

Leeds

Local Education Authority

Inspection Report

Date of Inspection: October 2004

Reporting Inspector: Barry Jones HMI

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Basic information

Name of LEA:	Leeds Local Education Authority
LEA number:	383
Address of LEA:	Leeds City Council 3 rd Floor East, Civic Hall Calverley Street Leeds LS1 1UR
Reporting Inspector:	Barry Jones HMI
Date of Inspection:	October 2004

Summary

Introduction

Leeds is the second largest metropolitan area in England and has considerable diversity. A large area of inner city Leeds is characterised by multiple disadvantage. The outer ring consists of small towns and countryside. As part of an on-going review there has been significant school reorganisation since the previous inspection. Altogether 30 schools have closed but 11 new primary schools, a new community high school and a special inclusive learning centre have opened.

Standards of attainment are in line with national and statistical neighbours' averages¹ in primary schools but below at GCSE level. Leeds' pupils make insufficient progress from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. The number of secondary schools with low attainment has been too high but has reduced significantly since the previous inspection. Attendance rates have improved above the national trend but exclusion rates are increasing. Raising attainment in secondary schools is a high priority for the council.

A critical inspection report published in February 2000 judged the LEA to be poor. Following this, the Secretary of State directed that Leeds City Council enter into a contract for five years with Education Leeds, a non-profit making company wholly owned by Leeds City Council. The company was established in April 2001 and was directed to employ Capita to provide strategic capacity to assist in the provision of its education services. The Board consists of an independent chair, two officers nominated by Leeds City Council and two representatives from Capita. A subsequent inspection in 2002, therefore, focussed primarily on the work of Education Leeds in discharging the LEA's functions regarding the provision of education to school-aged children. As the contract term has not expired, this inspection has a similar focus.

Since the previous inspection in 2002, there has been a change in political control. Following elections in June 2004, the administration comprises an alliance between the Conservative, Green and Liberal Democrat parties. The number of council departments has reduced from 15 to seven. Leeds City Council's client role for education is carried out by the chief learning officer.

¹ Leeds statistical neighbours are: Sheffield, Kirklees, Lancashire, Bolton, City of Bristol, Stockton-on-Tees, Rotherham, Calderdale, Wakefield and Wigan.

Main findings

Summary: Leeds is a highly satisfactory LEA. It has made highly satisfactory progress since its previous inspection and its capacity for further improvement is good. The arrangements between the city council and Education Leeds are working well and there is a trust now between officers and elected members. A similar relationship is developing with schools but their partnership is not effective regarding support for behaviour. A good senior management team for Education Leeds is providing strong, imaginative leadership and direction. There have been particular gains in provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and improving attendance. However, there is still much to do. Standards in many secondary schools are too low, exclusion rates are too high and too many schools have required special measures.

Areas of strength	Areas of weakness/for development
Corporate leadership of education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education is a high priority and linked to regeneration and aspirations for the city • Strong leadership by elected members and senior officers • Good allocation of resources • Very good provision for early years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some tough spending decisions have still to be taken
Strategy for education and its implementation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards in primary schools • Some innovative and imaginative approaches to school improvement • Good quality data • Difficult decisions made to close schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards in secondary schools • Too many schools in special measures • Some LEA targets are unrealistic and target setting in schools is inaccurate.
Support to improve education in schools	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective development of self-evaluation tools in schools • Support for governors and financial services to schools • Good ICT and management information strategy • Recent appointments have considerably enhanced capacity within the advisory service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money of services supporting school improvement
Support for special educational needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High proportion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools • Improving SEN support services that give good value for money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion time for statutory assessments
Support for social inclusion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very effective support to improve attendance • Robust procedures for reporting racist incidents leading to 100% returns from schools • Good racial equality policy and action plan • Corporate parenting role for looked after children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partnership between Education Leeds and schools is not yet effective in improving behaviour • High rates of exclusion in some secondary schools with low rates of reintegration • Two pupil referral units and one special EBD school had significant weakness in Ofsted inspections. • Not all looked after children have personal education plans.

Recommendations

Key recommendations

Effectiveness of the LEA's identification of, and intervention in, underperforming schools: Ensure a consistency of challenge to schools, and improve the analysis of data to identify trends and to evaluate the effectiveness of early intervention to prevent schools being placed in Ofsted categories.

Support for behaviour: Further strengthen the partnership with schools, and monitor and evaluate the implementation of revised provision for meeting the needs of pupils with EBD.

Provision for pupils education other than at school: Secure the agreement of all schools on an effective strategy to improve the reintegration of pupils excluded from school.

Other recommendations

Strategy for education and its implementation

The strategy for school improvement and its implementation

- Ensure that targets at Key Stage 2 are based on pupils' prior attainment.
- Ensure that evaluation includes comparisons for inner city and outer-ring schools and for the LEA as a whole.
- Ensure that Ofsted evaluations of the quality of Education Leeds support to schools causing concern are shared with the Education Leeds board.

Support to improve education in schools

Effectiveness and value for money of services to support school management: Improve the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of property support to schools.

Support for special educational needs

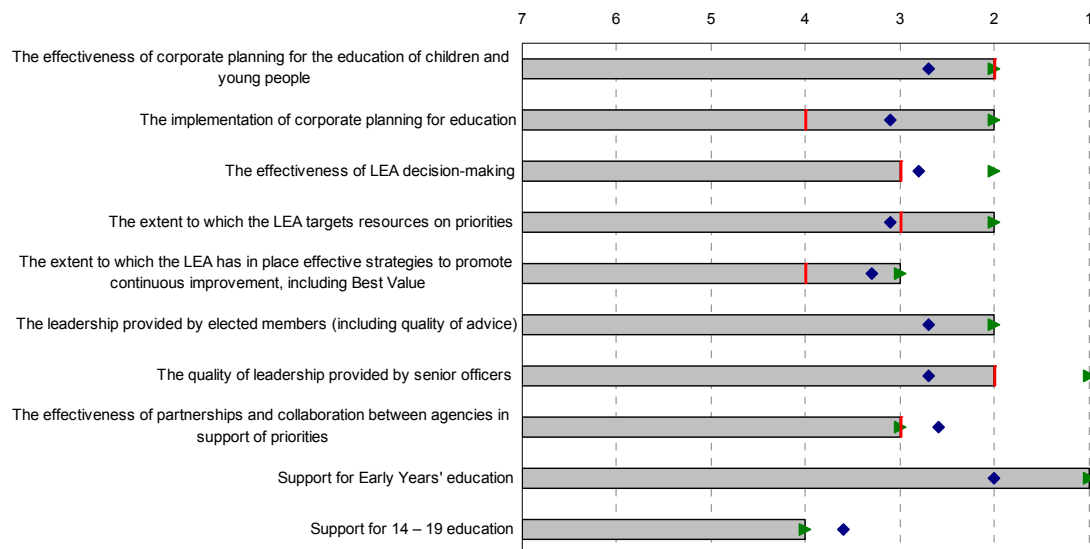
Statutory obligations: Continue to work with partners to ensure that statutory assessments are completed within the recommended timescales.

Support for social inclusion

Provision for looked after children: Continue to work with partners to ensure all looked after children have a personal education plan.

Section 1: Corporate leadership of education

Summary table of judgements



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

Corporate planning for education and its implementation

1. Corporate planning for education and its implementation are good. Education is at the heart of the council's vision and is seen as a key element in securing the city's continuing prosperity and influence within regional developments. Corporate planning was also good at the time of the previous inspection but implementation was at an early stage. Considerable progress has been made in linking together strategic plans to develop a coherent approach to school improvement and capacity for further improvement is good. The community strategy for Leeds has clear consistent links with the Education Development Plan (EDP), Education Leeds strategic plan and the neighbourhood renewal scheme with standards in secondary schools and behaviour appropriately given high priority. The completion of the Education Leeds Strategic Plan satisfactorily addresses the recommendation in the previous report. A weakness is that there is no indication of costing to indicate how very aspirational targets will be achieved and that the plans are affordable. Operational plans are costed.

