

## **Narrowing the Gap Scrutiny Task Group**

**16 December 2014**

Report of the AD Governance & ITT

## **Narrowing the Gap Scrutiny Review Report**

### **Summary**

1. This report provides initial information in support of the new scrutiny review on Narrowing the Gap in York, and asks Members to agree a way forward for progressing the work on the review.

### **Background to Review**

2. In July 2014, the Committee received a feasibility report on a proposed scrutiny topic on 'Narrowing the Gap' in York. The Assistant Director of Education & Skills informed Members that by the age of 19, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged young people (as defined by them being in receipt of Free School Meals at age 15) and their peers in York, were amongst the widest anywhere in the country. She felt a review would help to own this as a collective issue to help improve national performance indicators and narrow the gaps in attainment.
3. Narrowing the Gap: The York Context  
In York as is the case nationally there is a strong link between poverty and underachievement. Nationally this has led to increased scrutiny of the outcomes of disadvantaged children through the introduction of the pupil premium.
4. In York at the end of Primary and Secondary schooling there are about 300 children eligible for the pupil premium. The distribution of the pupil premium cohort varies across the city and this has created pockets of disadvantage.
5. In an effort to close the attainment gap between that cohort and their peers, a project was undertaken to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the cohort through sharing and interrogating school performance and social care data to gain an understanding of the potential barriers to progress for individual pupils. This resulted in an

accurate profile of the York 300 cohort in the current Year 5 – see Annex A.

6. In November 2014 the Committee considered the 2014 school outcome data and the profile data on the York 300 cohort which compared their performance against that of their peers. The outcome data showed that progress in narrowing the gap had been made in some key stages, but was not consistent across all key stages. Gaps had narrowed in Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2 (KS2), but had widened in Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 4 (KS4).
7. For the profile analysis York schools had been divided into geographical and attainment cluster groups, to provide schools with information on how to improve their intervention work. Whilst the results varied from school to school, it appeared those with a smaller number of disadvantaged pupils were struggling to close the gaps, possibly due to funding issues. It also suggested that the current work to narrow the gap was inconsistent and gaps may be narrowing due to fluctuations in the contextual profile of cohorts rather than the impact of the actions taken.
8. Members questioned why some York schools and school clusters had narrower gaps and what could be learnt from their practice, and how those schools with small numbers of pupils eligible for the pupil premium might use that premium more effectively to narrow the gap. They also agreed it would be useful to look at good practice by other Local Authorities achieving narrower gaps, including early years.
9. With this in mind, the Committee chose to proceed with the review and agreed the following review remit:

#### Aim

To identify and disseminate best practice guidance on narrowing the gap to York Schools.

#### Objectives

- i. To examine:
  - Good practice from other Local Authorities achieving narrower gaps, including early years.
  - The actions taken by identified schools in York whose outturn data shows an established trend of narrowing the gap

- The use of the pupil premium to narrow gaps in attainment and progress in those York schools which are consistently narrowing the gap
- ii. To draft some guidance proposals for dissemination through York Schools
10. The Committee set up a Task Group to carry out the review on their behalf and agreed the review was to be completed in time for the review draft final report to be presented at the next formal committee meeting in January 2015.

### **Consultation**

11. A number of the Task Group members attended a 'Narrowing the Gap' conference on 9 December 2014. Led by Sir John Dunsford, the conference brought together school representatives and partners to share information and examples of best practice, and focussed on what schools need to be doing to further improve their efforts and use of the pupil premium. There were case studies from Millthorpe, Westfield and Roundhay schools.
12. It may be useful for the committee to meet with the Headteacher from Bacon Garth Primary School in Cottingham, East Riding or the Headteacher from Swinemoor Primary School in Beverley, East Riding, who are both designated leaders of education recommended by the DfE to undertake Pupil Premium reviews in schools requiring improvement.

