

# **Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee**

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**Thursday 25 October 2012 at 2.00 pm**

**To be held at the Town Hall, Pinstone  
Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

**The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend**

## **Membership**

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Councillors Gill Furniss (Chair), Rob Frost, Keith Hill, Talib Hussain, George Lindars-Hammond, Karen McGowan, Mohammad Maroof, Lynn Rooney, Colin Ross, Andrew Sangar (Deputy Chair), Nikki Sharpe, Clive Skelton and Stuart Wattam

## **Education Non-Council Members**

Jules Jones, Gillian Foster, Paulette Kennedy, Joan Stratford and Alison Warner

## **Sheffield Local Involvement Network**

(Observer)

## **Substitute Members**

In accordance with the Constitution, Substitute Members may be provided for the above Committee Members as and when required.

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## **PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING**

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The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of the planning, policy development and monitoring of service performance and other general issues relating to learning and attainment and the care of children and young people within the Children's Services area of Council activity. It also scrutinises as appropriate the various local Health Services functions, with particular reference to those relating to the care of children.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at [www.sheffield.gov.uk](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk). You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. on Friday, or you can ring on telephone no. 2734552. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked \* on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Scrutiny Committee meetings. Please see the Council's website or contact Democratic Services for further information.

Scrutiny Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last. If you would like to attend the meeting please report to the First Point Reception desk where you will be directed to the meeting room.

If you require any further information about this Scrutiny Committee, please contact David Molloy, Scrutiny Policy Officer on 0114 2735065 or email [david.molloy@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:david.molloy@sheffield.gov.uk).

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## **FACILITIES**

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There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

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**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SUPPORT SCRUTINY AND POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA  
25 OCTOBER 2012**

**Order of Business**

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- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**  
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest**  
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Public Questions and Petitions**  
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 6. Minutes of Previous Meeting**  
To approve the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012.
- 7. Education Outcomes for Looked After Children**  
Report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families
- 8. Policy Update**  
Report of the Policy Officer (Scrutiny)
- 9. Date of Next Meeting**  
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2012 at 2.00 pm in the Town Hall.

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## ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

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New standards arrangements were introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The new regime made changes to the way that members' interests are registered and declared.

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period\* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

\*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -
  - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
  - which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) -
  - the landlord is your council or authority; and
  - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
  - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
  - (b) either
    - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
    - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Under the Council's Code of Conduct, members must act in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership), including the principle of honesty, which says that 'holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest'.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life.

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously, and has been published on the Council's website as a downloadable document at [-http://councillors.sheffield.gov.uk/councillors/register-of-councillors-interests](http://councillors.sheffield.gov.uk/councillors/register-of-councillors-interests)

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Lynne Bird, Director of Legal Services on 0114 2734018 or email [lynne.bird@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.bird@sheffield.gov.uk)

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**Children, Young People and Family Support  
Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee**

**Meeting held 27 September 2012**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Gill Furniss (Chair), Andrew Sangar (Deputy Chair), George Lindars-Hammond, Talib Hussain, Karen McGowan, Mohammad Maroof, Lynn Rooney, Nikki Sharpe, Stuart Wattam, Rob Frost and Clive Skelton

**Non-Council co-optees** Jules Jones, Paulette Kennedy and Alison Warner

**1. WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING ARRANGEMENTS**

1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and outlined the housekeeping and fire evacuation arrangements. Members welcomed Paulette Kennedy to the Committee, as the newly appointed Parent Governor Representative.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Hill and Colin Ross, and also from Joan Stratford and Gillian Foster (co-opted members). No substitutes were appointed.

**3. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

3.1 No items were identified.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4.1 There were no declarations of interest on agenda items.

**5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

5.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2012 were approved as a correct record, and there were no matters arising.

**6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

6.1 There were no public questions or petitions submitted to the meeting.

**7. RAISING OF THE PARTICIPATION AGE**

7.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, with regard to the Raising of the Participation Age. In attendance for this item was Tony Tweedy (Sheffield City Council), and Andy Barrs and Lynne Hilson (Sheffield Futures).

7.2 Mr. Tweedy outlined the significant changes which were planned around

information, advice and guidance available to students around careers advice in schools. This service would now be bought in by individual schools and would vary across the City. He outlined several key changes which had either occurred recently or were planned to go ahead, such as the abolition of Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac).

- 7.3 Mr. Tweedy stated that it was felt by some that the current 5 A\*-C GCSE grade standard demotivated young people who were not very academic, and the E-Bac would focus more upon a young person's employability, rather than just on their academic credentials.
- 7.4 There had been changes seen in post-GCSE trends already, with fewer students who achieved the required grades taking up University places, largely (it was thought) due to the fees increase.
- 7.5 Sheffield already boasted the largest vocational programme in the UK, and now there was a national drive to promote apprenticeships, especially in small to medium sized businesses, as currently only 10% of this sized business offered the opportunity of an apprenticeship. Members felt that often these businesses did not know enough about apprenticeships in order to make them available, and that more information for employers was required in this area.
- 7.6 There was a rising level of young people nationally who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), although the term 'NEET' was being phased out, as young people did not want to be categorised in this way. It was not yet clear what NEETs would be called in the future.
- 7.7 It was noted that it would be compulsory for young people to be in some form of education or training until they were 17 by 2013, and this would increase to 18 years of age by 2015. It was essential that there were enough training/ apprenticeship/ educational places available in the system in order for this to be feasible. A figure of 98% of young people engaging with this by 2013 had been set locally in Sheffield. It was noted that Dee Desgranges, Sheffield City Council, had been leading on this strategy at a national level.
- 7.8 It was essential to understand the NEETs cohort and analyse the reasons why these young people became NEET in the first place. It was essential to get the mix and balance of provision right in order to offer suitable places.
- 7.9 Mr. Tweedy detailed several groups who were at risk of becoming NEET and who were identified in the Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI). This included young people with learning difficulties, teenage parents, young carers, and young people who had suffered major trauma. It was essential to identify young people in these categories at an early stage in order to put appropriate interventions in place.
- 7.10 Schools were now responsible for buying in their own careers guidance services, and Sheffield Futures were currently offering one 'free' day per week per secondary school, although the funding for this offer was due to terminate at the end of March 2013. Members wished to know what was in place for when this

offer ended.

- 7.11 Members commented that although the careers service was 'information rich', it was often 'guidance poor, with students coming home with vast quantities of information, but almost too much to digest and make the best decision. This information overload could be overwhelming for young people.
- 7.12 It was also noted that the Secretary of State had recently removed the obligation for schools to offer work experience to Year 10 pupils, and that the work experience offer now varied dramatically across the City.
- 7.13 It was noted that additional information sessions were being commissioned through Sheffield Futures' Community Youth Teams for young people from Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) as the NEET cohort in Sheffield had a disproportionately large number of young people from BME backgrounds. Sheffield Futures were also developing a parents' guide advising parents on the type of questions they should be asking with regard to careers guidance for their children. In terms of schools receiving high numbers of 'new arrivals' especially from the Roma/ Slovak community, increased dialogue was required to ensure that these schools had sufficient resources in place in order to handle this influx of students.
- 7.14 Members asked whether any action would be taken against young people who did not engage with education or training up to the new age of participation, and it was confirmed that if the NEET level was unacceptably high, the Department of Education would intervene, although fines for parents had been stopped.
- 7.15 Members were keen that user-friendly terms were adopted to replace confusing acronyms such as NEET and RONI. With regard to NEET figures, Mr. Tweedy confirmed that the number of NEETs had decreased year on year until 2007, whereupon the numbers had started to increase, largely due to the global recession, and locally, the disassembling of Sheffield Futures. Sheffield Futures was now being reconstructed with a more streamlined structure; although it was acknowledged that a great deal of expertise had been lost from the organisation in the process. These Community Youth Teams had a named worker per secondary school in Sheffield.
- 7.16 Members wished to know how the 'quality assured providers' referred to in the report were defined, and Mr. Tweedy outlined the process which Sheffield City Council followed in order to ensure these quality providers, which included specific tender requirements and careful management of all contracts. Ofsted had commented that Sheffield had very rigorous and robust structures in place for this process.
- 7.17 It was also hoped that, in future, there would be an improved procedure around managed moves from one work placement to another, if a young person's placement was not working out for some reason.
- 7.18 It was emphasised that the Raising the Participation Age strategy was not just about retaining young people in education; it was also about finding suitable

training, volunteering and work experience placements.

7.19 Members wished to know more about the potential impact of the Baccalaureate, and requested that the Committee keep an eye on these developments.

7.20 It was clarified that there was already a great deal of work taking place City-wide to utilise the two City Universities as resources for learning mentors, and some A-level engineering courses were already being delivered by the University of Sheffield.

7.21 Members asked about the creation of 'free schools' across the City and it was confirmed that these free schools were a Coalition Government initiative which were outside of the control of the Local Authority.

7.22 Members were concerned that the removal of EMA would deter young people from staying on into further education. There needed to be a robust system in place to ensure that this did not happen.

7.23 It was confirmed that Sheffield Futures had specialist staff working within the teams to deliver services to school children with learning difficulties and special educational needs. Members requested a breakdown of information to show what all schools across the City were providing in terms of information, advice and guidance.

7.24 It was confirmed that the City Wide Learning Body (CWLB) were keeping a watching brief upon the topic of information, advice and guidance in their work programme, and this would also be a topic to be considered by school governing bodies.

7.25 Andy Barrs extended an invite to all Members to come and see the work of the Community Youth Teams out in local areas.

