to focus on this. At both primary and secondary level, school improvement adviser visits and reports focus specifically on the achievement of vulnerable pupils. At primary level, training sessions on the effective use of data reinforce the importance of scrutinising the data for vulnerable groups and identifying appropriate actions as a result. At secondary level, the effective use of pupil premium has formed part of subject network meetings throughout Year 3 of the Leeds Learning Partnership (LLP) and this will continue in Year 4. In addition, we have added the option for schools to buy into an LLP

'Advanced Membership' which is dedicated to closing the gap. Primary EAL projects have focussed on developing literacy so that those pupils are secondary ready. A number of future actions have been identified which include ensuring that there is an even closer correlation between the data analysis of schools with large numbers of vulnerable pupils and the support and/or intervention required. In addition, we intend to visit other local authorities where there has been real success in closing the gaps and using more widely the expertise of schools in Leeds that are also making headway in this regard. Other recommendations are detailed in **Appendix 2c**.

**3.3 Recommendation 3 – That the Director of Children's Services scrutinises the early entry policies for maths and English GCSE examinations for secondary schools in Leeds to ensure that policies are not counterproductive to pupil attainment. The Director is requested to provide a progress report to the Scrutiny Board at the April 2014 meeting.**

- 3.3.1 Since the scrutiny board inquiry and subsequent recommendations, the DfE announcement in November 2013 stipulated that GCSEs would become linear with assessment at the end of the course. November entries are no longer possible as early entry points.
- 3.3.2 November 2013 was the final opportunity for schools to use November as an early entry point and the final time that the 20% for speaking and listening skills contributed towards the English GCSE grade. This earlier result, no matter if the pupil is entered again in June, will count for official statistics, even if the pupil produces an improved grade.
- 3.3.3 Ofsted has revised its subsidiary guidance to say: "For inspections after the publication of the 2014 results where pupils' GCSE grades have changed as a result of examination entries, inspectors will take account of all available information" (paragraph 41 of Ofsted subsidiary guidance January 2014). This means that they will consider internal data provided by the school during inspection on the best a pupil has achieved in order to make a judgement.
- 3.3.4 In the most recent Carr Manor inspection (February 2014), the Ofsted report states: 'The school enters a small number of students early for GCSE examinations in English and mathematics. This is used to identify specific weaknesses in what they know and can do. This forms the basis for focused support to improve their grades further. Early entry does not hold students back; quite the opposite, in fact'.
- 3.3.5 Since the DfE announcement we have been working closely with a number of schools to monitor the impact of this policy change and encouraging all secondary settings to respond to requests for information. In mathematics, of the 24 secondary setting respondents, 18 entered pupils in November 2013. These schools have a range of Ofsted judgements from grades 1 to 4. Three of these schools entered the full cohort. Of these three, the results show a range of below, at and exceeding expected three levels of progress (LP). These three schools had prepared pupils extensively for the November examination. Late withdrawal was considered too disruptive to pupil learning. The other 15 settings entered specific cohorts. Those settings who entered specific cohorts gave the following reasons: pupils who were at

risk of non or reduced attendance by the June examination; pupils who were ready to achieve A/A\*; pupils who had just missed an A or C grade in the end of year 10 exams; low ability pupils who had been prepared for the exam and any late change would have disrupted their learning; pupils who attend off-site provision, pupils identified who could secure the C grade on the Foundation paper and then take the Higher paper in June after specific teaching. Results from all schools evidence a range of outcomes ranging from below, achieving and exceeding 3LP. At this stage, there is no discernible pattern of under or over achievement according to entry policy.

