

APPENDIX 1 - Update on the 12 Recommendations

1 Select Committee Recommendation One

Learning Development Centres

We recommend that the Cabinet Member ask the Bucks Learning Trust to explore the feasibility of establishing Learning Development Centres to offer targeted learning opportunities for parents and children. These centres should be located in areas accessible to economically disadvantaged families.

Original Response: Accepted in part - This is a commissioning responsibility which remains with the County Council. The Cabinet Member will explore the approach used at Learning Development Centres and consider how the benefits could be delivered locally within existing resources.

1a Background

- The Matrix Centre, based at Wycombe Wanderers Football Club, works with under achieving students and this includes a percentage of pupil premium pupils and pupils with SEND (an increasing number).
- The Matrix provides a 6-week intervention at the centre in school time or after school. The primary objective is to develop the mind-set of the pupils so that they become more engaged with learning back at school.

1b 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

- During 2015-6 academic year, 810 students in total accessed a variety of Matrix programmes both at the centre and in schools. 274 (235 primary students) attended the school study support provision.
- Of these, during Year 5 in 2014-15 or Year 6 in 2015-16, there were 69 pupil premium pupils in attendance on the programme from 10 schools in the Wycombe area (12 groups).
- At present, due to the changes in assessment, it is difficult to compare year on year impact and the Matrix Centre is working closely with schools on reporting under the new assessment system.

Parental and Pupil Perceptions - All Participating Families (2015-16)

- The Matrix Centre programme is evaluated by all pupils and parents:-
 - **96%** of students said they felt more confident as learners.
 - **98%** of students rate their learning experience as 'brilliant' or 'good'
 - **70%** of students reported that there has been a positive impact on their school work
 - **99%** of parents reported that the confidence of their children has improved
 - **97%** of parents reported that the attitude to learning of their children had noticeably improved
 - **98%** of parents said they were very pleased or pleased with their child's experience at the Centre

Quotes from Participating Schools

“Pupils who excelled at the Matrix gained confidence in their school work; success in something has had a positive impact on their approach to learning.”

“They all responded extremely well to the activities offered. Pupils flourished at school and have a clearer understanding of the maths concepts covered at Matrix.”

1c Future Plans.

- The Matrix Centre is introducing a new course 'More Than Just a Game' aimed at Key Stage 2 students, linked to the new National Curriculum. Subjects include English, Mathematics, Science, Art and Design, Geography and History and are tailored to a chosen year group.
- This will give access for schools outside High Wycombe area who can attend for a day or a number of days in the school year and will give practical accessibility to the centre at a manageable cost particularly for schools north of the county.

2. Select Committee Recommendation Two

The Early Years' Curriculum.

In order to promote the Early Years Curriculum, we recommend that the Council proactively supports the implementation of Development Matters, Early Years Outcomes, and the new Early Learning Goals for all Early Years providers in Buckinghamshire.

Original Response: Yes - The Council is committed to promoting the Early Years Curriculum and is already actively involved in supporting its implementation. Progress will be reported in the Annual Standards Report

2a Background

- The amended Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and assessment was launched nationally in 2012.
- The implementation of the Early Years Curriculum, Development Matters, the Early Years Outcomes and the Early Learning Goals were, and continue to be, supported throughout Buckinghamshire by the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust (BLT).

2b 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

- The BLT has supported the Early Years' curriculum for disadvantaged pupils in a range of ways, including the following projects aimed at narrowing the gap in early years:

The Early Language Development Programme (ELDP)

- The ELDP was an early intervention training programme aimed at creating a better skilled workforce, with the knowledge, confidence and skills to support speech, language and communication development in the early years. The programme has now been completed. It has been provided to children's centres and their reach area settings across the whole of Buckinghamshire.
- By the end of the programme, data indicated an increased number of children working within the level typical for the age and a reduced number of children working below the level typical for their age in each aspect of communication and language development.

- The Early Years' Service is now providing training and support to early years' settings, schools and children's centres to embed the learning from the programme.

Improving outcomes project (January to July 2016).

- This was a two-term project to support the primary schools with the widest gap in achievement at the end of the EYFS between those eligible for Pupil Premium and their peers. The schools which had the highest number of children eligible for Pupil Premium and with the widest gaps in achievement participated in the project. This was nine schools in total (6% of schools which have a reception year).
- The table below demonstrates the progress made by the Pupil Premium children in these schools and how effectively the gap has narrowed. (Provisional data). The gap narrowed from 31.9% in 2014-5 to 10.9% in 2015-6.

EYFSP Good Level of Development in participating schools								
	Pupil Premium Children				Non Pupil Premium Children			% Difference
Academic Year	Total in YR	Total Pupil Premium	Number GLD	Percentage	Total Non-Pupil Premium	Number GLD	Percentage	
2014/2015	524	98	29	29.6%	426	262	61.5%	-31.9%
2015/2016	569	77	40	51.9%	492	309	62.8%	-10.9%

- The gap between the % of Pupil Premium (PP) children in these schools achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) and their peers narrowed because of the higher achievement of Pupil Premium children.
 - In 2016, 1.3% more non PP children achieved a GLD than in 2015
 - In 2016, 22.3% more PP children achieved a GLD than in 2015.