7.26 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee

(a) requests the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families to provide a table of information upon what all schools across the City are currently doing about developing their own information, advice and guidance provision, and

(b) requests the Scrutiny Policy Officer to circulate a formal invite to all Members from Sheffield Futures for a visit to Community Youth Teams.

## **8. FOSTERING AND ADOPTION**

8.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, with regard to the latest developments in the area of Fostering and Adoption. In attendance for this item were Jon Banwell and Liz Spaven, Sheffield City Council.

8.2 Mr. Banwell reported that the Government were making changes nationally to adoption processes, in that the Government wanted to see the process speeded

- up. A new 'adoption score card' had been produced for this purpose.
- 8.3 Members requested to see a copy of the new score card, and were also keen that the success of adoptive placements was not compromised by trying to rush adoptions through. It was essential not to introduce situations where adoptive placements may break down just to hit Government targets. Sheffield currently had a very low number of adoptive placement breakdowns, and Members were very keen that this success continued.
- 8.4 Mr. Banwell reported that no placements would be compromised just to meet targets, and that Sheffield had very robust processes in place, with no issues being picked up by Ofsted. He added that all permanency case plans were monitored on a monthly basis, and that the tracking of each case was very clear.
- 8.5 Mr. Banwell added that 2011/12 had been a fairly poor year in terms of adoptions, and that this could potentially be linked to the global recession. Nationally, there was a shortage of adopters, although Sheffield had a high number compared with other cities across the UK. A local campaign was to be devised to increase numbers of adopters, and Members wished to input into this.
- 8.6 Some Members were disappointed that the role of the Adoption Panel had been diminished, as it had previously comprised ten members, and now had a quorum of just three. Mr. Banwell said that the situation was not ideal, but that he was still confident Sheffield had sufficiently robust systems in place in order to effectively approve adoptive placements.
- 8.7 It was noted that children who were in custody were now classed as Looked After Children (LAC). It was hoped that Sheffield could retain as many of its LAC within the City boundaries as possible, to save money and provide better support to them.
- 8.8 Work was taking place to increase awareness of adoption/ fostering amongst BME communities, such as a recent event held at the Pakistani Muslim Centre. It was also noted that the religious and cultural wishes of the children were always respected throughout adoption. Increased awareness work around single people being able to adopt was also ongoing.
- 8.9 There was also an increased level of support being put into place to provide help to birth parents post-adoption.
- 8.10 Members mentioned that potential adopters/ fosterers may be put off by the 'red tape' involved with the process, but Mr. Banwell stated that a lot of this red tape had now disappeared, and he encouraged anyone to get in touch with the service who may be an interested party. He added that he and Ms. Spaven would be very pleased to come and talk to any interested groups.
- 8.11 It was noted that potential adopters with medical/ mental health problems did not preclude them from adopting, but that all factors would be taken into account in assessment, on a case by case basis.

- 8.12 It was confirmed that some foster carers who had previously been registered with external agencies were now coming back into the Sheffield 'in house' team, as better support was in place.
- 8.13 Members requested information about what was required by Sheffield City Council in terms of potential adopters/ fosterers.
- 8.14 Members thanked the officers for their update and the excellent work achieved by the service.
- 8.15 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee requests that the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families;
- (a) provides a copy of the adoptions scorecard;
  - (b) provides statistics about national trends regarding adoptions;
  - (c) follows up a request from Members to have an input into the next recruitment campaign for adoptions, and
  - (d) provides further information about what Sheffield City Council are looking for in potential adopters/fosterers.

## **9. POLICY UPDATE**

- 9.1 The Scrutiny Policy Officer, David Molloy, provided a detailed policy update for Members upon school funding reforms, and the new arrangements which would be put into place for 2013/14.
- 9.2 He also commented that Members had requested a joint Scrutiny meeting with the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee to discuss the future role and development of apprenticeships in the City.
- 9.3 There had also been a request from the Youth Council to attend the Committee on an annual basis.
- 9.4 James White, Assistant Director, Policy and Performance, then provided Members with an update about the controversy surrounding the marking of some GCSE papers over Summer by the AQA examination board. He stated that it had not been decided as yet whether there would be a legal challenge by Sheffield, but he would keep Members posted on the situation.
- 9.5 A further issue was raised by a Member regarding child sexual exploitation and safeguarding issues in Rotherham, and whether there were any links to Sheffield.
- 9.6 **RESOLVED:** That the Scrutiny Policy Officer be requested to;
- (a) investigate the need for a joint Scrutiny meeting with the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee to discuss

the future role of apprenticeships in the City;

(b) facilitate a request from the Youth Council to attend the Committee on an annual basis;

(c) keep Members posted on the situation regarding the AQA examination remarking, and

(d) further investigate an issue raised by a Member regarding child sexual exploitation and safeguarding issues in Rotherham, and whether there were any links to Sheffield.

## **10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

10.1 All to be held at 2.00 pm in the Town Hall- 25 October 2012, 22 November 2012, 24 January 2013 and 28 March 2013.

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## Report to The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee

25 October 2012

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**Report of:** Director of Inclusion and Learning Services

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**Subject:** Education Outcomes for Looked After Children

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**Author of Report:** Stephen Mather  
Head of the Virtual School for Looked After Children,  
[stephen.mather@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.mather@sheffield.gov.uk) Tel:0114 2506789

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**Summary:**

The information presented has been requested by the Scrutiny Committee to enable it to scrutinise performance.

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**Type of item:** The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	X
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	X
Other	

**The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:** consider this report and to provide views, comments and recommendations.

Be aware of the LAC attainment challenge for the City and the outcomes of summer 2012 assessments, tests and examinations.

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**Background Papers:**

No background documents have been used to write the report. However some of the historic figures used in this report have been taken from Department for Education data sets.

**Category of Report:** OPEN



# EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

## 1. INTRODUCTION/CONTEXT

The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee have requested a report on the current picture on **outcomes for looked after children** to consider at their meeting on 25 October 2012.

The report contains details of the educational outcomes for Sheffield's cohort of Looked After Children (LAC) who were eligible for end of Key Stage assessments, tests or public examinations in summer 2012 (i.e. those children who were 7 years old, 11 years old, or 16 years old at the end of the 2011-12 school year).

## 2 HEADLINES FOR LAC ATTAINMENT AND ATTENDANCE 2012

### 2.1 Introduction / context:

- The cohort used by central government to measure outcomes of Looked After Children (referred to in this document as 'the reportable group') has changed three times over the last two years. Therefore caution should be exercised when making year on year comparisons.
- The statistics presented in this report are based on low numbers of children. Although they may indicate differences compared to previous results, the low numbers involved mean that caution should be exercised when comparing data, or making generalisations about cohorts.
- From 2010 onwards, the KS2 LAC cohort was based on the financial year cohort i.e. those children who had been in continuous care for 12 months in the year ending 31st March.

### 2.2 Key to terminology:

- Reportable cohort – this is the group of children who have been in continuous care for at least twelve months. It is the cohort which the Government uses to compare educational outcomes for LAC.
- Non reportable cohort – Other children who have not been in care for at least twelve months. The Government does not include their educational outcomes within the overall LAC attainment data.
- PEA – This is the Personal Educational Allowance which was formerly available for LAC to use to support their education.
- Pupil Premium – this is money which is included in the school budget and is linked to LAC. Schools should use this to support the education of the looked after child.

### 2.3 Overall summary

- The progress which the 22 LAC children made between start and end of Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics improved in 2012.
- The attainment of the 23 KS2 LAC in mathematics reached a five year high in 2012.
- The progress which the LAC students made between start and end of Key Stage 4 in both English and mathematics markedly improved in 2012.
- The percentage of the 46 LAC students who gained 5 good GCSE passes at grades A\*-G at age 16 continued to steadily improve in 2012.
- The percentage of the 46 LAC students who gained 5 good GCSE passes at grades A\*-C including both English and mathematics at age 16 improved in 2012, but remains low.
- Comparisons between years for Key Stage 1 children (age 7) is very difficult to make due to small cohort sizes between years.
- Year on year comparisons for all measures is difficult to make. The cohort used by the Government to measure outcomes of LAC has changed three times in two years.

### 2.4 Key Stage One (7 year olds) summary

- In 2012 there were 30 LAC in Y2 at the time of Key Stage One tests and of these 19 were in the reportable group.
- 20 LAC were in Foster placements. Five were placed for adoption, 3 LAC were placed with a relative/friend and two placed with parents

### 2.5 Key Stage Two (11 year olds) summary

- In 2011 there were 27 LAC in Y6 at the time of Key Stage Two tests and of these 23 were in the reportable group.
- At the time of the tests one child was placed in a specialist residential school, 18 LAC were in Foster placements, six were placed with parents and two were placed with a relative or friend.
- 32% of the cohort who took their SATs in 2012 were in care at the end of KS1.

### 2.6 Key Stage Four (16 year olds) summary

- In 2012 there were 59 LAC in Y11 at the time of GCSE and other public examinations and of these 46 were in the reportable group.
- At the time of the examinations 29 were in placements with 'other foster carers'; 17 were in 'homes and hostels'; the other 13 were a range of placements.
- 42% of the cohort who took GCSEs in 2012 were in care at the end of KS2 and 17% of the cohort were in care at the end of KS1

## 2.7 Key Stage 1 Headlines

Year	No. LAC	L 2+ Read	% L2+ Read	National	L2+ Writ	% L2+ Writ	National	L2+ Maths	% L2+ Maths	National
2008	17	8	47.1	54	6	35.3	47	9	52.9	59
2009	12	6	50.0	54	5	41.7	48	7	58.3	61
2010	12	7	58.3	58	7	58.3	51	8	66.7	62
2011	7	4	57.1	59	4	57.1	52	6	85.7	63
2012	19	10	52.6		7	36.8		11	57.9	

The profile of each cohort is important in order to fully understand their achievement. The 2012 Key Stage 1 Year 2 reportable cohort was the largest in the past five years and of the nineteen children in the Year 2 cohort, fifteen were placed in Sheffield Schools and four out of the City. Overall, ten children (52.6%) achieved Level 2+ in Reading and 8 of these were educated in Sheffield. Seven children (36.8%) achieved Level 2+ in Writing and six of these were educated in Sheffield. Eleven (57.9%) achieved Level 2+ in Mathematics.