- 3.3.6 In English, of the 26 respondents, 18 entered pupils for the November 2013 exam. 6 of those entered the whole cohort and 12 entered specific cohorts. The fact that November 2013 was the final opportunity to include the 20% allocation for speaking and listening was the main reason for entry. Settings for both full and specific cohort entries offered the same range of reasons as mathematics for entry policies. 11 of the 18 settings felt that the entry had been a success. One school had a wider moderation issue which has impacted on overall grades despite receiving outstanding moderator feedback four months earlier. 7 of the respondents had seen A/A\* reductions but were adamant this was due to grade boundary and assessment changes rather than a misjudged entry policy. Some schools had continued to enter in November to enable English departments to assess current grades and predictions accurately and intervene effectively because of fluctuating grade boundaries. Some settings used/use the early entry option because of the restricted timescales of their pupils. For example for some pupils in the Hospital School and secure settings it is the only opportunity to sit the exam. Some schools achieved good or better rates of progress and well above national average for A\* to C grades. As in mathematics, there is no discernible pattern to outcomes and it is difficult to establish a control group against fluctuating boundaries.
- 3.3.7 As a comparison, an outstanding teaching school in a neighbouring authority entered the full cohort stating that pupils have such a good level of oral articulacy that it would be a disservice not to give them this final opportunity for this to be recognised. This school produced its 3<sup>rd</sup> best ever results from the November entry with 40% of pupils achieving 4LP and 88% A\*-C grades. This school also cited a reduction in expected A/A\* grades.
- 3.3.8 In conclusion, the most powerful reason for early entry is to enable precise and targeted intervention based on the detailed exam results data. Schools that do this effectively enable pupils to achieve and exceed expected achievement/attainment. Schools where capacity or practice is limited and this is not done effectively will produce poor achievement/attainment as a result of the early entry policy.
- 3.3.9 The school improvement service monitors and evaluates the progress of these schools according to the Learning Improvement Strategy. Close scrutiny and evaluation of progress towards targets in achievement and attainment forms part of regular monitoring visits. Following the summer 2014 examination results, we will be undertaking a detailed analysis of all the available data to ascertain the full impact of this significant change in policy.

- 3.4 **Recommendation 4 – That the Director of Children’s Services investigates the viability of collaborating with schools in the design and implementation of city wide standardised reporting format for feeder schools to provide consistent high quality information to secondary schools to aid the transition process. The Director is requested to provide a progress report to the Scrutiny Board at the April 2014 meeting.**
- 3.4.1 Since the start of this scrutiny inquiry, there has been a key policy change that makes this recommendation considerably more difficult to achieve in the short term.
- 3.4.2 In Summer 2013 the government unexpectedly announced the end of National Curriculum Levels from September 2014 following a recommendation from the expert group on National Curriculum Review. The DfE has a stated policy of autonomy for schools so that they have the freedom to develop their own means of assessing pupils’ progress towards end of key stage expectations. Levels had given a common tool to communicate between schools and other stakeholders at both a local and national level. If a number of different assessment systems now emerge this may lead to difficulties in comparability and common understanding. Schools therefore need to work in collaboration to ensure a consistent approach to assessment so that high quality information is available at any transition point.
- 3.4.3 The National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) set up an independent commission on testing and assessment following the DfE’s decision to remove levels without replacement. The first report from the commission, published February 2014, gives clear advice and guidance to support schools in determining new assessment arrangements in relation to the curriculum and pupils’ learning. A member of the commission, Tim Sherriff, has been invited to share the commission’s initial findings with Leeds schools on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2014. In addition a working party has been developed by school leaders for school leaders to look at how best to collaborate and find a way forward, the first meeting took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014.
- 3.4.4 The outcomes of the above will then inform future decisions about possible citywide standardised reporting formats to be used in the primary/secondary transition process.
- 3.5 **Recommendation 5 – That the Director of Children’s Services facilitates dialogue and action at the appropriate level/forum to reinforce the importance of providing accurate and realistic pupil information to secondary schools throughout the whole transition process. The Director is requested to advise the Scrutiny Board of the proposed process for facilitating dialogue in the Director’s response.**
- 3.5.1 There are current issues around lack of trust in the accuracy of pupil information passed on to secondary schools (including attainment levels achieved in national assessed SATs). We believe that the way forward to address these issues is to encourage and facilitate more joint working across the primary and secondary phase. The following commentary highlights some of the ways in which this recommendation is being addressed, either through the facilitation of new ways of working or by identifying and sharing good practice that already exists in this area. This should of



course be viewed within the context of what is stated above in relation to recommendation 4 – i.e. the future removal of levels

3.5.2 We have facilitated some cross-phase moderation of pupils' work to develop a deeper understanding of pupil levels to ensure assessments are accurate and points for improvement are accurately identified. One of the Children Services primary consultants has undertaken a specific piece of cross-phase work (involving pupils in year 5 to 8 in Leeds primary and secondary catholic schools) to build a better understanding of different attainment levels in English across the primary and secondary sectors. **(See Appendix 1a - Case Study 1, and Appendix 1b - data)**. Another cross-phase programme is underway in the South Leeds cluster of schools involving Cockburn High School and six primary schools, the aim here being to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy, avoiding the attainment dip that can happen through the transition process **(See Appendix 1a, Case Study 2)**

3.5.3 In addition, there is much good practice taking place in relation to information sharing about vulnerable pupils to ensure their progress is not disrupted as they transfer from primary to secondary school. Some examples include:

