

**Report of: Director of Children and Families**

**Report to: Executive Board**

**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**Subject: The role of Learning Improvement in driving up standards, with a focus on vulnerable learners**



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

National changes to the education system have increased the complexities around school structure and governance. The education landscape faces further change, with a growth in the provision of free schools, continued academisation and an increase in the institutions that oversee schools. These changes, and the uncertainty surrounding policy direction, are prompting discussions around the future of local authorities. Within these deliberations the actual education of children and young people can be forgotten. The future of education should focus on securing the best outcomes for all children and young people, enabling them to succeed in life and develop a love of learning and personal growth.

There is no doubt the current education system is more autonomous and fragmented and this trend is set to continue. Councils have fewer powers to intervene and significantly less funding to support school improvement. All this is arguably at a time when expectations on school performance and pupil attainment have never been higher. Funding reductions to both schools and the local authority have also had an impact on the education landscape. As part of the local government settlement, the government has reduced the 'per pupil' rates for Education Services Grant (ESG) by 11.5%. For Leeds this equates to a core funding reduction of approximately £700k, with the potential to rise to £1,000k dependent upon academy conversion rates. In 2020, when

the proposed National Funding Formula will take full effect, the National Audit Office has projected a real term school funding reduction of about 8%.

There is strong evidence that a local education authority-type function is a feature of the best performing education systems globally. Councils are well placed to act both as a support to schools and a champion for young people and families, however, the reality is that the space between central government and schools is now more crowded, with councils joined by multi-academy trusts, teaching school alliances, national leaders of education, diocesan academy trusts and regional schools commissioners.

For Leeds to become the best city for children, a Child Friendly City, and the best city for learning, we need to develop an education system that improves the academic performance, and educational experience, for all of our children and young people; but particularly for those children who are vulnerable.

## **Recommendations**

The executive board is recommended to:

1. Acknowledge the Council has an important role to play in the future of education
2. Agree that the Council should use Learning Improvement to develop a model for collaboration between schools and settings
3. Recognise that cooperation between schools and settings should be enhanced
4. Agree to a stronger collaboration with key comparative cities to strengthen the learning improvement offer across Leeds, to be developed in the next 12 months
5. Acknowledge the future plans to reduce the learning gaps for vulnerable learners
6. Note that the officer responsible for the implementation of the above recommendations is the Chief Officer Learning Improvement

## **1 Purpose of this report**

In order to put young people first, it is more important than ever to think about the role of the Council in education, working with all schools and partners. This paper aims to encourage discussion on this fundamentally important issue and suggests principles and models for future collaboration. All discussions about our education system and schools must be seen through the lens of what is best for the children and young people of Leeds.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 Children and Families submitted a paper to Executive Board in April reflecting the challenges in education and the context in which we were developing a Learning Improvement system across Leeds. Executive board requested a follow up paper to clarify the issues that are within our control and to outline the approach that the Local Authority is taking, particularly in relation to closing the gap for vulnerable groups in Leeds. In addition to this, an exploration into how comparative cities tackle the same issues was requested, to ascertain a comparison with Leeds' outcomes and to examine if there are any lessons to be learnt.

## **3 Main issues**

### **3.1 The need for a local education authority**

Education research suggests some form of intermediate tier between government and schools is always present in the most effective education systems globally. The highly regarded McKinsey report on school systems, 'How the World's Most Improved School Systems Keep Getting Better', observed:

*"As the school systems we studied have progressed on their improvement journey, they seem to have increasingly come to rely on a 'mediating layer' that acts between the centre and the schools. This mediating layer sustains improvement by providing three things of importance to the system: targeted hands-on support to schools, a buffer between the school and the centre, and a channel to share and integrate improvements across schools"*

In England this position, once fulfilled by local education authorities, has become increasingly crowded. Councils have been joined by multi-academy trusts, teaching school alliances, national leaders of education, diocesan academy trusts and the regional schools commissioners.

This paper will develop an understanding of the possible future directions of the local authority to create the conditions to deliver a new model of working, in a continually changing educational landscape.

### **3.2 What are we doing in Leeds?**

Leeds has continued to support Learning Improvement across the city working with all sectors from 0 – 19. There are strong partnerships with schools, settings, key partners and communities in order to raise Attendance, Achievement and

Attainment for our children, and to enable our young people to both contribute to, and benefit from, the strong economic development in the city.

As we move to a new space in the educational landscape, we need to do so in a way that creates the right conditions for an effective local school improvement system. We must acknowledge that we are in an open market, with many others vying for the opportunity to work with schools and settings and offering a range of services. We need to be the best, to be responsive to the needs of schools and settings and to the desires, ambitions and aims of the council, to create a strong partnership that allows all educational settings to thrive and the authority to carry out its duties (see appendix 1).

The local authority cannot lose its place as an independent and impartial advocate of schools. We are best placed to be both an evaluator and broker for schools, as we know our schools and settings and can therefore provide a link across the entire community. We have a high level of engagement from the vast majority of educational settings because they can see the purpose and benefits of having a locally focussed Improvement System, are excited by the potential, and can agree on the key priorities for the local system.

We must monitor and support our vulnerable schools and settings and we must continue to keep Learning Improvement across the city relevant and pertinent through adding capacity and intelligence to all partnerships.

This is being delivered through:

*Developing a clear and compelling vision for the local improvement system*

- Continuing to work with schools and settings to keep a sharp focus on teaching and learning and improving outcomes for children
- Continuing to deliver clarity on strategic steps through the Best City for Learning strategy
- Keeping a focus on continuous improvement and providing the best educational opportunities for all children across the local community
- Maintaining an understanding of the local and national challenges and context that is driving the vision and creating a community of learning across Leeds
- Continuing to work closely with elected members in partnership with local stakeholders

*Creating trust and mutual respect between schools, the local authority and key partners*

- Forming a close working relationship based on mutual respect and credibility, shared common goals and transparency of school or setting level-data

- Developing a willingness to act co-operatively to address vulnerabilities through collaborative work
- Modelling of effective relationships and partnership working through Learning Alliances
- Linking leadership from key school system leaders such as Universities, Teaching Schools and the Diocese to engage colleagues, share intelligence and expertise, and forge solutions

*Empowering and enabling a community of learning across Leeds*

- Enabling smooth collaborations and relationships through school to school or setting to setting support
- Bringing expertise, local and national intelligence, validation, impartiality and objectivity

*Effectively creating local links with regional players such as the RSC, Ofsted, West Yorkshire Strategic Partnership and Teaching School Council*

- Creating structures to enable dynamic and focused partnerships
- Brokering and co-ordinating support and quality assurance that ensures effectiveness
- Working at a range of levels, from Learning Alliances focussed on peer review, to authority-wide groups in order to identify common priorities across the local system
- Demonstrating the quality and credibility of key players in the local learning improvement system

Leeds Learning Partnership (see appendix 6) is key school improvement traded service co-ordinated by the secondary learning improvement team. It has grown over the last seven years, and works with a wide variety of organisations to develop school based system leaders. One such project is in collaboration with Red Kite and the Yorkshire Leadership Community, comprising of partners across Yorkshire. That project is to develop leadership in all education phases through the provision of continuing professional development opportunities. Whilst the various Leeds Learning Partnership strands are longer-term, on-going strategies, the impact is already evident in the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of Leeds Learning Partnership schools

### **3.3 Leeds on the front of the curve**

There are many examples of where Leeds is at the forefront of developing a sector based system but keeping the local authority as a central player. The Area Inclusion Partnerships (AIPs) are a unique demonstration of trust and respect between the local authority and schools. There is a considerable amount of funding from the High Needs Block, which is allocated to reduce the level of exclusions. This is achieved through the sector wide creation of a range of innovative and creative ways to manage pupil behaviour and intervene appropriately and early to diminish the need to exclude children. Headteachers lead and manage these partnerships, which are then quality assured by the local authority. Accountability systems are developed alongside the schools and any issues that arise are collectively addressed; a true partnership.

Clusters are another example of the unique way that Leeds encourages strong relationships between schools and the local authority to support city-wide initiatives. Supported by Children and Families and Health, schools are developing effective links with families and communities to improve the lives, outcomes and engagement of all children and their families. The success of this model can be seen through the willingness of schools in Leeds to buy into the clusters. Through these arrangements the schools have been instrumental in creating pioneering ways to engage with the families of their vulnerable learners, and support active engagement. We know as we continue to develop these links we need to ensure a strong and positive effect on the standards being achieved in schools.

### **3.4 A New Relationship with Schools and Settings**

If we are to support our maintained schools to work alongside academies and free schools in one collaborative and co-operative learning culture across the city, then we need them to feel that they too have all the advantages and securities of a school within a multi academy trust. There is an increasing body of evidence for the benefits of close collaboration between schools. Evidence suggests that collaborations, where there is shared accountability, are more likely to deliver benefits; it is these partnerships that have shown a higher probability of leading to long-term school improvement.