The number of children in the cohort this year was 19, a more statistically reliable cohort size compared with 2011 (7) and 2010 (12). Therefore, as explained in the notes at the beginning of this paper, comparison with results for previous years is not necessarily indicative of worse (or better) performance.

It should be noted that in both 2010 and 2011, all Sheffield KS1 outcomes were suppressed in DfE publications due to low numbers,

## 2.8 KS1 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L2+ Reading

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	47.1	50.0	58.3	57.1	52.6
City Actual (%)	80.3	80.6	80.3	81.7	82.8
Difference between LAC and City	-33.2	-30.6	-22.0	-24.6	-30.2

In 2012 the gap between Key Stage 1 outcomes for LAC and the Sheffield average for all children, Year 2 outcomes in Level 2+ Reading widened by 5.6%, compared to 2011.

## 2.9 KS1 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L2+ Writing

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	35.3	41.7	58.3	57.1	36.8
City Actual (%)	76.7	77.4	76.5	77.9	79.8
Difference between LAC and City	-41.4	-35.7	-18.2	-20.8	-43

In 2012 the gap between Key Stage 1 outcomes for LAC and the Sheffield average for all children, Year 2 outcomes in Level 2+ Writing widened by 22.2%, compared to 2011.

## 2.10 KS1 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L2+ Mathematics

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	52.9	58.3	66.7	85.7	57.9
City Actual (%)	86.7	86.5	85.4	86.6	87.6
Difference between LAC and City	-33.8	-28.2	-18.7	-0.9	29.7

In 2012 the gap between Key Stage 1 outcomes for LAC and the Sheffield average for all children, Year 2 outcomes in Level 2+ widened by 28.8% compared to 2011.

## 2.11 KS1 non reportable LAC cohort

There were an additional ten children who were Looked After at the time of the tests, but were not in the reportable group due to them newly coming into care. Their results were as follows;

Year	No. LAC	L 2+ Read	L2+ Writ	L2+ Maths
2012	10	6	5	6

## 2.12 Key Stage 2 Headlines

Year	No. LAC	L 4+ Eng	% L4 Eng	National	L4+ Maths	% L4 Maths	National	L4+ Combined	% L4 combined	National
2008	26	8	30.8	46	5	19.2	44	5	19.2	-
2009	14	2	14.3	45	0	0.0	43	0	0.0	35
2010	21	8	38.1	46	8	38.1	45	6	28.6	37
2011	24	10	42.0	50	9	38.0	48	9	38.0	40
2012	23	9	39.1		10	43.5		7	30.4	

Note: In 2012, there was no 'writing' test. The English level is based on a combination of a reading test and a teacher assessment in writing. Results for one child are also still outstanding. In 2010, 7 children were discounted as they attended schools that boycotted the test.

The profile of each cohort is important in order to fully understand their achievement. In 2012 there were 23 children in the Key Stage 2 Year 6 reportable cohort. Of the 23 children in the Year 6 cohort, 16 were placed in Sheffield Schools and seven out of the City. Of the 23 children in the, Year 6 cohort, 16 were on the Special Educational Needs registers: four had Statements; eleven were at School Action Plus and one was at School Action.

Nine children (39.1%) achieved Level 4+ in English and this is only one child lower than in 2011. Of the sixteen children educated in Sheffield 6 (37.5%) achieved Level 4+ in English. Ten children (43.5%) achieved Level

4+ in Mathematics and this represents the highest achievement in the last five years; seven of these were educated in Sheffield.

Seven children achieved level 4+ in both English and mathematics combined and four of these were educated in Sheffield. While the percentage of children achieving both English and mathematics combined is slightly less than last year's figure (30.4%), of the five children who achieved L4+ in either English or mathematics, all made two levels progress and all registered a level 3 in the other subject.

While data for one child remains outstanding, this year's performance compares well with previous years. Performance in mathematics is at a 5 year high of 43.5% and the English result is similar to last year's performance at 39.1%.

Performance against predicted achievement showed good correlation. For English, of ten children predicted to achieve L4+, eight achieved this level, results for one child are outstanding and one achieved level 3. Similarly, nine out of eleven children achieved their predicted outcomes for mathematics with the remaining children achieving level 3.

### 2.13 KS2 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L4+ English

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	50.0	66.7	48.3	56.0	
LAC Actual (%)	30.8	14.3	38.1	44.0	39.1
City Actual (%)	76.7	75.8	76.9	76.7	81
Difference between LAC and City	-45.9	-61.5	-38.8	-32.7	-41.9

The gap between Key Stage 2, Year 6 outcomes in English Level 4+, is wider this year than in the past two years although still shows a significant improvement on the result in 2009.

### 2.14 KS2 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L4+ mathematics

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	50.0	61.9	48.3	56.0	
LAC Actual (%)	19.2	0.0	38.1	40.0	43.5
City Actual (%)	75	75.6	78.7	77.6	82
Difference between LAC and City	-55.8	-75.6	-40.6	-37.6	-38.5

The gap between Key Stage 2, Year 6 outcomes in Mathematics Level 4+ is broadly the same as last year in spite of the improved outcome.

### 2.15 KS2 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L4+ English and mathematics combined

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	19.2	0.0	28.6	40.0	30.4
City Actual (%)	67.5	68.3	70.4	70.0	76
Difference between LAC and City	-48.3	-68.3	-41.8	-30.0	-45.6

The gap between Key Stage 2, Year 6 outcomes in English and mathematics combined Level 4+, is wider this year than in the past two years although still shows a significant improvement on the result in 2009.

## 2.16 LAC KS2 reportable cohort - 2 levels progress from KS1 to KS2 in English and in maths (1 year trend)

Subject	2011		2012		2011-12 Difference	2011-12 Trend
	Number	%	Number*	%		
Reading			17	77.3		□
Writing			18	81.8		□
English	16	69.6	16	72.7	3.2	↑
Maths	10	43.5	18	81.8	38.3	↑
Discounted pupils	2		1			
<b>Total eligible pupils</b>	<b>23</b>		<b>22</b>			

\* data still outstanding for  
1 pupil

This is an important measure and it represents the progress which children should make between starting and ending Key Stage 2. It is expected that children should broadly make two full levels progress in both English and mathematics during this period.

Although overall LAC attainment was similar to 2011, the progress made by the KS2 cohort was significantly higher than last year. The percentage of pupils making 2 levels progress in English was 72.7%, a rise of 3.2% on 2011; in maths 81.8% of pupils made expected progress a rise of 38.3%. The figures for 2011 have been reworked using current methodology to enable accurate comparison.

For 2012, expected progress levels for reading and writing are 77.3% and 81.8% respectively. Insufficient data is available for the 2011 cohort to enable comparison.

## 2.17 KS2 non reportable LAC cohort

There were an additional four children who were Looked After at the time of the exams, but were not in the reportable group due to them newly coming into care. Their results were as follows;

Year	No. LAC	L 4+ Eng	L4+ Maths	L4+ Combined
2012	4	3	2	2

## 2.18 KS2 2011-12 Interventions/Additionality offered

A range of strategies have been used by schools to improve the learning of LAC. Some of these strategies are outlined below:

- Schools have used PEA to provide additional tuition in Y5 and Y6.



- In some cases the Virtual School has also commissioned support to be delivered by the school.
- Letterbox for Years 3,5,7. (Letterbox is a national programme that is aimed at raising the literacy skills and wider educational attainment for Looked After Children. It has been running for some years and is targeted at particular year groups. These have been Year 3 and Year 5. From 2012 the programme has been extended to include Year 7 (first year in secondary) for the first time. The children who are part of the Letterbox programme receive books and other educational items – games, puzzles, quizzes etc every month from May until October.)
- Study support for Year 6 every Thursday on a fortnightly basis (Bannerdale)
- Nine week (one night per week) creative writing project hosted by Hallam University.
- Two day filming and animation project
- Two year Children’s University Fellowship project offered from Year 5 (alternate Saturday mornings)
- Actively encouraging carers and schools to include LAC in out of core school hours activities, increasing their engagement and reducing isolation
- Additional funding for schools to target all Y6 and Y5 LAC in order to increase support and intervention programmes.
- Pupil premium e.g. 1:1 tuition, Play therapy or Additional in class support

## 2.19 Key Stage 4 headlines

Year	No. LAC	5 A*-C	% 5 A*-C	National	5 A*-C (EM)	% 5 A*-C (EM)	National	5 A*-G	% 5 A*-G	National
2008	58	11	19.0	13.9	7	12	-	25	43.1	43.4
2009	56	5	8.9	20.9	3	5.4	9.7	24	42.9	-
2010	56	12	21.4	26.6	3	5.4	11.7	24	40.0	-
2011	49	10	20.4	31.2	2	4.1	12.8	24	49.0	-
2012	46	10	21.7		4	8.7		24	52.2	

1. Children looked after continuously for at least twelve months excluding children in respite care.

2. Number of children based on those aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August

“-“ denotes where data not available or suppressed by DfE due to low numbers

Measure	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011-12 trend	2010-12 trend	2009-12 trend
English and Maths			x	8.7			
5A*-C with E & M	x	x	4.1	8.7	□		
5A*-C	20.8	22.6	20.4	21.7	□	□	□
5A*-G	45.0	47.2	49.0	52.2	□	□	□
1A*-G	75.0	71.7	75.5	67.4	□	□	□
Any Pass	83.0	81.1	81.6	82.6	□	□	□

It is important to understand the context of the cohort in order to gauge their achievement.