- The development of cross phase programmes of work in some clusters such as the use of Numicon (where a maths teacher at high school visits feeder schools to test upcoming students in Maths in order to ensure appropriate provision in Year 7) and the use of Active Literacy Kit/ Units of Sound for literacy development across a number of primary/ high school.
- SEN Case work for Year 6 students – detailed reports go to high school SENCOs to ensure secondary staff are aware of needs and provision required. These students are followed up in Year 7 with consultation provided to ensure their needs are being addressed, that appropriate provision is in place so that good progress continues. SEN case work also gives indicators on which students need access arrangements for examinations.
- The use of targeted data: all students entering Year 7 with Maths and /or English below Level 2 are offered consultation and intervention. There has also been a focus on students entering year 7 with a two level discrepancy between English and Maths which leads to discussion about suitable provision/ grouping with secondary school SENCOs. Advice is also given to secondary SENCOs on suitable assessments to carry out at the beginning of Year 7 e.g. reading, phonics, spelling, writing, Maths.

3.5.4 More generally, there is a range of other strategies being developed to ensure greater collaboration and more consistent continuity of pupil progress across the primary/secondary transition phase. These include:

- The employment of primary-trained teachers in secondary schools - either to support 'nurture groups' or to provide intervention for students who have fallen behind / are not achieving their potential. Pupil premium funding and the 'Y7 catch up premium' are often used to employ such teachers whose experience in knowing how to support students at these levels is proving invaluable. They

can also be a valuable source of information and expertise for the secondary teachers in key pedagogical strategies such as effective differentiation.

- The opportunity for primary pupils to experience wider curriculum opportunities at secondary schools. These include the provision of master classes when more able primary students aiming for the higher levels are invited to attend 'master classes' in the secondary school with specialist maths /English teachers. Primary teachers are also increasingly being asked to support secondary colleagues to develop strategies and interventions relating to pupils assessed as being at the lower levels.
- The development of 'through schools' in Leeds e.g. Roundhay School and Carr Manor Community School. Both these schools have established themselves quickly as effective through schools, as endorsed by recent Ofsted inspections, and it is anticipated that, as the age range of the primary phases increases, the two schools will become centres of excellence for transition.
- Some primary schools send their children to secondary schools with 'a best piece' of written work which is put into the secondary exercise book, generally in English, so teachers can see what the child is capable of.

3.5.5 An additional example worth highlighting in relation to effective transition is the participation of a secondary school and three feeder primary schools in a Comenius partnership bid with Leeds Development Education Centre (Leeds DEC). They will link with schools in Berlin on the theme of migration and transition from Key Stage 2-3. Key objectives include supporting improved attainment in the core subjects of English and mathematics) for migrant heritage students and identifying what teachers need to equip them to work with multi-ethnic populations, and improve their current practice in working with migrant heritage children.

3.6 **Recommendation 6 – That the Director of Children’s Services evaluates the improvement in education provision as a result of traded service and School Improvement Service engagement and identifies which interventions and support are the most effective in driving improvement forward. The Director is requested to provide a progress report to the Scrutiny Board at the April 2014 meeting.**

3.6.1 The School Improvement Service has continued to address this recommendation proactively and has a wealth of evidence that demonstrates that educational provision is improving in Leeds. This is most evident in the outcomes of Ofsted inspections across the city. Within the context of an Ofsted framework in which the bar is continually being raised, the number of schools judged as good or better has increased significantly over the past 18 months. Just over 104,000 of Leeds pupils - 78.43%- now attend a school rated as good or outstanding. Since September 2012, all Ofsted inspection report and HMI monitoring reports should include a comment about the quality of external support, whether this is from the Local Authority (for maintained schools) or the sponsor/trust (for academies). We have collated all these comments which present a positive picture about School Improvement Service engagement with Leeds schools and the impact on raising standards and improving outcomes. The comments relate to both the core offer (of adviser monitoring and challenge) or specific traded support. Below are examples of a few comments. A spreadsheet containing a full list all these comments can be accessed on the Leeds

City Council website and a hard copy will be made available to the Scrutiny Board by the Principal Scrutiny Advisor. (background information 3).

- 'The local authority has provided effective support in the teaching of English and mathematics to support raising achievement.'
- 'The local authority knows the school's strengths and areas for development. It provides additional support and training which has helped to raise standards in writing.'
- 'The local authority provides good support for the school. This has helped the school to identify accurately its strengths and areas for development and has helped senior and subject leaders to improve teaching and achievement to date'
- 'The school is receiving outstanding support from the local authority. The amount of support offered has been well-judged and matched to the needs of the school.'