Home Learning Matters

- This was a project for 25 settings with the greatest number of funded 2 year olds and their locality children's centres (funding is on the basis of household income or SEN)
- Impact of this project is detailed in Recommendation 6, page 22.

2c Future Plans

- During the autumn term 2016-7, EYFSP data will be analysed against national data and further schools who have the highest number of children eligible for Pupil Premium and with the widest gap in achievement, will be invited to join the original schools on this project.
- The Early Years' Service will facilitate peer to peer working where the original schools will share their successes with the newly invited schools, sharing good practice, and motivating them to make a difference.

3. Select Committee Recommendation Three

Children's Centres Review.

We recommend that the planned review of Buckinghamshire Children's Centres focus on a) accessibility and take-up of services by deprived parents and children, b) the location of centres in their role as early intervention hubs, and c) the links between schools and centres.

Original Response: Yes - The review of Children's Centres is currently underway and includes a focus on the three areas suggested. The outcome of the review will be reported by September 2014.

3a Background

- The review had two outcomes:
 1. Transfer centres to the management of schools that met set criteria in order to achieve accessibility and take up, the development of Early Excellence Hubs and improved links with schools. From September 2014 six Centres were developed into Early Years Excellence Hubs and we are monitoring their development and performance. In these the Primary School, Early Years places and Children's Centre are all based at the school. This model was extended to develop collaborations with all local early years' providers, offering greater peer to peer support, consultation and partnership working.
 2. Recommission the remaining centres: A competitive tender process was undertaken and two new providers were awarded contracts: Spurgeons to deliver three centres in Aylesbury and Action for Children to deliver the remaining twenty-five centres

3b 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

- The new contractors commenced delivery of the centres on 1st September 2015. The first six months of the contact were a period of update and change to meet the new contract requirements and to complete the needs analysis. With a higher than expected number of staff not transferring to the new providers the implementation took longer than anticipated.
- In the first 10 months (to 30th June 2016) the new providers:

- increased engagement with funded 2 year olds from 14.% to 38.6%;
- increased the number of target families being supported from 305 to 452. The “steps to effective parenting” star has ten levels, with 1-2 being the lowest (“stuck”) and 9-10 the highest (“effective parenting”). Support to target families in the following categories increased:
 - level 2 from 183 to 242;
 - level 3 from 58 to 113; and
 - level 4 from 64 to 97;
- The average starting point on the star has fallen from 6.07 to 5.85; which indicates greater vulnerability in the families being identified and supported.

3c Future Plans

- A review of family support services is being undertaken in order to improve the outcomes for children and families, reduce demand on statutory services and reduce duplication and gaps in provision.

4. Select Committee Recommendation Four

An Early Years Pupil Premium

We recommend that the Schools Forum review the Funding Formula with the objective of targeting additional funding at the children of families from the most deprived backgrounds, in order to assist early years providers to achieve the Government's Early Years Outcomes and the 17 Early Learning Goals.

Original Response: Yes -The Council has protected funding for early years with the support of the Schools Forum. We have recently agreed a cut to the School's budget to offset cuts from central Government. We already fund for deprivation and we will review, with the Schools' Forum, whether a pupil premium approach will be more effective. The review will take place between September 2014 and April 2015.

4a Background

- The Government consultation on introducing an Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and funding for two-year-olds was published on 25 June 2014. The Early Years Pupil Premium has been implemented nationally from April 2015
- From September 2015, Ofsted began to include checks into how EYPP funding is being used by Early Years providers and whether it improves outcomes for the children in receipt of the payments

4b 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

- All Early Years' providers have been given information on the premium and how to apply. This is regularly updated and communicated to ensure that encouraging parents to apply remains a top priority.
- Since the implementation of the EYPP in April 2015, there have been approximately 800 successful applications (including Looked After Children).
- Payment (£300 per pupil) has been made to the relevant Early Years' Provider to enable them to better support the children found to be eligible. Applications continue to arrive on a regular basis.

- We have introduced an online application process which either parents or Early Years' providers can use to check eligibility. This streamlines the process for both providers and parents and removes any obstacles, whether perceived or actual, which may discourage parents from applying.
- The online solution is provided by the same software provider who manages the application process for 2 year old funding eligibility checks for Buckinghamshire County Council so it will be familiar to those families who have already completed this process.
- The Buckinghamshire Learning Trust support the effective use of EYPP in Early Years Settings through:
 - Discussion on effective use of pupil premium during visits
 - Training on effective use of pupil premium to narrow the gaps in children's outcomes
 - Promotion of the DfE funding 'Learning Together About Learning' project which provides resources to support the roll out of EYPP
 - Promotion of the Education Endowment Foundation website, which contains a toolkit identifying the most effective use of pupil premium in Early Years settings
 - Development of an Early Years Pupil Premium Action Plan pro-forma
 - Where identified as an issue in an Ofsted report, intervention to ensure effective use of the fund

4c Future Plans

- In 2016-17 The BLT will be specifically measured through a KPI requiring that '100% of settings judged by Ofsted to be less than 'good' in using the EY Pupil Premium (EYPP) have been supported to use this funding effectively'

5. Select Committee Recommendation Five

Improving Literacy

We recommend that the Cabinet Member undertake a review on how to improve the performance of phonics and to consider methods to achieve higher levels of literacy for deprived pupils at early years and primary school levels.