Strong collaborations provide:

- Opportunity to improve more children's life chances by creating a collective responsibility for the results of all children.
- Career progression and leadership succession planning in order to retain the best staff in the alliance, if not in the same school
- Transmission of the best practice into all schools, including shared staff, data, curriculum expertise
- Strategic Governance allied to educational focus

We have established Learning Alliances across the city, where groups of schools within the umbrella of the local authority are beginning to function as a close learning collaborative. They can keep the economies of scale from the services of the local authority, whilst accruing the benefits of smaller, more keenly focussed and community specific alliances. In order to sit alongside MATs, these alliances must deliver the characteristics of successful MATs and academies. These would include:

- A well communicated strategic vision & plan that moves seamlessly from implementation into impact
- Clear accountability framework for the performance of the Alliance
- Clear quality assurance systems
- Clear delegated governance framework
- Alliance-wide school improvement strategy
- Systematic programme of school to school support
- Skilled management of risk indicators
- Clear succession plan for the key posts within the Alliance
- A commitment to making a contribution beyond their own school to support the Alliance.

Learning Alliances are enabled and facilitated by the School Improvement Advisors who will act as a critical friend in the process and ensure the impact of the process of peer review and evaluation. It is felt that through the Learning Alliances, schools will further improve teaching and learning and this will impact directly on pupil outcomes. By being involved at such a deep level, the Learning Improvement Team will have a real insight into the development of leadership and the delivery of teaching and learning in a school, adding to the shared understanding of the local authority.

*“The school have worked extensively with the Local Authority School Improvement Team and have also gained invaluable support by working closely with other schools sharing good practice. Since September 2016, Moor Allerton have profited from membership of a Learning Alliance of 6 local schools who are working together to improve standards. We recognise we need to make progress in specific areas and feel we have in place the support we need to secure this” (Chair of Governors response to the Regional Schools Commissioner coasting letter)*

The impact of the Learning Alliance work can be seen in schools across the city, including Moor Allerton Hall Primary School (and the Otley Family of Schools, see appendix 5).

### 3.5 Acting as a Critical Friend through School Review

As schools and settings are constantly reviewing their effectiveness against a range of appropriate criteria, not least those given by Ofsted, we feel it is important that each school has a review during the year. These would be supported by a School Improvement Adviser and could involve a peer head teacher (and possibly senior leaders from their school). Such a review would be particularly beneficial for schools and settings that are vulnerable in any way and/or that are due an Ofsted inspection in the near future. We will continue to use strong leaders in our schools to be part of a peer review team.

Ralph Thoresby School is an example of the way in which Learning Improvement works with schools to both improve the school and develop support for other schools (see appendix 6). In March 2013, Ralph Thoresby was rated Ofsted Requires Improvement. The School Improvement Adviser brokered support from a peer head to build leadership capacity, provided challenge and support to develop the school's performance, and worked with key partners to conduct reviews. In 2015, Ofsted found the school to be good in all areas and commented that: *"The LA has provided good support in checking on the performance of the school with the head teacher and supporting the development of leadership across the school"* (Ofsted, 2015). Learning Improvement brokered support from senior leaders at the school to develop leadership at another local school with an Ofsted Requires Improvement judgement through a National College bid. This resulted in leadership and management at the partner school being graded good at its next inspection.

### 3.6 Working with Schools and Settings to Close the Gap

Over the last decade, whilst overall attainment has risen in our schools, the performance gap between some pupils and their peers has remained. In Leeds, the reasons for the gap can be many and varied, and change from school to school; typically gaps occur for those in receipt of pupil premium, with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Social Emotional and Mental Health, gender, ethnicity and with English as an additional language, or for those children who start off the learning journey disadvantaged. Analysis of local authority data gives us a clear picture of the gaps across the city and has a key part in refining the strategy to focus on need.

Closing the gap in these learning outcomes is a key priority for the Children & Families service and Learning Improvement. Leeds is striving to ensure education in Leeds is equitable through acknowledging that not every child starts at the same point, and therefore focusing extra support to ensure that children who are disadvantaged make accelerated progress and achieve the same outcomes as their peers.

All Learning Improvement staff work with leadership teams to identify any gaps, and support them to apply the following strategies to address the gaps and



diminish the impact of disadvantage. It is also acknowledged by all staff within Children & Families that any interaction with a family, child or young person should include an acknowledgement that learning is a fundamental element of support. The 3A's, of Attendance, Achievement and Attainment are at the heart of the innovations bid and work is taking place through the vulnerable learners group to ensure that learning has a high priority in all consultations.

Whilst the changing demography of Leeds presents challenges and a context within which performance should be viewed, this does not fully explain the extent of the gap in outcomes for our vulnerable and deprived children and young people. Department of Education analyses of statistically similar Local Authorities consistently indicate that the outcome gaps in Leeds are larger than in comparable Local Authorities.

Learning Improvement Advisors are working with schools across Leeds to narrow their attainment gaps and improve outcomes for all learners. Moor Allerton Hall Primary School (please see below) and Hugh Gaitskell Primary School (see appendix 4) are two examples of this.

An Associate School Improvement Advisor supported Moor Allerton Hall Primary School during 2015-2016, with a focus on improving provision and outcomes for disadvantaged learners. The improvements were recognised during the recent Ofsted inspection: "Additional money for supporting disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to enable the learning mentor, behaviour support worker and the teacher for the nurture group to provide regular social, behavioural and emotional support. This has contributed to the increase in attendance and improvement in the behaviour of some disadvantaged pupils. There is also good use of this funding to provide one-to-one and small-group sessions with teaching assistants, which is contributing to the recent improvement in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. Governors ensure that additional government funding is used to improve the progress of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teaching assistants have received specialist training to enable them to provide effective support to pupils in lessons and in small groups. Teaching assistants are used well and deployed effectively to support pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities" (Ofsted, 2017)

### **3.7 How we address these gaps**

In partnership with schools, partner head teachers and third sector groups, Learning Improvement are using a variety of bespoke projects and programmes to narrow the gaps in Leeds.

- Efficient sharing of key information, including sharing Local Authority and school performance data e.g. at Primary Headteacher briefings, secondary Headteachers and Principals meeting, Leeds Learning Partnership senior leader briefings and Governing Body network meetings
- Delivery and training for governors focussed on vulnerable learners

- Data sharing with a deeper, more forensic analysis of need
- Further engagement with national evidence based projects, more of these cross phase eg: Education Endowment Foundation
- Traded work referenced and informed by performance data and research analysis
- ‘Achievement for All’ conference (March 2017). This was a major event attended by school leaders and governors from both the primary and secondary phases. The key note speaker was Sir John Dunford (the former National Pupil Premium Champion)
- Use of outstanding local and regional practice to challenge low expectations
- Key role of seconded Headteacher was to champion Pupil Premium/ disadvantaged children
- Early Years implementation of pupil premium and local authority Continuing Professional Development to support effective use of Early Years Pupil Premium funds
- Work with Children’s Centre teachers to focus on raising attainment
- Comprehensive Early Years training and support offer based on analysis of data and Ofsted outcomes
- Mainstream secondary advisors linked to SILCs to increase focus on progress of SEND cohorts

The impact of the measures outlined above have raised awareness and sharpened leaders’ focus around the issues of the gaps.

### **3.8 Improving outcomes for those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities**

The complex needs service is for children and young people from 0 to 25 years with complex learning difficulties and disabilities, and their families. The vision is that every Leeds child with a significant learning difficulty or disability will benefit from child centred, high quality, flexible and responsive services that help them to live a successful and fulfilling life.

There are five main areas within the complex needs service:

- Special educational needs statutory assessment and provision service team (SENSAP)
- Special educational needs inclusion team (SENIT)
- Educational psychology team

- Sensory service team
- Child health and disability (CHAD) including social works teams, occupational therapy and the regional specialist paediatric teams

The Leeds Strategy for SEND (2014-17) outlines that to improve outcomes:

- We will promote 'quality first teaching' in all schools
- We will develop networks to support those working in education to provide high quality support for those with SEND
- We will make sure we have good communications across schools, settings and all the partners affected to help them understand and work on issues to support outcomes for those with SEND

School improvement advisors will now work with these teams to signpost and focus work in settings on the provision of personalised quality first teaching. The classroom strategies used to support those with special educational needs are part of the repertoire of skills that are essential to every educational professional in order to close the gap. To be effective in this area we must move beyond monitoring statutory responsibilities to ensuring that settings can empower all practitioners to deliver effectively.

### **3.9 Working with Schools Causing Concern**

Local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) both have powers with respect to maintained schools that cause concern. RSCs will act with the devolved authority and powers of the Secretary of State to intervene in schools that have been judged inadequate by Ofsted, are meeting the coasting definition or who have failed to comply with a warning notice.