3.6.2 Overall pupil outcomes at all key stages are outlined in the annual standards review but it is worth highlighting here that, whilst Leeds still remains below national averages against some of the key benchmarks, there is a wide range of improved outcomes. In April 2011 Brighouse and Woods, widely acknowledged experts in educational provision, carried out a stock take review of the state of education in Leeds. A summary of the issues raised and the progress made is shown below:

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Too few schools are rated as good or outstanding by OFSTED.</b>
Progress made:	The proportion of primary schools rated as good or outstanding has improved from 69% in 2011 to 82% in 2013. At secondary phase, the figure has improved from 54% to 58%. Leeds is now above the national figure for primary, but remains below at secondary phase.
<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Improvement in the number of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C GCSEs including English and math over a four year period has been slower than in other core cities and nationally.</b>
Progress made:	Leeds has improved outcomes by 2%pts, to 57% and is now 2%pts above Core cities average, but remains below the national figure of 61%.
<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Rates of improvement at Key Stage 2 are sluggish</b>
Progress made:	Attainment rates have improved in line with those seen nationally and now stand at 74% of pupils achieving L4+ in reading, writing & maths. Rates of progress between KS1 and KS2 continue to exceed those seen nationally, with Leeds in the first or second quartile of LAs on these measures.
<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Pupils eligible for free school meals often do worse in Leeds than elsewhere in all phases from the earliest years onwards</b>
Progress made:	There are still significant attainment gaps at Key stages 2 but the percentage of FSM eligible pupils making expected progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 is above the national rate seen for these pupils. At Key Stage 4, the proportion of pupils achieving 5+A*-C including English & maths has improved at twice the rate, seen nationally, thus narrowing the gap in outcomes which now stands at 7 percentage points.
<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Pupils from some BME groups do better in other cities</b>
Progress made:	There have been some improvements for some groups but consistent improvement is yet to be achieved.

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Attendance is below the national average and lower than in other core cities, persistent absence is a particular issue</b>
Progress made:	Attendance in the primary phase has improved from a below national position in 2011, to above national in 2012 and 2013. In the secondary phase, attendance improved at twice the national rate in 2012 and these levels of attendance were maintained in 2013. These rates remain the highest ever recorded in Leeds. In 2013, secondary persistent absence fell from 8.2% to 7.4%, equivalent to 198 fewer pupils being persistently absent. In the primary phase, persistent absenteeism has gone from being above national in 2011, to below national in 2013, based on provisional figures.
<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Too many primary and secondary schools fall below or uncomfortably close to floor standards for English and maths.</b>
Progress made:	Leeds is making progress in reducing the number of schools below floor standard. There were <i>16 primary schools below floor standards</i> in 2012/13 compared to 34 in 2011/12 and 21 in 2010/11; 6 secondary schools below in 2012/13, compared to 6 in 2011/12 and 7 in 2010/11)

3.6.3 Evaluation of the impact of both the primary and secondary traded services is detailed and on-going. The summary below identifies the main strands of the support and its impact. Greater detailed information can be accessed on the Leeds City Council website and a hard copy will be made available to the Scrutiny Board by the Principal Scrutiny Advisor. (background information 4a and 4b).

#### 3.6.4 Primary Schools

3.6.5 In 2012-2013, 73 schools bought a five day or more bespoke package of support, 101 schools purchased 147 ad hoc days of support and the primary team delivered in the region of 145 training events attended by approximately 4,000 delegates. Headteachers rated this service as follows:

- 85.7% stated overall effectiveness as excellent and 14.3% as good
- 80% rated the support as being excellent and 20% as being good in terms of matching the support to identified needs
- 96.9% stated that the traded service offers 'value for money.'

3.6.6 In 2013-2014, 84 schools have bought a five day (or more) bespoke package of support with 157 schools purchasing 166 days of support on a pay as you go basis. So far the team has delivered in the region of one-hundred and ninety seven training events involving approximately 5,000 delegates. Evaluation is still taking place but based on the returns so far, 75% of headteacher state overall effectiveness as excellent and 25% as good. All state that the traded service offers 'value for money' because of the outstanding way the team is prepared, has relevant/up-to-date knowledge/expertise, and effective communication skills. Specific examples of impact cited by schools include improvements in the quality of the teaching of literacy and greater consistency in calculation at a whole school level.