### **Information Gathered**

13. Ofsted Guidance for schools:
 

*'Never confuse eligibility for the Pupil Premium with low ability, focus on supporting disadvantaged pupils to achieve the highest levels. Thoroughly analyse which pupils are underachieving, particularly in English and mathematics, and why. Draw on research evidence (such as the Sutton Trust toolkit<sup>4</sup>) and evidence from their own and others' experience to allocate the funding to the activities that are most likely to have an impact on improving achievement. Understand the importance of ensuring that all day-to-day teaching meets the needs of each learner, rather than relying on interventions to compensate for teaching that is less than good. Allocate the best teachers to teach intervention groups to improve mathematics and English, or employ new teachers who have a good track record in raising attainment in those subjects. Use*

*achievement data frequently to check whether interventions or techniques are working and make adjustments accordingly, rather than just using the data retrospectively to see if something had worked. Make sure that support staff, particularly teaching assistants, are highly trained and understand their role in helping pupils to achieve. Systematically focus on giving pupils clear, useful feedback about their work, and ways that they could improve it. Ensure that a designated senior leader has a clear overview of how the funding is being allocated and the difference it is making to the outcomes for pupils. Ensure that class and subject teachers know which pupils are eligible for the Pupil Premium so that they can take responsibility for accelerating their progress.'*

14. Good practice from other Local Authorities achieving narrower gaps  
**Best Start Lancashire** is a school based initiative delivered through children's centres to provide additional early support for children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their families between the ages of 4 and 7 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2). The resource (£5 million) to enable this innovative programme was implemented in 2011/14 and was targeted at children eligible for FSM.
15. In 2011/12, there were 6869 eligible pupils in the target year groups in Lancashire primary schools, and in 2012/13 there are 7,363 eligible pupils. Children's centres have been allocated £250 per FSM pupil as an additional resource to provide an increased early support offer for schools in their reach area
16. Key intended outcomes for pupils eligible for Free School Meals were:
  - Improved levels of attendance at school
  - Improved attainment in speaking and listening and reading skills at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - Improved levels of reading at the end of Key Stage 1
  - A reduction in referrals to children's social care that require no further action
17. Impact data for 2013 shows a rise in Good Level of Development (GLD<sup>1</sup>), increases in the number of Y1 pupils passing the phonic screening check and children attaining 2C in reading at the end of KS1. Also attendance has improved.

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<sup>1</sup> GLD = Good Level of Development (the benchmark for Early Years Foundation Stage, children at the end of the reception year in school)

18. The Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters (**RADY**) **project in Wirral** is based around KS3 target setting in secondary schools i.e. the children involved are the Year 7 and Year 8 cohorts (those children who would complete KS4 in 2016 and 2017). A total of 1287 pupils are currently involved.
19. The vast majority of schools set targets that are, to a greater or lesser extent, based on prior attainment. This includes targets that reference Fischer Family Trust estimates (FFT<sup>2</sup>) and targets based on all pupils making three levels progress in English and maths. The net result of this is that there is a built-in gap in the targets - the targets for FSM children are systematically lower than those of non-FSM children. This is because FSM children on average leave KS2 with lower results than non-FSM children.
20. As part of the project, the schools have made a commitment to set equality targets and ensure they focus intervention swiftly on those pupils falling behind the inspirational target. Once the targets have been set, it is probable that FSM children will feature more prominently in the underachieving group than they would otherwise have been. Therefore any intervention targeted at underachieving pupils will naturally make its way to disadvantaged children more often than in previous years. This is a key principle behind the RADY methodology. RADY does not provide intervention—its aim is to provide precision information on which pupils are most in need of extra support at the time it is likely to have the greatest impact.
21. The **Progress Centre at Stantonbury Campus School** in Milton Keynes provides a range of programmes developed in response to the particular needs of Pupil Premium students. Launched fully in September 2013, the programmes fall in to two categories – Academic Intervention and Support Intervention. The Progress Centre team consists of a Manager and three outreach workers each focussing on a different area for improvement – achievement, attainment and family support. The Progress Centre also co-ordinates opportunities for inspirational and enrichment activities and trips, as well as offering financial support to those pupils who require it in order to participate in other school activities.

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<sup>2</sup> FFT estimates = Fischer Family Trust estimates – schools use this to set targets for their pupils.

