

<p style="text-align: center;">Education Learning and Skills 2011/12 Business Plan Outturn</p>

Introduction

The 2011/12 Business Plans were written in the context of a Children, Families and Education Directorate before the recent re-structure. Outturn reporting against the 2011/12 Business Plans will reflect the change to an Education, Learning and Skills Directorate and subsequent changes to the Directorate structure and responsibility areas.

The role of the local authority within the context of the education sector is redesigned by legislation and this has required us to re-focus our core strategic responsibilities to secure improvement in the early years, schools, and post 16 education sectors; ensure good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, together with other pupils who may be excluded from school; be the champion of children and young people to ensure they have access to a good education and make good progress; and commission a sufficient diversity and number of good quality school places.

The development of a more diverse school system requires KCC to change the way it works, and part of our response to this is increased delegation to schools and changes in the way central services are delivered and funded.

During the summer of 2011 the senior management structure of Education, Learning and Skills was revised and the Directorate was redesigned to comprise two distinct functions:

- Statutory and Strategic Services
- Traded Services

Redesign of the Directorate and recruitment to the new Structure was successfully completed and the Directorate now comprises seven service units:

- Standards and School Improvement including Early Years
- Skills and Employability
- Advocacy and Entitlement

These services report to the Director – Quality and Standards

- Provision Planning and Operations
- Fair Access
- Education Psychology
- SEN and Placement

These services report to the Director – Planning and Access.¹

In addition, a consultation exercise was undertaken to consider what funding and/or resources should be further delegated or devolved to schools from the centrally retained part of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

As a result, a number of functions carried out on behalf of schools by KCC moved to a full or partly traded basis – trading through the vehicle of EduKent. The decision was also taken to devolve the Specialist Teaching Service to a lead Special School in each district with effect from September 2012.

The majority of the activity set out in the 2011/12 Business Plans and falling within the remit of the Education Learning and Skills Directorate has been delivered successfully with targets being met. Some of the initial actions have had to be reviewed during the year in the light of changes to national performance thresholds and legislative changes.

Quality and Standards Division

Standards, and School Improvement

All targets have been met with mostly good or better provision in early years settings and outcomes for children at the end of the Foundation Stage above average, with the achievement gap narrowing for the 20% most disadvantaged children at age 5.

Our Key Stage 2 standards are in line with similar areas and just below the national average (74%) with some improvement in 2011 with 72% achieving level 4 in English and Mathematics.

At Secondary level the overall effectiveness of schools has improved and our secondary education is mostly good or better (69%) which is in line with the national average. Key Stage 4 standards have continued to improve and are just above similar areas and in line with the national average for five good GCSE grades including English and Mathematics (58%).

However, our rate of improvement is not fast enough and we have over 100 primary and secondary schools which are below the government's floor standards and 115 schools have remained satisfactory for two or more inspections. During the 2011/12 Business Planning period KCC, working with the DFE and schools, set up The Kent Challenge – a Kent plan for improving the performance in all of our schools. This collaborative intelligence-led approach is being taken forward into the 2012/13 Business Planning year and will be built on through the development of the Kent Learning Partnership – designed to develop and support a self-improving school system based on

¹ Vacant post

stronger and weaker schools working together in more formal improvement partnerships.

Skills and Employability

The Skills and Employability team was established to take account of the recent changes in national government policy in this area. Activity in the 2011/12 Business Plan for the 14-19 (24) unit completed:-

- Development of the Skill Force programme
- Implementation and review of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Curriculum framework
- Development of the Area Prospectus, on-line application process, and the Information, Advice and Guidance portal to develop the career management skills of young people
- Planning and delivery of the change from the Connexions contract to deliver the All Age Careers Service
- Production of data packs to inform planning decisions
- 10 Master-classes delivered
- Website: KC4U used by 83% of the cohort
- Careers Education Information, Advice and guidance framework that is accessible to all vulnerable learners in place

Activity that has commenced but is ongoing and/or carried forward into the 2012/13 Business Planning period due to the changing curriculum at KS4 and Raising the Participation Age:-

- Development of centres of excellence for technical and vocational programmes
- Development of flexible learner focused provision offering appropriate choices up to age 18
- Development of the apprenticeship programme
- Development of effective employer engagement and links with the Local Economic Partnership (LEP)
- Development of appropriate learning pathways for vulnerable learners
- Shaping education and skills provision around the needs of the economy

Not completed:-

- Development of the Young Apprenticeships programme –
- Review of Education Business Partnership's schools relationship – due to EBP funding being removed
- Implementation of a planning cycle across 12 districts to deliver high quality 14-24 provision – delay due to requirement to respond to Raising the Participation Age agenda. Discussions are now commencing.