3.6.7 The annual Maths and Literacy Conferences in October 2013 were attended by 164 delegates across the two conferences with very positive feedback. The Maths cross-phase conference was rated overall as follows: 19% excellent, 75% good and 6% as

satisfactory. 75% of delegates at the literacy conference rated it as excellent overall, with 25% rating it as good. Overall evaluation ratings from delegates attending maths and English courses are also extremely positive - 58% rated maths training as excellent and 42% as good. English training was rated as excellent by 68% of attendees, 31% as good and 1% as satisfactory. Comments from delegates overall report that they are inspired, challenged and supported to reflect on their teaching to utilise the learning gained back in school, with staff and children to impact on outcomes.

### 3.6.8 **Secondary Schools:**

- 3.6.9 Evaluation of the secondary traded service training and development programme, the Leeds Learning Partnership (LLP) during its first 2 years has shown that delegates have rated the effectiveness of all traded CPD provision on average as either good or outstanding. Comments from delegates provide evidence of the impact the service has had in developing the leadership capacity of subject and senior leaders across the partnership.
- 3.6.10 Analysis of questionnaires distributed to subject leaders in Summer 2013 reported that the percentage of lessons rated good or outstanding had increased in 58% of departments. The questionnaires also indicated that as a result of partnership membership and the focus on teaching and learning, with a particular emphasis on the findings of John Hattie's 'Visible Learning' research, that awareness had been raised on the importance of feedback and strategies to improve its effectiveness for 73% of respondents.
- 3.6.11 Literacy modules have been created by the secondary learning improvement team and facilitated by Learning and Teaching Specialists (the school based lead practitioners who work alongside the secondary learning improvement team to plan and deliver the traded service CPD programme). These have been a key element of the LLP's network and conference programme in 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14. Analysis of the Summer 2013 subject leader questionnaires evidenced that 99% of respondents had developed classroom practice to ensure opportunities for literacy were clearly planned for. In contrast 75% of respondents indicated that opportunities to exploit mathematics were clearly planned for.
- 3.6.12 In Summer 2012, literacy and 'mathematics across the curriculum' leader networks were established following the successful literacy conference (Summer 2012) and mathematics across the curriculum conference (Autumn 2012). Both conferences drew on both local and national expertise and best practice. In 2013/14 the mathematics across the curriculum (MAC) and literacy across the curriculum (LAC) strategic development plan was drawn up to facilitate expertise and knowledge transfer in evidencing impact and setting priorities for MAC/LAC development. This enabled MAC/LAC leaders to address staff CPD and the new curriculum through LAC/MAC activities and to ensure MAC/LAC leaders can present self-evaluation and priorities to wider stakeholders and influence outcomes. Case studies exemplify the impact of these networks.
- 3.6.13 In 2013/14 Case Studies were conducted to review the effectiveness of Leeds Learning Partnership membership. The benefits identified by schools of partnership membership include:

- localised networking;
- collaboration
- its responsiveness to locally identified need as well as national directives;
- the LLP's ability to attract high profile educationalists including subject HMIs to contribute to networks and conferences;
- engaging with and responding to current educational research and best practice;
- the development of the leadership skills of the Learning and Teaching Specialists that can be exploited back in their own schools.

3.6.14 In 2013/14 the Mathematics Pedagogy and Practice (MPP) programme was established as part of LLP silver membership to develop pedagogy and practice in areas of mathematics identified through Ofsted's 'mathematics made to measure report' as requiring significant improvement. MPP used materials developed by the National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics (NCETM) and drew on research evidence that identified 'lesson study' as a high impact CPD strategy to embed changes in mathematics practice. An interim evaluation of the project forwarded to NCETM evidences the initial impact of the programme. A final report will be published in Summer 2014.

*[An evaluation of the impact of initiatives led by the Closing the Gap team, such as the work with EMA Hubs, can be found in Recommendation 9.]*

3.7 **Recommendation 7 – That the Director of Children's Services investigates how the service can be effective in raising awareness about the benefits of Teaching School Alliance membership and making more extensive use of National, Local and Specialist Leaders of Education with Headteachers and Governors. The Director is requested to provide a progress report to the Scrutiny Board at the April 2014 meeting.**

3.7.1 The importance of developing effective school-to-school partnerships has been long recognised in Leeds and as a key element in ensuring effective school improvement takes place. We recognise that the role of Teaching Schools and National, Local and Specialist Leaders of Education are central to this. Over the past twelve months the Learning Improvement team has continued to ensure that schools are aware of the benefits that TSAs can bring and that N/L/SLEs are more extensively used. More specifically: Significant changes are currently underway with website development across Children's Services. The new Leeds Education Hub and traded services websites will enable schools to access a wide range of information relating to school improvement including links to the range of expertise available from Teaching School Alliances (TSAs). It is anticipated that that this will provide a real one-stop shop for a wide range of school improvement services