Original Response: Accepted in part -The Council is responsible for overall standards in our schools and is committed to ensuring that we maintain and build on our successes. We consider that phonics should be taught as part of a range of strategies to support literacy within our schools in line with the Rose Review findings. The Service Director is already holding discussions with a range of schools on literacy (including the teaching of phonics) to develop the future commissioning of the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust in this area.

5a Driving Improvement in Phonics Project 2014-15

- A data review highlighted 28 schools in 2014 who had not met the expected standard in the Year 1 Phonics Check (74%) by 10% or more.
- The Local Authority wrote to each of these schools informing them that they would be part of a “*Driving Improvement in Phonics Project*” run by the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust. 25 of these schools took part.
- Each school received funding for the Headteacher and one member of staff to attend ‘*The Road to Success with the Phonics Screening Check*’ in November. Following this they received targeted support by BLT Officers who helped to create an action plan with clear outcomes. There was an end of intervention conference to share good practice and celebrate success.
- All bar one intervention school significantly increased their results in the screening check, many by over 20% from 2014. The overall increase was 19%, as against 1.8% for other schools.

% achieving expected standard	2014 results	2015 results	Increase
Schools in project	53.1	72.1	19.0
Schools not in project	76.9	78.7	1.8
County average	72.0	77.4	5.4
National	74	77	3.0

- Buckinghamshire’s average percentage increased to 77.4% an increase of over 5% from 2014. The national average was 77%. Consequently, Buckinghamshire met/ exceeded national for the first year since the check began.
- Many of the intervention schools were included in the STA monitoring cycle in order to confirm procedural adherence to stipulations; all identified schools were exemplary and some excellent practice was observed in the administration of the check itself.
- Disadvantaged pupils were not specifically targeted in this project. However, overall results in 2014 were low and the support given benefited Pupil Premium children as well as others.
- In 16 out of 25 project schools the percentage of disadvantaged pupils working at the expected standard for the screening check increased.
 - In 3 of the schools there were no disadvantaged pupils with results (no pupils or the small number that were, were disapplied (SEN))
 - So 73% of the 22 project schools with reported results for disadvantaged pupils (16) increased the percentages achieving;
 - In terms of the gap, 14 of the 25 schools reduced their gap from 2014, with several schools having disadvantaged pupils outperforming other pupils

Quotes from Participating Schools

“Her work with the English team in school and KS1 teachers and LSAs has been fantastic, it gave our teachers a clear sense of what was needed, how to teach phonics and working alongside our English leader has rewritten our expectations in phonics”.

“We have used this to ensure that we have consistently taken an approach to phonics that moves the children through the phonics scheme at an appropriate pace and encourages a clear understanding. It has provided confidence for the KS1 team and this has had a positive impact on the learners.”

5b. 2016 Update and Impact Assessment - 2015-16: Pupil Premium Action Group

- In 2015-16, the BLT identified schools where gaps between disadvantaged and other pupils were high for the screening check and put in place intervention specifically targeted towards reducing the difference.

- The Pupil Premium Action Group strategy was an action research based project, targeting primary schools with significant gaps for disadvantaged pupils in Phonics, KS1 outcomes and/or KS2 outcomes. Altogether, 22 schools took part in the project. Head Teachers were invited to attend the launch conference with keynote speaker Daniel Sobel (Inclusion Expert), which showcased innovative practice from a school in Leeds.
- Outcomes from the Pupil Premium Action Group demonstrate that the vast majority of schools taking part made a significant difference to the progress of targeted pupils
 - 13 schools focused on raising attainment in phonics for disadvantaged pupils.
 - 45% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard across the 13 schools in 2015. This figure rose to 70% in 2016.
 - All 13 schools' disadvantaged phonics results were below National disadvantaged in 2015. Only 4 were below National disadvantaged (2015) in 2016. (As yet, data for National disadvantaged 2016 is not available)
- Owing to changes in assessment, it is not possible to draw comparisons between 2015 and 2016 outcomes for KS1 and 2. However, anecdotal evidence from schools' case studies indicates that rates of progress for targeted disadvantaged pupils were accelerated during the course of this project, and that in a number of schools, an increased proportion reached the expected End of KS standard in the context of greater challenge.

5c Future Plans

- The project leads are in the process of drafting a project plan for this year and analysing the available (unverified) data to determine which schools should be targeted for further support.
- Schools with the largest differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally will be selected, with priority given to schools with larger cohorts.
- Building upon the successes of 2015 and 2016 projects, project leads will propose that support is focused upon pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and address their specific barriers, to enable access to high quality phonics learning, in the targeted schools.

