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**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS  
REPORT TO SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)**

**SUBJECT: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ACTION PLAN APPROVED BY SCRUTINY BOARD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2006 IN RESPONSE TO THE SPECIALIST INCLUSIVE LEARNING CENTRE INQUIRY**

**Electoral wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Ethnic Minorities

Women

Disabled People

Narrowing the Gap

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) of progress on the agreed actions in response to the Scrutiny inquiry into the specialist inclusive learning centres (SILCs)

**2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 A fall in the number of pupils on the roll of the North West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre led to a significant budget shortfall and a managed staffing reduction in 2005. This caused significant concern to staff and parents and led to an inquiry by Scrutiny Board (Children and Young People).
- 2.2 Education Leeds responded to the recommendations of that inquiry with an action plan. A copy of the action plan is appended (Appendix 1) with a brief progress report against each recommendation. The SILC Strategy Group Strategic Objectives (Appendix 2) also reflect the Scrutiny Board recommendations.

**3.0 MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Scrutiny action plan has been refreshed to reflect recent developments.
- 3.2 A significant issue reflected in the Scrutiny inquiry was the information available to

stakeholders, including parents.

- 3.3 A document giving general information about the SILCs and SILC strategy is currently being produced. Each SILC has reviewed its communication with parents and is in the process of making further improvements with the support of Education Leeds Communication Team. The Parent Partnership Service has established a Parent Forum in the North West SILC which will shortly be followed by similar Forums in the other SILCs.
- 3.4 The Early Support Programme (ESP), a central government initiative, coordinates and develops information and support to the parents of young children with disabilities. The Children's Information Service of Children Leeds has developed a Children and Families Directory.
- 3.5 A Choice Advisor has recently been appointed to the Parent Partnership Service to support parents to make choices at key transition periods. The Service is also appointing an information officer.
- 3.6 The communication strategy is being reviewed over the Spring and Summer terms so as to ensure comprehensive communication is available to all stakeholders.
- 3.7 Over the Spring term we are gathering information on the specific numbers per area of Leeds educated on site in the SILCs, at Partnership Schools and in resourced provision over the last three years. These will enable us to predict future needs. Once this piece of work is completed further consultation will be required.
- 3.8 The current and anticipated demand for partnership provision continues to be monitored. The identified trend for primary schools being increasingly inclusive and therefore reducing the demand for primary partnership places continues. Secondary partnerships are proving very popular and the current Building Schools for the Future programme will bring a significant increase in the number of places. Demand will continue to be carefully monitored.
- 3.9 Five out of the six SILCs have recently been externally inspected by Ofsted. The East SILC was judged to be good with outstanding features, the West SILC, satisfactory with good features and the North West SILC and South SILC good. The BESD SILC has only recently undergone an inspection and a draft report is awaited.
- 3.91 In all of the Ofsted Inspections the quality of the inclusive opportunities provided by partnership working and the progress of pupils in partnership has been commented upon and described as outstanding.
- 3.92 A key focus of our work is to re-align the SILC Strategy, Inclusion Strategy and No Child Left Behind project into one overarching strategy. This will provide a greater coordination of approach towards the city's vulnerable pupils.

## 4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Communication with all stakeholders, including parents is a key development area over 2007/08. A number of initiatives are already in place. Additionally a

comprehensive communication strategy is planned over the next year.

- 4.2 SILCs are prioritising the information they provide to parents, in order to improve communication and keep parents fully informed.
- 4.3 External evaluation by Ofsted has positively endorsed the outstanding practice in our partnership arrangements.
- 4.4 Re-aligning the key strategies across Integrated Children's Services into one comprehensive plan will bring greater clarity and coherence for stakeholders, including schools, parents and colleagues across Children Leeds.
- 4.5 Good overall progress is being made in addressing the recommendations made by the Scrutiny inquiry.

## 5.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) are asked to:

- note the contents of this report and endorse the good progress made to date
- endorse the refreshed action plan