- The Learning Improvement team is continuing to promote the programmes available through the TSAs in a range of documentation relating to school improvement. This includes training brochures and briefing papers to school leaders. In addition, Local Authority action plans for schools currently judged as Grade 3 or 4 by Ofsted increasingly include the brokering of support from TSAs such as the deployment of SLEs and the signposting of teachers to Improving and Outstanding Teacher Programmes (ITP and OTP). In addition, representatives of TSAs will be attending a

major LA event in late April focusing on the promotion of the range of support now available to support school improvement from a variety of sources including the local authority and TSAs. Many schools are now citing clear evidence of the impact of these TSA interventions and, encouragingly, they are sometimes referenced in Ofsted/HMI reports.

- Leeds LA is recognised by the National College as an effective broker and commissioner of National and Local Leaders of Education (N/LLEs). The deployment of this group of leaders is strategic and effective. Where appropriate, N/LLE partnerships have been established with a significant number of schools judged as Requiring Improvement or Inadequate by Ofsted and/or below floor standards. The majority of N/LLEs based in Leeds schools have now been deployed to support other schools across the city (or in some cases, in neighbouring LAs). In addition, in order to meet specific needs, the LA has brokered the support of N/LLEs from outside the LA to work in Leeds. Whilst the focus of N/LLE support will vary depending on the needs of the school, a common thread running through the vast majority of deployments is a focus on schools getting to good and, ensuring that achievement in English and maths improves, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils to ensure that the achievement gap continues to narrow. The work of N/LLEs is quality assured by the LA through its on-going monitoring role with LA schools and the establishment of robust contracting, action planning and evaluation processes. There is now a significant amount of evidence that demonstrates the impact of such partnerships and **Appendix 5** summarises this in relation to previous and current N/LLE deployments in Leeds schools.
- In recent months, there has been the opportunity for N/LLEs and Teaching School Alliances to bid for funding to the National College to support N/LLE partnerships. As the LA has a comprehensive knowledge of overall standards in Leeds schools and the improvement needs of individual schools, we have been working closely with TSAs and N/LLEs to support these bids and we are delighted that a number of these have been successful. Some of the bids relate directly to a bespoke package of N/LLE support for schools currently judged as Requiring Improvement. Here the emphasis will be on raising standards in the core subjects of maths and English, depending on the needs of individual schools. We are particularly excited by the success of one of the other bids which is for specific funding to support six newly appointed teachers in Grade 3 schools. This will enable a 12-month programme of support to be implemented which will involve close partnership working between the six schools, N/LLEs and Local Authority officers. Getting to Good, Closing the Gap, improvement in maths and English achievement will be the key aims of these partnerships.
- SLES. The number of Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) has increased significantly over the past twelve months. SLEs are accredited via the National College and deployed directly from the TSAs. Initially the majority of these were secondary SLEs and ensuring that these colleagues are effectively deployed has been the key priority for our partnership working with TSAs. In the case of the Yorkshire Inclusive TSA, one of the first TSAs in Leeds, the majority of their SLEs have now been deployed effectively in other schools although the LA has been proactive in brokering the support of SLEs from other TSAs within Leeds (such as Morley) and beyond (Red Kite TSA).

- There are some examples of effective deployment of primary SLEs although we are aware that this is an area that needs to develop further. The LA has been proactive in encouraging colleagues from schools to apply for SLE status and, as such, the number of primary SLEs is increasing. A good example of this is a particular piece of work that has taken place through the Closing the Gap team in Childrens Service linked to the Quality Plus programme. This was set up to improve the quality of teaching in Arooj schools by pairing up outstanding teachers with teachers who wished to improve. From the outset, one of the objectives of the Quality Plus programme was to encourage the participating outstanding teachers to apply for SLE status thus ensuring a larger pool of expert teachers within the LA. The application process for the programme was modelled on the SLE application process used by the National College (NCTL), preparing them well for future application for SLE status. The Closing the Gap consultant worked closely with the Yorkshire Inclusive TSA to develop the skills teachers would need to be successful in their applications. At the end of the programme two Early Years teachers from Bankside applied to be SLEs and both were successful. Through the establishment of an Early Years hub of good practice (in partnership with Bankside Primary Schools these SLEs are now supporting specific schools on a termly basis with very positive feedback.
- Since the original scrutiny inquiry, the National College has been developing the National Leaders of Governance (NLG) programme across the country. In Leeds we now have one secondary and one primary NLG. Ofsted reports are now regularly recommending reviews of governance and school improvement advisers are therefore brokering such reviews from NLGs (including from outside the LA). We have also utilised their expertise to lead and contribute to Interim Executive Boards – examples here include John Smeaton Community College and the BESD SILC. The Governor Support Service in Leeds is actively encouraging chairs of governors to apply for NLG status. They are also planning to recruit local leaders of governance in partnership with the Diocese of Leeds and the National College.

