

## Actions taken to further raise standards of attainment and improve progress of children and young people in 2015-2016

All school improvement advisers allocated to maintained schools at risk of requiring improvement in 2015-2016 consistently provided support and challenge to schools to ensure a focus by leaders, teachers and governing bodies on securing improvements in the 2016 outcomes at key stages 1, 2 and 4, in the challenging context of a new national curriculum and a new assessment system. This included:

1. actions focusing on the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils, as outlined in the County Council's '**Closing the educational attainment Gap Strategy**' and in particular:
  - the delivery of primary and secondary head teacher briefings and Closing the Gap conferences with an enhanced focus on the 'East Midlands Challenge', which sets out the urgent agenda to improve outcomes for key disadvantaged learners: Free School Meal(FSM)6; White British FSM6; Looked After Children (LAC); and those with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
  - Education Improvement Adviser support for targeted schools, focusing particularly on the provision and outcomes for vulnerable and/or disadvantaged groups, including bespoke visits to targeted schools/academies where Looked After Children outcomes were of concern
  - bespoke Pupil Premium Reviews for targeted schools as well as the development of a 'Pupil Premium Toolkit' and training offer to build schools' and Systems Leaders' capacity for self-evaluation and improvement planning in order to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. *(Approximately 240 delegates from 146 Nottinghamshire schools have accessed this training since February 2016)*
  - working with the Teaching School Alliances (TSAs) to develop and promote a cohesive 'sold offer' which will enable Nottinghamshire's schools to access appropriate training and support in a timely manner
2. **Headteacher briefings, conferences and meetings** included a sharp focus on raising attainment and securing sufficient progress through effective leadership. Specific actions included:
  - assessment updates, collation of information on schools using particular assessment systems, so that headteachers have been able to moderate assessments with other schools more easily and effectively
  - briefings on the new SATs papers and key performance indicators, so that headteachers have been able to ensure that teachers could support children to understand the requirements of the tests and maximise their achievement
  - senior leaders responsible for assessment have continued to access the assessment networks, which have been attended by 66 schools. This has meant that schools were as well prepared as possible to support children to demonstrate their achievements in the 2016 Standard assessment tests (SATs)
  - updated guidance was provided for schools on judging progress and carrying out effective work scrutinies to evaluate progress and identify areas for improvement
  - RAISE on Line training was attended by 71 schools and ensured that leaders used the inspection dashboard and RAISE reports to evaluate trends in attainment and progress effectively in order to inform future improvement planning
  - schools had access to Fischer Family Trust (FFT) data and workshops on how to make the most of FFT and have supported leaders in interpreting the data, setting targets and tracking progress
  - training, attended by 120 schools, was provided to support leaders and teachers to understand the Interim Teacher Assessment Frameworks. Opportunities for cross school moderation, supported leaders to make increasingly accurate judgements of attainment and progress.
  - literacy leader networks were attended by 23 schools. The networks supported leaders to deepen their knowledge and understanding of children's literacy development. As a result literacy leaders were better informed to support the development of literacy in their schools

- a maths leaders' network, attended by 57 schools, had a focus on strengthening leadership of the role in order to impact on maths learning and achievement
3. Medium term strategies have been incorporated within the **revised School Improvement Strategy** and focussed on the further strengthening of partnership working across the authority. Specific actions included:
- termly reviews of known partnerships with Teaching Schools Alliances (TSAs), national and local leaders of education/partnership leaders and other stakeholders in each supported school, which have ensured a continued focus on the 'impact' of support on improving attainment and progress across the County
  - joint TSA and Support to Schools Service meetings have been held each term to share field knowledge about Schools Causing Concern (SCC) to improve the capacity of TSAs to respond speedily to requests for specific support
4. Nottinghamshire's **Performance, Intelligence and Policy Team** (PIP) has continued to produce a wide range of high quality datasets in order to assess impact, identify areas of greatest need, areas for improvement and examples of good practice that can be shared and built upon at county, local and school level to support the closing of educational attainment gaps. The team has generated and interrogated closing the gap datasets at district, locality and ward level with a sharper focus on close analysis of 'multiple risk' factors for key vulnerable groups, e.g. White British FSM Boys.
- In **Early Years**, provisional outcomes in 2016 indicate that the FSM gap for pupils eligible for free school meals attaining a good level of development and those not eligible has narrowed.