In 2012 there were 46 young people in the Key Stage 4 Year 11 reportable cohort. Of these 46 young people in the Year 11 cohort, 30 were placed in Sheffield schools and sixteen out of the City. 41 were on Special Educational Needs registers: 13 had full statements; 19 were at school action plus; nine were at school action. Nine young people were not entered for any GCSE exams, due to their complex needs and circumstances. Five LAC were in secure units of within the youth offending custodial system

## 2.20 Narrowing the gap at KS4 attainment at 5A\*-C

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	12.3	No statutory targets set			
LAC Actual (%)	19.0	8.9	20.0	18.4	21.7
City Actual (%)	57.8	63.5	75.1	71	77
Difference between LAC and City	-38.8	-54.6	-55.1	-52.6	-55.3

The gap between LAC and whole city outcomes at 5A\* - C widened this year in spite of the improvement in result.

## 2.21 Narrowing the gap at KS4 attainment at 5A\*-C (English and maths)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	5.3	20.3	16.1	20.0	
LAC Actual (%)	12.1	5.4	5.3	4.1	8.7
City Actual (%)	40.8	44.6	49.2	49.2	55.4
Difference between LAC and City	-28.7	-39.2	-43.9	-45.1	-46.7

The gap between LAC and whole city outcomes at 5A\* - C including English and mathematics has widened this year in spite of the improvement in result.

## 2.22 Narrowing the gap at KS4 attainment at 5A\*-G

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	44	45	47.2	49	52.2
City Actual (%)	89.2	91.2	92.8	89.5	93.2
Difference between LAC and City	-45.2	-46.2	-45.6	-40.5	-41

The gap between LAC and whole city outcomes at 5A\*- G has widened this year in spite of the improvement in result.

## 2.23 KS4 progress - 3 levels progress in English and maths

Subject	2010/11			2011/12			2011-12 difference
	No. included	No. 3 lvl prg	% 3 lvl prg	No. included	No. 3 lvl prg	% 3 lvl prg	
English	44	6	13.6	44	11	25.0	11.4
Maths	43	5	11.6	45	12	26.7	15.0

This is a really important measure as it represents the progress which students made between starting secondary school in Year 7 and ending

Year 11. It is expected that all students will make at least three levels progress in both English and mathematics during this period.

Although the percentages of children achieving 5A\*-C and 5A\*-G GCSE and equivalent qualifications are similar to last year's figures, the percentage of children making the expected level of progress in English and mathematics has shown a significant improvement since last year (see table above). 25% of KS4 LAC made expected progress in English and 26.7% made expected progress in maths.

## 2.24 KS4 non reportable LAC cohort – outcomes

There were an additional twelve children who were Looked After at the time of the exams, but were not in the reportable group due to them newly coming into care. Their results were as follows;

Year	No. LAC	5A*-C	5A*-C (EM)	5A*-G	1A*-G
2012	12	1	1	2	5

## 2.25 KS4 2011-12 Interventions/Additionality offered

Schools offered a range of intervention and support strategies for their LAC. Some of these included:

- A two day Sheffield Hallam University summer school for Y9 (13-14 year olds) and Y10 (14-15 year olds).
- 'Go further- Go higher' booklets and events to support LAC in making informed decisions about future education, employment and training.
- Schools have used their funding (eg PEA) to provide additional tuition in Y10 and Y11. In some cases the Virtual School has also commissioned the school to deliver 1:1 or small group support.
- Revision incentives using Meadowhall and HMV vouchers.
- Bespoke University and Sheffield College Open evening events.
- Additional study support opportunities.
- Pupil premium e.g. 1:1 tuition, or Additional in class support.

## 2.26 Attendance

Years	2008-2009			2009-2010			2010-2011			2011-2012		
	LAC	ALL	DIFF	LAC	ALL	DIFF	LAC	ALL	DIFF	LAC	ALL	DIFF
Primary	94.1	94.27	-0.17	95.7	94.22	1.48	96.3	94.52	1.8	96.9	95.2	1.7
Secondary	84.2	92.19	-7.99	85.9	91.79	-5.89	87.6	92.5	-4.9	94.6	93.6	1.0
Special	88.1	85.79	2.31	85.9	89.03	-3.13	88.3	87.71	0.6	91.3	88.9	2.4

Notes:

- ALL Attendance refers to attendance at Sheffield schools for the whole academic year.
- LAC Attendance refers to attendance for Sheffield LAC of compulsory school age at mainstream primary, secondary and special school, both in and out of the City and for children who have been in care for the whole year.
- Secondary includes academies.
- The attendance of LAC in both phases and in special school settings has increased this year and has been consistently running above the relevant citywide figure.

### **3 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD?**

- 3.1 The continued focus on the educational outcomes for looked after children has resulted in the progress which they are making being markedly improved at Key Stages 2 and 4 in 2012. This has come about through the schools focusing tightly on pupil level targets and providing a range of bespoke intervention strategies, especially with the widespread use of small group and 1:1 tuition.
- 3.2 The aim is to ensure that each looked after child fulfils their own potential and who is able to maintain good attendance and make a positive transition in to further education, employment or training with the skills and education to grow into confident people able to enjoy their life experiences and contribute positively to the economy and their community.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To note that improvements have been made in the progress which LAC are making at Key Stage 2 and 4.
- 4.2 Agree the scope of more detailed LAC education reports to Scrutiny or how this report can contribute to any further work Scrutiny may wish to undertake with regards to LAC.

**CYPF Scrutiny Committee****Policy Update****SEPT/OCT 2012****1. School funding reform: arrangements for 2013-14**

- a) The DfE has published the final school funding arrangements for 2013-14 following a series of consultations on funding reform in preparation for the introduction of a national funding formula in the next spending review period.
- b) The most recent of these set out proposals for the 2013-14 financial year. The main features of the arrangements are:
  - The introduction of 3 notional blocks through which local authorities will be allocated funding in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) – a **schools block; early years block; and, high needs block**
  - Maximum delegation of funding to schools
  - Reduction in the number of factors that can be used in local formulae to distribute funding from 37 to a maximum of 10
  - Changes to the composition and operation of Schools Forums

*Simplification of the local funding arrangements*

- c) The development of new local formulae under these arrangements is highly likely to result in changes to each school's budget share
- d) In order to limit the impact of these changes and to provide stability and protection for schools, a minimum funding guarantee of -1.5% per pupil in 2013-14 and 2014-15 will be put in place
- e) Local authorities should work on the basis that services within the notional Schools Block and the funding for them should be delegated to schools in the first instance. In most local authorities, this will mean more delegation to schools than there has been in the past
- f) There are 3 exceptions to this, including some changes to existing exceptions and some further exceptions related to growth in pupil numbers, equal pay back=pay and non SEN places in independent schools:
  - **Where maintained schools collectively agree** (through the Schools Forum) that a service should be centrally funded because it provides better value or pools risk. Academies can choose to buy into these services by local agreement, and there will no longer be any need for a Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) calculation. The specified items are:
    - Allocation of contingencies (but only for exceptional unforeseen costs, schools in financial difficulties, and additional costs related to new, reorganised or closing schools)
    - Administration of free school meals eligibility
    - Insurance
    - Licenses or subscriptions
    - Staff costs or supply cover
    - Support for minority ethnic pupils or underachieving pupils
    - Behaviour support services
    - Library and museum services

- **Historic commitments** where there has been agreement with the Schools Forum to use the Schools Budget to fund costs which would normally be met from general local authority funding (e.g. redundancy costs) or where local authorities have funded capital from revenue (e.g. the capitalised costs of equal pay arrears, or to supplement capital funding), which does not require Schools Forum approval
  - Expenditure on some services related to **statutory functions of the local authority** (e.g. the co-ordinated admissions scheme, the carbon reduction commitment and administration of the Schools Forum) will also be allowed
- g) Two further exceptions will be allowed (with agreement from the Schools Forum): equal pay back-pay (for staff in schools and academies) and non-SEN places in independent schools (where local authorities choose such placements due to pressure on state school places)
- h) In addition, local authorities will be able to create a ring-fenced growth fund from the DSG in advance of allocating school budget shares to support growth in pupil numbers to meet basic need (for the benefit of both maintained schools and academies). They will be required to produce criteria for the allocation of any growth fund (which must be agreed by the Schools Forum) which must also be consulted on the total sum to be top sliced in each phase
- i) The 9 formula factors that can be used for distributing the notional Schools Block are:
- **Basic per-pupil entitlement** (mandatory): at a single rate for primary pupils, but local authorities will be able to apply different age-weighted pupil units for Key Stage 3 and key Stage 4. Initially there will be no minimum threshold for pupil-led factors, but this will be reviewed next year
  - **Deprivation** (mandatory): to be based on free school meal (FSM) data, IDACI data, or both
  - **Looked after children** (optional): if used, primary and secondary schools will attract the same rate
  - **Low cost, high incidence special educational needs** (optional): if applied, this factor will be based on prior attainment. For primary schools there will be 2 thresholds (either all pupils who do not achieve 78 points or all pupils who do not achieve 73 points or more in the EYFS Profile). For secondary schools the threshold will be pupils who fail to achieve Level 4 or above in both English and maths at Key Stage 2
  - **The notional SEN budget** (mandatory): local authorities will be required to give mainstream schools a notional SEN budget from the Schools Block, which might be made up of funding from the basic per-pupil entitlement, deprivation and low cost, high incidence SEN factors. From this notional budget, mainstream schools will be expected to meet the needs of pupils with low cost, high incidence SEN and contribute, up to a level set by the local authority, towards the costs of provision for pupils with high needs
  - Support for pupils with **English as an additional language** (optional): local authorities will be able to provide support for a maximum of 3 years from when the pupil enters compulsory education in England. They will be able to allocate different rates for EAL pupils in primary and secondary schools
  - **Lump sum** (optional): local authorities will be able to allocate a lump sum of the same amount to all schools in their area (to support small

schools). In 2013-14 the limit of this sum will be £200,000 but this may be changed in 2014-15

