



meeting	EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING SELECT COMMITTEE		
date	22 February 2005	agenda item number	4

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Progress on the implementation of the LEA's post Ofsted inspection action plan

Purpose of Report

1. This report summarises the progress made by the education department in delivering its post Ofsted inspection action plan and highlights areas for continuing development. A copy of the progress report is **attached** for Committee members only.

Information and Advice

Background

2. Nottinghamshire LEA was inspected in May 2003 and the inspection report was published on 10 September 2003. The inspection report is extremely positive and identifies very clearly the progress that has been made since the previous inspection. The LEA is judged to be a good LEA (grade 2) with the highest capacity to improve (grade 1). Many of the LEA's key functions are found to be good and support for literacy is very good. Of the fifty-four judgements made in the inspection of Nottinghamshire LEA only one was unsatisfactory and considered a weakness: the support provided for gifted and talented pupils.
3. The report identifies six areas for improvement, not all of which are of the same magnitude. There were two recommendations that needed to be addressed as a priority:
 - establishing procedures for external quality assurance for pupils educated in hospitals
 - establishing monitoring procedures to ensure all designated teachers for child protection participate in training.

The other areas for improvement were:

- implementing the actions planned within the EDP in relation to information and communication technology (ICT)
- raising the profile and tracking the progress of gifted and talented pupils
- identifying and sharing good practice in the support for gifted and talented pupils
- working with Social Services to complete personal education plans for pupils, in a timely manner.

The LEA action plan

4. The LEA was required to produce an action plan setting out the actions to be taken to bring about improvement in the key issues. The action plan was submitted to Ofsted and the DfES in line with the required timescales by December 2003.
5. The action plan is constructed in two parts. Part 1 sets out the actions in response to the small number of recommendations made by the inspection team. In addition to the recommendations made by Ofsted, the LEA carefully scrutinised the inspection team's judgements and the details of the report and identified areas that were satisfactory. As part of its own improvement programme, the LEA selected nine areas where, despite being satisfactory, the senior team of the education department felt that improvements could still be made in order to raise the quality of services to good. These were set out as part 2 of the action plan.

Progress made with implementing the action plan

6. The implementation of the plan has been overtaken by major national initiatives that have impacted on the planned activities and led to changes to timelines or in some cases a complete rethink of the actions needed. The DfES Five Year Strategy and the Children Act have had a particularly significant impact on the action plan.
7. Overall, 72 actions were planned in the action plan and by December 2004, 41 of the actions had been fully completed (57%). All other activities not completed either have been rescheduled for overall completion by July 2005 or have been discontinued because of national changes. Where activities have not been completed within the planned timeline this has largely been due to staffing difficulties.

Progress with outcome indicators

8. Overall there has been good progress made with indicators that relate to improving the efficiency of education department services. Judging the impact of the actions is more difficult because many of the success

criteria relate to performance measures that will not be available until later in the year. This is particularly the case for the one area of weakness identified by the inspection: that of support for gifted and talented pupils. A further report updating the Committee on the outcomes from the plan will be presented in the autumn term 2005, when the summer term data will be available.

9. A detailed commentary is included within the progress report setting out what actions have been delivered and, wherever possible, what the impact of the actions has been.

Next steps

10. Page 15 of the progress report sets out further action to be taken in relation to each of the actions. These actions will be set out in the Education Development Plan for 2005-2006 or the education department strategic plan for 2005-2006. Both these plans are carefully monitored by the education department senior team in a six-monthly scrutiny of progress against outputs and outcomes.
11. From April 2006, the local authority will be required to produce a Children and Young Person's Plan setting out all the actions across all county council departments for improving outcomes for children and young people. Any further action arising from the post Ofsted plan will be incorporated into the Children and Young People's Plan.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, Crime and Disorder and those using the service. Where such implications are material, they have been described in the text of the report. Members' attention is however drawn to the following:-

Financial Implications

13. The cost of implementing the action plan is met from the education department budget.

Implications for Service Users

14. The education department has worked with schools and other service users and partners in constructing its action plan and uses the views of schools gathered by the Audit Commission as important success criteria.

RECOMMENDATION

15. That the Committee note the report and identify any issues arising from the inspection report for future scrutiny.

PAM TULLEY

Director of Education

Director of Resources' Financial Comments (PWH)

As paragraph 13 of the report indicates, the cost of implementing the post Ofsted inspection plan will be met from within the Education Department budget.

Background Papers Available for Inspection

Nil.

M19C1269