

Report of: The Director of Children's Services

Report to: Executive Board

Date: 24th June 2015

Subject: Raising Educational Standards in Leeds – Learning Improvement



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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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. The appended Annual Standards Report 2013-14 summarises the achievement of learners in Leeds throughout the academic year of 2013-2014. It also outlines the action taken by the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to support, monitor, challenge and intervene as necessary. Evidence is drawn from national and local performance data, monitoring activities undertaken by council officers and Ofsted inspection reports.
2. This year, the report has been created in an alternate format, the intention of which is to enable it to be published on the web, thus widening the readership and ensuring that the report is user friendly. The electronic version will have automated links to supportive documentation
3. The finalised report once agreed by Executive Board will be been published slightly later in the year due to a national data slippage at Key Stage 4.

Recommendations

4. The Executive Board is recommended to:
 - a) Note and consider the documented information provided and presented verbally to the Board on the 24th of June 2015 and comment where necessary on the new format and contents of the Annual Standards Report for future development.

- b) Endorse the progress that has been made and support the areas that need further improvement.
- c) Support the future provision of monitoring, support, challenge and intervention in all Leeds schools to ensure that progress continues.
- d) Endorse sector lead partnership working in securing accelerated progress.
- e) Support the further development of programmes to build sustainable links between schools and local businesses to better prepare young people for the world of work and to meet the entry level skills needs of business to support sustainable economic growth.
- f) Note that the officer who is overseeing these recommendations is the Head of Learning Improvement.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The report summarises the achievement of learners in Leeds at all key stages, including Early Years Foundation Stage in 2014. It also outlined the action taken by the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to support, monitor, challenge and intervene as necessary.
- 1.2 Evidence is drawn from national and local performance data monitoring activities.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Annual Standards Report 2013-14 includes analysis for Leeds to facilitate debate regarding
 - The use of the data to improve educational outcomes
 - Narrowing the gap
- 2.2 The Annual Standards Report summarises the achievement of learners at all Key Stages throughout 2013-2014. It shows the achievements and challenges over the course of that academic year, and provides recommendations for the future. It also outlines the actions taken by the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to support, monitor, challenge and intervene as necessary.

There have been significant changes within education, both nationally and locally, with a shift from large centralised systems to a much smaller and effective central local authority improvement function. Despite significant budget pressures there is a continued drive to develop innovative and creative approaches to school improvement.

The challenge for the local authority is:

Firstly; to ensure effective monitoring, challenge, support and intervention in schools where necessary. Whilst this applies unambiguously to all local authority maintained schools, and there is an emphasis on weaker schools where standards are considered to be too low, although this is less clear in relation to academies. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (HMCI) has made it explicit that local authorities must evaluate, monitor and challenge the effectiveness of academies and free schools. The Council will therefore continue to challenge all schools and academies about outcomes, particularly those concerned with the success of students from poorer backgrounds, ethnic minorities or with special needs.

Secondly, to act as a key broker in developing support to schools to bring about continuous improvement through the promotion of school led improvement systems. School to school support is a key element of government policy and one which the local authority is actively promoting and developing in Leeds.

Leeds City Council has maintained a reduced, central school improvement resource to continue to provide a robust model of challenge and support to all local authority maintained schools. This comprises an annual review cycle for all

schools (differentiated according to need) and additional support for schools causing concern; an increasing number of systems leaders (providing school to school support) notably:

- A small team of Leeds Headteachers and partners seconded to work with the Local Authority on a part-time basis to help accelerate the rate of improvement across the city.
- A team of National and Local Leaders of Education (NLEs and LLEs), recruited by the National College yet largely deployed according to specific needs identified by the school improvement team.
- Developing partnerships with teaching schools. The main areas of partnership working here include: the deployment of outstanding headteachers, designated as National Leaders of Education (NLEs) and Local Leaders of Education (LLEs) and, more recently, Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs); leadership development programmes; and bespoke programmes to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The Leeds Learning Partnership – the traded aspect of the school improvement service.

Improvement Strategy

The challenge has been to provide an overarching strategy through which the local authority responds strategically to the very different educational landscape and to ensure the progress made in recent years is accelerated. Alongside this is the ambitious city-wide commitment to achieving a child friendly city; that underpins school improvement and builds upon the new relationships with schools and partners.

Leeds as a Child Friendly City

A key element of the work of the Learning Improvement team and partners is to drive up standards of achievement to ensure that the city is the best place for children to grow up. Its ambition is to support those children that have barriers to learning which sit outside the school gates by working in the context of increasingly effective cluster collaboration. Central to this work is the drive to ensure that learning in schools and settings is engaging, dynamic and inclusive, leading to accelerated rates of progress of all learners.