Leeds will be formally working with any maintained schools prior to a warning letter being issued. This formal notice period will involve a call in meeting for the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors with a Senior School Improvement Adviser and the Head of Learning Improvement. The reasons for this call in will be explicitly documented prior to the meeting, and school should respond to the concerns directly. It is expected that such a formal notice will be shared with the full governing body and evidence of this will be sought. If no such undertaking is made, then the authority will make representation to the full governing body. It is expected that rapid intervention by the school would prevent a warning letter being issued, however, the response to the formal process will add to the decision making process when deciding if a warning notice is issued.

Where there are significant concerns about performance, standards, or safety, a warning notice will be issued. A range of factors must be taken into account when deciding whether to issue a warning notice:

- standards below the floor
- a breakdown in leadership and/or governance

- the safety of pupils or staff may be being threatened
- low standards achieved by disadvantaged pupils
- variations in performance and progress between different groups
- a sudden drop in performance
- sustained historical underperformance
- Ofsted judgments on performance with no demonstrable capacity to improve

Local authorities and the RSC will ‘exercise their judgment’ in deciding to issue a warning notice, as part of their responsibility to ensure improvements in standards in schools.

Learning Improvement works with a wide variety of key partners across Yorkshire to support schools and settings across Leeds to develop leadership and management, improve teaching and learning, and increase good practice across all provisions. This work is most poignant in vulnerable schools and settings; three examples of these are La Coccinelle (see appendix 3) Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School (see appendix 4) and Temple Moor High School (see appendix 6).

La Coccinelle was judged to be an Inadequate nursery by Ofsted in 2014, however work with a Learning Improvement consultant supported the nursery to improve safeguarding, develop staff knowledge and skills and monitor progress; the nursery was reinspected and judged to be Good ***“The nursery has links with the local children's centre and works closely with the local authority's early years improvement team. The manager is ambitious and aims to provide a diverse and multicultural nursery environment, which meets the needs of local families. She has made significant improvements since the last inspection and has met all actions set. This is because she has been well supported by the local authority early years improvement team and Leeds Children's Services welfare officer. They have worked in partnership to develop the knowledge and skills within the staff team and improve safeguarding procedures”*** (Ofsted, 2014)

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School has struggled with numerous and complex issues, including a Satisfactory Ofsted judgement in 2010 and an Inadequate HMI visit in 2011. A School Improvement Advisor worked with the school from 2013, to support its improvement journey and in July 2016 the school achieved a Good judgement with Ofsted commenting: ***“The local authority has provided a range of support to the school and has contributed to the journey to good”*** (Ofsted, 2016)

In 2015, following analysis by Learning Improvement, Temple Moor High School was designated as a school causing concern. The school's self-evaluation indicated that the school was inadequate. The School Improvement Advisor worked with the school, Chair of Governors, other Local Authority officers and a partner Headteacher to monitor progress and to increase challenge to the senior leadership team. In March 2017, Ofsted found the school to be good and commented: ***‘The leadership team has restored the good quality of education in the school following a dip in performance after the last inspection. Both governors and the local authority identified this drop in standards two years ago and were swift to challenge the decline’ and ‘Governors, with support from the local authority and yourself, have quickly strengthened their skills in challenging you and other leaders’*** (Ofsted, 2017)

### 3.10 Comparative Cities

We were challenged by Executive Board to compare and contrast the Leeds approach to Learning Improvement with cities in a similar context to Leeds. The questions that are being asked are;

- What do they do that we can learn from?
- How do they organise the teaching and learning in their cities so children and young people achieve?
- How can we improve attainment in our city?

These questions may appear relatively straightforward; however the answers are far more intricate than the simplicity of the questions may indicate. It is important to conduct a comparison with UK cities that have a similar context to Leeds. There are four cities that can be measured as statistical neighbours with a similar context to ours: Bristol, Liverpool, Newcastle and Sheffield. An analysis of their current direction of travel with regards to Learning Improvement, along with comparative statistics, can be found in Appendix 2.

The indicators of comparison are:

- Outcomes (0-19)
- Ofsted rated quality of provision
- Attendance and exclusions data
- Proportion of schools that are academies and free schools

All five cities appear to be working towards the conclusion of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) report into effective strategies for school improvement where collaboration across the sector was seen as the way to widen opportunities for children and particularly address the needs of vulnerable groups of learners. The report cited strong evidence that such a system supports positive impact on pupil's attainment, achievement and engagement in learning. The NCSL also found, however, that 'collaboration is not always a straightforward option that can be easily introduced.' The report highlighted that collaborations flourish in carefully fostered conditions, and all five of the local authorities have looked to use their trust and influence to engineer these conditions.

All five cities are driving this collaborative agenda across schools whilst establishing a much stronger partnership arrangement with schools and (in the case of Leeds and Bristol) early years settings; creating a much more sector led system. Two cities (Sheffield and Liverpool) have moved to arms-length traded companies, whilst the other three all have variations on establishing a hybrid of trading from within the council alongside a school improvement agenda. Advantages to creating a separate Learning company appear to be around a sharp focus on learning improvement within the schools and a greater feeling of control by them. The disadvantage is that the local authority has greatly increased

difficulty in driving other integrated agendas alongside schools i.e. community projects, as schools are much more autonomous of the council. A similar position occurs in Bristol, where, despite a council wide initiative to drive learning standards, a high proportion of schools are academies and therefore without the council's systems and strategies. This can be reflected in exclusion figures, where Bristol, Liverpool and Sheffield are all worried about rising rates of exclusions as schools are more likely to respond to nationally driven accountability metrics. Liverpool and Sheffield are working with Leeds to see if they can learn lessons from us and find ways to manage these exclusion rates. [N.B. A word of caution to using macro statistics in this way, for example we know that just 5 of our secondary schools account for 55% of all exclusions in our data, which can skew a 'city' picture].

Newcastle is the authority with the most similarities to Leeds in a variety of areas. They have a strong primary sector with 96% of schools that are good or better in Ofsted terms, but had poorer outcomes for children at secondary schools. They have a similar proportion of schools as academies; however, all Newcastle secondary schools are academies as opposed to approximately half those in Leeds. Other similarities to Leeds include the organisation of schools into working groups and looking to move towards a stronger partnership with schools by using Headteacher Partners to help create a strong link between the strategy for city wide improvement and the improvement needs of the individual schools. Their figures for attainment are stronger than ours and we will work with Newcastle to understand this relationship between the centre and schools in relation to standards.

The success of the attendance obsession clearly demonstrates that when focus is concentrated on a specific issue, we can make a significant difference. We are continuing the partnership work with our schools to drive up standards in our city, and we have introduced the priority of the 3A's of Attending, Achieving and Attaining, with a clear focus on vulnerable children, to remain a relevant and pertinent influence on our schools to improve education across the city.

### **3.11 Next steps in Improving Learning in Leeds**

Learning Improvement acknowledges that to achieve further improvements in schools and settings that we need to establish a new model of working which has a strong partnership base and is supported by the Local Authority. To that end we will:

- Update the Learning Improvement strategy to reflect the new educational environment and support schools to drive up standards
- Discuss the creation of Headteacher partnerships to steer the development of learning across the city and with the school community.
- Look at developing a strong co-operative and collaborative culture across the city that enables all schools, and particularly maintained schools, to feel supported and secure.

- Create mechanisms to enable restorative dialogue between the local authority, schools and other key partners to ensure the successful delivery of the 3A's (attendance, achievement and attainment) obsession.
- Ensure that work initiated by the local authority is designed to raise standards overall and specifically for those groups who see a gap in their attainment to the national expectations.
- Work closely with the 4 identified similar cities to learn lessons, share expertise and drive up standards.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 In Leeds, we acknowledge that schools are more than just learning places and are also a gateway to being a child friendly city. When the city asks: 'what is it like for a child to grow up in Leeds?' a large proportion of the answer is based in the work that schools do in our communities. Through schools, the local authority has access to every child, young person and family in the city. The nationally acknowledged support networks of clusters, regarded as a gift by Ofsted, and the more focussed REST teams (Restorative Early Support Team), supported by the government through the latest innovations bid, rely on the strong relationship that exists between the schools, including academies, and the local authority. Whilst that relationship needs to change, and indeed is changing, it enables a strong cooperative and collaborative learning community that continues to develop a strong sector led drive whilst benefitting from the large, supportive infrastructure that the local authority provides. The newly developing relationship with our learning places is much more symbiotic and understands that an economically strong and compassionate city needs great schools, and that great schools are supported by the strength a vibrant and dynamic city.

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

4.2.1 The closing the gap section of the report details the challenges of improving equality and diversity in the context of increasing pressures on the system. The Best City for Learning and the Annual Standards Report provide specific information on the priorities in relation to equality and diversity in Leeds.