2. A condition of the initial intervention strategy by the DfES was the enhancement of strategic capacity for education by a private sector partner, Capita. Initially, three of the five members of the Education Leeds senior management team were provided by Capita. This has worked very well in many respects. The support has been invaluable in providing rapid access to expertise, in re-engineering a number of key services and in successful bids for external funding, for example, the

Private Finance Initiative. The Board has been an important agent for driving change and for developing positive strategic links with the council in order to seek support for some challenging decisions. It has been less successful in intervening in underperforming schools. The procedures and the strategy developed in the first year following the previous inspection have not been carried forward and have been changed. Although a good, potentially more effective strategy is now in place, the slow start has contributed to the overall unsatisfactory progress in aspects of this work.

3. The LEA is successful in implementing most of its plans, although it is not meeting its targets for pupils' attainment. This is principally because some of the shorter term targets are unrealistic. There is a thorough, rigorous and open process as part of a good performance management framework.

4. The arrangements whereby Education Leeds performs most of the council's functions for school-aged children are working well. This was a controversial arrangement initially and met with considerable local opposition in some quarters. Relationships have improved markedly and Education Leeds has won the trust and support of the leaders of the political parties, other council officers and the majority of schools. This strong alliance underpins a good capacity for further improvement.

5. The previous report referred to responsibility for education being fragmented between several departments of the council. This is no longer the case. The early years service which continues to be managed by the local authority is of excellent quality and integrates well with other services. Since the previous inspection the council has established priority boards to determine the strategic direction for its services and is actively considering its response to issues in the Children Bill.

Decision-making

6. This continues to be highly satisfactory. There has been increased delegation to officers and there is a continuing commitment to maintaining overall resources to education. The council rightly recognises the need to address underachievement and under-investment in the secondary sector. The medium-term financial plan realigns £9 million to secondary education from within the education budget. £5 million has been redirected to date. The remainder is dependent, however, on the council making savings on other aspects of the education budget, for example, youth and community services, which is budgeted to spend 25% above the formula spending share

7. The council's new streamlined organisational structure is contributing to effective decision-making. The recommendation in the previous report has been satisfactorily addressed; the functions of the chief education officer have been reviewed and extended. Decisions are informed by comprehensive consultation. A good example is the partnership work involved in school reviews to reduce surplus places. The council is currently exploring proposals to improve local decision-making and accountability through area committees.

Targeting of resources

8. The LEA's targeting of resources to priorities has improved and is good. Education spending is consistently above the government's recommended allocation and additional funding possibilities are actively pursued. Education is the highest priority in the council's capital programme.

9. Medium-term financial planning is good. Funding within the education budget has been realigned to address underachievement and underinvestment in the secondary sector. Education Leeds has a detailed rolling three-year financial plan that identifies emerging financial pressures and current activity supported by short-term funding. Transparency of funding is a strength within Education Leeds, particularly for SEN. There is good sharing of all financial information between Education Leeds and the council's corporate finance officers. Consultation with schools on emerging budgets is strong.

10. A major review of the funding formula is at an early stage although in line with the timetable in the EDP activity plan. Incremental changes to the formula have been made since the previous inspection reflecting changing needs and specific targeting of funding, for example, funding for inclusion and information and communication technology (ICT). Age weightings within the formula favour primary schools to a greater extent than is usually found. The LEA is taking appropriate action to address the significant number of schools with high surplus balances.

Strategies to promote continuous improvement, including Best Value

11. This area is highly satisfactory. The previous inspection recommended changes to service planning and that actions be taken to enhance monitoring and self-evaluation. Good progress has been made in most areas. There is a clear improvement agenda within the council and education is at the centre of all corporate plans. The council has established priority boards to drive through the council's priorities. Education Leeds is subject to an annual review process that is moderated by an external review team and based firmly on parts of the Ofsted Framework for the Inspection of LEAs. The organisation is self-aware and focused on improving known areas of weakness. The self-evaluation prepared for this inspection was mostly accurate.

12. The performance management handbook provides good guidance to support staff in completing service plans. These vary in quality from excellent to satisfactory. All plans include sections on Best Value principles. Most plans lack evaluation of previous performance at activity level and few make reference to financial efficiency savings, although they do include budget information. A Best Value review resulted in a change in ICT service delivery and the establishment of a service advice team to support procurement activities in both schools and Education Leeds.

Leadership by elected members and advice given to them

13. The leadership of elected members has improved markedly since the previous inspection and is now good. The council executive ensures that educational policy is closely linked to the council's strategic aims. Lead members are very supportive of Education Leeds and encourage officers to show initiative. They have supported officers in participating in innovative partnership arrangements. There are good working relationships with senior officers, who provide the executive with clear, well-informed advice. Elected members have taken difficult decisions to close schools to reduce the number of surplus places. Further difficult decisions have yet to be taken to realign spending plans and to deliver the promised savings to fund increases on spending for secondary schools.

14. The scrutiny function is performed exceptionally well. There is good participation by schools and diocesan representatives. Members have adapted to the role well and issues are treated on their merits without recourse to party lines. The scrutiny committee is increasingly and usefully involved in commenting on draft policies. The challenge function of its work is performed well. It instigates investigations on major topics and holds officers and executive members to account.

Leadership by senior officers

15. The quality of leadership provided by senior officers is good, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The transition from the former interim management arrangements has been well managed. The capacity of the senior management team of Education Leeds has been enhanced by the permanent appointment of three deputy chief executives. The chief executive has provided very good leadership throughout this formative period and this is acknowledged by elected members and schools. A strong management team is now providing vision and drive and there is good capacity for further improvement. The team is still comparatively new and, while strategies are now in place, not all have had time to impact fully. This is particularly the case for the school improvement strategy and the implementation of the inclusion strategy.

16. Relationships with schools are satisfactory and improving. In the school survey, the leadership of senior officers is rated as good. This partnership is, however, likely to be tested over issues of support for behaviour and exclusion of pupils. It will be of critical importance to the success of the development of the Children's service agency.

Strategic partnerships

17. Collaboration with partners remains highly satisfactory, including partnerships under the auspices of the Leeds Initiative. The Leeds Learning Partnership involves representatives of all stakeholders in education across the city. The council has also reviewed the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) to enhance strategic direction. Progress in producing a local preventive strategy has been relatively slow. The CYPSP is being merged with the council's

priority board which has a similar function. This has the potential for improving decision-making and making more effective use of resources.

18. There are examples of partnership working improving performance, for instance, in improved levels of attendance resulting from joint projects with the police. However, rates for completing statutory assessments for pupils with SEN involving different agencies have been low and good partnership working for 14-19 has yet to raise attainment sufficiently. Evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of partnership activities and their impact on the service's work is not well developed.

Support for Early Years

19. The support for early years is very good. This well-established service has been recognised nationally, including the award of Beacon status for innovation and integration of early years' services. The early years service and Education Leeds work well together and ensure that the council's vision for the education and care of its younger children is subscribed to by all officers and key stakeholders. Implementation is very effective. The proposed city-wide children's centre programme and extended schools initiative are good examples of the collaborative approach.

20. The Early Years and Child Care Partnership (EYDCP) is well supported and provides a good foundation for cross-sector participation. This close partnership has led to the development of a range of innovative services in the current children's centres that provide well-targeted advice, information, training and support to parents. Prospective and existing providers in the private and voluntary sector receive very good support to enable them to improve their quality of practice and there is a good range of training opportunities.

21. All three- and four-year olds requiring an education place are funded and the use of Foundation Stage teacher support and profiling is well established. The format for the transfer of information from private and voluntary sector providers to schools is being devised.

Support for 14-19 education

22. Support is satisfactory. Provision is improving and partnership working is strong but they have yet to raise standards sufficiently. Education Leeds liaises well with other providers and the local Connexions service to provide good quality advice. Greater collaboration with other partners has successfully increased the opportunities for vocational and work-related learning. However, despite some improvements, staying-on rates beyond 16 are below national averages.

23. Standards of pupils' attainment are below national averages and often below the average of statistical neighbours. However, the provisional results for 2004 do give some optimism that the gap is being closed. The innovative six schools project with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has resulted in very significant improvements in four of the schools involved. The number of schools not meeting

the government's floor target at GCSE level decreased significantly from nine in 2001 to five in 2004. Support for pupils' participation in study support initiatives has helped to raise standards.

24. The draft 14-19 strategy has the support of partners at both strategic and operational levels. It builds well on the secondary school review that involved radical changes including school closures, amalgamations and improvements to school buildings.

Section 2: Strategy for education and its implementation

Summary table of judgements



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The strategy for school improvement and its implementation

25. The LEA's strategy for school improvement has improved and is now highly satisfactory. Significant progress has been made in linking together contributions from different services. The co-ordinated admissions arrangements and strategies to reduce the number of surplus places are well integrated into the school improvement strategy. Priorities are clear and consistent in the EDP and these are consistent with other major plans. Other initiatives such as Excellence in Cities (EiC), and national initiatives at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 are successfully incorporated. Links with strategies for SEN and social inclusion are clearly defined. There have been weaknesses in the strategy to support schools causing concern and the scale of the problem has been identified by Education Leeds' audit. It is also reflected in the school survey where the rating for the capacity for school improvement is significantly below the average for other participating LEAs. A new improved policy has been devised.

26. The implementation of the strategy is satisfactory. The recommendations from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. Good progress has been made in improving provision for SEN, removing surplus places, raising attendance levels and reducing the number of underperforming schools. 'Closing the gap' between attainment in the LEA and national averages is a high priority. This requires improvement rates above the national trend; however, currently they are in line at all key stages. The LEA has missed all its statutory targets for pupil

attainment in 2004 and is not on track to meet 2005 targets for pupil attainment, reducing exclusions or for no schools to require special measures. The targets set for pupils' attainment at Key Stage 2 were unrealistic and should be more securely based on pupils' prior attainment. The secondary targets are more achievable.

27. Monitoring of school improvement is very thorough. Evaluation, including for EiC initiatives and EDP priorities, is satisfactory but comparisons are sometimes too narrowly focused on other core cities. This can result in too positive an assessment and does not identify issues with sufficient clarity for schools in the green belt areas.

Recommendations

- Ensure that targets at Key Stage 2 are based on pupils' prior attainment.
- Ensure that evaluation includes comparisons for inner city and outer-ring schools and for the LEA as a whole.

The LEA's monitoring, challenge and intervention in schools and the targeting of support

28. The LEA's definition of, and its procedures for, monitoring challenge and intervening in schools have recently been revised and are now good. At the time of the previous inspection, monitoring and challenge were unsatisfactory. This continued to be the case for a further year while the school improvement services were being restructured and led to a period when too many schools were judged to require special measures. Marked progress has been made in the last year, particularly in developing schools' capacity for self-evaluation and strengthening the expertise of the advisory service. Monitoring and challenge are now satisfactory, the targeting of resources to areas of greatest need is now highly satisfactory and the capacity for further improvement is good.

29. Education Leeds inherited a legacy of low attainment in secondary schools; its audit showed that 26 of its 41 secondary schools were underachieving. It has rightly pursued a policy to develop autonomous, self-managing schools but a significant number of schools have not had the capacity to engage fully with this agenda. In 2003/04 there were only two secondary quality assurance advisers (QAAs) and priority was given to using experienced headteachers in supporting peer review in schools. Consequently, the level and regularity of monitoring special schools and PRUs were limited. During this period a high number of secondary and special schools and PRUs required special measures. Several vulnerable schools report that they have not had continuity in support for performance reviews over the last two or three years. The number of secondary QAAs has now been increased from two to five, with a further appointment for January 2005.

30. The quality of data produced by Education Leeds is good. It has been further enhanced to facilitate pupil-tracking and provides analyses of what pupils

should be expected to achieve. However, target-setting in schools has lacked rigour. In 2003, the proportions of secondary schools meeting or exceeding their targets for Key Stage 3 and GCSE attainment were generally either below or well below national averages. Provisional results for 2004 indicate a similar picture. This is against a background of underachievement in secondary schools. There are indications that use of this data is leading to a raising of expectations in the targets set for 2005.

Effectiveness of the LEA's identification of, and intervention in, underperforming schools

31. Overall, the effectiveness of the LEA's work is unsatisfactory. Despite recent improvements in the support and challenge, there has been an upward trend in the number of schools being placed into special measures. In a period of just over one year up to May 2004, ten schools were judged to require special measures or to have serious weaknesses, much higher than the national rate. The number of schools in Ofsted categories has remained high, but following recent closures in August 2004, is now less than at the time of the previous inspection. There are weaknesses in the way Education Leeds uses data to analyse trends and to evaluate the impact of the support given to schools to prevent the need for special measures.

32. When primary schools have been placed in special measures, extensive and effective support has been provided and schools have been removed from the category within the recommended timescales. There are also examples of good practice in secondary schools. The six schools project with the DfES targets six schools with the lowest attainment and effective support is being provided by Birmingham headteachers. The formation of these partnerships resulted in two high schools that had been in special measures for extended periods improving, but only to the serious weakness category. Some secondary schools have taken too long to recover. Ofsted monitoring has noted some weaknesses in the support from Education Leeds for both secondary and special schools, but comments on consistently good support in primary schools. These evaluations are not routinely shared with the Education Leeds board and so do not sufficiently influence decision-making.

33. There are effective exit strategies and the capacity for further improvement is good. A case conference approach has been introduced recently which brings together all services supporting a school. This should help to address some secondary headteachers' concerns that the acknowledged extensive support to schools in challenging circumstance is not well co-ordinated. The quality standard framework (QSF) for school evaluation is of very good quality and is being rolled out to all schools. The capacity for further improvement is good.

Recommendations

- Ensure a consistency of challenge to schools, and improve the analysis of data to identify trends and to evaluate the effectiveness of early intervention to prevent schools being placed in Ofsted categories.
- Ensure that Ofsted evaluations of the quality of Education Leeds support to schools causing concern are shared with the Education Leeds board.

Asset management planning

34. Asset management planning is highly satisfactory. The collection and presentation of asset management data have improved in the last year. The previous inspection recommended the LEA to increase significantly the funding for the maintenance and improvement of school buildings. Education has been prioritised in the council's capital programme and education capital receipts are reinvested in school projects. As a result, investment has doubled since the previous inspection.

35. There was also a recommendation to include a representative with educational expertise for asset management planning on the corporate asset management planning group. This is also in place. Strong corporate working relationships have ensured the substantial regeneration of Leeds schools through Private Finance Initiatives, 'Building Schools for the Future' and the city-wide primary reorganisation programme.