- **Split-sites, rates and PFI** (optional): local authorities may apply additional factors to reflect the costs of operating on split sites (a cash sum), rates (based on actual costs) and PFI arrangements (a cash sum)
  - **Exceptional premises factor** (by agreement with the Education Funding Agency): local authorities can request that this is included for exceptional premises (i.e. less than 5% of the schools in the local authority) with additional costs (e.g. listed buildings, farm buildings, rented buildings)
- j) Other factors that local authorities will be able to take into account are post-16, where local authorities have used DSG for 6<sup>th</sup> forms they will be allowed to honour this commitment in 2013-14 but no new commitments or increases in expenditure will be allowed. Also, pupil mobility where local authorities will be able to apply a factor based on the number of pupils entering schools at non-standard entry points
- k) Now that the final formula factors are defined, local authorities can finish developing their local formula and start to consult the Schools Forum and others. The DfE has updated its formula to reflect changes, and a final version will be issued, as will confirmation of the information the DfE will collect on the pro-forma and the more detailed table underpinning it
- l) The timetable for the DSG is unchanged. Local authorities must submit the provisional Schools Budget pro-forma to the Education Funding Agency by the end of October
- m) The minimum funding guarantee (MFG) has been set a -1.5% per pupil for 2013-14 and 2014-15. Post-16 funding, allocations from the notional High Needs Block, including those for named pupils with SEN, and the lump sum will be automatically excluded – in addition, allocations made through the early years single funding formula and for rates will be excluded
- n) Free Schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools opening in 2013-14 will continue to use the 'ready reckoner' to plan 2013-14 budgets. They will be funded in accordance with local formulae and the impact of any difference between planned and realised budgets will be limited by providing a protection of -1.5% on a like-for-like basis
- o) Final details of funding for FE and Sixth Form Colleges which make full-time provision for 14-16 year olds are still being finalised, and further details will be given in the Autumn

#### *Improving the way that local areas are funded*

- p) Final arrangements are generally as described in the March consultation paper, but in response to queries from local authorities about children who defer entry to reception classes, the DSG will be uplifted to reflect differences in reception pupil numbers between October and the January counts of the previous academic year, and Regulations will allow local authorities to apply this uplift to all schools with reception classes, reflecting what happened in each school the previous year
- q) The DfE plans to consult later in the summer, alongside the DCLG's consultation on the business rates retention scheme, on options for the transfer of funding for the central education functions currently included in LA Block LACSEG from LA Formula Grant to the DfE. The Education Funding Agency would then distribute this funding as a separate un-ringfenced grant to local authorities and Academies in proportion to pupil numbers

*Improving arrangements for funding pupils and students with high needs*

- r) The new high needs funding arrangements ('Place Plus') will be introduced for all providers in the schools sector from April 2013, including local authority maintained schools, special and Alternative Provision Academies. They will be phased in for mainstream Academies by September 2013 (new arrangements for providers in the FE sector will be introduced from the start of the 2013-14 academic year)
- s) The final arrangements are generally in line with those proposed in the March consultation paper. Arrangements which have been clarified following consultation are:
- The DfE will recommend that, when discussing top-up funding for Alternative Provision settings, providers and commissioners will calculate half-termly rates for short-term placements and daily rates for part-time placements
  - When placing pupils in AP for fixed-term exclusion, early intervention or off-site direction, mainstream schools and Academies will not be required to repay AWPU (as they will in cases of permanent exclusion), but will pay top-up funding to AP settings
  - A new approach to hospital education from April 2013 will involve top-slicing the current spend on each hospital education setting from the national DSG and passporting the funding to providers through the maintaining local authority, ending the need for inter-LA recoupment, and enabling the Education Funding Agency to fund any providers that convert to Academy status. It is intended to use the same arrangements for hospital education for young people aged 16-18 provided in the 7 secure forensic psychiatric units

*Simplification of the arrangements for the funding of early years provision*

- t) The DfE will shortly publish short, clear, non-statutory material to help local authorities improve their funding arrangements, best practice examples from local authorities, and even local authority-level data on the funding, take-up, quality and outcomes of early education provision
- u) From 2013-14, all providers of free early education, including Academies currently funded for early education by the Education Funding Agency, will be funded by local authorities on common principles through the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF)
- v) Currently, the MFG applies to the whole school budget (including early education funding) in primary and infant schools with nursery classes.
- w) In future, the early years budget (based on the January census, not the October one) will be excluded from MFG. Instead, the DfE proposes to introduce a specific MFG for all providers of free early education for 3 and 4 year olds but is supportive of local authorities using the EYSFF to level the playing field between different types of behaviour. So, where necessary, it will be possible for local authorities to apply to suspend the early education MFG (with a presumption that applications that improve the fairness of funding between providers will be approved). The early education MFG will also be set at -1.5% but only the per-hour base rate will be included
- x) The DfE will shortly make a final announcement on the transitional arrangement for 2013-14 that will be put in place ahead of ending the 90% floor funding for free early years education for 3 year olds from 2014-15. A separate consultation will



shortly seek views on how funding for early education for 2 year olds could be allocated to local authorities

## **2. Measures to improve adoption and fostering**

- a) Adopting and fostering will become a faster and more efficient process thanks to new arrangements for approving carers, Children's and Families Minister Edward Timpson has announced
- b) The Government is seeking views on measures that aim to allow foster carers to make everyday decisions about the children they look after and cut unnecessary bureaucracy in the approval process to encourage more people to come forward to foster. They also set out to reduce the time it takes to adopt and make the whole process more user-friendly
- c) These measures should help fostering services recruit more people and support foster carers in providing a normal family environment for their foster children
- d) By speeding up the assessment process for adopters the Government expects that more babies will be settled into adoptive families earlier in their lives
- e) The Government will sweep away bureaucracy which will mean that those who want to adopt and foster do not have to:
  - Call social workers every time a child in foster care goes for a haircut, has a sleepover at a friend's house or goes on a school trip
  - Undergo a criminal records check if they are previous adopters or foster carers who have already been approved and who want to adopt through the fast track process, unless agencies want them to undertake one
  - Wait longer than necessary to foster or adopt because agencies cannot share records
- f) In proposing to get rid of these rules the Government intends to introduce measures to encourage councils to do more to enable children in care to be placed more quickly with stable and loving adoptive or foster families who can meet their needs. These include:
  - Bringing in a new 2 stage approval process for adopters, as well as a new fast track procedure for approved foster carers and previous adopters who wish to adopt
  - Taking forward 'fostering for adoption' by enabling adopters to be approved rapidly as temporary foster carers. This will mean that more children can be placed with their potential permanent carers on a fostering basis while the council seeks a placement order from the courts
  - Requiring councils to refer looked after children for whom adoption is the plan to the Adoption Register within 3 months so that they are matched with adopters as soon as possible
  - Requiring all adoption agencies to refer prospective adopters to the Adoption Register no later than 3 months after approval
  - Making it a legal requirement that councils ensure that the child details on the Adoption Register are kept up to date
  - Removing the requirement to interview personal referees when a person has been an approved foster carer in the last year and a referee is available from their last fostering service
- g) The 2 stage adopter approval assessment process means eligibility checks and initial preparation and training will be completed within the first 2 months. This will be followed by 4 months more intensive training and an assessment of their

capacity to care for children needing adoption. In addition, the Government is also seeking views on reducing the size of adoption and fostering panels

- h) After the consultation the changes are set to take effect next year
- i) The Government is also announcing £8 million funding this year to help adoption services. This will be used to develop the necessary skills, tools and working arrangements to deliver the programme of adoption reform, of which these measures form a significant part

### **3. 55 new Free Schools to open in September 2012, twice as many as this time last year**

- a) The Government has announced that 55 new Free Schools will open in September 2012. The first 24 Free Schools opened in September 2011 while a further 114 have been approved to open in 2013 and beyond
- b) Free Schools aim to achieve higher standards and offer a genuine alternative. They are funded by the Government but have greater freedoms than local authority-run schools. They are run by teachers – not local councils or Westminster politicians – and have freedom over the length of the school day and term, the curriculum and how they spend their money
- c) Of the new Free Schools opening this September:
  - o 19 are primary schools, 19 are secondary schools and 7 are all-age schools. There is one 14-19 school and one 16-19 school. Five are alternative provision schools – the first Free Schools of their type – and 3 are special schools
  - o The schools are spread across England. They are primarily concentrated in areas of deprivation or areas where there is a shortage of school places. 25 of the 55 schools are located in the most deprived 25% of communities in the country. 33 of the schools are in areas where there is need for more school places
  - o 12 have been set up by teachers, 19 by parent or community groups, 9 by charities and 13 are set up by existing education providers. Two existing independent schools will join the state sector as Free Schools.
- d) Free Schools have proved hugely popular with parents. All 24 which opened last year have filled, or almost filled, all their places for this year. Many have expanded to meet demand and many have large waiting lists
- e) New York Charter Schools, one of the inspirations behind Free Schools, have been shown to substantially narrow the attainment gap between rich and poor – by 86% in maths and 66% in English. In Chicago they halve the achievement gap between inner-city students and their wealthier suburban counterparts
- f) In England academies, which have the same freedoms as Free Schools, improve at a faster rate to state secondary schools – between 2010 and 2011 the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at A\* to C including English and maths rose by 5.7% in academies, compared to 3.1% in state secondary schools