Inclusive Economic Growth

The recession disproportionately impacted young people evidenced by the growth in youth unemployment. Recovery has seen a falling youth unemployment rate but young people face an increasingly competitive and changing labour market. Employers across all sectors report difficulties in recruiting to meet the changing skills needs of their workforce and report that many young people do not have the key employability skills they require. Ensuring that young people have the required knowledge and skills of the world of work to make informed choices and secure employment with career progression opportunities that meet the skills needs of businesses and the local economy will support the Best Council Plan objective of promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth that aligns with the city's Child Friendly ambition.

3 Main issues

3.1 Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

There has been a considerable increase in the proportion of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) in Leeds, from 51% in 2013, to 58% in 2014. There has been a slightly larger improvement nationally, from 52% in 2013, to 60% in 2014.

The biggest challenge for Leeds at this Key Stage is the indicator which measures the gap in attainment between the lowest 20% of children and the average for the cohort. Leeds had the largest gap in this indicator. Significant priority has been given to addressing this issue over the last 12 months, and Leeds has seen a very considerable and encouraging improvement, with the gap reducing from 44.6 to 38.4.

3.2 Key Stage 1

Leeds' overall performance in the Year 1 Phonics de-coding check is in line with national figures. Leeds is ranked equal 74th out of 150 LAs.

At the end of Key Stage 1, reading results are as follows:

- L2+ reading have been improving in line with national, but Leeds remains 3% percentage points below national.
- Level 2B+ in reading is 78%, also 3 percentage points behind national.
- Leeds is also 3 percentage points behind statistical neighbours and 1 percentage point behind core cities.

At the end of Key Stage 1, writing results are as follows:

- L2+ in writing has increased by 3 percentage points however Leeds remains 2 points below national at 84%.
- Level 2B+ in writing is 67%, 3 percentage points behind national.

At the end of Key Stage 1, maths results are as follows

- L2+ maths has improved at a faster rate than national, but at 90%, it is 2 points behind National
- Level 2B+ in maths is 77%, 3 percentage points behind national.

For more detail, please see appendix 1

3.3 Key Stage 2

The proportion of students achieving a level 4 or better all three subjects of reading, writing and maths has risen by 1 percentage point, to 75%. The national figure has risen by 2 percentage points to 78%.

For attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, results are follows:

- The proportion of students achieving a level 4 or better in the reading test has risen in Leeds by 2 percentage points, to 87%. The national figure has risen by 3 percentage points to 89%.
- The proportion of students achieving a level 4 or better in the writing teacher assessment has risen in Leeds by 1 percentage point, to 83%. The national figure has also risen by 1 percentage point to 85%.
- The proportion of students achieving a level 4 or better in the maths test has risen by 1 percentage point to 84%. The national, statistical neighbour and core cities figures have also risen by 1 percentage point.
- The Grammar, punctuation & spelling test has only been conducted since 2013. The proportion of students achieving a level 4 or better has increased by 3 percentage points to 75%. This increase is in line with the national improvement.
- There has been an encouraging 3 percentage point increase in the proportion of students achieving the higher level of performance in all three main subject areas in Leeds. This increase matches the national pattern and exceeds the improvements seen in statistical neighbours and core cities.

For progress at the end of Key Stage 2, Leeds had performed well against the measure of the proportion of children making expected progress in recent years.

- This indicator for reading has seen a further improvement in 2014, remaining 1 percentage point above the national figure of 91%.
- Although there has been no improvement in the figure for writing in Leeds, we remain 1 percentage point above the national figure of 93%.
- The proportion of students making expected progress in maths has also improved and remains 2 percentage points above national at 91%.
- Leeds performance matches statistical neighbours and is above that of core cities.

For more detail, please see appendix 1

3.4 Key Stage 4

The national changes made to the GCSE system in the last 12 months have caused a significant degree of volatility in examination results and has resulted in a dip in overall performance, which was widely expected. Comparisons between this year's results and those achieved in 2013 are not possible.

The Department of Education have premised the published data with major caveats in relation to the interpretation of the data. These relate to two major

reforms that have been implemented and which affect the calculation of key stage 4 (KS4) performance measures data in 2014:

1. Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education recommendations which;

- restrict the qualifications counted
- prevent any qualification from counting as larger than one GCSE
- cap the number of non-GCSEs included in performance measures at two per pupil

2. An early entry policy to only count a pupil's first attempt at a qualification.

The main headline measure of the percentage of students achieving 5+A*-C grades including English and maths currently stands at 51%, based on the new "first entry" methodology. In 2013, the figure stood at 58%.

Performance against the English Baccalaureate (EBACC) measure has seen a marked improvement, continuing the upward trend from previous years. This reflects the DfE's challenge to improve students outcomes in the academic GCSE subjects. 22% of students in Leeds achieved the EBACC standard, compared to 24% nationally.

The percentage of students making expected progress in English has remained unchanged at 64%, but the equivalent figure for maths has dropped to 62%.

As part of the increased focus on the preparation of young people for the world of work and meeting the skills needs of business to support economic growth, subsequent Annual Standards Reports will include destination data detailing where young people progress to after Key Stage 4, covering those progressing into employment including Apprenticeships.