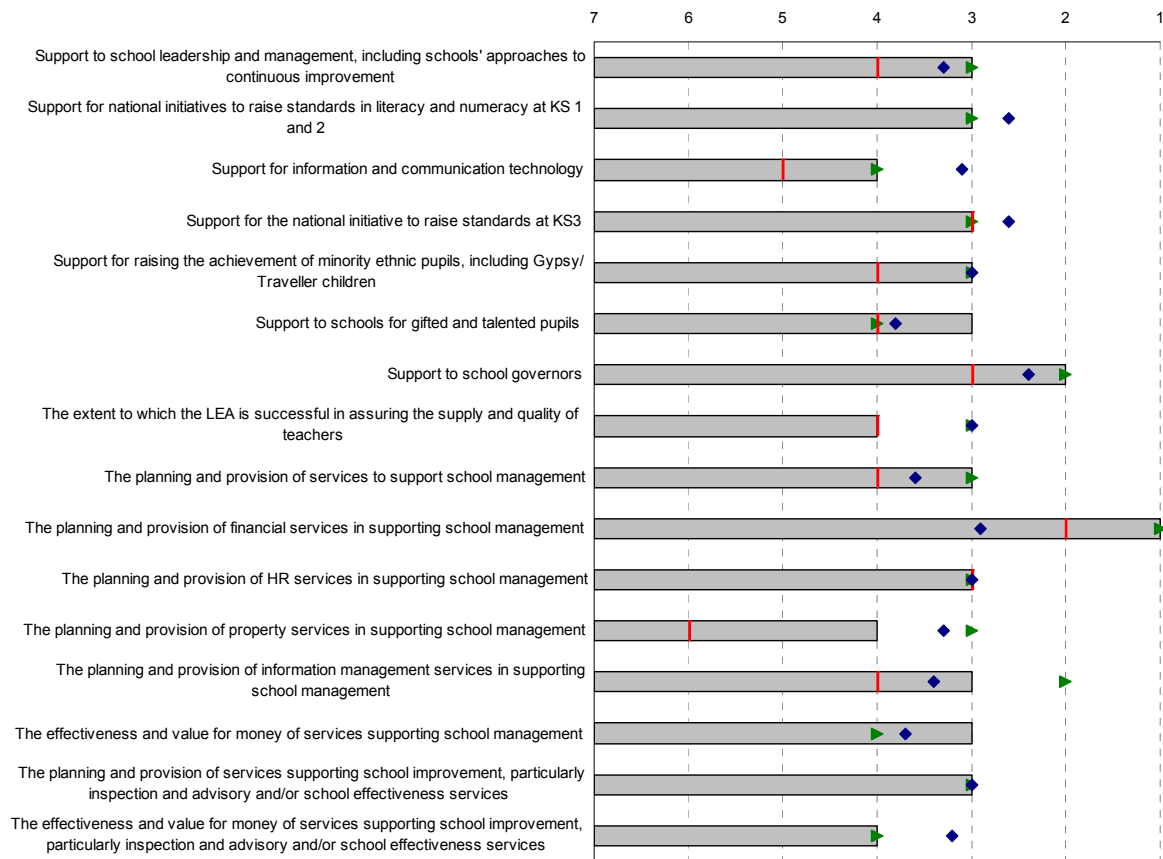
Admissions to schools

36. Admissions to schools is satisfactory. Admissions arrangements largely comply with the code of practice and current legislation. Admission numbers for sixth forms are currently not published but this will be corrected in future publications. High priority is given to children with SEN and looked after children in all co-ordinated admission arrangements. However, the re-integration of excluded pupils and the casual admission processes are not working effectively. These are sensibly being reviewed.

37. Good, clear information is produced for parents and summary leaflets are produced in seven languages. Evaluations of parents' responses demonstrate high satisfaction levels and feedback is used to improve future documentation. Appeals are dealt with quickly and the LEA has been successful in winning a high proportion of appeals. A new admissions computer system is currently being procured to enable effective co-ordination between all the Voluntary Aided schools and neighbouring LEAs; full integration of all Education Leeds' information management systems; and online application for school places by parents. There are close links with the education transport team.

Section 3: Support to improve education in schools

Summary table of judgements



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

Support for school leadership, management and continuous improvement

38. This area of work has improved and is now highly satisfactory. There are particular strengths in the support for school self-evaluation, support for governors and financial services, although support for new headteachers is less consistent.

39. Support for leadership, management and continuous improvement is effective for primary schools but has been too variable for secondary schools. For example, while all headteachers now receive an induction course, 27% of secondary headteachers took up the programme in 2003, which is well below the national average. Additional secondary QAAs have now been appointed and the service is nearly up to strength. Early signs are that advisers are working productively with schools.

40. A robust school self-evaluation framework has been introduced and staff trained in its use. The framework enables advisers, headteachers and governors to review the performance of schools and establish areas for development. It is increasingly being used well to audit performance and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. Good use is made of high quality performance data to inform the self-review process but weaknesses remain in target-setting.

41. Partnerships of schools and networks of teachers have been supported to develop and share good practice. The implementation of the primary strategy is highly satisfactory. Pilot work funded through EiC for ICT and gifted and talented initiatives have been disseminated through conferences and extension programmes. Local delivery partnerships of secondary schools, colleges and work-related learning providers have shared their approaches to collaborative working practices very effectively.

42. The service advice team is making good progress with providing headteachers and governors with information about the sources and procurement of services. Preferred providers of services such as ICT and supply teachers are being quality assured and services are brokered for schools.

Support for information and communication technology

43. This area was unsatisfactory in the previous inspection. It is now satisfactory. Pupil-to-computer ratios have improved, are in line with national averages and meet government targets. Linking up all schools to broadband by 2005 is on schedule. Access to ICT accredited courses increased in 2004 and the % of pupils gaining qualification improved significantly. Plans are in place to support all schools to offer courses at level 1 and 2. However, the Key Stage 3 target was missed in 2004 and the numbers of pupils gaining a nationally accredited qualification at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2003 was below national levels and statistical neighbours.

44. The ICT and information management strategy is good and has been developed with schools and other partners. It links well to other plans and strategies. Priorities are based on a recent audit and there are clear targets for raising standards. Schools value the work of the consultants and support is well targeted on those with greatest needs. The QSF criteria are used well to audit schools' ICT provision and to evaluate the work of consultants. Other support is brokered by the city learning centres and an external provider.

45. City learning centres provide effective support for innovative work in teaching and learning. For example, leading professionals and consultants are well supported to develop expertise in using whiteboard technology. Study support is available on-line for pupils in Key Stage 3. The centres offer courses for technical staff to acquire nationally recognised ICT qualifications.

Support for the national initiative at Key Stage 3

46. Support for raising standards at Key Stage 3 is highly satisfactory. Rates of improvement are in line with national averages and standards in nearly all schools receiving intensive support are rising. However, in 2003, attainment was below national averages in mathematics and science but in line in English. Value-added rates between Key Stages 2 and 3 were below the national average. Exclusion rates in Key Stage 3 are high.

47. A coherent strategy underpins well-differentiated support to schools and there are good links with the primary strategy. Key Stage 3 consultants have contributed effectively to the six schools project and early indications are that attainment is rising and behaviour is improving in these schools. Other schools receive targeted support based on an analysis of performance in different subjects. Key Stage 3 consultants link well with behaviour, attendance and minority ethnic achievement consultants. This well-planned support programme is valued by schools.

Support for raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils, including Gypsy and Traveller children

48. Support has improved considerably and is now highly satisfactory. Strategic plans and the EDP all reflect the high priority given to the support for minority ethnic pupils. Education Leeds has improved the effectiveness of the support and challenge it offers to schools to raise achievement. Monitoring by Ofsted shows that there is good support for Traveller children.

49. Attainment levels at Key Stages 1 and 2 are broadly in line with those of the general school population of Leeds and in line with, or better than, similar authorities. However, at Key Stage 3 the gap in attainment between some minority ethnic groups and the Leeds average widens. Improvement in attainment at Key Stage 4 has been achieved and one of the local public service agreement targets for Black Caribbean and Black African pupils has been exceeded. Nevertheless, some other groups at Key Stage 4 perform significantly below the Leeds average and the proportion of minority ethnic pupils leaving school without a GCSE pass is higher than for statistical neighbours.

50. A wide range of strategies are used to support improvement, including provision for the increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers. Supplementary schools in Leeds, run by local communities, offer religious and language teaching and specific grants have been used to further strengthen their work. Similarly, projects for Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean children support the transition from primary to secondary schools. Resources and staff are being refocused to support this improvement strategy.

Support for gifted and talented pupils

51. Support for gifted and talented pupils has improved and is now highly satisfactory. There is evidence of increasing numbers of pupils taking GCSEs at an early age. Attainment at higher levels is generally in line with national averages and statistical neighbours in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. School inspection reports show that provision for gifted and talented pupils is better than that of statistical neighbours and the national average.

52. This support, and the Aim Higher initiative, have been developed effectively through the EiC programme. All secondary schools have a gifted and talented coordinator and good practice is shared. In the primary sector, there is a well-planned rollout programme. There are sufficient training opportunities and there are also increasing opportunities covering talented pupils in art, music and sport, involving local colleges of higher education and specialist schools.

Support for school governors

53. Support for governors has improved from highly satisfactory to good. Governor vacancies are low. LEA governors' vacancies are fewer than nationally and for statistical neighbours. The numbers of governors from black and minority ethnic groups have improved and there are plans for recruiting more. School inspections indicate improvements in the effectiveness of governing bodies. There is a pool of governors available to provide additional support to governing bodies in schools causing concern. Training in the new school self-evaluation framework has enabled governors to engage more effectively in debates about school improvement and social inclusion.

The supply and quality of teachers

54. This aspect of the work is satisfactory. The vacancies in Leeds schools are in line with the national average, although some schools in challenging circumstances find it difficult to recruit suitably qualified staff.