### **4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 This report highlights the challenges to delivering the outcomes and priorities – in particular to be a Child Friendly City - as defined in the Best Council Plan and the supporting Children and Young People's Plan 2015-19, the Best Start Plan 2015-19, the Best City for Learning 2016-2020 and Leeds SEND Strategy 2014-17.

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

4.4.1 The level of investment in children and young people is considerable. The need to continue to improve learning and education across Leeds means that this must remain a high priority when allocating resources. The challenges outlined in this

report only serve to sharpen the necessity of this investment to ensure that we continue to improve the lives and outcomes for all our children and young people

#### **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 Risk is managed through a variety of groups, depending on the topic of consideration. These include, but are not limited to: Children and Families Trust Board, Children's Services Leadership Team, Vulnerable Learners, Complex Needs Board, Schools Forum, Dedicated Schools Grant Board, Basic Need, Learning Improvement Leadership Team, Future In Mind Programme Board

### **5 Conclusions**

Schools in Leeds do not exist in a vacuum. They are vital to the life chances of the children in their care and the quality and development of the communities they serve. The education of children takes place in individual schools but the rest of society has a major stake in its success. We acknowledge that not all schools are good and not all good schools remain so; addressing this, however, cannot be a matter for Head Teachers and governors alone. Bringing about improvement in the schools in Leeds shouldn't be about market forces or about individual leaders or an 'expert' in the local authority. Rather, it should be a collaborative and structured pursuit of excellence in which the knowledge and expertise of the many are applied to all local and individual school needs in order to produce the best for all our children.

*We would be 'naive to overlook the influence of what happens at the local authority level, ... Local history, interconnections between schools and established relationships are always there, helping to shape what happens. Consequently, levers need to be found that will be powerful in encouraging the development of interdependence amongst groups of schools. In this way, further progress can be made towards an education system that is geared to raising standards for all students, in all schools' (NCSL : Mel West)*

It is a complex and ongoing process that we believe is best managed locally and demands expert, independent intervention over time from a range of sources. We are currently operating in a fast changing school system; the Council has the key strengths to bring to a newly-designed, sector-led model for delivery of school improvement in Leeds. In so doing, we believe this will greatly reduce the risk of any school falling through the gap in the future and ultimately secure the best outcomes for our children and young people.

### **6 Recommendations**

The executive board is recommended to:

1. Acknowledge the Council has an important role to play in the future of education



2. Agree that the Council should use Learning Improvement to develop a model for collaboration between schools and settings
  3. Recognise that cooperation between schools and settings should be enhanced
  4. Agree to a stronger collaboration with key comparative cities to strengthen the learning improvement offer across Leeds, to be developed in the next 12 months
  5. Acknowledge the future plans to reduce the learning gaps for vulnerable learners
  6. Note that the officer responsible for the implementation of the above recommendations is the Chief Officer Learning Improvement
- 7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**
- None

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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.

## **Clarification of Local Authority Statutory Duties relating to services relevant to the ESG**

### Statutory and regulatory duties

#### ***Statutory obligations of local authorities for all schools***

##### **Strategy**

A local authority must:

- appoint a Director of Children’s Services (section 18, Children Act 2004); and
- strategically plan for its education service (sections 13 to 15B, Education Act 1996).

##### **Finance**

A local authority must:

- prepare revenue budgets: information on income and expenditure relating to education, for incorporation into the authority's annual statement of accounts; and the external audit of grant claims and returns relating to education (Local Government Act 1972); and
- perform internal audit and other tasks necessary for the discharge of the authority’s chief finance officer’s responsibilities under section 151, Local Government Act 1972.

##### **Information**

A local authority must:

- provide information to or at the request of the Secretary of State (section 29, Education Act 1996).

#### ***Statutory obligations of local authorities for maintained schools***

##### **Human resources**

A local authority must:

- carry out suitability checks of employees or potential employees of the authority or of governing bodies of schools, or of persons otherwise engaged or to be engaged with or without remuneration to work at or for schools (School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009);
- provide advice to governing bodies in relation to staff paid, or to be paid, to work at a school, and advice in relation to the management of all such staff collectively at any individual school (“the school workforce”), including in particular advice with reference to alterations in remuneration, conditions of service and the collective composition and organisation of such school workforce (School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009);
- appoint a teacher recommended by a governing body (or a head teacher or deputy head recommended by the governing body’s selection panel) unless the teacher or head teacher is to be appointed otherwise than under a contract of employment (regulations 15 to 16, School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009);
- terminate the employment of any person employed by it to work solely at a school if the governing body determines that he or she should cease to work there (regulation 20, School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009);
- consider whether it would be appropriate to provide prescribed information to the Secretary of State where a local authority has ceased to use a teacher’s services due to serious misconduct, or might have done so had the teacher not resigned first

(section 141D, Education Act 2002). The prescribed information is set out in reg 20 of the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012;

- pay employer's contributions to the appropriate pension fund (reg 67 and Schedule 2, Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013);
- pay teachers' pension contributions to the Secretary of State (reg 30, Teachers' Pensions Regulations 2010);
- appoint non-teaching staff within the local authority's conditions of service and grading system (regulation 17, School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009).

### **Finance**

Schedule 15 to the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 empowers a local authority to suspend a governing body's right to a delegated budget in certain circumstances of failure to comply with requirements or manage the budget satisfactorily. This implies a duty on the local authority to monitor a governing body's budget management. There is a duty to review any suspension. When a governing body is suspended, the duty to manage the school budget reverts to the local authority and the School Staffing Regulations do not apply, therefore powers over staffing also revert to the local authority (Schedule 2, Education Act 2002).

A local authority must also:

- monitor compliance with the requirements of their financial scheme prepared under section 48, School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which may include advice to assist governing bodies in procuring goods and services with a view to securing continuous improvement, and any other requirements in relation to the provision of community facilities by governing bodies under section 27, Education Act 2002; and
- send to the Secretary of State any financial statement provided to the local authority by a governing body (reg 5, Consistent Financial Reporting Regulations 2012).

### **Health and safety**

A local authority must comply with its duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the relevant statutory provisions as defined in section 53(1) of that Act in so far as compliance cannot reasonably be achieved through tasks delegated to the governing bodies of schools.

### **School companies**

A local authority must exercise its monitoring and reporting functions as the supervisory authority of school companies formed by governing bodies (section 12, Education Act 2002; regs 26 and 27, School Companies Regulations 2002).

### **Equality**

A local authority must comply with the public sector equality duty (section 149, Equality Act 2010), publish information to show its compliance with the equality duty (reg 9, Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017), and set itself specific, measurable equality objectives (reg 9(1), Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017).

### **Religious education**

A local authority must:

- set up a standing advisory council on religious education (section 390, Education Act 1996); and

- prepare an agreed syllabus of religious education in accordance with Schedule 31, Education Act (1996).

### **School improvement**

Expenditure incurred by a local authority in respect of action to support the improvement of standards in the authority's schools, in particular expenditure incurred in connection with functions under the following sections of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:

- (a) section 60 (performance standards and safety warning notice);
- (b) section 60A (teachers' pay and conditions warning notice);
- (c) section 63 (power of local authority to require governing bodies of schools eligible for intervention to enter into arrangements);
- (d) section 64 (power of local authority to appoint additional governors);
- (e) section 65 (power of local authority to provide for governing bodies to consist of interim executive members) and Schedule 6; and
- (f) section 66 (power of local authority to suspend the right to delegated budget).

### ***Statutory obligations of local authorities for all schools***

When delivering their school improvement function, **local authorities must have regard to the Schools Causing Concern statutory guidance**. This guidance provides clarity about the role of local authorities in delivering school improvement for maintained schools and for academies.

Extract:

"1. Schools that have been judged inadequate by Ofsted – An academy order will be issued for all maintained schools that have been judged inadequate by Ofsted, requiring them to become sponsored academies. To minimise delays and ensure swift action, there is a new duty on governing bodies and local authorities to facilitate academy conversion. When an academy is judged inadequate by Ofsted, then the RSC is able to terminate the funding agreement with the existing academy trust, identify a new sponsor and move the academy to that new trust. The process for schools judged inadequate by Ofsted is described in more detail in Chapter 2 of this guidance.

2. Schools that are coasting – RSCs will be able to take formal action in any school which falls within the definition of coasting. They will first consider the school in the round before deciding what, if any action is necessary. Where action is necessary and a coasting maintained school does not have a sufficient plan and the necessary capacity to bring about improvement, the RSC will use the powers of the Secretary of State to intervene. They will consider a range of interventions to ensure that the school receives the support and challenge it needs. This could include requiring the conversion of the school into an academy with the support of a sponsor. RSCs will also consider what action is necessary where an academy is coasting, and may issue a termination warning notice, which will require the academy trust to take specified action, and could ultimately allow a coasting academy to be moved to a new sponsor where necessary. The process for schools falling within the coasting definition is described in more detail in Chapter 3 of this guidance.