Comparisons cannot be made with 2015 gaps for Key Stages 1 and 2 due to the changes to the assessment system

- **At Key Stage 2**, provisional data for 2016 indicates a gap of 24 percentage points between the percentage of FSM6 pupils and Non FSM6 pupils achieving the expected standard or above in combined reading, writing and mathematics. Figures show that 35.7% of FSM6 gained this measure compared to 59.7% of Non FSM6 pupils.
  - In terms of Nottinghamshire's Key Stage 2 outcomes for **White British FSM Boys** and White British Non FSM boys, the 2016 gap stands at 29 percentage points. 24.3% of White British FSM boys gained the expected standard in combined reading, writing and mathematics compared to 53.9% of White British Non FSM boys. This is an area for focused, collaborative action in 2016 -17.
5. In addition, the highly focused **continuous professional development (CPD) offer**, identified through **deep analysis of Nottinghamshire school outcomes** both by the LA included:
- Use of data to identify good practice in relation to the teaching of early phonics at Foundation and key stage 1 and grammar, punctuation and spelling
    - the CPD offer was further enhanced to include a sharp focus on underpinning subject knowledge such as basic numeracy, the teaching of early phonics and the effective teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling, particularly at key stage 2 and the teaching of inference when reading
    - Ofsted provided training for schools with Early Years provision that required improvement ('Getting to Good in the Early years')

Effective teaching of Phonics remains an area for improvement in 2016-17.

- A considerable amount of Education Improvement Service (EIS) time was devoted to the continued development of effective practice across all Nottinghamshire primary schools in 2015-2016 to ensure that '**assessing without levels**' (AWL) has been embedded across the county in preparation for the beginning of the new testing arrangements in the summer term 2016, with outcomes being published for the first time without levels.

- A headteacher consultation group was used to identify, develop and share best practice
  - AWL networks ran every term in 2015-2016 across the county to develop best practice and share this with schools
- A series of 'Hot Topic' briefings for governors on the implications of the new curriculum and AWL ran in the spring and summer terms 2016. These were attended by governors from 67 schools. Governors in these schools have a good understanding of AWL and of their role in holding the headteacher to account for the successful implementation of new assessment systems and processes across the school.
6. The acting group manager for the Support to Schools Service worked with team managers in the service and with senior leaders in the other 8 LAs comprising the East Midlands and with TSAs to develop a co-ordinated response to the **East Midlands Challenge**. This included the identification of high performing statistical neighbours and the organisation of good practice visits to early years' settings, schools, TSAs, FE providers and universities to research effective strategies to raise the attainment and improve the progress of FSM6, EAL and LAC children in all key stages. The Early Years visit to Lancashire took place in the summer term 2016 and the learning will be used to enhance the Early Years' outcomes in the 2016-17 Improvement Strategy
7. **A Leadership and Governance toolkit** was developed in 2015, which was used by headteachers and governors to develop alternative models of leadership. Officers from Governing Body Services and the Education Improvement Service supported governors and headteachers to consider the most appropriate leadership model to support them to drive school improvement in a cost effective way. This was a significant challenge for all schools and especially for small schools. This is an area for further development in 2016-17
8. The StSS continued to work in partnership with headteachers and governors of **small schools** to support them to overcome these challenges through Small School Forum meetings, which focussed on developing their understanding of the benefits of working in Collaborations and Federations
- There are now 9 small schools working in formal collaborative partnerships, with 1 headteacher leading 2 or more schools. In addition, there are 2 small schools in a federation, 3 in a mixed collaboration (made up of 1 academy and 2 maintained schools) and 1 small school has recently joined a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). These partnerships have more capacity to drive and secure school improvement than an individual small school.

This is an area for further development in 2016-17

9. Support for **Coasting Schools or those at risk of Coasting**
- 2015-16, risk assessments by the EIS ensured that all schools at risk of coasting were supported by an Education Improvement Adviser (20 Local Authority maintained schools were below coasting threshold for 2014 and 2015 and at risk of being designated coasting in 2016).
  - The headteacher briefing in the summer term 2016 alerted schools to the coasting criteria and possible action that the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) might take
  - 'Hot Topic' briefings were arranged for governors in the autumn term 2016. All headteachers and chairs of governors of schools at risk of coasting, based on data from 2014 to 2016, were specifically invited to attend these meetings. The briefings identified what information might be expected to be required by the RSC and how the schools could best prepare a response.