55. During 2003-04, Education Leeds gave good support for the appointment of headteachers and provided an induction programme for all. Induction programmes for newly-qualified teachers (NQT) have improved and more NQTs are continuing to work in Leeds for a second year. The services to provide supply teachers and assist recruitment are cost effective and well tailored to schools' needs. However, in the previous year, the proportion of headteacher appointments supported, and the proportion of headteachers attending induction were in the bottom ten per cent nationally. Not all new headteachers in schools in challenging circumstances received an induction programme and individual support.

56. Education Leeds is now better able to assist with the recruitment and induction of headteachers and the school improvement service is nearly up to strength. The refocusing of the work of the QAA has enabled rapid progress to be made with developing a strategy for continuing professional development in

consultation with schools. External providers are being encouraged to offer a wide range of accredited courses for school staff.

57. Good use is made of workforce data to map the profile of the education service and inform workforce remodelling. Education Leeds is seeking to recruit staff from black and minority ethnic groups through school-centred initial teacher training routes and by providing advice about the appointment process for potential headteachers. Learning mentors are being usefully employed to undertake non-teaching tasks.

Effectiveness and value for money of services to support school management

58. The planning and provision of services to support school management are satisfactory. Their effectiveness is highly satisfactory. The previous inspection was critical of progress made in providing schools with information to enable them to make informed purchasing decisions. Good progress has been made recently, although schools have not yet fully benefited from this recent work.

59. Since the previous inspection, a review of the cost of recharges for corporate services provided to Education Leeds has been completed. This resulted in additional funding being delegated to schools for finance, ICT and personnel and payroll services. Extensive use is made of the school survey and the Ofsted LEA Inspection criteria to monitor performance.

60. There has been considerable investment in setting up the Education Leeds service advice team to improve competition and the choice available to schools. This team is beginning to have a positive impact by challenging internal service providers about the quality, evaluation and costs of services. The team has recently launched a specific and separate website and hosted a trade fair for over 60 service providers in addition to services provided by the LEA. Training has also been provided to internal providers on improving service level agreements and the new team is providing a robust challenge to service delivery. This is good practice which is not yet fully embedded. Most of the benefits accruing from this investment will be gained in the new financial year.

61. The planning and provision of financial services are very good. All schools with the exception of one, purchase the financial traded service. Over 80 percent of primary and secondary schools judged the service as good or very good in the 2004 school survey, placing it in the top 25% nationally.

62. Guidance to schools clearly distinguishes between services provided as a statutory service and those provided as traded financial services. A supplementary traded bursar service is offered to schools. This helps schools with short-term staffing difficulties and ensures a segregation of duties between undertaking book-keeping and providing focused financial support and advice.

63. There is a good flow of financial information between schools and the LEA which ensures effective management of financial systems within schools. Good

quality benchmarking data are provided to all schools and this is well supported with training on best value. There is good practice in engaging school staff in using benchmarking comparisons, for example, in grouping schools with similar profiles.

64. School improvement staff are informed of the financial health of all schools, not just those identified as requiring additional school improvement support. Good criteria are included in the QSF to evaluate all schools on financial and resource management performance. This is a model of good practice.

65. Property support to schools was judged to be poor in the previous two inspections, it is now satisfactory. Poor communication, unreliability, and poor contract monitoring and supervision have all been addressed and the school survey shows that schools recognise this and the schools' rating is now closer to the national average.

66. Guidance and support materials available to schools have improved since the previous inspection. Immediate professional support has been provided to schools following two major fire incidents. However, without a process of evaluation in place to assess client satisfaction, for example through surveys, it is difficult for Education Leeds to judge how much improvement has been made.

Recommendation

- Improve the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of property support to schools.

67. The planning and provision of information management services are highly satisfactory. A comprehensive strategy is now in place which addresses well the recommendation from the previous report. Improvements have also been made in the secure transfer of electronic data between schools and the LEA. The intranet is used as an effective means of communication with schools and between services in the LEA.

68. A Best Value review resulted in the outsourcing of a range of technical services. From April 2004, all schools entered a contract with the preferred supplier through a service level agreement but some schools remain to be convinced about the quality of technical support.

Effectiveness and value for money of services to support school improvement

69. The planning and provision of services supporting school improvement are highly satisfactory and much improved from the previous inspection when planning was unsatisfactory. Service plans are aligned with overall priorities and most services are up to strength. Priorities for improvement are identified in the EDP and in the Compact with the DfES and have been agreed after full consultation with schools and governors.

70. Education Leeds has been successful in recruiting high quality staff. Recent recruitment has remedied the shortage in the number of secondary QAAs and strengthened expertise. Good use is made of headteachers and advanced skills teachers to extend the range and quality of support available to schools.

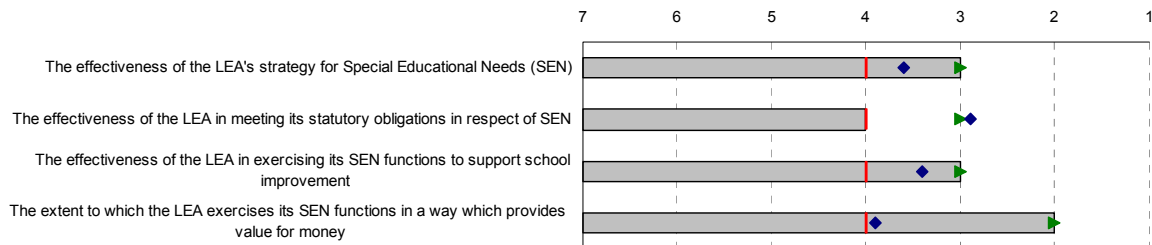
71. Job descriptions and team plans provide staff in school improvement services with clear expectations of their roles. There is a good professional development programme for advisers and consultants and performance management is well established.

72. On balance, services supporting school improvement now operate effectively but do not yet provide satisfactory value for money. The authority has not stemmed the flow of schools into special measures, has missed all of its 2004 EDP targets for pupils' attainment and value-added measures in secondary schools are low.

73. Education Leeds recognises that improvement is a long-term issue and, despite much determined effort and innovative approaches, there has been limited time in which to tackle fully these long-standing issues. Considerable progress has already been made in improving attendance and provision for SEN. A strong senior management team is in place, the capacity of the advisory service has been enhanced and there are several new strategies that are relatively new and are in the early days of implementation. Capacity for further improvement is highly satisfactory.

Section 4: Support for special educational needs (SEN)

Summary table of judgements



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

The strategy for SEN

74. Education Leeds has significantly improved its strategy for SEN and it is now highly satisfactory. The new inclusion strategy 2004-2010 has a clearly articulated vision which is firmly embedded in a broader strategy for social inclusion and strongly supported by the council and schools. The weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been addressed although there has been slow progress in response to the recommendation to improve provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD).

75. The principles in the strategy are fully in line with the key strategic themes in the corporate vision for Leeds 2004-20. The range of activities is also closely aligned to the EDP and other key plans such as the race equality action plan and the behaviour support plan. The number of pupils with statements has fallen significantly and the proportion placed in mainstream schools is high; less than one percent of the school population are now in special schools. Schools are being supported and challenged to self-review their support for SEN. There is a very strong partnership with early years providers and health services.

76. Improvements have been achieved largely by providing early support for pupils and by moving provision from special school to mainstream settings. The review of funding for inclusion has supported well the implementation of the strategy, reducing the number of statements for SEN and targeting resources more flexibly to meet the needs of pupils in mainstream schools.

77. Funding has been used well to improve provision in mainstream schools to enable pupils with disability to have access to the curriculum. There has been good progress in redefining the role of special schools and in building on the effective partnership work already developed. The outreach role for the new specialist inclusive learning centres is at an early stage, but it is being well supported by transitional funding arrangements over the next three years. There is good practice in providing city-wide support for pupils with autism. Similar, more recent provision

for pupils with EBD designed to address the gap in provision following the closure of a special school, is not as well embedded.

Statutory obligations

78. This remains satisfactory; reasonable steps are taken to meet statutory obligations. Progress in meeting the recommendations of the previous report has been good. The parent partnership service provides an impartial source of advice and support, and is valued by parents; very few appeals go to tribunal. Statutory statements now clearly identify the provision needed to meet the needs of individual pupils. However, the rate of completion of statutory statements within the recommended timescale has been too low.