3. Schools that have failed to comply with a warning notice – Local authorities and RSCs may give warning notices to maintained schools where they have concerns about unacceptable performance (including results below floor standards), a breakdown in leadership and governance, or the safety of pupils or staff may be being threatened. Where a maintained school does not comply with a warning notice it will become eligible

for intervention. The warning notice process is described in more detail in Chapter 4 of this guidance. Arrangements for academies (that are not failing or coasting) are described in each academy's funding agreement."

This guidance is statutory for local authorities, and sets out their role in relation to maintained schools that are causing concern. It also describes how RSCs will exercise the Secretary of State's powers to intervene in maintained schools, and how they will take action in failing and coasting academies.

### **Education welfare service**

Education welfare service and other expenditure arising from the local authority's school attendance functions. Where Education Welfare Officers are directly involved in issues related to The Children Act 1989, the relevant expenditure should be charged to line 3.3.2.

Expenditure in connection with powers and duties performed under Part 2 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (enforcement of, and power to make byelaws in relation to, restrictions on the employment of children).

### ***Statutory obligations of local authorities for all schools***

#### **Attendance**

A local authority must:

- make arrangements to identify children not receiving education (section 436A, Education Act 1996);
- send a written notice to a parent whose child of compulsory school age is not receiving suitable education, followed by a school attendance order if they do not comply with the notice (section 437, Education Act 1996); if exercising its power to prosecute a parent for a child's non-attendance (section 446) the local authority must consider whether to apply for an education supervision order (section 447);
- publish a code for penalty notices to address poor attendance and administer the penalty notice regime according to the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and subsequent amendments;
- improve attendance where schools report absence to them according to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006;
- investigate the whereabouts of pupils who have poor attendance and are at risk of being deleted from the schools' admission register (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006); and
- comply with all its statutory obligations under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

#### **Child performance and employment**

A local authority has responsibility for administering and enforcing requirements and protections for those below compulsory school leaving age taking part in employment or performances (Part 2, Children and Young Persons Act 1933, Part 2, Children and Young Persons Act 1963, Children (Performances and Activities (England)) Regulations 1968).

### ***Statutory obligations of local authorities for maintained schools***

In addition to the above, a local authority has the right to inspect school registers (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2014).

### **Central support services**

Includes expenditure on:

- pupil support: provision and administration of clothing grants where such expenditure is not supported by grant;
- music services: expenditure on the provision of music tuition or other activities which provide opportunities for pupils to enhance their experience of music;
- visual and performing arts (other than music): expenditure which enables pupils to enhance their experience of the visual, creative and performing arts other than music; and
- outdoor education including environmental and field studies (not sports): expenditure on outdoor education centres – field study and environmental studies etc. – but not including centres wholly or mainly for the provision of organised games, swimming or athletics.

### ***Statutory obligations of local authorities for all schools***

Local authorities have no statutory obligations to provide the services described in the above section. Local authorities are free to provide these services if they choose.

### **Asset management**

Expenditure in relation to the management of the authority's capital programme, preparation and review of an asset management plan, negotiation and management of private finance transactions and contracts (including academies which have converted since the contracts were signed), landlord premises functions for relevant academy leases, health and safety and other landlord premises functions for community schools.

### ***Statutory obligations of local authorities for all schools***

Local authorities have a general landlord duty for all buildings which they let to academies (under the relevant academy lease), and for all community school buildings, and overall responsibility for capital strategy including basic need, which applies to all pupils (section 14, Education Act 1996).

### ***Statutory obligations of local authorities for maintained schools***

In its role as landlord for community schools, a local authority has a duty (section 542(2) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) to ensure that school buildings have:

- appropriate facilities for pupils and staff (including medical and accommodation);
- the ability to sustain appropriate loads;
- reasonable weather resistance;
- safe escape routes;
- appropriate acoustic levels;
- lighting, heating and ventilation which meets the required standards;
- adequate water supplies and drainage; and
- playing fields of the appropriate standards.

A local authority, as an employer, has a general health and safety duty for employees and others who may be affected (Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974).

A local authority must manage the risk from asbestos in community school buildings (Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012).

### **Premature retirement costs/redundancy costs (new provisions)**

Any budget for payments to be made by the local authority in respect of the dismissal of, or for the purpose of securing the resignation, of any member of the staff of the school, after 1st April 2014 under section 37, Education Act 2002.

***Statutory obligations of local authorities for maintained schools***

A local authority must fund redundancy costs (not premature retirement costs, which are the responsibility of the school concerned) of school staff, unless there is a good reason not to fund them centrally (section 37, Education Act 2002).

***Statutory obligations of local authorities for academies***

Local authorities have no statutory obligations for academies regarding premature retirement and redundancy costs.

**Therapies and other health-related services**

Costs associated with the provision or purchase of speech, physiotherapy and occupational therapies should be recorded here. Include any expenditure on the provision of special medical support for individual pupils which is not met by a Primary Care Trust, National Health Service Trust or Local Health Board.

***Statutory obligations of local authorities for all schools***

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a statutory duty on local authorities and local health bodies to commission services jointly to support disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs, including those who need therapy support.

**Monitoring national curriculum assessment**

Expenditure on monitoring National Curriculum assessment arrangements required by orders made under section 87 of the 2002 Act.

***Statutory obligations of local authorities for maintained schools***

Under the Education (National Curriculum) (Key Stage 1 Assessment Arrangements) Order 2004, a local authority must do the following:

- moderate the teacher assessments carried out at the end of key stage 1 by schools (in reading, writing and mathematics) in at least 25% of maintained schools each school year and ensure that every school will be subject to moderation at least once every four years; and
- appoint a person to complete the assessment moderations who has recent experience of provision of the National Curriculum in primary schools.

Local authorities also have equivalent duties in respect of key stage 2 and key stage 3 moderation (Education (National Curriculum) (Key Stage 2 Assessment Arrangements) Order 2003) and (Education (National Curriculum) (Key Stage 3 Assessment Arrangements) Order 2003) but, as **local authorities receive funding for these duties through specific grants, they are not funded from ESG.**

***Statutory obligations of local authorities for academies***

A local authority may provide the service set out in the section above (statutory obligations of local authorities for maintained schools for monitoring national curriculum assessment)

for academies; however the duty for securing this service lies with the relevant academy trust, as set out in its funding agreement with the Secretary of State.



Appendix 2

	Leeds		Newcastle		Bristol		Liverpool		Sheffield		ENG
<b>SCHOOLS</b>											
Primary	221		72		105		118		134		
Secondary	42		15		22		31		28		
Special	11		6		13		15		11		
total	274		93		140		164		173		
Percentage of Academies	21%		25%		68%		14%		45%		
<b>Quality of Provision</b>											
Primary Good / Out'	93.1%		87.1%		90.3%		91.0%		82.4%		89.10%
Secondary Good / Out'	74.4%		71.8%		96.2%		45.5%		71.1%		81%
<b>DATA</b>	<b>score</b>	<b>Rank/ quart</b>	<b>score</b>	<b>Rank/ quart</b>	<b>score</b>	<b>Rank/ quart</b>	<b>score</b>	<b>Rank/ quart</b>	<b>score</b>	<b>Rank/ quart</b>	
<b>EYFS</b>											
Ave Points	33.5	115 (D)	34.8	52 (B)	34.1	88 (C)	32.9	135 (D)	34	92 (C)	
Inequality gap Good Level Development	34.8	112 (C)	28.9	43 (B)	33	94 (C)	35.9	117 (D)	31.6	78 (C)	
	62.5	144 (D)	69.5	76 (C)	66.3	112 (C)	59.8	151 (D)	68.6	93 (C)	
<b>KS1</b>											
Reading Expected	65	149 (D)	73	90 (C)	71	116 (D)	64	150 (D)	71	116 (D)	
Higher	17	136 (D)	24	70 (C)	23	82 (C)	12	149 (D)	23	82 (C)	
Writing Expected	54	146 (D)	67	65 (B)	62	115 (D)	53	149 (D)	65	79 (C)	
Higher	8	134 (D)	14	57 (B)	12	96 (C)	5	149 (D)	14	57 (B)	
Maths Expected	64	146 (D)	73	72 (C)	70	114 (D)	62	150 (D)	71	93 (D)	
Higher	13	136 (D)	17	83 (C)	17	83 (C)	9	148 (D)	19	54 (B)	
<b>Phonics</b>											
Score	77	133	81	58	78	119	75	147	77	1133	
<b>Key Stage 2</b>											
Reading/Writing/Maths Expected	48	132 (D)	57	39 (B)	54	69 (C)	46	144 (D)	52	96 (C)	
Reading/Writing/Maths Higher	4	101 (D)	6	48 (B)	7	26 (B)	3	129 (D)	5	72 (C)	