**3.8 Recommendation 8 – That the Director of Children’s Services investigates how Leeds City Council and the YorksITSA can utilise project funding to research Maths and English attainment in Leeds and the action required for improvement. The Director is requested to advise the Scrutiny Board about the progress of the investigation in the Director’s response.**

- 3.8.1 At the time of writing, progress with this recommendation has been very limited. A bid from the YorksITSA through the Education Endowment Foundation to undertake research was unsuccessful but, depending on feedback, may be resubmitted. As stated in the commentary about Recommendation 7, we have worked closely with YorksITSA secure funding for N/LLEs. In addition we are developing closer links with Higher Education Institutions which we hope will lead to some research projects.

**3.9 Recommendation 9 - That the Director of Children’s Services reviews the intervention strategies and projects implemented in schools and school collaboratives across the City to identify successful outcomes. Plus, also**



**investigates how, working collaboratively with schools, the effective processes can be expanded and embedded in the city to effectively narrow the gap in Maths and English attainment. The Director is requested to provide a progress report to the Scrutiny Board in April 2014.**

- 3.9.1 In addition to what is stated above in relation to Recommendation 6, there is regular and on-going evaluation of the impact of intervention strategies and projects across the city on the outcomes for vulnerable learners. These strategies are aimed at every key stage, in recognition that there is the need to improve the outcomes for all learners (with a particular focus on closing the gap between children who are in receipt of pupil premium funding).
- 3.9.2 In response to the significant gap in outcomes between EAL pupils and non-EAL pupils in Leeds, a working party was set up with the aim of equipping all staff with the skills and strategies needed to ensure that EAL pupils' potential can be fully recognised and evidenced across all areas of learning with a particular focus on the prime areas including understanding, speaking, listening, reading, writing and number.
- 3.9.3 In the primary team, report templates record the outcomes for vulnerable groups and key issues arising from the data. These are used as a starting point for discussion with schools. Key actions and progress are reviewed on subsequent visits with activities to support school self-evaluation. Within the secondary Leeds Learning Partnership (LLP), schools work together to identify best practice and share it, developing a coherent and systematic set of interventions that empower school leaders to work collaboratively, change attitudes and raise expectations of pupils in order to improve outcomes and close the gap for the most vulnerable learners. In 2013/14 the LLP CPD programme has included specific modules and opportunities to share best practice in relation to closing the gap. This has included cascading the findings of national research across the partnership such as DfE's pupil premium toolkit, the Sutton Trust 'teaching and learning toolkit' and Ofsted's report 'The Pupil Premium: how schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement'. The effectiveness of this module will be evaluated in Summer 2014.
- 3.9.4 In the Closing the Gap team, there are a number of focused interventions to facilitate schools working collaboratively. Support and challenge is offered to schools through programmes such as the Arooj collaborative, the EMA Hub programme, Quality Plus and Maths4All. **Appendix 6** contains more specific details of these programmes and there are case studies in **Appendix 1a – Numbers 5, 6 and 7**. The programmes are having an impact on improving the outcomes for the targeted vulnerable groups in the participating schools. Successful strategies that make a difference are rolled out to a wider group of schools and additional schools are also being recruited to work in this way.
- 3.9.5 Working in partnership with clusters is key to improving outcomes for vulnerable learners. In the CHESS cluster (Chapeltown and Harehills), there is an example of schools focusing on improving English and mathematics. All schools within the cluster work collaboratively to ensure consistently good and better practice in relation to improving across all cluster settings, leading to accelerated progress and attainment in English and mathematics by sharing good and outstanding practice.

They have developed pedagogic 'non-negotiables' with a key focus on English and mathematics which are interdependent and critical in determining good and better progress to raise the attainment of all pupils and groups. This policy recognises the importance and value of effective quality first teaching to promote first language as well as enhancing additional language development.