22. Since its soft launch in April 2013, more than 600 pupils have engaged with The Progress Centre’s services or programmes. From April – July 2013, 27 Year 11 pupils were provided access to six hours of academic tutoring in either English or maths. From this cohort, 60% achieved three or more levels of progress from their GCSE results.
23. In the last two years, attainment by pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) has risen by 22%, with 36% of pupils achieving five A\* – Cs in English and maths. In the same period, the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has narrowed to 19%; a 9% improvement.
24. York schools whose outturn data shows an established trend of narrowing the gap  
 In 2013, there were 172 Y6 pupils in receipt of free school meals in York, spread across 41 of the 51 primary schools in the city. Some schools had higher numbers of these pupils e.g. Clifton Green (14 in 2013) and Hob Moor (10), but most York schools have much lower numbers. In 2013, 12 schools had only 1 such pupil, and a further nine only 2 or 3. This wide distribution presents a barrier to schools seeing the issue as a ‘group’ issue rather than the difficulties experienced by a particular pupil. There is a similar spread across other year groups in the primary sector.
25. Some schools do well at KS1 and not well at KS2 and others vice versa. The tables below provide some more detailed information regarding some of the outcomes of these pupils in the primary schools across the city. For illustration purposes, the information is separated to show schools with more than 5 FSM pupils in a cohort, and at KS1 also schools with fewer than 5 FSM pupils in a cohort.

i) Schools with more than 5 FSM pupils in their cohorts at KS1

Reading at L2b+ <sup>3</sup> (National Gap 2014 = -15, CYC Gap 2014 = -22)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Clifton Green (-20 to +13)	Burton Green (-18 to -38)
Dringhouses (-47 to +6)	Carr Infant (-32 to -31)
Haxby Road (-26 to +3)	OLQM (-36 to -57)
New Earswick (-25 to + 9)	Scarcroft (-32 to -48)
Osbaldwick (+8 to +2) *declining	Tang Hall (-37 to -41)
St Lawrence’s (+ 19 to 0) * declining	

<sup>3</sup> Level 2b and above at the end of Key Stage One is the ‘age related expectation’ for pupils to be on track for making good progress throughout Key Stage Two and beyond.

Writing at L2b+ (National Gap 2014 = -20 CYC Gap 2014 = -25)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Clifton Green (-29 to +13)	Burton Green (-10 to -18)
Dringhouses (-32 to +2)	Carr Infant (-32 to -33)
Haxby Road (-11 to +4)	OLQM (-29 to -36)
Hob Moor Primary (-23 to -7)	Scarcroft (-35 to -33)
New Earswick (-21 to +27)	St Barnabas (+19 to -24)
Osbalwick (-25 to +10)	Tang Hall (-17 to -51)
St Lawrence's (+6 to +4)	Westfield (-10 to -20)
Yearsley Grove (-46 to -8)	

Mathematics at L2b+ (National Gap 2014 = -16 CYC Gap 2014 = -20)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Clifton Green (-23 to +26)	Carr Infant (-34 to -36)
Dringhouses (-18 to -3)	OLQM (-40 to -39)
Haxby Road (-25 to -10)	Scarcroft (-57 to -43)
Hob Moor Primary (-1 to +1)	St Barnabas (+4 to -17)
New Earswick (-25 to +9)	Tang Hall (+20 to -39)
Osbalwick (-13 to -6)	Woodthorpe (-27 to -30)
St Lawrence's (+6 to +4)	

ii) Schools with fewer than 5 FSM pupils in their cohorts at KS1

Reading at L2b+ (National Gap 2014 = -15 CYC Gap 2014 = -22)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Acomb (-32 to +22)	Badger Hill (+15 to -80)
Copmanthorpe (-3 to +14)	Clifton with Rawcliffe (+22 to -5)
Popp Ousebank (-41 to +24)	Knavesmire (+7 to -39)
Robert Wilk (-37 to +13)	St Paul's (+17 to -68)
Skelton (-8 to +10)	
St Mary's (-77 to +29)	
St Wilfrid's (-58 to +18)	

Writing at L2b+ (National Gap 2014 = -20 CYC Gap 2014 = -25)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Copmanthorpe (-31 to +18)	Acomb (+39 to -78)
Robert Wilkinson (-29 to +16)	Clifton with Rawcliffe (+35 to -50)
St Oswald's (-68 to +22)	Huntington (-18 to -53)
St Wilfrid's (-69 to +24)	Knavesmire (+30 to -22)
Wigginton (+15 to +14)	St George's (-25 to -47)

