
Select Committee on Children's Services - 14 September 2009

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Raising Attainment at Key Stage 1 - Progress Report

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on the work being undertaken to raise standards in Key Stage 1 (5 - 7 Year olds). The report below outlines the work that is currently taking place to raise standards. Officers will be happy to discuss provisional results for 2009 if they are published before the committee meeting.

Background

2. As a Local Authority we are keen to ensure that early intervention of carefully selected programmes supports identified pupils in making the best possible progress.

Initiatives for schools

3. Every Child a Reader (ECaR)
The Every Child a Reader teacher is trained as a Reading Recovery (RR) teacher to work on a one-to-one basis with the lowest performing pupils. Schools are provided with a contribution to the salary of an Every Child a Reader teacher (bringing the salary down almost to the 'cost' of a teaching assistant).
4. Early signs show that the pupils have made significant progress in both reading and writing, have improved self-esteem and confidence and fewer of the pupils have been referred for statements. The work impacts on Key Stage 1 standards, and not only for the identified pupils. We have a reciprocal arrangement within the Black Country and Sandwell Local Authority provides our Teacher Leader who trains the Every Child a Reader/Reading Recovery teachers. 11 Dudley schools benefited over 2008, having staff trained to undertake very focused support for pupils in Year 1. A further nine teachers will be trained in 2009/10 leading to Dudley having 17 Every Child a Reader schools (some schools are finding the work so successful that they are training two teachers). The Every Child a Reader teachers hold staff meetings and support the teaching of reading across the school. Dudley have also supported

Every Child a Reader schools with funding, resources and training of staff (teacher and teaching assistant) in Fischer Family Trust Wave 3 programme which aligns well with the Reading Recovery approach to support the teaching of those pupils assessed for Reading Recovery but who do not receive the one-to-one teaching.

5. This work links well with Every Child a Talker (ECaT), language development work in Foundation Stage, for schools and Private & Voluntary Settings.

6. Every Child Counts (ECC)

Dudley have supported Every Child Counts schools with funding and training for teaching assistants to support those pupils assessed for the programme but who do not receive the one-to-one tuition. We also have one school next year trialling 'triplets', teaching in small groups of three pupils, to see if this is as effective as one-to-one. Detailed analysis will be done in August/September but early assessments show that all pupils have made significant progress, some of more than two years, in 10-15 weeks. Similar funding arrangements exist to Every Child a Reader above but this programme is still in the development stage. Dudley employ the Teacher Leader who also trains Sandwell schools in the Numbers Count programme. Five Dudley schools are having teachers trained through this initiative in 2009 and a further nine next academic year (14 in all). Numbers Count is intended to support Year 2 children.

7. Communication Language and Literacy Development (CLLD)

Communication Language and Literacy Development is language work for Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1, but is intended to have impact across the school. This work is undertaken by Primary and Early Years consultants and focuses on quality teaching of phonics to support reading, writing and spelling. 12 schools were identified for this work in 2008/2009 and three will continue to receive support next academic year with the remaining eight forming a network, and a new cohort of schools will begin the work. We are taking on more schools using Primary Consultant time to spread this approach to more schools with significant standards issues in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Regional Adviser visits and monitoring show that schools have made considerable strides in standards but have not yet met the challenging targets set for pupils at the end of Year 1. Further detailed analysis of this work and the impact it has made will be done in August/September, but we have four teachers from these schools who are now Leading Teachers and offer demonstration sessions to others. We plan to disseminate the approach to all schools starting in September.

8. Assessment for Learning

Whole school approaches and training provided via Professional Development Days for whole staff, including teaching assistants and senior leaders, as well as teachers

through assessment for learning focus days. Setting assessment for learning in a context ensuring that new Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) material is not merely an activity. This has been a mammoth task leading to training days with two or three schools over the whole year - 2400 packs.

9. Over 90% of primary and special schools have taken part by the end of the academic year. This work has included all the School Improvement Team to ensure that work is carried forward in schools. The Primary Consultants have also provided Assessing Pupil Progress Subject Workshops, including a maximum of 12 participants with revisit(s) as network type activity enabling teachers and subject leaders to get under the skin of Assessing Pupil Progress in practice. They have also made follow up visits to schools to show new material/updates and to discuss cluster work needs and help to formulate a menu of options to be offered for cluster work in 2009-10. We also plan to deploy Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) to support networks/clusters.
10. Training and support for teachers
The Primary Team devised and provided training to support Key Stage 1 teachers in improvement in;
 - Letters and Sounds - attended by virtually all schools (75%), with many schools sending teams of teachers. Early Years have also done considerable training in Letters and Sounds for settings
 - End of Key Stage 1 assessment procedures
 - Moderation of levels in reading, writing and mathematics
 - Reception to Year 1 transition training – two days (developed further this year to become three days to support better understanding of Foundation Stage)
 - Data return training
 - Use of P scales in Key Stage 1
 - Phonics and Early Reading
 - Coaching – to support teachers in improvements in their classes
 - Level 2 to Level 3 training (attended by 73% of schools)
 - Training for Leading Teachers for Gifted and Talented in Talk for Writing and APP processes to ensure they offer appropriate lessons

Finance

11. The work of the Early Years, Youth and Education Services Division is financed from Local Authority base budget and Standards Fund Grants.

Law

12. The Council maintains schools under the provisions of the Children and Education Acts and may do anything incidental to, conducive to, or which facilitates the discharge of that function under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Equality Impact

13. This report takes into account the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy.

Recommendations

14. It is recommended that the Cabinet Members receive this report and note the action that has been taken to improve standards at Key Stage 1.



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List of Background Papers