79. Education Leeds, in partnership with schools, has been very successful in reducing the demand for statutory statements by meeting needs more quickly through the formula funding for inclusion. Schools welcome the responsiveness and flexibility of these arrangements. Despite the low numbers being processed each year, only 48% of statutory assessments were completed in the recommended timescale in 2003/04, well below the national average. Education Leeds has analysed why the delays occur and has taken appropriate action with its partners. Consequently the completion rate for statements has significantly improved to 76% in the first five months of this year.

80. Criteria used for making statutory assessments are consistent with the SEN Code of Practice and Procedures are clear. Annual reviews and individual education plans for pupils with statements are carefully managed. Reviews lead to changes in provision and, where appropriate, statements are ceased. Comprehensive information is available to parents, including published materials via links through the city council website.

Recommendation

- Continue to work with partners to ensure that statutory assessments are completed within the recommended timescales.

SEN functions to support school improvement

81. Support is highly satisfactory. Education Leeds is making good progress in strengthening the support and challenge to schools to further improve the provision made for pupils with SEN. Ofsted inspections show that the majority of pupils make satisfactory or better progress, although 40% of pupils with statements leave school with no qualifications. Good quality pupil-level performance data are used well by the inclusion teams to track and monitor the progress of the lowest-attaining 20% of pupils.

82. Schools are well supported to carry out self-evaluation using the charter mark for inclusion and the quality standards framework. Links are developing well at area level between QAAs and inclusion teams, particularly focusing on the

improvement needed in the performance of pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4. Support and training for SEN co-ordinators in schools are good. An extensive programme of training has supported the introduction of P scales² and special schools are tracking the progress of their pupils effectively. The reorganisation of specialist provision is in progress and there are appropriate plans to extend the outreach services offered by the specialist inclusion learning centres.

Value for money

83. Value for money has improved considerably since the previous inspection and is now good. Education Leeds has reviewed the funding formula for SEN and, by introducing new and agreed criteria, succeeded in making significantly more funding available for pupils with SEN without the need for a formal statement. This is freeing up the time of specialist services to concentrate upon earlier identification and intervention, particularly in the early years provision across the city.

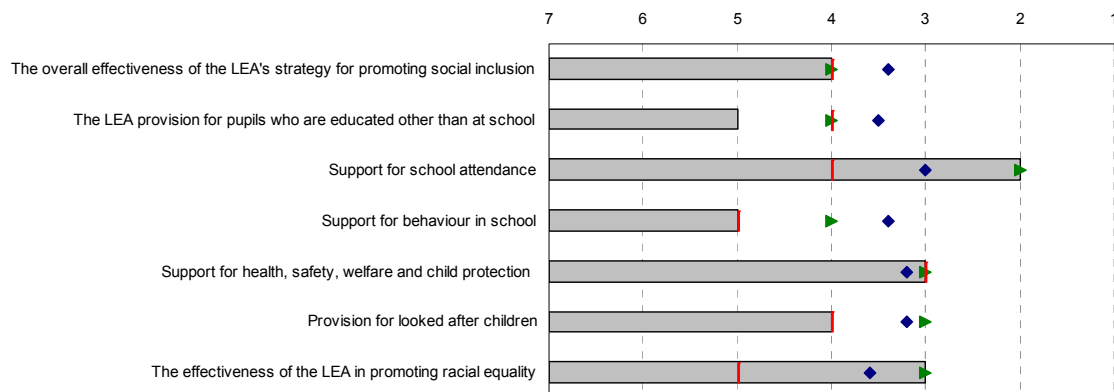
84. Spending on SEN is below that of similar authorities, while school inspections indicate that the progress made by these pupils is generally above. Budget planning and monitoring are sound, with few significant variations, and where they do occur they are managed within the overall budget for SEN. Spending on out-of-city placements is significantly below the national average, although the cost of each place is rising in line with national trends. These initiatives are underpinned by a ten-year draft financial plan.

85. Service plans are clear and carefully constructed; the best allocate costs to activities and benchmark data where these are available. Education Leeds is a very active member of the SEN regional partnership and work is in progress to improve the availability and sharing of benchmarking data between local authorities and to develop value-added measures.

² P scales are a means of measuring attainment below National Curriculum Level 1

Section 5: Support for social inclusion

Summary table of judgements



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

The strategy for social inclusion

86. The strategy for social inclusion remains satisfactory. There is a strong corporate policy and well-developed partnerships which have led to improved attendance by pupils and better procedures to promote racial equality. However, despite considerable effort, strategies to improve behaviour have not been sufficiently effective and statutory obligations relating to permanently excluded pupils have only very recently been met.

87. The vision for Leeds and corporate plans for inclusion are clear, well sequenced and reflect the priority that elected members and officers give to 'closing the gap' for all children and young people in the city. The board of Education Leeds and the scrutiny committee receive regular and comprehensive reports supported by good data and analysis that identify achievements and areas for improvement.

88. Education Leeds and the council work well with their partners to support initiatives for social inclusion. Resources available through the EiC and behaviour improvement programme (BIP) have been targeted appropriately to schools. Since the previous inspection, support for attendance has improved from satisfactory to good. There has been a review of strategy which has led to more effective service delivery. Improvements in primary and secondary attendance have been above the national trend and EDP targets have been met. However, a similar review of strategy has yet to reduce the level of exclusions.

89. The Vulnerable Children's Grant is being used imaginatively to raise the achievement of pupils, including those of minority ethnic heritage and refugee and asylum seeker children. Single regeneration resources are being used at the local area level and education is a major recipient of funding for specific projects.

Education, social care and health services work together to manage the placement of pupils who need to be educated or placed in care outside the city. This is effectively managed by an inter-agency panel.

Provision for pupils educated other than at school

90. Support has deteriorated since the previous inspection and is unsatisfactory. Insufficient progress has been made in implementing the recommendation of the previous report. Since September 2004, Education Leeds has met the statutory requirement to provide full-time education for pupils excluded from school. Given the continuing rise in the number of pupils permanently excluded from schools, too few excluded pupils are quickly reintegrated into a mainstream school and many spend far too long in pupil referral units (PRUs).

91. Since the previous inspection there have been weaknesses in the support available to schools. In particular, two PRUs were found to have serious weaknesses. There was also pressure on resources resulting from the special schools for EBD pupils being placed into special measures and subsequently closed. These events have inhibited Education Leeds' ability to implement its strategy.

92. Following a turbulent period in the quality of support, optimism for the future is well founded. The behavioural support service has been successfully restructured and the leadership of the service has improved. The Key Stage 2 PRU makes effective provision for primary-aged pupils and last year successfully re-integrated all its pupils back into mainstream schools. The two Key Stage 3 PRUs that had serious weaknesses, have been combined under one associate headteacher and there is a sound plan to remedy the weaknesses. The Key Stage 4 PRU was relocated to more suitable premises over a year ago. Low reintegration rates remain an issue, but Education Leeds has improved the range of alternatively accredited vocational courses.

93. Education Leeds offers very useful advice to parents who are considering educating their children at home. The quality of this education is monitored rigorously and support is offered to parents where necessary. A combination of home-tuition and hospital teaching services ensures that children with medical needs are well supported. Support for teenage mothers is appropriate. This includes access to a new teaching and learning centre with good crèche facilities to support those for whom a mainstream school placement is not suitable during, and immediately following, their pregnancy.

Recommendation

- Secure the agreement of all schools on an effective strategy to improve the reintegration of pupils excluded from school.

Support for behaviour

94. Support for behaviour was unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection and it remains so despite significant work. Progress with the recommendations from the previous report has been too slow. Specialist provision and outreach service have only recently resumed following the closure of the special school for pupils with EBD. Similarly, although the restructuring of the PRUs and the specialist provision to support inclusion have been welcomed by schools, many report significant gaps in the support available during the transition period. Unsurprisingly therefore, the numbers of pupils permanently excluded, or excluded for a fixed-term, have continued to rise, although the rate of this increase has slowed in recent months. In line with national trends, pupils with SEN and from minority ethnic heritage are at a greater risk of exclusion from Leeds schools. More positively, there have been no exclusions from special schools during the previous year, the number of permanent exclusions in primary schools continues to be low, and the difference in the rate of exclusion between black and minority ethnic and white pupils is reducing slowly. High levels of support and intervention in specific schools with high exclusion rates are increasingly effective.