6. Select Committee Recommendation Six

The Role of Parents in Education

We recommend that the Cabinet Member develop a programme to engage and further involve parents in the education of their children, with a particular focus on supporting parents of the most vulnerable children.

Original Response: Accepted in part -The Cabinet Member is committed to ensuring that the Council supports parents in supporting their vulnerable children in education, and funding is already used to support this work in Buckinghamshire. The Cabinet Member will review existing arrangements through its review of the Parenting Strategy.

6a Background

Work on engaging and further involving parents in education has been taking place across both BCC and the BLT and included a focus on closer inter-agency collaboration.

6b 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

The work of the Family Resilience Service

- Referral for parenting courses for school aged children is via the Family Resilience Service and a programme is provided to all agencies including schools on a termly basis. Parents can either refer themselves or be referred by social workers, teachers and other professionals. Where parents are not yet able to access a group for reasons of confidence, ill health or other issues, the Family Resilience Service can deliver a suitable programme on a one to one basis. Referral for this support is via the new Early Help Panels.
- A wide range of parenting programmes continues to be delivered, with 272 parents completing courses in 2015-16. The resources and skills used in these parenting groups are also made available to parents on an individual basis and for 2015-16 the parents of 1,321 children benefited from this.
- In June 2015, Early Help Panels were established across the county, and in the first year of operation 459 different families including 1,113 children were allocated a lead family worker. There were 30 different referral source agencies to the EHP, with schools being the largest single group at 43%, 115 schools in total referring. The most frequent primary reason for referral was behavioural issues of children, with mental health the next most common, particularly when affecting the caring parent.

The third most frequent referral reason was parenting capacity. On average, families had at least 5 problems.

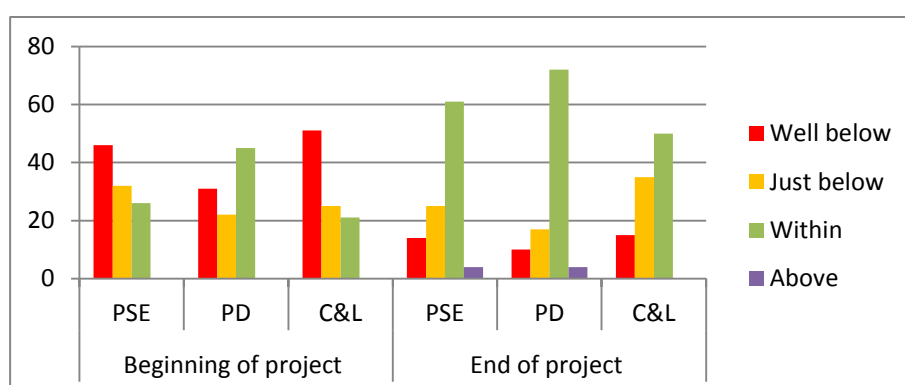
- A case study is attached, demonstrating how solving problems affecting the caring parent creates positive impact on the behaviour of the child.

Home Learning Matters – September 2015 to April 2016 (end of project)

- 25 settings with the greatest number of funded 2 year olds and their locality children’s centres took part in the project. (2-year olds are funded on the basis of household income or special educational needs). A wide range of events have helped to show parents that even the simplest activity can have huge implications for children’s learning.
- Now that the project has ended we have analysed results across the settings, comparing the stage of development for the target group against expected stage for the age group:
 - In all prime areas of learning (personal, social & emotional development [PSED]; physical development [PD] and communication & language [C&L]) there has been a significant shift from the majority of children performing below or significantly below age expected stage of development to the majority performing within or even above expected; an average 30% increase in number of children performing at age expected levels.
 - This demonstrates accelerated progress which has closed the gap between this group of disadvantaged 2 year olds and their peers.

Starting point assessment March 2015	Prime Areas		
	PSED	PD	C&L
Significantly Below Typical Stage of Development	46	31	51
Just below Typical Stage of Development	32	22	25
Within Typical Stage of Development	26	45	21

Ending point assessment March 2016	Prime Areas		
	PSED	PD	C&L
Significantly Below Typical Stage of Development	14	10	15
Just below Typical Stage of Development	25	17	35
Within Typical Stage of Development	61	41	50
Above Typical Stage of Development	4	4	0



Black and Minority Ethnic Families

- The LA works in collaboration with the Community Consultative Group, which was set up in 2008 to support raising the achievement of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) children and young people who were not reaching their full potential. This fulfilled at the time and continues to fulfil the Government's agenda on diminishing the difference.
- The group is made up of community, faith and supplementary school leaders who were interested in joining the LA's quest to find community solutions to this dilemma.
- Amongst several activities led by the CCG with support from the LA has been the following:
 - Recruitment drive to increase the number of BME parents onto Governing Bodies at school level
 - Annual Parent Conferences which focus on parental support for their child's education

- The CCG who are all volunteers also act as advocates for BME parents requiring support to understand and comply with the education system. They also mediate and support parents at school and LA meetings e.g. Admissions appeals.
- In collaboration with Governor Support Services, a BME Governors' forum has been set up to support recruitment of new BME governors. Part of the role of the new forum is to support understanding of the gap and how the BME community can support their children's education. Their function in part will be to disseminate good practice to schools and parents.

