

Achievement of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Lancashire
(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information: Bob Stott, Director of Universal and Early Support Services, Directorate for Children and Young People, 01772 531652
bob.stott@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The report sets out the achievements of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals at Lancashire and District level at the end of Key Stages 2 and 4. The report also outlines the strategies which are being deployed to raise achievement for this group of pupils.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to give its views on the report.

Background

Assessment information at national and local level has indicated consistently that the achievement of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) is well below the performance of their peers. The local authority has worked in partnership with schools to raise the achievement of these pupils. In 2011 additional funding (known as the Pupil Premium) was provided to schools to enable them to support FSM pupils who have been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years. The value of the Pupil Premium has risen year on year and the current value is £900 per pupil per year. All schools have identified strategies to support the learning of their FSM pupils and are monitored on the achievement of this group of children and their use of the funding.

**Achievement in Lancashire for pupils eligible for Free School Meals
Early Years Foundation Stage**

- The proportion of FSM children reaching a good level of attainment at the end of their first year in school rose to 46% in 2012. This was a rise of around 6% on the previous year.
- The attainment of FSM children in the Early Years has risen by 13% in the last three years but remains 2% below the national average.

Key Stage 2 (see Appendix A: Table 1)

- At the end of Key Stage 2 the proportion of FSM pupils reaching level 4 or above in both English and mathematics rose to 66% in 2012. This was a rise of 10% on the 2011 figure.
- The attainment of pupils was in line with the national average and was better than the average for similar local authorities.
- The results have improved steadily over the past 3 years.
- 87% of FSM pupils made the expected levels of progress in English and 81% of pupils made the expected progress in mathematics. This was an improvement on the previous year but is below the level of progress made by their peers. The achievement of FSM pupils remains a key priority for the local authority.
- In 2012 the attainment of FSM pupils rose in 11 out of the 12 districts with only Fylde failing to improve. Fylde's performance was also the lowest in Lancashire and is over 10% below the national average.

Key Stage 4 (see Appendix A: Table 2)

- At the end of Key Stage 4 the proportion of FSM pupils gaining 5 or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and mathematics rose very slightly to 30.2%.
- The attainment of FSM pupils in Lancashire was below the national average and that of similar local authorities.
- The results have improved slightly over the past 3 years but this improvement has been below the rate of progress nationally.
- 42% of pupils made the expected levels of progress in English, a decrease on the previous year. In mathematics the proportion of pupils making expected progress rose to 39%, an increase on the previous year. Progress for FSM pupils remains well below that of their peers and is a key priority for schools and the local authority.
- In 2012 the attainment of FSM pupils rose in 5 districts with the highest increases in Preston, West Lancashire and Fylde. Attainment in 7 districts fell, however, with the largest decreases in Lancaster and Pendle. The lowest attainment was in Lancaster, Burnley and Pendle.

Strategies to support and challenge schools in raising the achievement of FSM pupils

General strategies

- All schools receive information which highlights the performance of FSM pupils
- Over the past three years the County Council has made available £5 million to create the Best Start Programme, a programme which has enabled Children's Centres to work with primary schools to support FSM children aged 5 – 7 years and their families so that they can make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Whilst this programme will cease in 2014, schools will be able to use their increased Pupil Premium Funding to commission this valuable family support from Children's Centres.

- The use of the school's Pupil Premium funding is monitored through adviser visits and the progress of this group of pupils is carefully tracked by headteachers and governing bodies with support from advisers
- Both national and local information about the most effective strategies to support FSM pupils at risk of underachievement is shared with schools including toolkits to challenge and inform practice
- Where FSM pupils are not making sufficient progress, schools are challenged to raise achievement

Specific strategies to raise achievement at Key Stage 4

In the light of the limited progress being made to raise achievement for FSM pupils at the end of KS4 a specific action plan has been implemented which includes:

- Identifying schools where the greatest proportion of FSM pupils attend and where attainment and progress for these pupils remains low in order to inform and direct the work of school advisers and to engage schools in local support networks.
- Advisers challenging schools to track FSM pupil progress at least termly and to ensure appropriate intervention and support is in place, making effective use of the Pupil Premium and brokering in additional support as necessary, including from successful schools.
- Highlighting, for senior leaders, the key messages from national research into underlying barriers and effective support for FSM pupils and Children Looked After, sharing effective practice locally through a Pupil Premium conference
- Providing information on the attainment of FSM pupils to District Children and Young People's Trusts where it is an area of concern so that additional support for socially disadvantaged pupils is targeted to meet their needs
- Providing consultant support to schools with higher levels of persistent absence to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils
- Providing bespoke support for schools in challenging circumstances where the attainment of FSM is low, including
 - support for small group or 1/1 tuition
 - support for mathematics revision classes
 - "masterclasses" in mathematics
- Provision of subject-specific training for teachers and support in mathematics and English with a strong focus on maximising pupil progress, ensuring in-school support for teachers in schools causing concern.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

N/A

Risk management

There are no implications for risk management arising from this report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
<u>Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: academic year 2011 to 2012</u>	Jan 2013	Jonathan Hewitt Directorate for Children and Young People 01772 531663
<u>National curriculum assessments at key stage 2 in England: academic year 2011 to 2012</u>	Jan 2013	Jonathan Hewitt Directorate for Children and Young People 01772 531663

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A