## Appendix 2

<b>GCSE</b>											
Progress 8	-0.06	89 (C)	-0.07	92 (C)	-0.19	129 (D)	-0.35	147 (D)	0.01	59 (B)	
Ave Attainment	48.4	111 (C)	48.6	111 (C)	47.7	125 (D)	47.3	134 (D)	48.3	114 (D)	
Baccalaureate	22.9	86 (C)	23.9	75 (C)	18	128 (D)	23.2	84 (C)	21.8	95 (C)	
<b>A Levels</b>											
Ave points Score	28.1	112 (C)	28.1	114 (D)	30.2	67 (B)	28.1	113 (D)	30.8	46 (B)	
Ave point ( best three )	31.6	113 (D)	31.2	112 (D)	32.5	94 (C)	32.3	101 (C)	34	55 (B)	
<b>Schools Causing Concern</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>rank</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>rank</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>rank</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>rank</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>rank</b>	England
Below Floor											
KS2	2.00%	44	0.00%	1	5.00%	94	7.00%	115	4.00%	77	5.00%
P8	13.20%	108	30.80%	147	14.30%	111	29.00%	144	7.70%	71	9.30%
Coasting	17.10%	115	10.00%	75	10.50%	82	31.00%	144	13.6%	106	11.30%
<b>Attendance (Absence)</b>											
Primary	3.90%	36	4.40%	130	4.45%	139	4.60%	145	4.60%	145	4.00%
Secondary	5.60%	114	5.30%	76	5.90%	134	6.40%	146	5.90%	134	5.30%
<b>Exclusions</b>											
PX (all)	0.02%	9	0.02%	9	0.11%	106	0.10%	93	0.13%	119	0.07%
X Primary	0.46%	21	0.55%	29	2.06%	149	0.90%	68	1.69%	137	1.10%
FX Secondary	10.80%	128	6.86%	78	12.01%	136	6.29%	58	12.9%	139	7.51%
<b>Expenditure</b> average per pupil	£4,333		£4,601		£4,640		£4,864		£4,244		£4,408
	<b>Leeds</b>		<b>Newcastle</b>		<b>Bristol</b>		<b>Liverpool</b>		<b>Sheffield</b>		<b>ENG</b>

### Comparator Cities: Sheffield, Bristol, Liverpool and Newcastle

To fully understand the complexities within the education system, and to gain an accurate picture of where Leeds sits nationally, it is important to conduct a comparison with UK cities that have a similar context to Leeds. There are four cities that can be measured as statistical neighbours with a similar context to Leeds: Bristol, Liverpool, Newcastle and Sheffield. An analysis of their current direction of travel, with regards to Learning Improvement and education, can be found below, alongside comparative statistics.

#### Bristol

Learning Improvement in Bristol is being delivered by the Learning City Partnership. They aim to tackle inequality as well as locally identified priorities.

The Partnership Board was established in 2015 and consists of 24 partners; it is chaired by the elected Mayor. The Board is made up of city leaders from across the public, private and education sectors, supported by three Challenge Groups and a number of task groups delivering specific pieces of work. Building on existing good practice, Learning City partners are committed to creating and promoting learning opportunities for everyone, of all ages and from all communities, in all parts of the city. The areas of challenge that the Partnership are collectively addressing are: Learning in Education, Learning for Work and Learning in the Community. This structure has provided a cross-partnership approach to meet the identified challenges, as part of a developing city governance framework.

To realise this vision, the aim is to ensure:

- Greater awareness about the value of learning
- Increased participation in learning for all ages
- Improved achievement and life chances for everyone

Bristol plans to achieve these priorities; drive long term change and develop indicators such as:

#### 1. Awareness and Value

Increased attendance from targeted groups and communities in all phases of formal learning

Increased numbers attending vocational programmes to meet skills demand

#### 2. Participation

Increased participation in formal learning from targeted wards and groups

Increased number of good/outstanding learning providers

#### 3. Achievement and Life Chances

Improved outcomes for all learners

Increased number of local people in work

#### 4. Learning in Education

Raising the attainment of all students through formal learning in Bristol's early years setting, schools, colleges and universities

Current priorities:

- Raise education outcomes for all young people in specific areas of Bristol

- Widen participation into Higher Education through new pioneering schemes such as Bristol Scholars
- Increase the diversity of the education workforce
- Ensure the sufficiency of and access to education providers.

The council has created the Trading with Schools unit, which brings services across the council into one trading unit, to better support the changing needs and requirements of schools and educational settings. Trading with Schools provides a vast knowledge base and a wealth of experience in meeting the complex business and training needs required to help schools and educational settings perform well. Trading with Schools can offer set packages as well as bespoke services to meet individual requirements.

### Liverpool

Liverpool has moved its learning improvement to an independent company; The Liverpool Learning Partnership has been established to bring together all of the learning establishments within the city of Liverpool and to retain and protect what is widely being referred to as the **'family of Liverpool schools and other educational organisations'**. The Partnership seeks to further expand this key principle, by ensuring that education in Liverpool is successfully co-ordinated to support all learners. There is a real desire for schools and other learning establishments in Liverpool to continue to work collaboratively and further the excellent progress made by all learners.

### **Aims of the Liverpool Learning Partnership**

- To develop inclusive learning to ensure that all learners in Liverpool, including the most vulnerable, are given opportunity to achieve.
- To provide opportunities within the city to ensure lifelong learning for all children and adults.
- To keep the achievement of all children at the forefront of educational planning across the city.
- To shape provision across the city, ensuring that new learning opportunities are co-ordinated and meet the individual needs for all learners in Liverpool.
- To encourage all learning agencies to work together for the benefit of all learners in Liverpool, irrespective of their status or designation.
- To develop strong links between learning and the city's overall strategy for regeneration by creating school specialisms focused on the local business and industry needs.

The Liverpool Learning Partnership seeks to engage all those committed to make learning central to the city's development and invite them to work together. Two strategic groups have been established to focus on:

- The quality of provision for **all learners**.
- Targeted provision for **learners who need more**, including vulnerable learners.

The Liverpool Learning Partnership (LLP) is three years old and has a huge buy in from schools (98%) and focuses on learning and learners; it is a limited company and is seeking charitable status. Schools buy into the partnership on an amount per pupil basis and commit to a three year contract.

LLP has an Executive Board, chaired by a Headteacher with representatives from all phases of education, School Improvement, the Local Authority, City of Liverpool College and Liverpool Governor's Forum. The Board meets termly to receive reports, set future priorities and drive forward the Partnership's agenda. There are two sub groups: All Learners and Learners Who Need More. These are focussed groups, overseeing actions and programmes and delivering the LLP Strategic Plan.

### **Newcastle**

There have been some significant improvements in educational attainment in 2016, especially in Newcastle primary schools, but pupil progress through secondary education and attendance overall are key areas to improve. Following concerns raised by Ofsted in 2015, a restructure of the education service has commenced to ensure that it is fit-for purpose and affordable. The number of schools that are now academies continues to grow and by September 2018, all of Newcastle's secondary schools, more than a third of the primary schools and the Pupil Referral Unit will be academies.

The local authority is looking to establish a new model of school improvement that is led by schools and academies and is supported by the local authority. The role of the local authority will be to provide an accurate and robust evaluation of the quality of schools in Newcastle. In the new model, the local authority will commission school-to-school support rather than provide it directly. Encouraging all schools to work together in partnership will be crucial to the success of the new strategy. From the outset, the new model will be based upon:

- All schools participating and taking responsibility for the education of every pupil in the city and not just those pupils in their own schools;
- All Headteachers being involved in the peer support and challenge;
- The Newcastle Teaching Schools playing a lead role in the prospective sector-led school improvement model for the city;
- The local authority being an equal partner and working alongside Headteachers to fulfil its statutory role of identifying and challenging those schools causing concern.

Newcastle City Council and Headteachers will champion educational excellence by:

- Understanding the performance of all schools in Newcastle and identifying those schools that require improvement and intervention;
- Ensure swift and effective action is taken when underperformance occurs in an academy or school, including the use of intervention powers in maintained schools and alerting the RSC to concerns about academies where this will improve leadership and standards;
- Encouraging good and outstanding schools and academies to take responsibility for their own improvement and to support other schools.