Dialogue with other Agencies

- The Children's Partnership Team (BCC) facilitated networking between themselves, the BLT and a number of teams including:
 - Charitable Provider (Restore Hope)
 - Children's Centre Providers
 - Family Resilience Officers
 - Emotional Wellbeing Group
- The focus of these meetings was on improving outcomes for children of all ages through:
 - Appropriate and relevant use of the Pupil Premium
 - Supporting parents to engage with school and to foster learning outside school
 - Supporting schools to engage with harder to reach parents in a productive fashion
 - Supporting schools to recognise the need for offering emotional support, and to have access to the relevant advice, resources and services.
- Since the deletion of the Children's Partnership Team (April 2016), there have been fewer opportunities for this work to continue. However, a multi-agency project is planned for 2017 (*Appendix 3 - Next Steps*)

6c Future Plans

- A review of family support services is being undertaken in order to improve the outcomes for children and families, reduce demand on statutory services and reduce duplication and gaps in provision.

- Home Learning Matters (HLM) will continue to be provided through the Early Years Training Programme. We intend to work with the practitioners involved in HLM to co-deliver and provide peer to peer support.
- In addition, most of the county Early Years Excellence Hubs (EYEHs) were involved in the project (these are the schools which have early years from aged 2 and children's centre provision on site). As part of our work with the EYEHs, we plan to support the schools with disseminating this good practice throughout the sector and beyond into school.

7. Select Committee Recommendation Seven

High Achieving Economically Disadvantaged.

We recommend that the Cabinet Member encourage Buckinghamshire primary schools to provide targeted learning support in order to enable high achieving pupils from deprived background to access grammar schools.

Original Response: Accepted in part - The Cabinet member is committed to ensuring that high achieving children who are economically disadvantaged perform well in all school settings not just Grammar Schools. The Council has commissioned the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust to pilot targeted learning support for children with high prior attainment to ensure they reach their potential. The pilot project will be in place in September 2014.

7a Background

Primary schools have become increasingly aware of underperformance amongst some Pupil Premium groups, but recognise that within these groups there are some high ability pupils with low expectations who do not access the selective school sector.

7b 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

Widening Participation Project.

- During 2015-16, the BLT undertook a project entitled “Widening Participation” aimed at encouraging and funding Grammar Schools to support disadvantaged pupils in local primary schools.
- The main objective of this work was to identify and target disadvantaged pupils, to provide them with the opportunity to experience what a grammar school may offer and potentially to successfully access places at Grammar Schools.
- In line with BCC policy, the focus of work was on raising aspirations, increasing confidence, and tuition in terms of the National Curriculum rather than on specific coaching for the Transfer Test. As yet, data is not available to evaluate the success of this project, however, Grammar Schools have been able to demonstrate impact in a variety of ways:
 - Primary Head Teachers’ comments on improved progress for Year 5 pupils being tutored by Year 12 pupils

- Letters from pupils
- Pupils' work
- Wider opportunities for pupil engagement / aspiration (e.g. attending drama productions)

Pupil premium reviews

- Schools continue to benefit from BLT led Pupil Premium reviews. Within the reviews, and the resulting action plans, there is a distinct focus on able disadvantaged pupils.
- For example, in one school an agreed action point was to “Forge links with local grammar schools to promote improved aspiration for able PP in Y5 so that an increased proportion of able disadvantaged pupils – and their parents - are encouraged to aspire to better outcomes in learning, and to access places in grammar schools”.

Network meetings

- Network meetings for Pupil Premium coordinators were established and embedded in 2015-16, and have provided opportunities to consider provision for the full range of disadvantaged learners in the county, including the most able.
- Schools are increasingly offering to host and showcase their work; the Autumn 2016 meeting for schools in the north of the county is being hosted by a school who have developed the practice of peer mentoring, using able disadvantaged pupils as mentors as well as mentees. This has inspired confidence and higher aspirations for these pupils.

7c Future Plans

- To analyse the success rate in the Transfer Test of disadvantaged pupils at primary schools participating in the Widening Participation project.
- To increase the number of Pupil Premium reviews, maintaining a distinct focus on able disadvantaged pupils
- To ensure that issues relating to more able disadvantaged pupils are a standing item on all Pupil Premium network meetings and CPD.

8. Select Committee Recommendation Eight

An Analysis and Challenge Toolkit for Schools

We recommend that the Cabinet Member ask the Bucks Learning Trust to develop guidance and online toolkits for schools on:

- project identification and assessment of educational programmes and interventions targeted at the needs of pupils most in need, and
- an evaluation framework template as a practical tool for assessing the impact of narrowing the gap projects.

Original Response: Accepted in part – The Cabinet Member supports the use of evidence bases, although does not consider it appropriate to develop new guidance and online toolkits. We will ask the Learning Trust to enable on-line access to existing tools from the Sutton Trust and other organisations by September 2014

8a Background

- The BLT have promoted and shared existing toolkits from both the Sutton Trust and the Essex Toolkit.