### **4. Urgent reforms to protect children in residential care from sexual exploitation**

- a) Urgent reforms to protect children in residential care homes from sexual exploitation and to overhaul the wider system have been announced
- b) The measures include more robust checks before children are placed in homes outside their home boroughs; overhauling the quality and transparency of data so there is a clear picture of children who go missing from care; and reviewing all aspects of the quality and effectiveness of children's homes – including their management, ownership and staffing

- c) Ministers have also ordered the lifting of regulations which stop Ofsted telling police and other appropriate agencies the location of children's homes – a key concern in keeping children in care fully protected
- d) The Government has also published a progress report on the national Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan published in November 2011 and 'step-by-step' guidance for frontline staff – which sets out ongoing work with the courts, police and social services to prosecute and jail abusers, protect young people at risk, and help victims of these appalling crimes get their lives back on track
- e) This action comes after a report published by the Deputy Children's Commissioner Sue Berelowitz – ordered after the sentencing in May of 9 men who groomed and abused young girls in Rochdale
- f) Ministers asked her to report urgently on emerging findings from her ongoing Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups inquiry, including recommendations on specific risks facing looked-after-children living in care homes
- g) Her report finds growing evidence that children in care are particularly vulnerable to child sexual exploitation – with a disproportionate number being groomed or sexually exploited, although the majority of known victims are outside the care system
- h) It finds there is a clear emerging picture that some residential homes are specifically targeted by abusers and that given the high turnover of young people in care there is a constant flow of vulnerable children for perpetrators to exploit
- i) It finds evidence that some children who are being sexually exploited may introduce other children within homes to their abusers – where they are forced or threatened to bring other children when they meet their exploiters
- j) And it makes a series of recommendations to address serious weaknesses in how care homes report and react to children going missing, in the checks made before children are placed into care homes, and weaknesses in staff skills and management quality
- k) Her interim report with fuller findings will be published in September and her final report in autumn 2013. It also follows a damning report by the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Children Missing From Care published last month, which said there was a scandal in the care system and called for urgent action to address key failings
- l) Ministers accept recommendations in both reports about how to secure improvements and provide better support and safety in children's homes
- m) This will build on Ofsted's tougher new framework, introduced in April 2012, for the inspection of children's homes that focuses far more strongly at whether a home has taken action to implement recommendations in previous reports, and whether improvements are flowing through in consequence
- n) The immediate actions announced include:
  - o Create a clear picture of children missing from care
  - o Ensure children's homes are properly protected and located. Ministers have ordered immediate changes to regulations so that Ofsted can share information about the location of children's homes with the police, and other relevant bodies as appropriate – a key criticism of the current system: Ministers are alarmed that there is no coherent set of figures for the number of children that go missing from care, which prevents children at risk being properly identified, and are clear that local agencies must be held accountable.
  - o Help children be located in homes nearer to their local area. Ministers are today announcing a task and finish group to report urgently by

September on tougher regulations and checks before any local authority can place a child outside their home borough

- o) Ministers accept there may be good reasons for placing a child or young person at some distance from their home area but argue it is difficult to accept that nearly half of all children in children's homes benefit from such distant placements. Both reports are clear about the problems that can arise
- p) The Government will consult on changes in the autumn
- q) The group will focus on:
  - o) The dependence of some local authorities on out of area children's homes, often at a considerable distance, in meeting the needs of a significant number of the most challenging children in their care. The group will be asked to consider how to ensure that there is much better scrutiny, planning and assessment of risks, before decisions are taken to place a child at a distance. This will include establishing how the placing authority should satisfy itself that the environment of the home will be appropriate for the child in question, and that they can reasonably be expected to be safe in the community within which they will be placed
  - o) Whether further changes to the care planning framework are required to ensure that local authorities will always respond appropriately when difficulties emerge in children's placements e.g. whether there is a role for the Independent Reviewing Officers in ensuring that the plan for the child is reviewed if there is an emerging pattern of going missing from their home and putting themselves at risk of sexual exploitation
  - o) The need for all children's homes to work collaboratively with their local police forces and other local safeguarding services. Homes should have strong policies for preventing children from running away or from being sexually exploited but also for responding effectively when these crises do occur in children's lives
  - o) The local authority's responsibilities for monitoring the quality of the care in homes located in their areas and the steps they should take if they consider that a home is failing to offer children the supervision and support that they need
  - o) Taking forward work to develop 'risk mapping' for those areas where there are high concentrations of children's homes to assess the general safety of these communities as places for bringing up our most vulnerable looked after children e.g. whether homes are located alongside hostels and other accommodation for adult offenders or are in areas where there is known to be a high level of prostitution
  - o) Drive up quality and effectiveness of children's homes
- r) Ministers are setting up a further expert working group that will have a broad remit to review and develop a clear action plan to drive up the quality of provision being delivered within children's homes, including the qualifications and skills of the workforce. It will review questions relating to:
  - o) The location of homes and models of ownership and commissioning practice
  - o) How homes can offer a more therapeutic environment to help children overcome their difficulties
  - o) What staff development is needed to manage children's behaviour, including when it is appropriate to use restraint
  - o) The effectiveness of current arrangements to drive improvement across the sector

- s) The group will report to Ministers by December with a clear reform timetable
- t) The Deputy Children's Commissioner report comes after the Education Secretary Michael Gove asked the Office of the Children's Commissioner to produce an accelerated report on the emerging findings of its inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups. In particular, he asked the Office of the Children's Commissioner to consider recommendations required to give better protection to children in care homes

#### *Wider child sexual exploitation*

- u) The Office of the Children's Commissioner's is half way through its 2 year inquiry and is in the process of analysing the emerging evidence
- v) Significant general themes emerging at this stage include:
  - Gang and group associated child sexual exploitation is taking place across England
  - Gang and group associated sexual exploitation is being perpetrated by people of varying ages, ethnicities and social backgrounds
  - In some areas agencies have a stronger focus on identifying group-associated child sexual exploitation and others have a stronger focus on gang-associated child sexual exploitation
  - Some services are better able to identify gang-associated child sexual exploitation than others, and so even within a local area different services provide different intelligence on both victims and perpetrators
  - Children are being sexually exploited by gangs and groups made up of people who may be of the same or different age, ethnicity, religion and social backgrounds to them
  - Children in care and children not in care are being sexually exploited. While the majority of children being sexually exploited are not in care, a disproportionate number are in care

#### *Children in care*

- w) Key findings from the emerging evidence shows:
  - Children in care, particularly in residential care, are more vulnerable to grooming and abuse and account for a disproportionate number of children known to be sexually exploited – although the majority of overall victims are outside the care system
  - Some residential children's homes are being deliberately targeted by those who want to exploit young people
  - Victims of sexual exploitation may introduce other children in the care system to their abusers – with clear evidence of coercion and threats if they do not recruit their peers. Local authorities have reported concerns about children in some homes going missing together and being particularly at risk of sexual exploitation
  - Children are expected to arrange their own travel back to some residential units late at night
  - Inconsistency in reporting and recording of incidents of children missing from care – with official figures only recording those missing for more than 24 hours, while emerging evidence shows that sexual exploitation victims may actually go missing for much shorter periods
  - Some care homes are not raising the alarm when boys go missing from residential units or are picked up by groups of older males
  - Over-16s housed in foyer, bed and breakfast and hostel accommodation are at significant risk – these are often unstable

placements where they live with older adults and are at risk of sexual exploitation from both residents themselves and abusers targeting residents

- Inconsistencies in quality of risk assessment, instability, and lack of choice in placements, lack of support for foster parents, a reduction in recognition of child sexual abuse in child protection plans, and an inability to appropriately identify placement by type, specialism and geography
- Lack of skilled workers – with residential care staff only required to be qualified up to A Level standard and managers up to degree-level but with no requirement for qualifications to be in health, education or social care. It finds that the majority of the staff who work with those in those units are not specialists working with highly troubled children and young people, nor in child sexual exploitation. Staff support and training is inadequate and much provision does not link up with the wider support services

#### **5. £100m to expand early education and childcare**

- a) Early education and childcare providers are to receive £100m to help them meet a growing demand for places
- b) The money will be used to support new nurseries and childminders in getting established, as well as helping existing providers to create and provide additional places. The Government will extend free childcare to 130,000 of the most disadvantaged 2 year olds from September 2013, rising to around 260,000 (40% of all 2 year olds) in September 2014
- c) Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are known to be more at risk of poor development, with evidence showing that differences by social background emerge early on in life. High quality early education can make a difference to a child's progress and the additional government money will help to make sure that children from poorer families do not lose out
- d) The £100m will be allocated to local authorities across England
- e) The free childcare entitlement for 2 year olds has already rolled out early in 10 pilot areas this September. Currently, more than 850,000 3 and 4 year olds nationally access up to 15 hours of free early education every week
- f) The 10 pilot areas trialling the free 2 year old entitlement are: Blackpool, Cornwall, Greenwich, Kent, Lambeth, Lancashire, Newcastle, Northamptonshire, Peterborough and Rotherham