For more detail, please see appendix 1

3.5 Key Stage 5

As with GCSEs, there have been a number of changes which may have impacted on A Level and other Level 3 qualifications. These include:

- Programmes of study starting to move away from modular study, to end of course of examinations
- The removal of the option for students to sit A Level examinations in January
- The increasing number students studying "EBACC" qualifications at GCSE and the effect this may be having on subsequent A level choices, especially the numbers of students choosing to study "facilitating subjects".

The average points per Y13 student in Leeds fell to 681.9 in 2014 from 696 in 2013. This is part of a national trend as students follow fewer subjects at KS5 and the reduction of resit opportunities from three to one. The Leeds figure is, however, below the national figure of 696.

There has been a drop in the average points per entry in 2014 from 209 points in 2013 to 208.3 points. This is below the national figure of 211.5 and statistical neighbour averages of 209.38.

The percentage of students achieving 2 A level passes or more in Leeds was 92%, which is two percentage points above the national figure and that for statistical neighbours.

The percentage of students achieving 3 or more A*- A grades was 8%, which is the same figure as our statistical neighbours, but one percentage point below national.

As part of the increased focus on the preparation of young people for the world of work and meeting the skills needs of business to support economic growth, subsequent Annual Standards Reports will include destination data detailing where young people progress to after Key Stage 5, covering those progressing into employment including Apprenticeships.

For more detail, please see appendix 1

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 None specifically for this report

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 The improvement in attainment of vulnerable groups is still a key area for improvement and is highlighted in the challenges for the city on page 6.

4.2.2 The Equality Improvement Priorities 2011 to 2015 have been developed to ensure our legal duties are met under the Equality Act 2010. The priorities will help the council to achieve its ambition to be the best City in the UK and ensure that as a city work takes place to reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity. Document attached at appendix 2.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

4.4.1 The improvement in school performance will continue to be a priority for the council using the new models of school support outlined in this report. The impact on many minority and vulnerable groups will be an area of particular focus and has strong links with other areas of council responsibility. In particular, the Best Council Plan 2015-2020 has highlighted the aspiration to create a Child Friendly City.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The need to continue to improve early years, primary and secondary education,

and the Council's need to be informed about strategy and progress, means that this must remain a high priority when allocating resources.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This report is subject to call in

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 None identified

5 Conclusions

5.1 This report provides an overview of Learning in Leeds across all Key Stages, from Early Years to Post 16, for the school year 2013-2014. It describes the processes and actions taken by Children's Services' to improve education throughout Leeds. It also details the recommendations to keep improving the quality of education in schools and all learning settings across the city. Each hyperlink leads to another layer of the report; one that provides more detail to the information provided.

5.2 We are looking at an improving situation, but we need to get better still.

- Overall, 77% of our learning places were rated as good or better.
- Over 75% of our registered child-minders were rated as good or better, as are more than 80% of our non-domestic childcare settings.
- Four out of five of our FE providers are rated as good or better.
- Eight out of our nine special schools (SILCs) and PRUS are rated as good or better. Two of our special schools are outstanding.

5.3 We continue to strive to be the best city for learning, and the report highlights the steps we are making on that journey.

- We have found learning places for all our children.
- We are developing strong 'school to school' support.
- There is a robust 'Leeds Learning Partnership' supporting learning across the city.
- We have a number of teaching Schools in Leeds, adding to the core of professional development available to learning places across the city.
- We have many research projects in Leeds, bringing some of the best new ideas in education directly into our classrooms.

5.4 We are aware of the challenges we have in the city and these are priorities for the future.

- We need to continue to raise attainment and close any gaps in standards, so all children in Leeds succeed, regardless of their background.
- We need to provide a strong continuum of support and education for those children who, for social or emotional reasons, find school difficult.
- We need to continue to improve Secondary Education, so that all schools are as good as the best in Leeds.

- We need to build more school capacity, providing even more great learning places for the children of Leeds.
- We need to create a world class education system, within a world of tightening budgets.

The report highlights the ways that we are looking forward, and the steps that we are taking, to be Leeds: best city for learning.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Executive Board is recommended to:

- Note and consider the documented information provided and presented verbally to the Board on the 24th of June 2015 and comment where necessary on the new format and contents of the Annual Standards Report for future development.
- Endorse the progress that has been made and support the areas that need further improvement.
- Support the future provision of monitoring, support, challenge and intervention in all Leeds schools to ensure that progress continues (Head of Learning Improvement).
- Endorse sector lead partnership working in securing accelerated progress (Head of Learning Improvement).
- Support the further development of programmes to build sustainable links between schools and local businesses to better prepare young people for the world of work and to meet the entry level skills needs of business to support sustainable economic growth.
- Note that the officer who is overseeing these recommendations is the Head of Learning Improvement.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ 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.