8b 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

- A number of activities to support schools have included information about tools to analyse interventions and challenge progress. These included CPD opportunities for Head Teachers and The Pupil Premium Action Group strategy, which was an action research based project. (Information on this can be found under recommendations 5 and 12 in this report)
- Additionally, governor training and Pupil Premium Networks have a continuous emphasis on research, particularly because of the new requirements for schools to give a rationale on their website for their spending of Pupil Premium money.
- The September update for schools reminds schools of a number of research tools they can use. Additionally, at network meetings the online Essex toolkit for Narrowing the Gap has been shared. Presentations at conferences for RAY (for schools at risk) and GO! (for good and outstanding schools) have also focused on sharing strategies.

Analysing data for disadvantaged pupils

- Levels and Average points scores were removed from the National Curriculum; they were not used for statutory assessment from Sept 2015, and were not an integral part of ongoing assessment the year before this.
- In addition to the development of Learning Tracks to support schools with Assessment Without Levels, (see below) a number of school leaders have been supported by the Educational Excellence Adviser for Vulnerable Groups to develop an analytical data narrative for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes in their schools. This has enabled leaders to identify patterns, examine the contributing factors to underachievement, evaluate the strategies already in place, and use this information to plan next steps with sharply focused intended outcomes.
- All Head Teachers who have been supported in this process have reported that it has been a very valuable experience, helping them to discuss pupil data confidently in focus meetings, governor meetings and inspections.
- Crucially, leaders have reported that the process of writing the narrative has increased dialogue between coordinators, phase leaders, and senior leaders to arrive at a common understanding of the barriers in the school, to embed the process of critical evaluation and to use knowledge of their pupils - together with published research - to select the most relevant and effective strategies for their pupils.

Assessment and tracking systems

- The Assessment Without Levels Commission report, published in September 2015, emphasised the need for schools to develop their own systems to assess pupils' progress and recognised that assessment would not look the same in all schools, as it should reflect the schools' curriculum.
- Within this context the BLT has not asked schools to adopt a single system for assessing pupils without levels, but has emphasised that schools should ensure that systems adopted allow schools to measure progress against the schools' curriculum.
- The BLT produced Learning Tracks for English, maths and science to assist schools in assessing pupils against age related expectations within the national curriculum and advised schools how these documents could link directly to the recording of both attainment and progress data through the commercial system Learning Ladders or through SIMS.

- Schools have been supported through CPD on the principles and purposes of Assessment Without Levels and through subject specific training on the use of the Buckinghamshire Learning Tracks documents.

8c Future Plans

- Pupil Premium Action Groups are based on action research models. There are also plans to collate and share successful strategies among schools. The BLT is also initiating joint work with a number of similar local authorities.
- Schools are supported to evaluate their systems for assessment without levels to ensure that the in-school summative assessment data is in line with nationally standardised summative assessment
- Schools are supported to assess pupils against age-related expectations using Buckinghamshire exemplification material for English, maths and science for each year group. This material would support schools with standardisation and complement end of key stage exemplification materials.
- Schools are supported to present their data narrative for all pupils through the use of a BLT assessment checklist guiding schools how to present in-school summative assessment data to stakeholders.

9. Select Committee Recommendation Nine

Researching and Evaluating What Works

We recommend that the Cabinet Member apply to the Education Endowment Foundation for funding to undertake an independent peer review of narrowing the gap projects in Buckinghamshire and that this report be shared for best practice.

Original Response: Yes -The Cabinet Member will ask Buckinghamshire Learning Trust to apply for the funding.

9a **Background**

- Although this review did not take place, Professor Steve Strand of the University of Oxford had already been commissioned to produce an independent report on FSM gaps, published in 2014.

9b **2016 Update and Impact Assessment**

- Researching what works for disadvantaged pupils in Buckinghamshire is of pivotal importance in all narrowing the gap projects and work

Pupil Premium Action Group (see response to recommendations 5 and 12 for further information and the impact of this work).

- Each school was invited to select a focus group of disadvantaged pupils from a specific year group. They were supported through network meetings and school visits to use available information in order to identify pupil barriers and strategies. Most schools were able to report positive impact by July 2016 (the project was launched in January 2016), however some have requested an extension.
- Each participating school, on completion of their project, has completed a case study which details the specific barriers, strategies and impact. The BLT are in the process of compiling examples of successful strategies to share through Buckinghamshire schools.

Case Study Example

One school in High Wycombe identified social and communication skills as barriers to learning for a specific group of disadvantaged learners in Year 6, particularly when manifested as immature language, behaviour and team working. On surveying these pupils, it was discovered that none of them had regular opportunities for high quality conversation in their homes. The participating staff members decided to address this through a lunch time club.