#### **6. Cash boost for disadvantaged school children**

- a) England's most disadvantaged pupils are to benefit from extra cash next year when the Pupil Premium rises to £900 per pupil – around 50% higher than last year
- b) Schools receive extra cash through the premium for every child registered as eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the past 6 years and children in care who have been looked after for 6 months
- c) Statistics show that in 2011:
  - 35% of pupils on free school meals achieved 5 good GCSE grades compared with 62% of other pupils
  - 58% of pupils on free school meals achieved the expected level in both English and maths by the end of primary school compared with 78% of other pupils

- The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and over 1.8 million disadvantaged children are benefiting from the extra cash that goes to schools. The total available through the premium has risen from £625 million in 2011-12 to £1.875 billion next year, and will rise further to £2.5 billion by 2014-15
- d) Evidence shows that children from low income families generally do not achieve as well as other pupils. Schools therefore receive additional Pupil Premium funding on top of the school budget to enable them to support these pupils in reaching their potential and to help schools reduce educational inequality
- e) Just 13.2% of children looked after by local authorities achieve 5 good GCSE grades, including English and maths, and the Government wants them to benefit from the extra funding through the premium
- f) Whilst schools have the freedom to use the Pupil Premium funding in innovative ways, it is vital they use it to boost results for the most disadvantaged pupils. They will be held to account by Ofsted through its inspections which include a closer focus on premium use and the performance of pupils who attract it, as well as a focus on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in the school performance tables
- g) Schools are also required to publish online details of their premium spend for parents
- h) Following the popularity of the summer schools for Pupil Premium pupils, the Government will be making £50 million available for the scheme to run again next year
- i) Nearly 2,000 schools received government funding to run a summer school this year, providing up to 2 weeks of support for around 65,000 disadvantaged children. Schools offered a range of activities aimed at helping children settle in to the new school, ranging from catch-up lessons for those children needing extra help, to extra-curricular activities such as theatre trips, and Olympics-related sporting events
- j) Pupils can struggle to make the jump to secondary education. Moving to a larger school and having to tackle a more challenging curriculum can be daunting for some pupils. This results in a dip in their performance, which can persist throughout their time at school
- k) The Department for Education has also confirmed that the per pupil level of the Pupil Premium for 2012-13 will rise from £600 to £619. This follows a smaller than expected rise in the number of pupils registering for free school meals in January 2012. The allocations to schools will be revised to reflect this change in the per pupil amount

## **7. Places for National Citizen Service autumn roll-out**

- a) Places are being announced all over England and Northern Ireland for young people to take part in National Citizen Service (NCS), starting in the October half-term holiday, Minister for Civil Society Nick Hurd has announced
- b) Previously, NCS has only run in the summer holidays, but following the success of this year's programme the Government is looking for ways to offer it all year round for every 16 and 17 year old. For the first time, NCS will also take place in Northern Ireland for 15 and 16 year olds
- c) NCS offers 16 and 17 year olds from different backgrounds valuable life experience by putting them into teams away from home and setting them the task of finding solutions to local problems or issues that matter to them. It also enables them to develop important skills that they can take with them into the world of work

- d) This summer, young people have already committed nearly three-quarters of a million hours of volunteering, making a hugely positive impact in communities across the UK
- e) NCS autumn will also see a new final weekend of further adventure away from home. The young people will go through a challenging scenario-based weekend, taking part in their teams and meeting fellow NCS participants from around the country to share experiences and tackle new activities
- f) Early findings from last year's scheme show that it was a success, with 9 out of 10 young people saying that they would recommend it to a friend, and more young people planning to stay on in education after taking part
- g) Ministers are keen that all young people, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to take part. Their aim is for the programme to give 16 and 17 year olds a shared common experience and to create a generation of 'work-ready', well-rounded young people with raised aspirations and greater opportunities in the job market
- h) NCS is a life-changing experience for 16 and 17 year olds. They get the chance to do outdoor activities, meet new people and put something back into their community. By taking part they learn new skills and have a great experience they can put on their CVs or college applications. This year sees the first trial of an autumn programme. This kicks off in the October half-term holiday, followed by days of activity over the next 6 weekends
- i) This year up to 30,000 places have been made available and the long-term aim is for NCS to be available to every 16 year old
- j) NCS brings young people together from different backgrounds (e.g. religious, ethnic and socio-economic) to work together, and teaches them what it means to be responsible and serve their communities. It promotes:
  - k) A more cohesive society by mixing participants from different backgrounds
  - l) A more responsible society by supporting young people's transition into adulthood
  - m) A more engaged society by enabling young people to work together to create social action projects in their local communities

## **8. Examinations for 15-19 year olds in England – Commons Education Committee Report**

- a) The Education Select Committee published its report, *The administration of examinations for 15-19 year olds in England* on 3 July 2012. This is the final report of the Committee's inquiry launched on 12 September 2011 into the administration of a public examination system that in 2011 issued 4.6 million GCSE grades, over 1.3 million AS and 8,000 A Level grades
- b) The report paints a picture of widespread negativity coming from those most involved in the exam system including academics, the independent schools sector, employers and universities. The most recent survey carried out by the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) found that out of a sample of 7,149 employers, 72% said that they did not feel confident in recruiting school leavers with A Levels or equivalent. The most recent CBI survey findings are that two thirds of employers (65%) see a pressing need to raise standards of literacy and numeracy among 14-19 year olds.
- c) While the report acknowledges that employer concerns are not new, it does highlight the fact that this is a consistent message about the rising pass rates at GCSE and A Level maybe not reflecting real improvement in student performance and its application in a work context



- d) Universities are also seen as critical of A Level, both as a selection tool and as a preparation for undergraduate level study. Ofqual research from 2010 looked at confidence in the GCSE and A Level system. Out of teachers, students and employers, teachers were most optimistic about the system with employers the least satisfied group (61% teachers, 57% students and 48% employers thought that the system was doing a good job but some improvement needed; 12% teachers, 14% students and 23% employers called for more fundamental reform).
- e) However, the Select Committee also notes low confidence levels reported amongst the wider public in annual perception surveys also conducted by Ofqual and its predecessor body. In 2011, only 28% of the general public was more confident in the GCSE system and 25% in the A Level system than they were in previous years
- f) The Select Committee report concludes that evidence gathering through the inquiry into 15-19 examinations suggested relatively low public confidence in the exam system among various groups which in the long-term risks compromising the credibility of the system and devaluing the qualifications achieved by young people. The factors involved, heard by the committee from a range of stakeholders, included the impact of exam board competition on syllabus content, the issues around grade inflation, the impact of the accountability system and the reliability of exam board marking

#### *Fundamental reform of the exam system*

- g) Michael Gove's view of a discredited exam system with a single board as a compelling answer is characterised as nothing new. It is emphasised that the concern about the number of exam groups has persisted over time against a backdrop of grade inflation and increasing pressure on teachers from the accountability system
- h) The report considers 3 models which are most commonly discussed as the basis of administering the public exam system. These are multiple competing exam boards (the current system in England); a single board (a national body responsible for setting administering and grading examinations); and franchising by subject so that individual exam boards are contracted to run examinations in particular subjects. The inquiry evidence is described as split with written evidence displaying most support for retaining multiple boards (over 40%) with just under 20% supporting a single board. Only 5% supported a franchised system which could be due to a lack of understanding about the way it works
- i) The exam boards, perhaps unsurprisingly as the report notes, are concerned about fundamental change, though they acknowledged that the system does need improving. However, exam board chief executives agreed that strong regulation with a focus on standards was a priority. In contrast, school leaders were mostly in favour of a single board though with caveats about its size and powers and the impact on school choice
- j) International comparisons explored as part of the inquiry are reported as revealing a number of countries with single exam boards including Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Hungary, Italy, Kenya and Uganda with Australia, Canada and China having regional groups. England is seen as unusual because of its regulated qualifications market which make international comparisons difficult. Evidence from other countries with different models cited suggests that the problems such as grade inflation would not necessarily be eradicated by a change to a differing examination model.
- k) The report concludes that the costs, heightened risk and disruption likely to be involved in the move to a single board outweigh the potential benefits and that if

the status quo is retained, significant improvements are needed to increase confidence in the system

### *The way forward*

- l) A recurring criticism of an exam board market as identified by the Select Committee is the downward pressure on the system generated by competition between the boards and the accountability system. In terms of syllabus development, the report emphasises that exam boards compete on a variety of features designed to attract particular teacher choice, and because of such fierce competition, do not share practice and collaborative approaches. The DfE warns of significant risk of awarding bodies producing more accessible specifications with content that is less intrinsically challenging in order to capture market share, raising the question of whether the boards' commercial concerns were overriding their educational purpose
- m) The report recommends that the development of national syllabuses coupled with stronger Ofqual regulation, would offer a way of addressing downward competition on content, without the disruption of moving to a single board.
- n) Little is known about the process by which public exam grades are arrived at. According to the report, the process is complex and technical and there is limited public understanding of it. The debates about 'grade inflation' are long standing and have a negative influence on public confidence in the exam system.
- o) The Committee concludes that the increase in higher grades achieved in both exams is undisputed, but that the case for accompanying improvements in knowledge, skills and understanding is far less clear and recommends that Ofqual continues to investigate grade inflation as well as engage in the public debate on exam standards

### *Role of Ofqual*

- p) The report flags up the strong steer that the Committee received through written and oral evidence, for a stronger Ofqual, whatever organisational model was adopted. The Government has already legislated to increase Ofqual's regulatory powers and amendments in the Education Act 2011 require Ofqual to benchmark attainment in English qualifications with comparable international qualifications, as well as qualification standards over time in England.
- q) The key perception of Ofqual emerging from the inquiry was that of the organisation adopting a more proactive approach to standards with its action to contain grade inflation at A Level, its accreditation of all new syllabuses and its development of an advisory group on standards issues
- r) However, the Select Committee recommended that Ofqual as part of its annual report to Parliament should detail the evidence used in the regulation of standards and the action taken to maintain standards
- s) A further recommendation was the need for Ofqual to build more in-house assessment expertise and for this to be further reflected on its board. Criticism was expressed about the lack of transparency concerning Ofqual's consultation processes with external subject experts and this is the basis of a further recommendation.
- t) The Select Committee recommended that national subject committees should be convened in large entry GCSE and A Level subjects, with membership drawn from learned organisations, subject associations, HE and employers
- u) Another recommendation was for the Government to give Ofqual greater clarity over its additional requirements for benchmarking standards over time and in terms of international qualifications.