### Sheffield

Learn Sheffield was created in August 2015, and it is a not-for-profit Schools Company, owned by the schools and colleges of Sheffield (80%) alongside Sheffield City Council (20%), with the main focus being school improvement. They are commissioned by Sheffield City Council to deliver the statutory duties relating to school improvement. The proposals were co-constructed with schools through the working groups that led to the decision to establish a Schools Company. In this model, Sheffield LA fulfils the role of commissioner. All Sheffield schools and colleges have either become members of Learn Sheffield, or have expressed an intention to do so. The new approach to school improvement have been developed by working with primary, secondary and special schools sectors; this new school led approach will be adopted from the beginning of the 2016/17 school year. Learn Sheffield's approach is that they can bring about improvement through partnerships, which is central to their strategy. They believe that the purpose of education is to enhance the life chances of children and young people. A great school, therefore, must ensure that it develops the achievement and readiness of its students, so that they are ready for life.

Learn Sheffield's mission is to support and challenge their members, who are the schools and colleges of the city, to have the courage and confidence to develop the education culture of Sheffield to be worthy of a world class city.

The Learn Sheffield vision is that:

- Sheffield's education community is honest, constructive, positive and always looking to promote and celebrate Sheffield
- Sheffield is outward looking and influences policy-making at every level of the education system
- Sheffield's education culture enables all learning institutions to be self-improving, inclusive and sustainable

The vision recognises that all schools need to improve continuously and all schools have something to contribute to the improvement of others. It is the responsibility of all school leaders and communities to secure improvement in their school, but it is also their responsibility to support improvement in all Sheffield schools and for all Sheffield children and young people. Learn Sheffield will support and challenge schools and colleges to self-evaluate accurately, share data and key information and work in partnership.

- To have an accurate and current evaluation of all schools and colleges, underpinned by robust self-evaluation
- High quality school leadership impacts on the outcomes of all schools and colleges in the city
- High quality teaching impacts on the outcomes of all pupils
- Schools have a shared commitment to the vision for Sheffield school improvement and collective refusal to accept under-performance

Learn Sheffield launched the Sheffield Priorities Project in December 2015, working with the National Education Trust, to identify the wider barriers to school improvement within the city. The priorities identified were: System culture, school improvement, inclusion, readiness, workforce and enrichment.

## La Coccinelle

La Coccinelle was registered in 2014 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in purpose-built premises in the Killingbeck area of Leeds and is privately owned and managed. It is a bilingual French and English setting serving the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. It was inspected in 2014 and found to be Inadequate, with inadequate safeguarding, a lack of a robust staffing system, ineffective risk assessments and a lack of challenge or motivation for children to learn. A Learning Improvement Consultant worked with the provision to support its improvement journey. The consultant worked with La Coccinelle to develop a focused improvement plan based on the Ofsted actions, supported the manager in meeting the safeguarding recommendations, and provided challenge, support and monitoring to improve practice and provision.

La Coccinelle was reinspected in October 2014, and the provision was rated Good. Key comments from Ofsted included: ***“The nursery has links with the local children's centre and works closely with the local authority's early years improvement team. The manager is ambitious and aims to provide a diverse and multicultural nursery environment, which meets the needs of local families. She has made significant improvements since the last inspection and has met all actions set. This is because she has been well supported by the local authority early years improvement team and Leeds Children's Services welfare officer. They have worked in partnership to develop the knowledge and skills within the staff team and improve safeguarding procedures”*** (Ofsted, 2014)

### **Learning Improvement Consultant activity has included:**

- Learning walks with the Manager across the nursery; joint action planning with the Manager
- In house staff training on 1. Observation 2. Planning 3. Supporting children's behaviour
- Manager began to attend the series of leadership twilights from the 0-5 learning improvement team training directory
- Delivered two in house training sessions on safeguarding
- Provided LA safeguarding audit and supported the manager in completing this

### **Impact on outcomes:**

- The premises are secure and regularly risk assessed
- The staff team have a good understanding of safeguarding and what to do if they have a concern
- All members of staff have a DBS check
- All staff have received paediatric first aid training
- Manager more aware of the need to build a strong team rather than try and manage everything
- The staff team are able to write quality observations
- The staff team plan interesting experiences to support children's learning & development
- Children's progress is monitored
- Staff have a better understanding of how to support children's behaviour

## Harehills Primary School

Harehills Primary is a large 3 form entry school serving an area of significant deprivation and growing diversity. The school has a high level of mobility, particularly among pupils of Eastern European and Gypsy Roma Traveller backgrounds. The school has a history of being below floor standards, with a constant turnover of staff. A School Improvement Advisor started working with the school in September 2012, supporting school leaders in strengthening their impact through the development of monitoring and evaluation activities. The school was inspected under the new framework in September 2013, with the overall judgement being requiring improvement; the work of the School Improvement Advisor was recognised by Ofsted: ***'The local authority supports the school well, particularly in developing the skills and knowledge of middle leaders'*** (Ofsted, 2013).

HMI monitoring recognised the school's good progress and productive relationship with the Local Authority which included work with governors; particular support was provided for the recruitment of a new head teacher and deputy head teacher for September 2014. The School Improvement Advisor supported the development of distributed leadership through assistant heads and cohort leaders, which brought about significant improvement and consistency to teaching, learning and assessment. The Local Authority assisted in brokering support from a local system leader, and the utilisation of existing networks and contacts which enabled the sharing and development of effective practice and provision. The school was inspected in December 2015 and was judged to be **good** for overall effectiveness, outstanding for leadership and management and outstanding for personal development, behaviour and well-being. ***'The school welcomed the very effective support provided by the local authority following the previous inspection. Local authority personnel played a key role in helping to restructure and improve leadership skills: for example, by coaching new leaders and training governors to increase the level of challenge they provide'*** (Ofsted, 2015)

### School Improvement Advisor activity has included:

- Supporting the development of robust assessment measures and data analysis
- Supporting the Headteacher in re-structuring and coaching extended leadership team, developing tighter accountabilities
- Supporting the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body to have robust and reliable monitoring and evaluation
- Regular teaching and learning observations, work scrutinies, coaching extended leadership team to challenge and support colleagues
- Timely brokerage of quality support from Local Authority consultant team, local school leaders and providing objective evaluation of the impact of this work

### Impact on outcomes:

- Children achieving a Good Level of Development saw a 3 year rising trend (2014-2016) from 47.8% to 56%
- Year 1 phonics saw a 3 year rising trend 2014-2016 from 56% to 65.2%
- Key Stage 2 outcomes in 2014 and 2015 showed the school significantly above national for progress overall for all subjects
- 2015 progress measures saw the school doubling the national for 'more than expected progress' in mathematics and within the top 10% nationally for progress
- 2016 Reading, Writing and Maths combined was above floor standard, with reading and mathematics outcomes above national



## Hugh Gaitskell Primary School

### Ofsted judgements and improvements in data outcomes

Hugh Gaitskell is a larger than average primary school (3 form entry). It is a complex school which meets the needs of a diverse community consisting of a mix of ethnicities, faiths and socio-economic groups. Mobility is the biggest challenge faced by the school. The school was judged to be Inadequate when inspected in November 2010, Satisfactory in February 2012 and Requires Improvement in December 2013. The current Deputy Headteacher was appointed Headteacher in June 2015 and raised expectations and her new rigorous approach to school improvement resulted in significantly high staffing turnover. The school was judged to be Good when inspected in May 2016.

***“The local authority has made frequent visits since the previous inspection and has provided effective support for the Headteacher and teachers. The recent support for the moderation of pupils’ writing has already had a positive impact” (Ofsted 2016)***

#### **School Improvement Advisor activity has included:**

- Enabling the school to provide an explicit profile of its complex intake which exemplifies high inward and outward mobility in each year group
- Regular teaching and learning observations and work scrutinies
- Whole school review of teaching and learning
- Supporting the Headteacher to develop role and impact of middle leaders
- Regular input at Joint Review Groups to support and challenge improvements
- Brokering appropriate support from others, and measuring its impact
- Supporting the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body to have robust and reliable assessment

Support was brokered from Learning Improvement consultants, an Early Years specialist leader and a Noctua Teaching School National Leader of Education.