The intended outcomes included both “hard” measures (i.e. progress data) and “softer” measures (i.e. observation of behaviour). In terms of progress, this group made more than expected progress between Spring 2 (when the club was launched in the school) and Summer 2. They also made faster progress than their non-disadvantaged peers. Incidents of referral to the Head / Deputy Head Teacher for poor behaviour also reduced for this group of pupils, thereby reducing risk of exclusion and enabling them to learn positive learning behaviour to be better prepared for life at secondary school.

Wycombe Standards Project

- Liaison groups in the Wycombe district were given the opportunity to work collaboratively as part of the Wycombe Standards Project to raise pupil attainment, including disadvantaged pupils, through joint project working. This project began in early 2015 and still continues.
- A variety of projects were identified including strengthening parent partnership, developing the growth mind-set, developing literacy and improving outcomes for pupils with SEND and mental health needs. Liaison groups are currently in the process of evaluating the impact of these projects, but early results look positive:
 - Of the schools which took part in the two terms from early 2015, 100% reported positive measurable impacts.
 - Of the 13 schools which had projects involving Year 6 pupils, 76% showed improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils at level 4+ reading, writing and maths compared to 2014.

Pupil Premium Reviews and advisory visits

- Pupil Premium Reviews and advisory visits continue to have a strong focus on development of strategies based on evidence of good practice in other schools and in research.

Example

The action points below are from a note of visit to an Aylesbury Vale school which took place in July 2016:

- Refer to published research (NFER; Sutton Trust; Greg Brookes) to ensure that strategies being used are the most effective.
- Consider additional resources shown to be effective in research, e.g.:
 - New Reading and Thinking resources
 - Accelerated Acceleratewrite – to be used with Clicker 6
 - Afasic website – look at strategies for language difficulties / disorders
 - Pre-teaching early morning
- Use partnership with [school in same Liaison Group] - Y5 teacher is completing a project on developing peer mentoring

CPD/networks

- The BLT continues to offer CPD with a focus on disadvantaged learners, both in terms of specific training and conferences, governor and school based training, and as a thread woven into wider support for leadership
- Pupil Premium Network meetings were established in 2015-16 and are well attended opportunities for professionals to share helpful strategies which have had impact in their schools.

9c Future Plans

- To complete evaluation of Pupil Premium Action Group project and consider whether and how to develop this programme to increase impact
- To use further opportunities within the Wycombe Standards project to support collaboration and sharing of good practice in terms of improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners
- To further develop CPD opportunities, ensuring that sharing good practice is a standing item in Network Meeting agendas.
- To encourage all CPD facilitators in the Trust to consider whether / how disadvantaged pupils' attainment might be woven into the course objectives and delivery

10. Select Committee Recommendation Ten

Narrowing the Gap Reports to Governing Bodies

We recommend that the Cabinet Member ask the Bucks Learning Trust to develop guidance for schools on the roles of governors in developing and implementing narrowing the gap projects, and evaluation of the effects of the Pupil Premium. This should include quarterly/annual reports on these topics to governing body meetings.

Original Response: Yes - We agree that Governing Bodies have a critical role to play in supporting and challenging schools in the way they tackle this agenda. We have carried out an extensive programme of training for governing bodies on the pupil premium in 2013 – 2014 and will include further dates in our Governor Development Programme for the academic year 2014 – 2015. In addition, model governing body agendas set out an expectation for governors to monitor use of the Pupil Premium on a termly basis through the report of the pupil premium governor or relevant committee.

10a 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

- Governors get regular reports through the BLT Head teacher's Report to Governors and we have also included monitoring the impact of Pupil Premium spend in the Terms of Reference for the Teaching and Learning Committee
- The BLT Head teacher's report to governors has been updated this term to reflect the changes in the September 2016 Ofsted Inspection Handbook covering the way the Pupil Premium is reported and the ways in which impact upon disadvantaged pupils is evaluated.
- The BLT has developed model terms of reference for the Curriculum and Standards Committee to include monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the use of any Pupil Premium funding.
- Guidance on the role of the Pupil Premium Governor is available on Governor Zone, and this includes guidance and questions to be used for effective governor visits as well as updates.
- Governing boards receive guidance on how to ensure their school websites meet the requirements to publish how the school spends its pupil premium funding and the impact. This includes the new requirement from September 2016 to publish a pupil

premium strategy. The BLT has developed website audit toolkits to assist governing boards with this.

- The termly Leadership Briefings for Chairs of Governors and Head teachers provide updates from a Buckinghamshire perspective as well as a national one. Regular issues of Governor Times provide information and updates for governors as appropriate.

Case Study – An Example from a Governing Board minutes

Pupil Premium Funding Allocation 2016-17 and Proposed Use of Funding

Miss X presented a report on the intended spending of the Pupil Premium in 2016/17 and its intended impact, supported by a document circulated to governors in advance. It was agreed that the report would be published on the School's Website. The main barriers faced by pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium at the School were identified as:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Emotional resilience
- Social learning
- Attainment – reaching age-related expectations
- Parental engagement
- Lack of opportunity due to financial disadvantage.

Governors noted the detailed plans to address and overcome these barriers and that £146,000 was allocated in 2016/17.