3.9.6 Moving forward/next steps identified include work on the following programmes:

- Language Rich Project in primary schools– developing language-rich classroom environments, working in partnership with speech and language therapists in order to accelerate the progress of learners' writing across the curriculum.
- Developing programmes in secondary schools, focused on developing oracy in order to narrow the gap for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium in English and mathematics.
- Establishing a GRT (Gypsy, Roma and Traveller) hub in primary schools working collaboratively to focus on sharing and developing effective practice in order to improve outcomes in English and mathematics.
- Further developing links between mainstream schools and supplementary schools focused on improving English and mathematics through setting up homework clubs in supplementary schools.
- In 2014/15 the secondary traded offer 'Advanced Membership' will include the new 'intervention leadership package' a programme of CPD for senior leaders and governors responsible for the effective use of pupil premium funding and mathematics and English leaders responsible for intervention within their subject areas. The programme will be facilitated by LA advisers supported by Ofsted HMIs and will strengthen schools' capacity to strategically spend pupil premium and year 7 catch up funding to ensure maximum impact.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 The scrutiny process underpinning this report meant that members were able to have face-to-face consultation with both representatives of the school sector and council services. The recommendations are based on their engagement in this process.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 Some young people are statistically more likely to have lower attainment and progress levels in English and maths such as those with learning difficulties and disabilities, those from some ethnic minority backgrounds, those with EAL and poor school attenders. The purpose of all the strategic and operational activity relating to this this area of work is to reduce the inequalities that prevent young people from achieving their potential in English and maths. Closing the Gap is therefore a key element of our work in relation to many of these recommendations.

### **4.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 Raising attainment in maths and English is at heart of the Children's and Young People's Plan and its core outcome relating to children and young people 'doing well at all levels of learning'. Many of the key indicators for this outcome rely on improving levels of achievement in English and mathematics.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The investment in resources to address this key issue, both at a school level and within Leeds Children's Services is essential if progress is to be sustained. Maintaining and further developing effective communication systems is a key factor here – these include headteacher briefings, other leadership networks and the further development of websites and other on-line resources. The contact that school improvement officers have with schools is extremely valuable in ensuring that lines of communication are maintained with all schools. The core offer adviser work focuses on pupil progress (particularly in English and mathematics) and identifies opportunities to share and develop good practice – all closely linked to work around the recommendations from this inquiry.

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 4.5.1 There are no relevant legal implications to this response to the inquiry.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

- 4.6.1 Raising the attainment and progress levels of young people in English and mathematics is vital to their future success and life chances and also to the economic and social success of the city.

### **5 MATHS & ENGLISH SCRUTINY INQUIRY- CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 There are many examples of improving educational outcomes in Leeds. Just over 104,000 of Leeds pupils- 78.43%- now attend a school rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted. On some measures there is year on year improvement with progress in Leeds often faster than elsewhere. Making the progress seen in the light of budget reductions, the increasing diversity of the school population and the rise of different school models is arguably a notable achievement.
- 5.2 Significant, tough and complex challenges remain. Much greater and faster progress in English and mathematics is one these challenges. Higher standards of literacy and numeracy are one of the keys to narrowing the achievement gaps that remain in Leeds across all key stages. Gaps which particularly affect boys, those with special educational needs or disabilities, some Black Minority Ethnic groups, those eligible for free school meals and those living in deprived areas of the city.
- 5.3 Core skills in English and mathematics are of extremely high value to individuals and their families, employers, the local and the wider economy. This inquiry has brought a fresh perspective and challenge to the issues we face in the city.
- 5.4 Leeds is ambitious. It wants to be the place where progress and improvement on previous best educational outcomes is the fastest in the country at every level. It wants to be the place where groups of children and young people vulnerable to

poor outcomes do better than elsewhere in the UK. It wants to be the place that recruits, develops and retains the best teachers and head teachers.

- 5.5 Developing the workstreams discussed in this inquiry, improving and sharing our knowledge of what works, applying this in dialogues with schools across the city, continuing to learn from best national and international practice, developing an unflinching commitment to our vision across the Leeds learning community, facilitating the best school to school improvement programmes, and developing and keeping the best teachers and leaders are key to consolidating incremental progress, and building faster, transformational change across the board.
- 6 Recommendations
- 6.1 The Board are requested to note the progress against the nine recommendations, based on their findings of the original scrutiny inquiry.
- 7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>
- 7.1
  - a) Ofsted Grades and LA Comment Tracker Autumn 2012 - Spring 2014 (Background information 3)
  - b) School Improvement Team: Service Level Agreement (SLA) Evaluation Results from 35 Schools 2012 – 2013 and School Improvement Team: Service Level Agreement (SLA) Evaluation 2013 – 2014 (Background information 4a)
  - c) Leeds Learning Partnership, Partnership Package Overview of Year 1 2011/12 and 2012/13, The impact of the Leeds Learning Partnership and Inspiring middle and senior leaders through the development of an effective Leeds-wide professional learning community. (Background information 4b)

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.