95. There is a costed and well-articulated behaviour strategy that links well with other plans. Schools are willing to be inclusive in theory but, in practice, the inclusion of EBD pupils is proving difficult to implement successfully. Some schools are managing exceptionally well and accept their full responsibilities. However, a significant number have lacked the capacity, confidence or determination to support EBD pupils. Education Leeds have set ambitious targets, but they do not take into account sufficiently the preparedness of their schools to respond.

96. Education Leeds does support its inclusion policy with an impressive array of initiatives and there are many examples of good practice. These include the setting up of five development centres in primary schools, intervention in early years settings, and the work of the multi-agency behaviour support teams in targeted secondary schools. EiC funding is being used effectively to provide learning mentors and places for 1400 pupils in learning support units across the city.

97. The recent re-structuring of the behaviour support service is improving the co-ordination of its work with education psychology and inclusion teams and it has reduced the time taken to deal with referrals of pupils by schools. Discussions with headteachers show a growing support for the direction given by Education Leeds but schools in challenging circumstances still feel they carry a disproportionate load. The introduction of the behaviour audit, the inclusion charter mark and improved monitoring indicate that the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

Recommendation

- Further strengthen the partnership with schools, and monitor and evaluate the implementation of revised provision for meeting the needs of pupils with EBD.

Support for health, safety, welfare and child protection

98. These aspects remain highly satisfactory. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that statutory obligations are met. Education Leeds is well represented on the Area Child Protection Committee. There is a range of suitable training courses for designated teachers which are monitored by child protection officers. Support for child protection has improved recently. New monitoring systems are in place and centred around the quality standards framework. Partnership working between Education Leeds and social services is effective and there is good collaboration between Education Leeds and the Primary Care Trust in supporting the healthy schools project and breakfast clubs. Guidance and advice for schools on health and safety matters are comprehensive and have been updated since the previous inspection. There is a rolling programme of inspections of schools' policies and procedures for health and safety.

Provision for looked after children

99. Provision for looked after children remains satisfactory. Elected members and officers demonstrate the high priority given to raising the attainment of these children by, for example, the regular visits made to children's homes, attendance at activities to celebrate success and prioritising resources to ensure access to computers and study support materials.

100. There are increasingly strong and developing partnerships with health and social services. All looked after children have an allocated social worker. The progress of those children placed outside the city is monitored systematically. An educational psychologist attends the annual reviews for those children with a statement of SEN. Looked after children have a high priority in the LEA's admissions policy and all have a school place.

101. However, only 71% of looked after children have a personal education plan. The attendance and the educational performance of this group of children remain too low and they are also at greater risk of exclusion. Working practices within social services have rightly been reviewed and procedures are now in place which should lead to all having a personal education plan. Good guidance and training are being provided to schools and early years' managers to underpin this new drive.

Recommendation

- Continue to work with partners to ensure all looked after children have a personal education plan.

Promoting racial equality

102. At the time of the previous inspection, support was unsatisfactory. Since then, good progress has been made and the provision is now highly satisfactory. Schools are now required to report racist incidents, and robust procedures ensure all schools make the required returns. This information is analysed and reported

appropriately. Importantly, checks are made on how individual incidents are dealt with and a summary report is provided to the board of Education Leeds, the council and the race equality advisory forum (REAF).

103. The previous inspection recommended improving the level of consultation with local communities. Consultation with parents and community groups now takes place extensively in all five areas of the city. The REAF education sub-group reports that the relationship with Education Leeds is much improved and consultations have informed the activities to be undertaken in the race equality action plan and the EDP. However, the outcome of consultation is not always reflected in the subsequent decision or action taken, for example on the presentation of data about the performance of data about the performance of specific groups in the annual race equality report. Importantly the reasons for this were not well communicated. Furthermore, community representatives have very real concerns about the pace of development to tackle underachievement of minority ethnic pupils.

104. The race equality policy provides good quality support and guidance to schools. All schools have equality policies which are monitored through the quality standards framework and the Stephen Lawrence education standard. The latter, which was developed in partnership with the REAF, rigorously challenges the race equality practices of schools and promotes the sharing of good practice.

105. The council has achieved level 2 of the Equality Standard for local government and rigorously monitors the recruitment and retention of staff. Nevertheless, the representation of minority ethnic groups in the workforce, particularly in schools, remains disproportionately low. Education Leeds has had more recent success in recruiting well-qualified minority ethnic heritage staff to senior management posts and in increasing the recruitment of minority ethnic governors.

Appendix A

Record of Judgement Recording Statements

Name of LEA :	Leeds Local Education Authority
LEA number:	383
Reporting Inspector:	Barry Jones HMI
Date of Inspection:	October 2004

No	Required Inspection Judgement	Grade	Fieldwork
Context of the LEA			
1	The socio-economic context of the LEA	5	NF
Overall judgements			
0.1	The progress made by the LEA overall	3	
0.2	Overall effectiveness of the LEA	3	
0.3	The LEA's capacity for further improvement and to address the recommendations of the inspection	2	
Section 1: Corporate strategy and LEA leadership			
1.1	The effectiveness of corporate planning for the education of children and young people	2	
1.2	The implementation of corporate planning for education	2	
1.3	The effectiveness of LEA decision-making	3	
1.4	The extent to which the LEA targets resources on priorities	2	
1.5	The extent to which the LEA has in place effective strategies to promote continuous improvement, including Best Value	3	

1.6	The leadership provided by elected members (including quality of advice)	2	
1.7	The quality of leadership provided by senior officers	2	
1.8	The effectiveness of partnerships and collaboration between agencies in support of priorities	3	
1.9	Support for Early Years education	1	
1.10	Support for 14 – 19 education	4	
Section 2: Strategy for education and its implementation			
2.1	The LEA's strategy for school improvement	3	
2.2	The progress on implementing the LEA's strategy for school improvement	4	
2.3	The performance of schools	5	
2.4	The extent to which the LEA has defined monitoring, challenge and intervention	2	
2.5	The effectiveness of the LEA's work in monitoring schools and challenging them to improve, including the use made of performance data	4	
2.6	The extent to which the LEA's support to schools is focused on areas of greatest need	3	
2.7	The effectiveness of the LEA's identification of and intervention in underperforming schools	5	
2.8	The effectiveness of the LEA in discharging asset management planning	3	
2.9	The effectiveness of the LEA in relation to the provision of school places	3	NF
2.10	The effectiveness of the LEA in relation to admissions to schools	4	
Section 3: Support to school leadership and management, including schools' efforts to support continuous improvement			
3.1	Support to school leadership and management, including support for schools' approaches to continuous improvement	3	

3.2	Support for national initiatives to raise standards in literacy and numeracy at KS 1 and 2	3	NF
3.3	Support for information and communication technology	4	
3.4	Support for the national initiative to raise standards at KS3	3	
3.5	Support for raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils, including Gypsy/ Traveller children	3	
3.6	Support to schools for gifted and talented pupils	3	
3.7	Support for school governors	2	
3.8	The extent to which the LEA is successful in assuring the supply and quality of teachers	4	
3.9	The planning and provision of services to support school management	3	
3.9a	The planning and provision of financial services in supporting school management	1	
3.9b	The planning and provision of HR services in supporting school management	3	NF
3.9c	The planning and provision of property services in supporting school management	4	
3.9d	The planning and provision of information management services in supporting school management	3	
3.10	The effectiveness and value for money of services supporting school management	3	
3.11	The planning and provision of services supporting school improvement, particularly inspection and advisory and/or school effectiveness services	3	
3.12	The effectiveness and value for money of services supporting school improvement, particularly inspection and advisory and/or school effectiveness services	4	
Section 4: Support for special educational needs			
4.1	The effectiveness of the LEA's strategy for special educational needs	3	

4.2	The effectiveness of the LEA in meeting its statutory obligations in respect of SEN	4	
4.3	The effectiveness of the LEA in exercising its SEN functions to support school improvement	3	
4.4	The extent to which the LEA exercises its SEN functions in a way which provides value for money	2	
Section 5: Support for social inclusion			
5.1	The overall effectiveness of the LEA's strategy for promoting social inclusion	4	
5.2	The LEA provision for pupils who have no school place	5	
5.3	Support for school attendance	2	NF
5.4	Support for behaviour in schools	5	
5.5	Support for health, safety, welfare and child protection	3	
5.6	Provision for looked after children	4	
5.7	The effectiveness of the LEA in promoting racial equality	3	

**NF' under fieldwork means that no fieldwork was conducted on this function during this inspection.*

JRS numerical judgements are allocated on a 7-point scale:

Grade 1: Very good; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3: Highly satisfactory; Grade 4: Satisfactory; Grade 5: Unsatisfactory; Grade 6: Poor; Grade 7: Very poor

Note: in the case of JRS 1: socio-economic context of the LEA and JRS 2.3: performance of schools, grades relate to comparisons against national averages:

- Grades 1-2: Well above
- Grade 3: Above
- Grade 4: In line
- Grade 5: Below
- Grades 6-7: Well below.