Governors questioned in some detail which interventions had been discontinued, and were satisfied that the reasons were due to limited impact, and were based on evidence collected by the School.

Miss X agreed to update Governors later in the school year.

11. Select Committee Recommendation Eleven

Lead Governor for Narrowing the Gap

In order to raise the profile of narrowing the gap within schools, we recommend that school governing bodies consider appointing a lead governor with special responsibility for narrowing the gap and Pupil Premium.

Original Response: Yes – A number of school governing bodies have appointed governors with a specific responsibility for pupil premium. We will continue to encourage all governing bodies to consider this.

11a 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

- The BLT continues to recommend the appointment of a designated NtG/Pupil Premium governor and records indicate that 102 (44%) governing boards in Buckinghamshire currently have a designated NtG governor with the rest choosing to have the responsibility sitting at committee level.
- The impact of this increased level of discussion, monitoring and accountability, there is now much more clarity about the way in which PP funding is applied, how effective different strategies may be, and the measurable impact of work at the level of the individual pupil.
- The appointment of a NtG/Pupil Premium Governor is always included on the model agenda for governing boards for the Autumn term when governor appointments are made for the new academic year.
- Training for NtG/Pupil Premium governors continues to be available through the 2016 – 2017 Governor Development Programme, with specific courses aimed at both primary and secondary school governors. The aim of the course is to *“understand the principles behind this unique fund and how you can support your school in closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.”* These courses are available on a termly basis and the training is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

- Guidance on the role of the Pupil Premium Governor is available on Governor Zone, and this includes guidance and questions to be used for effective governor visits; as well as updates.
- The Pupil Premium reviews include interviews with Pupil Premium governors. Part of the assessment of the review focuses on how well the Head Teacher is being held to account for the use of Pupil Premium funding, how well the Pupil Premium governor understands how funding is being spent, and what the measureable impact of Pupil Premium spending is.
- The termly Leadership Briefings for Chairs of Governors and Head teachers provide updates from a Buckinghamshire perspective as well as a national one. Regular issues of Governor Times provide information and updates for governors as appropriate.

12. Select Committee Recommendation Twelve

Narrowing the Gap Training for School Leaders

We recommend that the Cabinet Member ask the Bucks Learning Trust to enhance training opportunities for school leaders on maximising narrowing the gap projects and Pupil Premium including strategic overview, project identification and budget allocation, mid-term review, and evaluation and assessment.

Original Response: Yes -We will ask the Bucks Learning Trust to report on this training as part of their annual report to the Council.

12a 2016 Update and Impact Assessment

Training opportunities for senior and middle leaders have remained a high priority.

Conferences

- Following the success of the June 2015 Pupil Premium Conference, Sir John Dunford (National Pupil Premium Champion) was invited to return to Buckinghamshire to deliver a second conference aimed at Secondary leaders.
- The feedback from this training was overwhelmingly positive.

CPD opportunities for Head Teachers

- Through the RAY and GO! Programmes (for schools at risk/ causing concern, and for good or outstanding schools), we have supported leaders to analyse the impact of their provision, and gain a deeper understanding of pupils' needs as reflected in their school data.
- A number of head teachers have since requested further support from the Educational Excellence Adviser in developing further this practice in their own schools.

The Pupil Premium Action Group

- This project was an action research based project, targeting primary schools with significant gaps for disadvantaged pupils in Phonics, KS1 outcomes and/or KS2 outcomes.

- Altogether, 22 schools took part in the project. Head Teachers were invited to attend the launch conference with key-note speaker Daniel Sobel (Inclusion Expert), which showcased innovative practice from a school in Leeds.
- Outcomes from the Pupil Premium Action Group demonstrate that the vast majority of schools taking part made a significant difference to the progress of targeted pupils. (More detailed results were given in section 5 of this report).

Pupil Premium Network Groups

- These have been established in the three areas of the county. These are well attended by both senior and middle leaders and have covered a range of areas such as:
 - Effective strategies for raising attainment
 - Parent engagement
 - Peer mentoring and support
 - Website statements and statutory requirements
- School leaders are increasingly offering to lead the main agenda item as an opportunity to showcase the impact of the strategies they have put in place.

Governor training,

- This includes both courses and bespoke training for governing bodies, and remains in high demand.
- Overwhelmingly, governors' feedback indicates that they are in a stronger position to challenge and support school leaders in providing the best quality support for disadvantaged pupils.
- The format for Head Teachers' reports to governors is being updated to place an even stronger emphasis on outcomes for disadvantaged learners.

12b Future Plans

- Sir Robin Boshier, formerly Director, Quality and Training for Ofsted, is working with the BLT to develop a high impact programme to further diminish differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. This will be launched before the end of 2016.

- To work in partnership with Head Teachers within the Wycombe Standards Project Steering Group to identify barriers and strategies specific to the Wycombe area, as data reflects poorer outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in this part of the county.
- To identify a cluster of schools in the Wycombe Area to be targeted for additional support including funded visits, CPD opportunities, partnership working with other schools, and close monitoring / tracking of pupils