### *A Level Reform*

- v) The Government's agenda for A Level reform is already in process with changes taking effect for courses starting in 2014. The report endorses the Government's key long-term change for A Level and recommends the greater involvement of HE in the content of A Levels since such a high proportion of those studying A Levels go on to university. The evidence feeds into the report's recommendation for an inclusive approach involving the diverse HE sector in A Level development, and the importance of using Learned Bodies in addition with their links to universities. In terms of the Committee's support for Ofqual national subject committees, it also recommended the inclusion of new A Level criteria and accreditation issues in their remit

### *Exam board competition: market share, professional support and marking*

- w) Ofqual figures supplied to the inquiry showed that the overall GCSE/A Level market had remained stable over time, though Ofqual and exam board witnesses confirmed that shifts in market occur at moments of syllabus revision. The report stresses the difficulties of getting past anecdotal explanations for such changes and their possible implications for standards, and supports further regulatory scrutiny
- x) The Committee therefore recommends that Ofqual prioritise its existing work in monitoring changes in market share between exam boards and any implications that they might have for standards. As a result of concerns over the large amount of public money spent on exams and the perceived lack of transparency in awarding body operations transmitted as evidence to the Committee, the report also recommends that Ofqual should demonstrate that the charges made to the public purse by the exam system are fair and appropriate
- y) Prior to the Select Committee enquiry, Ofqual's own investigation into the training offered by exam boards to teachers was that there is a real risk that inappropriate information about the future of secure exams is disclosed and a risk of narrowing the curriculum through sessions on how to teach the specification
- z) Inquiry evidence reflected concerns about boards offering tailored support to individuals or groups of schools where there could be risks of inappropriate information being given
- aa) The report therefore welcomes Ofqual's decision to end exam board training on specific qualifications and recommends further monitoring of exam board marketing overall, including more general training that might be offered
- bb) Some of the potential conflict of interest concerns about training also emerged in relation to exam board endorsed textbooks, often written by senior examiners. The Committee welcomed the tighter restrictions already being considered by the boards on the role of examiners in textbook authorship and recommended that Ofqual oversee a consistent industry-wide approach
- cc) On question papers and marking, the report briefly reviews the impact on public confidence, of the 12 errors on GCSE/A Level Summer 2011 papers and acknowledges Ofqual's findings related to the need to refresh question paper setting procedures
- dd) The inquiry also took evidence on enquiry rates to the boards about results and grading which in 2011 were up by 38% on the previous year with the number of grade changes increasing by 11%
- ee) The Committee concluded that public confidence is obviously undermined by crises such as the 2011 errors and by allegations of improper conduct by the Boards related to marking and grading. It welcomed Ofqual's work to develop a

common approach to deal with marking concerns and recommended a rigorous approach by the regulator in response to allegations of improper exam board conduct

#### *Exams and school accountability*

- ff) The report acknowledges that many of the problems about the exam system are linked to accountability system pressures
- gg) The report briefly considers the impact of what it terms 'side effects' such as the burden of assessment and the impact of increasing early and multiple exam entry
- hh) However, the report identifies the core question as being whether the reform of the exam system and the strengthening of the role of Ofqual would in themselves solve the exam system problems without making any changes to the accountability framework that drives much behaviour in schools
- ii) The key issue on which the report focuses is the much debated issue of multiple purposes to which exams are used, attempting to assess individual, school and system performance, and briefly refers to the endorsement of its predecessor committee for sample testing as an alternative way to assess national standards
- jj) However, the current Committee dismisses this as not being part of its inquiry and instead recommends that the Government should look afresh at current accountability measures with a view to reducing the dominating influence of the measures of 5 GCSEs A\*-C or equivalent

#### **9. Measuring happiness**

- a) A new method that will help to measure the happiness of children has been developed by the Children's Rights Director for England
- b) Through discussions with children in care and/or living away from home, Dr Roger Morgan has created a questionnaire based on the things that young people might say about themselves
- c) Twenty statements such as 'I know what is happening next in my life', 'I get bullied', 'I am getting all the help I need' and 'I get lonely' are listed and each is given a score. Children complete the questionnaire by ticking all of the statements that are right about them
- d) During focus discussion groups, children and young people were asked what they thought the definition of happiness was. They thought happiness had a lot to do with being satisfied with how things are for you. One group said happiness wasn't one thing, but could depend on lots of different things for different people. Another group suggested that it could be to do with doing different things with other people, from sex to laughing a lot
- e) The children agreed that people are not born happy or unhappy, but are made happy or unhappy by what happens to them
- f) When asked if money can make you happy, some children said that being treated equally and fairly, and having family, is more important than how much money you have
- g) Children in the discussion groups said that being safe and well looked after, having all the basic things you needed, being treated fairly and with respect, being able to make your own decisions and do things you wanted to do, stability, and having support from family and friends, all helped to make children and young people happy
- h) The things that the children felt could make a child unhappy included lack of trust, being bullied, people being prejudiced against you, being treated unfairly, losing somebody who matters to you, not being cared for properly, being abused, not

being listened to, being excluded from things, not being told things you needed to know, and being let down by people should be supporting you

- i) The Children's Rights Director for England has independent statutory duties to ascertain and report the views of children living away from home or in care, to advise on children's rights and welfare, and to raise matters he considers significant to the rights or welfare of the children in his remit
- j) Ofsted regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked-after-children, safeguarding and child protection

### **10. Twice as many students not taking key academic subjects than to the EBacc**

- a) Long-term decline reversed
- b) Poorer pupils benefiting most
- c) Recent figures reveal how the introduction of the English Baccalaureate has led to a huge increase in the proportion of young people studying the core academic subjects so highly valued by universities and employers
- d) The EBacc was introduced by the DfE in the performance tables in January 2011. Pupils who achieve a GCSE grade C or better in English, maths, a language, history or geography, and two sciences achieve the EBacc
- e) In 2010 under a quarter (22%) of GCSE pupils were entered for the EBacc
- f) But a survey of more than 600 teachers in state-maintained mainstream secondary schools by Ipsos Mori for the DfE reveals that almost half (49%) of Year 9 pupils have chosen to study the set of key subjects from this September
- g) The take-up indicates that the EBacc is reversing the long-term and damaging drift away from the subjects most likely to lead to higher education and good jobs, and that they are bouncing back to the levels of a decade ago
- h) The survey indicates that individual subjects are returning to levels of popularity not seen for years:
  - o History
    - Highest for at least 20 years
    - 41% of GCSE pupils are set to take the subject in summer 2014
    - That is the highest proportion since at least summer 1994 when 39% of pupils took history GCSE
  - o Science
    - Highest for at least 20 years
    - 93% of GCSE pupils are set to take double or triple science GCSE in summer 2014
    - That is the highest proportion since at least summer 1994 when 79% of pupils took it
  - o Geography
    - Highest for 13 years
    - 36% of GCSE pupils are set to take the subject in summer 2014
    - That is the highest proportion since summer 2001 when 37% of pupils took geography GCSE
  - o Languages
    - Highest for 9 years

- 54% of GCSE pupils are set to take a language GCSE in summer 2014
  - That is the highest proportion since summer 2005 when 60% of pupils took a language GCSE
- i) And the figures show that the EBacc has had an especially positive impact on poorer pupils
- In 2010 just 10% of pupils in schools with a high proportion of children on free school meals were taking a combination of subjects that could have led to the EBacc
  - But 41% of pupils in these schools started studying the set of key subjects from this September – a 310% increase
  - The rise over the same period in schools with a low proportion of students on free school meals is 54%
- j) Ipsos Mori undertook the survey to assess to effects of the EBacc on secondary schools in England. It was carried out in June and July 2012. The survey was administered to a representative sample of 1,620 state-maintained mainstream secondary schools (by region, establishment type and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals). There was a response rate of 38%, with 618 schools taking part (which maintained a representative sample)
- k) The figures compare GCSE entry data (historically) with survey estimates of GCSE subject choice. Pupils who choose particular subjects are not always entered for them
- l) Free school meal bandings were devised by ranking schools by the proportion of their pupils who were FSM eligible, and dividing them into thirds (bottom third = low FSM band, middle third = medium, upper third = high)

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Proportion of pupils who took GCSEs in summer 2010 (%)</b>	<b>Proportion of pupils taking GCSEs in summer 2014 (%)</b>	<b>2010-14 change (% pts)</b>	<b>% increase in proportion of pupils studying the subject 2010-14</b>
EBacc combination	22	49	+27	123
History	31	41	+10	32
Geography	26	36	+10	38
Any language	43	54	+11	26
Double science	46	59	+13	28
Triple science	16	34	+18	113