Appendix B

Context of the inspection

This inspection of Leeds LEA was carried out by Ofsted in conjunction with the Audit Commission under section 38 of the Education Act 1997.

This report provides a commentary on the inspection findings, including:

- the progress the LEA has made since the time of its previous inspection in 2002;
- the overall effectiveness of the LEA and its capacity to improve further;
- the LEA's performance in major aspects of its work;
- recommendations on areas for improvement.

The summary is followed by more detailed judgements on the LEA's performance of its individual functions, which sets the recommendations for improvement into context.

All functions of the LEA have been inspected and judgements reached on how effectively they are performed. Not all functions were subject to detailed fieldwork, but in all cases inspectors reached their judgements through an evaluation of a range of material. This included self-evaluation undertaken by the LEA, data (some of which were provided by the LEA), school inspection information, HMI monitoring reports, and audit reports. In addition, the inspection team considered the earlier Ofsted/Audit Commission report on this LEA and a questionnaire seeking the views of all schools on aspects of the work of the LEA. In those areas subject to fieldwork, discussions were held with LEA officers and members, headteachers and governors, staff in other departments of the local authority, diocesan representatives, and other agencies and LEA partners.

The functions that were not subject to detailed fieldwork in this inspection were:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• support for the national initiatives at Key Stages 1 and 2;• providing school places;• the planning and provision of human resources in supporting school management;• support for attendance. |
|---|

Inspection judgements are made against criteria that can be found on the Ofsted website. For each inspected function of the LEA an inspection team agrees a numerical grade. The numerical grades awarded for the judgements made in this

inspection are to be found in Appendix A. These numerical grades must be considered in the light of the full report. Some of the grades are used in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment profile for the education service.

Context of the LEA

Leeds is the second largest metropolitan area in England. There is a main urban area with a population of approximately 500,000, and an outer ring of small towns and countryside, the majority of which is green belt, with a population of approximately 216,500. The contrast between inner and outer Leeds is marked and a large area of inner Leeds is characterised by multiple disadvantage; seven of the wards are in the bottom 10% nationally. However, the overall profile is more favourable. The average rank of all wards on the index of local deprivation places Leeds at 68 of the 354 districts nationally which is better than other core cities such as Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield. Almost 11% of pupils are of minority ethnic origin. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with national averages.

Leeds maintains 230 primary schools, 41 secondary schools, six specialist inclusive learning centres and four pupil referral units. There are 25 specialist schools. Thirty-five of the 41 high schools have sixth forms. An early education place is available for all parents who want it for their child. Since the previous inspection, 30 schools have closed. Some have been straight closures but others have formed 11 new primary schools, a new community high school and a specialist inclusive learning centre.

In 2003, the percentage of pupils who had statements of special educational needs was below the national average in primary schools (2.3) and higher in secondary schools (5.0). A lower percentage (0.6) of pupils with statements at primary school age attended special schools than nationally (1.0). In 2004, the number of statements was reduced to 1.5% in primary schools and 2.9% in secondary schools.

Following a critical inspection in February 2000, the Secretary of State directed that Leeds City Council enter into a contract for five years with Education Leeds, a non-profit making company wholly owned by Leeds City Council. This new company was directed to employ Capita to provide strategic capacity to assist in the provision of its services. A subsequent inspection in 2002, therefore, focussed primarily on the work of Education Leeds in discharging the LEA's functions regarding the provision of education to school-aged children. This inspection has a similar focus as the contract term has not expired.

Since the previous inspection in 2002, there has been a change in political control. Following the council election in June 2004, there has been a change from a Labour administration to an alliance between the Conservative Party, the Green Party and the Liberal Democrat Party. There have also been changes in the departmental structures and, as a result of the restructure in September 2002, the council reduced the number of departments from 15 to seven. The corporate management team of the council includes the chief executive of Education Leeds. The client role for

Education is carried out by the chief learning officer who reports to the director of learning and leisure.

The performance of schools

Performance at Key Stages 1 and 2 are consistently in line with national and statistical neighbours' averages. Key Stage 3 results are also usually in line but the percentages of pupils gaining level 5 or better in 2003 in mathematics and science were below national averages. GCSE results are below the national average. This decline in performance is reflected in low value-added measures in many secondary schools and the progress made by pupils in Leeds between Key Stages 3 and 4 is well below that found nationally. Improvement rates are generally in line with national and statistical neighbour trends. There has been a high number of secondary schools with low attainment at GCSE level, but provisional results for 2004 indicate a significant reduction since the previous inspection. There is considerable variation between schools and also within schools for different subjects.

Attainment of minority ethnic pupils is in line with LEA averages in primary schools but below at secondary level. The LEA sets local targets for raising attainment and met the target for Black Caribbean and Black Other heritage pupils in 2004. Attainment for looked after children is low but improving. These groups are over-represented in exclusions from schools.

Attendance and unauthorised absence rates are in line with national averages at primary level. Attendance at secondary level is below, and unauthorised absence rates well above, the national average. However, improvement rates are above the national trend for primary and secondary phases and the LEA met its targets for attendance in 2003. The rate of permanent exclusions in Leeds increased by 34% in 2002/03, widening the gap with the national average. The rate of permanent exclusions in 2002/03 was lower than statistical neighbours for primary, but higher for secondary and special schools.

Provisional results for 2004 indicate that the LEA missed its targets for pupils' attainment, often by a considerable margin. The shortfall was more than 8% for English and mathematics at Key Stage 2, and for English and ICT at Key Stage 3. The LEA missed its target for five or more higher grades at GCSE by a greater margin than is the case nationally. The LEA is not on track to meet its targets for pupils' attainment in 2005.

Funding data for the LEA

SCHOOLS BUDGET	Leeds	Statistical neighbours average	Metropolitan Average	ENGLAND AVERAGE
	£ per pupil	£ per pupil	£ per pupil	£ per pupil
Individual schools budget	2,865	2,774	2,812	2,900
Standards fund delegated	63	67	62	63
Excellence in Cities	70	45	54	35
Schools in financial difficulty	5	3	4	4
Education for under fives (non-ISB)	44	70	50	85
Strategic management	34	35	34	30
Special educational needs	55	98	118	126
Grants	47	23	31	26
Access	56	54	56	60
Capital expenditure from revenue	0	20	19	24
TOTAL SCHOOLS BUDGET	3,239	3,189	3,239	3,354
Schools formula spending share	3,010	3,003	3,066	3,197

Source: DfES Comparative Tables 2004-05

LEA BUDGET	Leeds	Statistical neighbours average	Metropolitan Average	ENGLAND AVERAGE
	£ per pupil	£ per pupil	£ per pupil	£ per pupil
Strategic management	116	109	119	99
Specific Grants	0	13	11	14
Special educational needs	23	29	27	36
School improvement	29	34	36	38
Access	151	113	108	142
Capital expenditure from revenue	0	2	1	2
Youth and Community	90	67	77	75
TOTAL LEA BUDGET	408	366	379	406

Source: DfES Comparative Tables 2004-05

Notes:

All figures are net.

Funding for schools in financial difficulties excludes transitional funding.

Averages quoted are mean averages; the original DfES Comparative Tables quote median average figures, not the mean average.

Notes