Advocacy and Entitlement

Primary and Secondary school persistent absence rates are reducing with more schools challenging inappropriate absence.

The IT support system for recording of attendance and inclusion data has been adjusted to enable analysis of permanent exclusions by SEN category, allowing improved targeting of activity.

Research has been undertaken to inform the development of an Inclusion Strategy in the 2012/13 planning period. This will encompass a review of our Alternative Curriculum and Pupil Referral Unit provision – testing and developing locally managed approaches to deliver improved outcomes.

As part of the ELS restructure, the responsibility for Elective Home Education has been established as part of the Advocacy and Entitlement Service. The team has been expanded to improve our information and support to parents who educate their children at home; to identify and take action where children are not receiving a satisfactory education or where children have been identified as a cause for concern.

The specification for Short Break Services has been reviewed and Short Break Services have been re-commissioned.

The Specialist Teaching Service is being devolved to a District model of delivery, subject to final approval by the Cabinet Member. Consultation and negotiation around the practical arrangements for deployment, local management of the resource and access arrangements for schools within a district has taken place, in parallel with work to develop and agree an outcome based specification between schools and the Local Authority.

Quality and Standards Division

Provision Planning and Operations

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2012-17 has been drafted and has just been subject to public consultation in parallel with discussions regarding delivery of the commissioning needs.

The responsibility for school “intervention” in cases relating to school standards moved to the Kent Challenge Team during this business planning period, although intervention for other reasons, such as financial mismanagement remains with the AEO Unit. During 2011/12, the AEO Unit formally intervened in, or continued formal intervention, in four schools: Wyvern Special School, Ursuline College, Walmer Science College and Furness Special School.

The Unit has continued to work effectively with emerging Academies to ensure that the children and young people of Kent receive the best possible education provision. This work has included brokering effective partnership arrangements to support schools which face challenges, resolving complex issues to facilitate the transfer of schools to academy status, challenging academies in the interests of Kent residents and ensuring academies remain the family of Kent schools.

Fair Access

The 2012 Admissions Scheme agreed and determined by Cabinet is now in full operation, and consultation on the proposed admission arrangements for transfer to primary and secondary schools in September 2013 has completed. The target for on-line admissions take-up was set at 80% (an increase of 30% on the 10/11 target). 86.3% of applications were made on-line during the 2011/12 business planning period – exceeding the 80% goal.

With regard to transport, consultation was undertaken on:

- Changes to the discretionary elements of home to school transport provision
- Post 16 transport policy
- Options for the 16+ Travel Pass

leading to adjustments to KCC's transport policy.

Education Psychology:-

All planned activities and targets were delivered. 98% of statutory action assessment advice to the Local Authority on the needs of children and young people was provided within agreed timescales and through supporting the SEN decision-making process.

The service supported early intervention through support and capacity building with schools for issues relating to teaching and learning; consultation and advice to parents, carers and other professionals in relation to vulnerable children; direct work with children and young people and contributing to 'Team Around the School' approaches.

An additional achievement during this period was the successful development of traded services in readiness for the 2012/13 financial year.

SEN and Placement:-

The review of Kent's SEN strategy has been carried over into the 2012/13 Business Plan in order that it can take account of proposed changes to legislation that will be outlined in the draft Children's Bill and the priority areas that we need to address based on our evidence and consultation with schools and other stakeholders.

We have delivered on our target for the percentage of Statements, issued within 26 weeks (11/12 target for all cases: 82%, delivered 88%) but we are still behind the national average and our statistical neighbour average (95% and 98% respectively).

We have not met our targets for:

- 5% reduction in the number of placements in independent and non-maintained special schools (11/12 target 266, outturn 293)

We are seeing an increase in the number of referrals for statutory assessment and we still have high numbers of tribunal appeals. It is intended that the SEN strategy will address these and other issues.