#### **Impact on Outcomes:**

- Continued improvement in the quality of teaching, from 60% good or better in September 2015 to 90% in Spring 2017. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated
- Data outcomes: Internal assessment of current cohorts evidences that there has been an increase in the percentage of pupils on track to achieve age expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths in all year groups from 2015-16 and again from 2016-17
- Current assessments predict an increase for Key Stage 2 results for reading, writing and maths combined from 24% in 2016 to 36% in 2017
- Disadvantaged children have made faster progress overall than their non-disadvantage peers and Looked After pupils are on track to reach Age Related Expectations, helping to close the attainment gap
- Visit from Department of Education confirmed the school had all the strategies in place that outstanding schools in similar challenging circumstances have and acknowledged the significant challenges faced by the school

## Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

### Ofsted judgements and improvements in data outcomes

This one form entry school has had 8 Ofsted inspections between 2010 and 2016. They have recorded at least 42 changes of staff since the appointment of a new Headteacher in 2011. The school struggled with numerous and complex issues, including an intricate child protection issue, a **satisfactory** Ofsted judgement in 2010, and an inadequate HMI visit in 2011. A School Improvement Advisor worked with the school from 2013, to support its improvement journey, and in July 2016 the school achieved a **Good** judgement, with Ofsted commenting:

***“The local authority has provided a range of support to the school and has contributed to the journey to good” (Ofsted 2016)***

#### **School Improvement Advisor activity has included:**

- Establishing and supporting a Governing Body panel with Headteacher Performance Management, which is now appropriate and effective
- Supporting Headteacher to create a functioning senior leadership team
- Supporting the senior leadership team and the Governing Body to have robust and reliable assessment
- Regular teaching and learning observations and work scrutinies
- Regular input at Joint Review Groups to support and challenge improvements
- Brokering appropriate and best support from Local Authority consultant team, local school leaders and schools in the Catholic partnership and measuring the impact of this work

#### **Impact on outcomes:**

Data outcomes in all key stages have been maintained or improved from 2013 to 2015 and, where the measure is the same in 2016, there is a demonstration of the impact and work of the School Improvement Advisor

- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile – a new Early Years Lead has been appointed, who is also part of the senior leadership team
- This has led to improvements to the environment, provision and staffing
- The School Improvement Advisor led continuing professional development and offered bespoke support for the Early Years Lead.
- Doubling of outcomes, closing gap on national (from 32% Good Level of Development in 2013 to 60% Good Level of Development in 2016)
- In Phonics, there has been continuous improvements from 72% in 2015 to 83% in 2016 (above national)

## Otley Learning Alliance

Schools in the Otley Learning Alliance (All Saints, Ashfield, Bramhope, Pool-in-Wharfdale, St Joseph's Catholic, The Whartons, Westgate) identified a shared priority around developing Growth Mindsets and the characteristics of effective learning. The structure of the Learning Alliance provided the environment for this knowledge generation through partnership work to take place. To evaluate the impact of this work, each Headteacher worked with the School Improvement Advisor and other Headteachers in the Learning Alliance to conduct learning enquiries in each school. The aim was to identify what is working well in each school and learn from each other by sharing effective practice. This work linked directly to priorities in their Partnership plan.

School Improvement Advisor activity has included:

- Setting up the enquiry: drafting discussion prompts and timetabling activities
- Joining Headteachers on the visits, adding challenge and summarising and collating feedback and observations
- Producing individual school summaries and a whole family summary of findings which were shared with staff and governors. This included: underpinning principles; key approaches; possible areas for development and agreed next steps to improve practice further.
- Facilitating / delivering two governor continuing professional development sessions on how they can gathering first hand evidence of the school's impact and effectiveness through pupil voice and work scrutiny. The first session provided a framework for visits and the second session was led by governors who shared monitoring activity and what they had learned.

Impact on outcomes:

- Headteachers had external validation of what is working well in their own schools and across the wider family, including implementation and impact of shared professional development.
- Significantly increased governor confidence in visiting school, talking to children about their learning and gathering first hand evidence of the impact of the school's work and consistency of practice.
- Headteachers having the opportunity to visit each other's schools, consider the learning environment and identify common key principles of practice across the family.
- Headteachers in the family already worked closely together and the enquiry strengthened this relationship as they worked collegiately to learn from each other.
- The enquiry identified differences in the deployment and impact of support staff and this is the agreed focus for the 2016/17 work.

## Temple Moor High School

### Securing a 'good' grading for a school at risk of special measures.

In 2015, following analysis by Learning Improvement, Temple Moor High School was designated as a school causing concern. The school's self-evaluation showed the school to be inadequate, and there were concerns around the capacity of leadership, including governance, which potentially rendered the school vulnerable to a special measures Ofsted judgement.

The School Improvement Advisor worked with the Chair of Governors, other Local Authority officers, and a partner Headteacher to monitor progress and to increase challenge to the senior leadership team. The School Improvement Advisor supported the school to secure stable leadership following the retirement of the Principle in 2016, with the newly appointed Vice Principle being ratified as the Interim Principle. To further stabilise the school, Learning Improvement successfully bid for funding to broker a partner Headteacher for a year.

In March 2016, the School Improvement Advisor facilitated a school review to measure the impact of the support provided and the changes to leadership. This validated the Interim Principal's self-evaluation and judged the school to be 'requiring improvement'. Work continued with the school and other partners to support Leadership and improve standards.

In March 2017, Ofsted found the school to be good and commented:

***'The leadership team has restored the good quality of education in the school following a dip in performance after the last inspection. Both governors and the local authority identified this drop in standards two years ago and were swift to challenge the decline' and 'Governors, with support from the local authority and yourself, have quickly strengthened their skills in challenging you and other leaders'***

School Improvement Advisor activity has included:

- Attending all governing body meetings
- Brokering associate adviser visits
- Conducting teaching and learning monitoring visits
- Supporting senior leader recruitment panels to ensure increased expertise and high quality appointments.

Impact on outcomes:

- In 2016, Progress 8 data shows improvement but the progress of groups of pupils and progress in English was disappointing. As a result, the School Improvement Advisor undertook an English review with key recommendations and brokered additional support.
- Continued challenge to the governing body resulted in the appointment of a new Chair of Governors and governance judged to be at least good

## Ralph Thoresby School

### To 'Good' and beyond: the development of a support school

Ralph Thoresby is a larger than average secondary school, with the majority of pupils being from a White British background. An above average numbers of children have pupil premium funding or English as an additional language. A School Improvement Advisor worked with the school to appoint a new Headteacher in September 2012. In March 2013, Ralph Thoresby School was Ofsted rated Requires Improvement in all areas, with pupil progress below that of their peers nationally, weaknesses in teacher's marking, maths and English progress, and below average attendance.

The School Improvement Advisor brokered support from a peer head to build leadership capacity, provided challenge and support to develop the school's performance, and working with key partners to conduct learning reviews.

In 2015, Ofsted found the school to be good in all areas and commented that:

***“The LA has provided good support in checking on the performance of the school with the head teacher and supporting the development of leadership across the school”***

Learning Improvement brokered support in 2015-16 from senior leaders at the school to develop leadership at another local school with an Ofsted Requires Improvement judgement through a National College bid. This resulted in leadership and management at the partner school being graded good at its next inspection.

School Improvement Advisor activity has included:

- Developing leadership capacity through peer Headteacher
- Providing challenge and support to the school
- Delivering reviews with Local Authority officers and a national leader of education, including:
  - a peer review with an external consultant and a local school
  - a Science review
- Training for middle leaders and governors
- Involvement in staff support plans
- Post 16 review and monitoring

Impact on Outcomes:

In August 2012, 47.5% of pupils at Ralph Thoresby gained 5 GCSEs at grade C or above including Maths and English. Progress in both Maths and English was below that of pupils with the same starting points nationally. Learning Improvement has continued to support and challenge the school so that its improvement trajectory has been sustained. It received its best ever results in August 2016 at both GCSE and Post 16. 62% of pupils gained a C grade or better in English and Maths with progress data in both subjects well above national.

### Leeds Learning Partnership

The Leeds Learning Partnership (LLP) is a key school improvement traded service co-ordinated by the secondary learning improvement team. The unique aspect of the Leeds Learning Partnership, and critical to its success, is its aim to develop school based system leaders who work collaboratively to plan, facilitate and lead the Leeds Learning Partnership network and conference programme (now covering 13 subject areas). Now in its seventh year, the Leeds Learning Partnership has worked in partnership with teaching schools to provide a programme of over a 100 continuing professional development events accessed by thousands of staff each year. In 2016/17, the membership of the Leeds Learning Partnership comprised over 40 settings including Local Authority maintained schools, academies, free schools, and independent schools – mainly from Leeds but increasingly from beyond Leeds.

The Leeds Learning Partnership is designed to:

- Provide practical school focused training that raises standards and meets schools' leadership development needs
- Develop teachers' knowledge of practical and highly effective evidence-based strategies that accelerate progress and close the gap between vulnerable learners and their peers
- Deliver a cohesive programme to improve the leadership of teaching and learning across the whole school, with a particular focus on a collaborative response to curriculum and assessment changes

Within the context of the above, the specific priorities for the partnership are reviewed annually in response to national and local policy changes. Helping disadvantaged students achieve as well as their non-disadvantaged peers remains a central priority with a particular focus on metacognition, marking & feedback and improving levels of oracy. In addition to the core Leeds Learning Partnership programme, additional packages of support are available to support other priorities – currently these are focused on Post-16 and Transition. The Leeds Learning Partnership also works with Red Kite and the Yorkshire Leadership Community, to develop leadership in all education phases through the provision of continuing professional development opportunities.

Whilst the various Leeds Learning Partnership strands are longer-term, on-going strategies, the impact is already evident in the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of Leeds Learning Partnership schools and in the incremental improvement in pupil outcomes year on year.