Mathematics at L2b+ (National Gap 2014 = -16 CYC Gap 2014 = -20)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Copmanthorpe (+4 to +12)	Badger Hill (-70 to -75)
Skelton (-8 to +10)	Knavesmire (+20 to -85)
St Oswald's (-80 to +17)	Ralph Butterfield (+14 to -78)
St Wilfrid's (-22 to +21)	St Barnabas (+4 to -17)
Wigginton (-85 to +11)	St George's (-28 to -55)
	St Paul's (+17 to -77)

iii) Schools with more than 5 FSM pupils in their cohorts at KS2

Reading at L4+ (National Gap 2014 = -10 CYC Gap 2014 = -9)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Dringhouses (-10 to +8)	Carr Junior (-20 to -43)
New Earswick (-13 to +3)	Lakeside (+4 to -98)
Poppleton Road (-6 to +7)	Osboldwick (+4 to -36)
St Lawrence's (-14 to -4)	Tang Hall (-5 to -20)
Yearsley Grove (-6 to +10)	Westfield (-19 to -20)

Writing at L4+ (National Gap 2014 = -13 = CYC Gap 2014 = -15)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Clifton Green (-5 to +6)	Carr Jun (-42 to -42)
Dringhouses (-33 to +15)	Haxby Road (-29 to -34)
New Earswick (-26 to -3)	Osboldwick (-40 to -45)
Yearsley Grove (-24 to +8)	Westfield (-18 to -26)

Mathematics at L4+ (National Gap 2014 = -12 CYC Gap 2014 = -12)	
Best performing over 3 years	Worst performing over 3 years
Clifton Green (-14 to -6)	Carr Junior (-24 to -47)
Dringhouses (-23 to +10)	Tang Hall (-5 to -20)
New Earswick (-33 to +9)	Woodthorpe (=5 to -12)
Westfield (-25 to 0)	
Yearsley Grove (-22 to +13)	



- iv) Secondary school gaps are shown below (Huntington, All Saints and Millthorpe are all showing positive trends)

	5+ A*–C inc English & Maths
All Saints	-9%
Archbishop Holgate's	-41%
Canon Lee	-43%
Fulford	-23%
Huntington	1%
Joseph Rowntree	-29%
Manor	-44%
Millthorpe	-13%
York High	-24%

### **Progressing the Review**

26. Members have already expressed an interest in visiting a number of York schools whose outturn data shows an established trend of narrowing the gap to gather information on what actions they are taking and how they are using their pupil premium. Officers have suggested New Earswick and Woodthorpe may be good ones to visit. Information on the initiatives/strategies that those schools have used, alongside some impact data is shown at Annexes B & C respectively – see table on page 1 of the New Earswick report and page 7 onwards of the Woodthorpe report. Similar information on other York Schools can be viewed via each school's website.
27. Alternatively, Members may identify other York schools to visit, using the data shown in the tables at paragraph 25 above, including some who are struggling to narrow the gap, to understand what specific barriers they are facing.

### **Review Timeframe**

28. Carrying out a number of school visits will have an impact on the time it will take to complete the work on this review. When the Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed to proceed with this review they agreed the review should be concluded in time to have the review draft final report presented at their next formal meeting on 21 January 2015. To achieve this, the Task Group would need to meet formally to consider its draft final report by no later than 12 January 2015.

28. Dates for two further Task Group meetings have been identified, 7 January and 12 January 2015. However, if Members proceed with visiting some of the York schools identified in this report, it will not be possible to carry out those visits and complete the work on the review within the timeframe outlined above.
29. The Task Group may therefore wish to consider asking the full Committee to hold an additional formal meeting at the end of February 2015 to receive the draft final report arising from this review.

### **Council Plan 2011-15**

30. The review of this scrutiny topic supports the Council's priority to protect vulnerable people.

### **Recommendations**

31. The Task Group are recommended to agree:
- a) Future Task Group meeting dates
  - b) The York schools they wish to visit
  - c) Issuing a request to the Chair of the Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee to hold an additional formal meeting in February 2015 (suitable date still to be identified).

Reason: To carry out the review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols and conclude the review before the start of the forthcoming purdah period.

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**Report Approved**  **Date** 8.12.2014

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** None

**Wards Affected:**

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers: None**

**Annexes:**

**Annex A** – York 300 Analysis Update: Pilot Cohort Compared with Peers

**Annex B** – New Earswick Primary School – Pupil Premium Impact & Spend  
Summary

**Annex C** – Woodthorpe Primary School – Pupil Premium Expenditure Report

**Abbreviations:**

DfE – Department of Education

GLD - Good Level of Development

FSM – Free School Meals

FFT - Fischer Family Trust

KS – Key Stages

RADY - Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters