North Yorkshire County Council

Our Strategy for Closing the Gap in Educational Progress and Attainment in Schools and Settings 2015-2018

Contents

Annexes

This Closing the Gap strategy should be read in conjunction with the North Yorkshire Closing the Gap in Early Years 2015—2018: A Strategy for all Early Years Providers, Practitioners and Local Authority Services Working with Young Children from 0-5.

1. Foreword

Educational outcomes in North Yorkshire are some of the best in the Country, and we are rightly proud of that. But this isn't true for all of our children. In common with many other local authorities, particularly rural ones, the progress made by our most disadvantaged young people does not match that of their peers. In fact, if anything, the gap in attainment is growing wider and on this measure North Yorkshire is amongst the worst performing authorities in England. This is a matter of deep concern to us all - politicians, headteachers, and professional colleagues.

The reason this issue matters is not to do with league tables. It matters because of its impact on the life chances of some of the most vulnerable young people we support. As professionals, we are driven by a passion to help them to fulfil their potential without preconceptions as to what that might entail. It is part of our collective moral purpose. Although there is excellent practice in some of our schools and settings, we have to accept that overall, we are not yet having sufficient impact.

So how do we move forward? Our new Children and Young People's Plan, Young and Yorkshire, highlights the ways in which high quality education transforms lives, and it sets out three strategic priorities for the County. "Closing the Gap" is a crucial supporting outcome for all three, whether we are talking about overall educational attainment, the achievement of Looked After Children, or related outcomes in health and emotional wellbeing.

This strategy document examines in more detail how we can make rapid progress in this area. It describes the national and local context. It takes account of the difficult financial environment, and the changing educational landscape, particularly the introduction of Improvement Partnerships. It sets out the immediate priorities for the next three years. It also suggests some challenging targets - accepting, of course, that this is not an issue which is susceptible to a single solution or a quick fix.

Action is needed by all of us, and by all of our partners. It is within schools and settings that we are most likely to see the transformational changes that are needed. As ever, we will be counting on the dedication and professionalism of our teachers and practitioners to achieve our shared goals.

I hope that this strategy will command widespread support, and that it will act as a spur for us all to redouble our efforts. If the majority of London boroughs can transform their performance in this area, as they have done over the last decade, then so can we. "Closing the Gap" should be a matter of professional pride for us all.

Pete Dwyer
Corporate Director
Children and Young People's Service

2. North Yorkshire's Closing the Gap Strategy in a page

Our Vision

From Young and Yorkshire: "We want North Yorkshire to be a special place where every childhood is wonderful and every young person thrives."

To which we add, in the context of this strategy:

*If North Yorkshire is to be a place where **every** young person thrives, we need to inject fresh rigour and urgency into our efforts to close the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged children and their peers.*

The ten principles we will adopt across the North Yorkshire Children's Trust:

1. We will put **high quality teaching and learning** at the heart of this strategy

2. We will adopt a **broad definition** of disadvantage

3. We will keep uppermost in our minds the fact that this issue is about **individual children and young people**, not homogeneous groups

4. We will adopt a **holistic approach** to Closing the Gap

5. Our interventions will be based on robust and transparent **data about performance and evidence about what works**

6. We will subscribe to the principles of **early intervention at all stages** of a child's development

7. We will focus on **high quality transitions**

8. We will **challenge** wherever necessary, with vigour and honesty

9. We will **support** wherever necessary, building relationships of mutual trust and respect

10. We will use our collective influence to ensure that national and local **resources**, including the Pupil Premium and any locally-available discretionary funding, are directed towards closing the gap

The ten immediate priorities:

A. **Define clearly the roles** of the various partners in driving the strategy forward

B. Reinvigorate the **Closing the Gap Strategy Group** with representatives from all phases and services

C. Ensure that raising attainment for all whilst closing the gap is the key priority for schools, settings and **Improvement Partnerships**

D. **Audit all current performance and practice** so as to identify rapidly:

   a. Particular areas of concern or outlying performance

   b. Local interventions that are proving successful and can be scaled up

   c. Activities that should be stopped

   d. Appropriate schools for Cohort 3 of the Closing the Gap Innovation Project

E. Set **challenging targets** at all levels

F. Ensure that **national and local resources** are allocated to addressing this issue

G. Focus on our strategies around particular areas i.e. the **coast**

H. Develop a discrete and ambitious **Early Years Closing the Gap Strategy**

I. Encourage all schools and settings, if they have not already done so, to identify **a senior manager, and a Governor**, with specific responsibility for this agenda

J. Set out clear expectations for Improvement Partnerships, schools, settings and the Local Authority

We will challenge wherever necessary – challenge individual children and young people to move beyond any self-imposed limitations; challenge ourselves as professionals to ensure we are not unconsciously limiting children's aspirations; and challenge schools, Improvement Partnerships, and all partners in the North Yorkshire Children's Trust to address this issue with vigour and honesty.

3. Why this matters: the national context

1. "Closing the Gap" - or rather, failing to - is widely seen as an Achilles heel of the British educational system. For many decades we have been aware that disadvantaged children fare significantly less well than their peers in terms both of absolute educational attainment and of progress while they are at school. The pattern sets in early - children from disadvantaged backgrounds are already well behind their peers in terms of cognitive development even before they start school. The gap frequently widens through the school system, meaning that overall, nearly six out of ten disadvantaged children do not achieve five A*-Cs including English and maths at GCSE, compared to around three out of ten from more advantaged backgrounds.

National data suggests that gaps in cognitive development between better-off and disadvantaged children open up before the age of three and get wider as children progress through school:

- By the time children start school there is a 19-month development gap between the richest and the poorest pupils
- Those from the poorest fifth of families are on average more than 11 months behind children from middle income families in vocabulary tests when they start school at five
- Disadvantaged children are 20% less likely to achieve Level Four in reading, writing and maths in Key Stage Two tests at age 11 compared to other children
- Disadvantaged children are 37% less likely to achieve five good GCSEs including English and maths

2. Such gaps in attainment lead to serious life consequences. Without a basic set of qualifications, young people are far less likely to go to university, to get a decent job, or to enjoy good physical and mental health. The pattern of disadvantage is likely to be passed onto their own children, seriously damaging social mobility. This has huge consequences for the economic and cultural life of the country.

3. Much of this is, of course, beyond the control of schools: family background, economic circumstances and parenting play the major part. But schools and settings can still make a real difference, and recent analysis suggests there is a wide variation in performance. In some parts of the country (notably London), spectacular progress has been made. We need to understand what has worked for our peers and what could work for us.

4. Recent evidence suggests that there is wide variation in the proportions of students getting five good GCSEs between schools even where pupils have similar levels of prior attainment. Equally, there are bigger variations in the performance of pupils within schools than there are between schools. Overall, three times as many disadvantaged pupils get five good GCSEs including English and maths in the best schools than in the schools with the weakest results. This should be a source of encouragement to us; progress is possible.

5. There is a growing consensus about strategies that can make a sustained difference. **Annex D** summarises some of the most recent evidence about "what works". Some of the key points that we have noted, in drawing up this strategy for North Yorkshire, are:

- the paramount importance of the highest quality teaching for all children and young people, with a relentless focus on progress for all and underpinned by the strongest leadership
- the most effective schools and settings start with a data-driven analysis of where children are falling behind. They start from first principles in understanding the barriers to learning - whether these are about the school environment, the home environment, or other factors and work systematically to remove them
- the very best schools intervene at the level of the individual student, developing awareness and processes that help to identify whenever a student is starting to fall behind
- early intervention is essential whenever and wherever underachievement is identified
- effective support and intervention in Early Years 0-5, for children and their families have the greatest impact
- teachers' expectations of students from disadvantaged backgrounds are key – high expectations are crucial
- additional strategies may be needed to engage and involve parents and carers
- the Education Endowment Foundation toolkit commands wide respect as an evidence-base for interventions
- the definition of "disadvantage" is most commonly applied to pupils who have been eligible for Free School Meals at some point in the previous six years. In North

Yorkshire we will adopt a wider definition of disadvantage (see page 11, paragraph 2)
- there is no single magic formula in schools or Local Authorities where disadvantaged students perform well. Success is incremental but based on a shared determination that all pupils can succeed

6. We have been particularly persuaded by the "five key steps" recommended by the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, as a holistic framework for tackling the issue, which we would re-order as follows:

1. Incessant focus on the quality of teaching and learning
2. Building a high expectations, inclusive culture
3. Using the Pupil Premium strategically to improve social mobility
4. Tailored strategies to engage parents
5. Preparing students for all aspects of life not just for exams

We believe that these five steps should underpin all of our strategies for addressing the issue in North Yorkshire (see section four)

7. Finally, we have been impressed by the observations of the former National Pupil Premium Champion, John Dunford, and his suggestions for a whole-school approach to closing the gap. There is a brief summary of his findings from paragraph 14 onwards of **Annex D.**

4. Why this matters in North Yorkshire

Pupil achievement data shows that disadvantaged pupils continue to perform less well than their peers at all Key Stages both locally and nationally, and the gaps between those eligible for free school meals and others are wider in North Yorkshire than the national average. In recent years there has been some progress in the County; however, this has been inconsistent. In 2014 the outcomes for pupils eligible for free school meals showed attainment remaining below the national level for similar pupils, although it is encouraging that the Key Stage 2 (KS2) gap closed significantly.

The table below sets out the position in 2014. Further statistical information is in **Annex A.**

EYFSP	% GLD	National 2014	NY 2014	NY Change	NY rank of 150 LAs 2014 (2013)
	FSM	45%	40%		Attainment 103 (144)
	EY FSM Gap	-19%	-23%	+1%	Gap 110 (96)
KS2	**%RWM4+**				
	FSM6	67%	60%		Attainment 137 (141)
	KS2 FSM6 Gap	-17%	-21%	- 3%	
KS4	**% 5 A*CEM**	33%	29%		Attainment na (85)
	KS4 FSM Gap	-27%	-33%	+1%	Gap na (100)

Comparing ourselves with other Local Authorities, suggests that in 2014 at Key Stage 2:

- All 27 shire counties have lower % FSM6 than national average (between 15% and 28%)

- All except four shire counties have lower outcomes for FSM6 than the national average (between 57% and 69% - England average 67%)

- All shire counties have FSM6 outcomes which place them below the national average - 12 are in the bottom quartile (ranks 112 to 150), including North Yorkshire (rank 137)

- One shire, Warwickshire, is both a shire authority and a statistical neighbour, with a similar number of pupils to North Yorkshire Outcomes for all pupils in Warwickshire were four percentage points above North Yorkshire, and although the disadvantage gap was above the national it was narrower than the gap in North Yorkshire. We will need to understand if there are lessons we can learn from their approach

North Yorkshire has led or supported a broad range of strategies, projects and training aimed at closing gaps over a number of years. Often schools and settings have been given financial support. **Annex B** sets out some of the projects which have been undertaken in North Yorkshire schools and settings.

In addition to these projects, the North Yorkshire Closing the Gap Innovation Project was launched to schools in November 2013 supported by funding from the Wrea Head Trust. Expressions of interest were invited from clusters of schools or teaching alliances who wanted to develop innovative ways of tackling the issue. The work is monitored by a project board consisting of local headteachers, local authority advisers and academic partners representing The Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Institute for Effective Education. **Annex B** also sets out brief details of the 15 proposals that have now been approved in the first two cohorts, involving over 120 primary and secondary schools.

However, we have to accept that whilst individual initiatives have had some success, we have to have a greater impact across the County. We need to move faster and in a more coherent way. With the role and capacity of the Local Authority changing as a result of government policy and funding cuts there will not be the same resource available to support schools and settings. We need a new strategic framework.

5. Our strategic framework for making progress

Strategic links with *Young and Yorkshire*

Young and Yorkshire, the Children and Young People's Plan for North Yorkshire, sets out a clear vision for the future of services for children and young people:

"We want North Yorkshire to be a special place where every childhood is wonderful and every young person thrives."

The plan also sets out three over-arching priorities for 2014-17:

- Ensuring that education is our greatest liberator
- Helping all children to enjoy a happy family life
- Ensuring a healthy start to life

Under those priorities there are a number of "supporting outcomes", a significant number of which refer – directly or indirectly – to the need to close the gap between more disadvantaged children and their peers, e.g.:

- Life chances for children are improved through better educational outcomes in early years, primary and secondary education, including those of more vulnerable children
- Looked After Children achieve improved educational outcomes
- Vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils are helped to close the attainment gap between themselves and others

- Children and families in challenging circumstances receive effective early help to become self-reliant
- Children enjoy good health and development, particularly in the early years
- Looked After Children and children with disabilities or learning needs have improved health and well-being outcomes

Our strategic framework for Closing the Gap

If North Yorkshire is to be a place where every young person thrives, we need to inject fresh rigour and urgency into our efforts to close the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged children and their peers. In doing so, we will subscribe to the following ten principles across the Children's Trust Partnership:

1) We will put **high quality teaching and learning** at the heart of this strategy, recognising that inspiring teachers, teaching assistants and practitioners - with high aspirations for all children in their care - are the key to overcoming educational disadvantage. We will ensure that the new Improvement Partnerships subscribe to this, and work with Local Authority services, Teaching School Alliances and others to develop excellent programmes of Continuous Professional Development. In addition, through the Early Years Strategy, we will promote strong home learning experiences and will ensure parents and carers can access support and training opportunities.

2) We will adopt a **broad definition** of "disadvantage". The debate is often couched in terms of socio-economic disadvantage, measured by those who have qualified for Free School Meals at any point in the previous six years. However, we recognise other children who may be vulnerable or disadvantaged, and whom the evidence suggests may not be achieving outcomes at the level of their peers, including – but not confined to:

- Children looked after by the Local Authority
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities
- Teenage parents
- Young offenders
- Children and young people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups and those with English as a second language
- Children and young people with parents in the armed forces
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender children
- Young carers
- Homeless young people
- Summer-born children
- White working class boys
- Persistent absentees
- Travellers
- Children from single parent families, or parents undergoing separation
- Children with parents or siblings in prison

We will seek to intervene wherever the evidence suggests there is an issue to be tackled. **Annex A** sets out some of the data we already have.

3) Notwithstanding the previous principle, we will keep uppermost in our minds the fact that this issue is about the achievement of individual **children and young people**, not homogenous groups. We will resist labels and group interventions that fail to recognise this, and which may run the risk of limiting the expectations and aspirations of schools and teachers. Equally, we will wherever possible listen carefully to the views of young people, and their parents or carers, in constructing interventions.

4) We will adopt a **holistic approach** to closing the gap. We will continue to challenge schools and settings to ensure that they have an inclusive culture and ethos that values all children and young people. We want to remove any barriers to presence, participation and achievement for all pupils, but with a special emphasis for those who are most at risk of underachievement. This means providing all of our children and young people with an environment where they have a voice, want to learn and can make real progress. We want to provide all of our learners with experiences that will stand them in good stead for the future as confident young adults who achieve economic well-being, have strong employability skills and who can stand on their own two feet.

At the level of the individual child, this means being sensitive to the fact that the possible causes of disadvantage may be multiple and complex in nature. At a "system" level, this means recognising that, while schools, settings and children's centres will be carrying forward most of the actions under this initiative, they will only succeed if their efforts are harmonised with:

- The new Prevention Service and Healthy Child Programme, which have created local capacity for targeted whole-family early intervention. The Local Authority Social Care service, which works intensively with those with more complex safeguarding and care needs
- Those involved in the assessment, support planning and specialist intervention for young people with SEN(D) and those who present behavioural challenges in school
- Other Council services beyond Children and Young People's Services, including those responsible for economic development and the relief of poverty
- Other potential partners, including employers and universities – making best use of the newly established Higher York Collaborative Outreach Network, see http://www.higheryork.org/schools/
- Parents, carers, childminders, other early years settings and local community leaders

Wherever it is appropriate and safe to do so, we will share information, and work in partnership across organisational boundaries. Being holistic also recognises that even if the group of disadvantaged children is quite small, we will nevertheless need to adopt a whole-school approach. This is well illustrated in John Dunford's diagram reproduced in paragraph 15 of **Annex D.**

5) Our interventions will be based on robust and transparent **data about performance and evidence about what works**. In particular, we will use data to underpin our challenge to schools and Improvement Partnerships, and to direct resources where they can have the greatest impact. We will evaluate all of our interventions so that we can effectively and swiftly spread best practice – scaling it up where appropriate – or stop activities that are not achieving their intended goals. We need to ensure that schools, settings, individual teachers and practitioners fully understand what the data is saying. We will promote use of the Education Endowment Foundation toolkit including the use of data to demonstrate that disadvantaged pupils can make accelerated progress and so raise aspirations. We will review best national practice, including relevant Ofsted reports, as set out in **Annexes C and D.**

6) We will subscribe to the principles of *early intervention at all stages* of a child's development – being sensitive to the emergence of potential problems, so that they can be tackled sooner rather than later - from Early Years onwards. We will engage with families even before birth and will promote the appropriate use of intensive language development and other interventions. We will develop models of collaborative working that promote sustainable improvement and build capacity. We will identify and respond quickly to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other areas of vulnerability. Through our Early Years' Strategy we will raise outcomes for all children at risk of under-achievement in Early Years, and, in particular, for the most vulnerable.

7) We will focus on *transitions* (e.g. into setting, into reception, into secondary school) since research shows that problems associated with disadvantage can get worse at these crucial points in the young person's journey: attainment gaps tend to widen as pupils move through education. We will understand and target children's individual vulnerabilities through robust observation; work with families and everyone who knows the child to manage all points of transition; and use local networks effectively to share information.

8) We will *challenge* wherever necessary – challenge individual children and young people to move beyond any self-imposed limitations; challenge ourselves, and each other, as professionals to ensure we are not unconsciously limiting children's aspirations; and challenge schools, Improvement Partnerships, and all partners in the North Yorkshire Children's Trust to address this issue with vigour and honesty.

9) We will *support* wherever necessary, building relationships of mutual trust and respect with children, parents and carers, teachers and other professionals. We will listen to their views and enable them to influence future developments.

10) We will use our collective influence to ensure that resources, both national and local, are directed towards closing the gap, including the Pupil Premium and any locally available discretionary funding, having first ensured that there is a robust evaluation of the ability and capacity of a school to benefit from any new support.

6. Priorities and next steps

Guided by the Framework set out in the previous chapter, we have identified the following ten immediate priority actions:

A. Define clearly the roles of the various parties in moving forward with this agenda – in particular:

i. The responsibilities for effective multi-agency action on the part of all partners of the Children's Trust
ii. The Local Authority as the champion of under-achieving pupils – ensuring the highest aspirations and providing challenge to fellow professionals, schools, settings and Improvement Partnerships
iii. The changing role of the Local Authority to facilitate, broker, commission and influence new ways of working to support schools
iv. Other potential partners within the Council and beyond

B. Reinvigorate the Closing the Gap Strategy Group to oversee the programme of interventions and ensure that they are enacted with urgency and rigour.

C. Ensure that raising attainment for all whilst closing the gaps for the disadvantaged is the key priority for schools, settings and Improvement Partnerships and is reflected through robust data and evidence in Improvement Plans, funding allocations, scorecards and reports to the Education Partnership.

D. Audit all current performance and practice so as to identify rapidly:

i. Particular areas of concern or outlying performance: a clear, transparent and unambiguous evaluation of all schools and settings in North Yorkshire
ii. Local interventions that are proving successful and can be scaled up, including those from the Closing the Gap Innovation Project
iii. Activities that should be stopped because they are not having sufficient impact
iv. Appropriate schools on which to focus funding for Cohort 3 of the Closing the Gap Innovation Project

In conducting this audit we will have regard in particular to:

- the suggested "five steps" set out in the "Cracking the Code" report which is referred to in Annex D
- the suggested whole-school approach set out by John Dunford, referred to in Annex C
- relevant OFSTED reports on the Pupil Premium – see Annexes C and D
- ensuring there is shared understanding of the links between strategies and projects; and that communications are rapid and effective

E.   Set challenging targets at all levels – see section 7 for more details.

F.   Ensure that national and local resources are directed to addressing this issue – including schools' and settings' use of the Pupil Premium, and the remaining allocation of the Closing the Gap Innovation Project funding.

G.   Focus our strategies around particular areas i.e. on the coast through the Scarborough Summit and Pledge.

H.   Through the Early Years Strategy, develop discrete and ambitious priorities and targets for the Early Years so that the principles of early engagement, excellent learning experiences and high quality provision are established right from the outset.

I.   Encourage all schools and settings, if they have not already done so, to identify a senior manager, and a governor, with specific responsibility for this agenda.

J.   Establish clear expectations of, and terms of reference for, all Improvement Partnerships to ensure that their work is focussed on closing gaps. Work with schools and governors to set out a clear set of expectations for them and the Local Authority to raise attainment and to close gaps.

Closing the Gap in Early Years Strategy 2014-17, Summary of Priorities

Priority 1: Strong Home Learning Experiences to support children's learning and development

Outcomes

- Parents and carers who are engaged and understand their child's development and learning needs, and who are confidently able to support their children's learning through home experiences.
- Parents and carers accessing support and training opportunities, including those provided by the Adult Learning team, to enable them to support their child's learning

Priority 2: Early Engagement

Outcomes

- Strong engagement with families, including engagement before birth
- Timely information-sharing across all services, providers and practitioners to ensure early engagement with children and their families
- Early identification and response to a child's areas of vulnerability
- Good levels of take-up of two year old places and effective use of EYPP

Priority 3: High Quality Provision

Outcomes

- Knowledgeable and well–qualified professionals with high aspirations for all children, including those with SEND, who are LAC, or are eligible for FSM
- Strong and effective leadership resulting in children's rapid progress to close the gap and ensure school readiness
- Training embedded in practice, in particular around communication and language, literacy, mathematics and PSED

Priority 4: Information-sharing and high quality transitions

Outcomes

- Identifying and targeting children's individual vulnerabilities through quality observations that inform robust tracking to support transitions
- Work with families and everyone that knows the child, to effectively manage all points of transition
- Support and promote local networks to effectively share and use information

7. How we will know we are making a difference

1.   We will set new and challenging targets for closing the gap at every appropriate level:
- For individual children and young people so they have clear expectations
- For schools
- For clusters
- For Improvement Partnerships
- For the Local Authority and its partners

2.   At Local Authority level, we will review the need to set new targets for any groups of children and young people who may be disadvantaged, such as those set out in the "broad definition" in section 5. In the meantime, we confirm the following targets which were set out in Young and Yorkshire:

Measure	Position at the start of the Plan			Target		
	N Yorks.	National	Statistical Neighbours	Year 1	Year 2	End of the Plan
The attainment gap of children claiming free school meals who reached a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage	24.3%	36.2%	n/a	19%	17%	15%
The attainment gap between pupils claiming free school meals and other pupils: Level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2	26.0%	19.0%	27%	2% wider than national	1% wider than national	Gap with national closed
The attainment gap between pupils claiming free school meals and other pupils: GCSEs at A* to C including English and maths	31.7%	26.7%	32.6%	3% wider than national	1% wider than national	Gap with national closed
The attainment gap between pupils with statements or Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) and other pupils: reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2	70.0%	74.0%	n/a	Gap in line with national without reduction of overall	Gap reduced by 2% (pending new indicator and EHCPs)	Gap reduced by 4% (pending new indicator and EHCPs)
The attainment gap between pupils with statements or EHCPs and other pupils: 5 GCSEs at A* to C including English and maths	62.2%	61.2%	n/a	Gap in line with national without reduction of overall	Gap reduced by 2% (pending new indicator and EHCPs)	Gap reduced by 4% (pending new indicator and EHCPs)

Annex A: Statistical Overview of Key Stage 2 Outcomes for Disadvantaged Pupils in 2015

The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in North Yorkshire is relatively strong at Key Stage 4, with results in 2015 having improved by 4% to meet national average. The analysis below supports the work of the Local Authority with the key focus of raising achievement at Key Stage 2.

Key Stage 2 attainment of reading, writing and mathematics level 4+

North Yorkshire is one of the 10% of local authorities with the fewest disadvantaged children, because only 21% of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have ever been in receipt of free school meals (FSM6). The national average proportion of disadvantaged pupils is 34%.

Across England, the percentage of the cohort described as disadvantaged (FSM6) ranges from 12% (Wokingham) to 67% (Tower Hamlets).

In North Yorkshire, 62% of disadvantaged pupils attained reading, writing and mathematics at level 4 or above. Despite an improvement of 2% in 2015, this was below the national average of 70%.
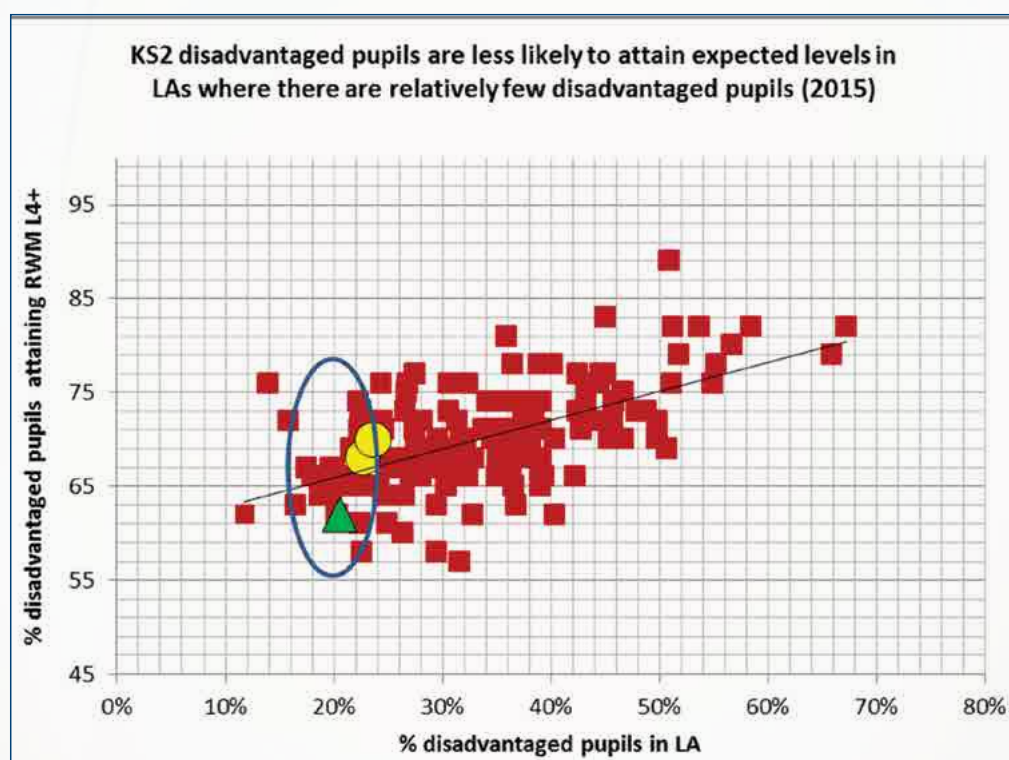
Where fewer than 25% of pupils are disadvantaged, most local authorities achieve below average outcomes for this group of children. In most of these local authorities results for disadvantaged pupils are above those in North Yorkshire, with several presenting a more rapid rate of improvement than North Yorkshire or national average. For example, results in East Riding, Shropshire and North Somerset increased by at least 5%. Some of the council areas with relatively few disadvantaged pupils share a range of features

which might be described as in common with North Yorkshire. For example, many are large counties with some degree of rurality and four of these are statistical neighbours (SN), as can be seen in the following table. We need to understand if there are lessons we can learn from work being done in those areas.

Large local authorities with low proportion of disadvantaged pupil

LA	% cohort disadvantaged	% disadvantaged attaining RWM 4+ 2015	% all pupils attaining RWM4+ 2015
National average	**34%**	**70%**	**80%**
North Yorkshire	21%	62%	79%
Buckinghamshire	16%	63%	83%
West Berkshire	17%	67%	82%
Surrey	18%	66%	83%
Cheshire East (SN)	20%	67%	82%
South Gloucestershire	20%	64%	81%
West Sussex	20%	62%	77%
Wiltshire	20%	66%	80%
Leicestershire	21%	65%	80%
Herefordshire	21%	66%	80%
Oxfordshire	21%	66%	81%
York (included as geographically close)	21%	66%	81%
Cambridgeshire	22%	61%	78%
Dorset	22%	65%	78%
Hampshire	22%	69%	83%
Hertfordshire	22%	70%	84%
Central Bedfordshire (SN)	23%	58%	77%
Cumbria ◯	23%	68%	80%
Shropshire	23%	68%	81%
East Riding of Yorkshire (SN) ◯	24%	70%	82%
Gloucestershire	24%	65%	81%
North Somerset	24%	72%	83%
Warwickshire (SN)	24%	65%	80%

Key	Below national average or wider than national gap	Above national average or narrower than national gap
North Yorkshire LA ▲	Geographically close, rural LA neighbour ◯	

Key Stage 2 disadvantaged gap

The disadvantage gap is calculated as the difference between outcomes for disadvantaged and other pupils. North Yorkshire is ranked 135 out of 150 local authorities for this gap measure at Key Stage 2.

Shire and other local authorities with rural areas

KS2 2015				Disadvantaged gap		All pupils
	% achieving RWM 4+	Rank	% achieving RWM4+	Rank	RWM4+ gap	Gap Rank
England	70		80		15	
North Yorkshire	62	143	79	112	21	135
Buckinghamshire	63	137	83	40	23	145
Cambridgeshire	61	145	78	130	23	145
Central Bedfordshire	58	148	77	138	25	149
Cheshire East	67	110	82	61	18	95
Cheshire West & Chester	67	110	82	61	20	128
Cornwall	66	122	79	112	18	95
County Durham	71	64	82	61	17	76
Cumbria	68	99	80	99	16	66
Derbyshire	69	84	82	61	18	95
Devon	71	64	82	61	15	55
Dorset	65	129	78	130	17	76
East Riding of Yorkshire	70	73	82	61	15	55
East Sussex	69	84	80	99	16	66
Essex	68	99	81	75	17	76
Gloucestershire	65	129	81	75	21	135
Hampshire	69	84	83	40	18	95
Herefordshire	66	122	80	99	18	95
Hertfordshire	70	73	84	24	17	76
Kent	67	110	80	99	19	114
Lancashire	69	84	82	61	18	95
Leicestershire	65	129	80	99	19	114
Lincolnshire	66	122	79	112	17	76
Norfolk	63	137	76	142	18	95
North East Lincolnshire	66	122	77	138	18	95
North Lincolnshire	68	99	79	112	17	76
North Somerset	72	55	83	40	14	40
Northamptonshire	64	134	78	130	18	95
Northumberland	67	110	78	130	16	66
Nottinghamshire	68	99	81	75	17	76
Oxfordshire	66	122	81	75	19	114
Shropshire	68	99	81	75	17	76
Somerset	64	134	78	130	19	114
South Gloucestershire	64	134	81	75	21	135
Staffordshire	68	99	80	99	16	66
Suffolk	64	134	77	138	18	95
Surrey	66	122	83	40	21	135
Warwickshire	65	129	80	99	19	114
West Berkshire	67	110	82	61	18	95
West Sussex	62	143	77	138	19	114
Wiltshire	66	122	80	99	18	95
Worcestershire	61	145	76	142	21	135

Equality Monitoring in North Yorkshire 2014 (source 2014 Growing up in North Yorkshire survey county report Pages 22-23)

Information is collected about social identities among pupils in North Yorkshire. We have done some analysis to see if the behaviours we see among young people in our county are different if they are to be found under one of the social identity headings shown in the table.

Not all differences show statistical significance; sample size is a factor.

Year 6 Results

Percentages in each social identity group reporting different behaviours - primary	All Y6 ***	Ethnic Minority	Single-parent family	Special Educational Needs	Disability or long term illness	Free school meals	Armed forces family ****
Eat 5-a-day	**30**	34	*24	**20**	26	*23	*22
Ever tried smoking	**3**	*5	*6	*6	5	*8	*6
Drank last week	**1**	0	2	*4	3	*4	2
7+ hours exercise/week	**35**	32	*28	32	38	*27	30
High wellbeing score**	**34**	31	*28	35	29	*26	37
High resilience score**	**39**	40	30	*29	*28	*30	38
Bullied at or near school last year	**21**	24	24	**26**	*31	*31	*31
Worry 'very often' about Health	**6**	*9	8	*15	*10	*11	*10
Worry 'very often' about moving on to secondary	**16**	16	18	*23	19	*24	19
Had accident last year	**27**	22	27	*35	*42	*34	31
Enjoy 'most'/'all' school Lessons	**59**	61	*51	58	58	55	61
The school encourages everyone to treat each other with respect	**89**	89	86	*76	81	80	87
I know my own targets and I am helped to meet them	**82**	82	79	73	79	73	81
Pupils' views make a difference in school	**73**	74	71	70	71	73	73
Numbers of pupils	4508	278	590	311	259	372	228

Shaded	= a significant difference was found in 2012.
*	= Difference from All Y10 is statistically significant (**BOLD**=more so).
**	= New question for the 2014 equalities analysis.
***	= Figures given as % of whole sample and may differ from those given in this or other reports.
****	= Different criteria used in 2014 and 2012

Year 10 Results

Percentages in each social identity group reporting different behaviours – secondary	All Y10 ***	Ethnic minority	Young Carers	In care	One parent family	Not in own home	SEN	Disability/ long term illness	Free school meals	Armed Forces family ****	LGB
Eat 5-a-day	19	19	17	24	15	18	*25	23	15	17	23
Ever tried smoking	34	38	*56	*61	*44	*60	39	30	*51	33	*49
Drank last week	35	31	34	28	36	41	30	36	29	44	42
Ever offered drugs	28	26	*42	33	*36	*43	32	30	34	34	*38
Ever taken drugs	14	15	*23	26	*19	*26	16	15	*22	17	*20
7+ hours exercise/ week	27	24	21	10	*22	23	23	31	*16	29	*16
High wellbeing score**	20	19	12	0	*16	9	16	21	*10	15	*9
High resilience score**	17	21	15	14	*12	10	16	13	13	14	*7
Bullied at or near school last year	17	17	*31	15	*20	24	*29	*34	*30	*23	*41
Worry 'quite a lot'/'a lot' about money	22	*28	*40	17	*29	*37	23	25	*29	26	*33
Worry 'quite a lot'/'a lot' about being different	6	*17	*11	13	*9	*20	8	8	9	*11	*39
Sexually active	19	16	*40	38	*24	28	24	16	*28	*28	*30
Can find free condoms	55	*45	65	63	55	48	53	50	60	53	53
Had accident last year	43	48	*64	45	43	50	*55	*61	45	51	48
Enjoy 'most'/'all' school lessons	40	38	36	30	*32	*22	37	34	32	31	33
Intend FTE after Y11	61	69	52	52	59	43	*47	67	*46	55	58
Term-time job	35	*23	29	35	30	38	34	36	*23	32	27
The school encourages everyone to treat each other with respect	75	67	63	57	69	54	70	75	67	70	66
Adults at school talk to me about how to improve my work	66	62	67	65	61	51	62	55	57	58	56
I know my own targets and I am helped to meet them	62	61	55	65	*54	48	54	55	54	56	*48
Pupils' views make a difference in school	52	49	57	48	50	49	50	52	48	54	44
Numbers of pupils	3529	261	117	23	616	65	243	96	237	151	180

Shaded	= a significant difference was found in 2012.
*	= Difference from All Y10 is statistically significant (**BOLD**=more so).
**	= New question for the 2014 equalities analysis.
***	= Figures given as % of whole sample and may differ from those given in this or other reports.
****	= Different criteria used in 2014 and 2012

Annex B: Case studies from North Yorkshire

The following box shows some of the mainstream projects and initiatives that are being, or have been, widely used in North Yorkshire in order to close the gap:

Achievement for All (AfA) – early years, primary, secondary (8 secondary schools, 11 primary/nursery)

Every Child a Talker (ECAT) – early years, training for practitioners and parents

Phonics counts – primary, training for teachers

Early Words Together – new National Literacy Trust project for children centre staff

Reading Intervention Programme – primary, secondary, special, training for teachers and TAs (338 schools, 528 TAs and teachers trained)

Paired Reading – primary and secondary, training for teachers, TAs and SENCOs

Talking Maths – early years, primary, early secondary, training for practitioners

1stclass@Number – primary, secondary, training for TAs (180 trained)

Success@Arithmetic – focus on any child L3b/c in KS2 or KS3

NumbersCount teachers – primary and secondary, 24 trained teachers

Numicon – primary, training for teachers

Inference Training – primary (KS2) and secondary, training for TAs and teachers

Mindsets project – Selby and Craven – cross-phase action research project

OXY-GEN – Coast, Central and West – cross-phase project

Literacy in Whitby – a cross-phase project

The boxes below give brief details of the 15 proposals that have now been approved in the first two cohorts of the North Yorkshire Closing the Gap Innovation Project, involving over 120 primary and secondary schools:

Summary of Cohort 1 projects	
Cluster	**Brief details of the project**
Craven	A mathematics collaboration between the five schools to raise standards in Year 4 mathematics (six children in each school chosen who have gaps and have not made good progress over time) The key focus is on closing the gap in calculation and numbers for a group of low attaining and vulnerable children.
HART alliance	The project will investigate whether the investment of time in preparing and providing specific feedback to parents/carers and the target child on a regular basis throughout the academic year makes a significant contribution to accelerating progress and closing the gap in one identified core subject.
Northallerton Primary	Does the implementation of Assertive Mentoring with vulnerable pupils raise attainment by increasing progress/attendance beyond expected rates?
Pickering	To what extent can the use of ICT, when used in small group interventions, impact on the rate of progress in grammar and maths in Year 2 and Year 3.
Scarborough Teaching Alliance	What are the most effective features of personalised interventions to ensure that EYFS and KS1 pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds can attain a good level in reading by the end of the Key Stage?
Selby Town Cluster	How much does an outdoor learning intervention accelerate progress and attainment in reading, writing and maths after one term for Key Stage 2 children?
Stokesley Partnership	What impact does increased engagement of parents have on the progress of FSM/Ever6 children with specific regard to Traveller Heritage and White Working Class children, in a rural setting?
Swaledale Alliance	To narrow the gap between pupils receiving the pupil premium and the rest of the cohort across the Swaledale Alliance at all phases by: • Collaborating across all school phases through shared CPD • Raising aspirations of vulnerable pupils and their families • Developing literacy skills in order to develop attainment
North Star Teaching School Alliance	Does specifically targeted support through the Achievement for All Programme close the attainment gap? With the long term aim of creating a sustainable programme that is specific to North Yorkshire's disadvantaged young people and closes the achievement gap.
Whitby	To identify the current work relating to feedback that has already had an impact on closing the gap for Pupil Premium children, and develop this work with collaborative schools to develop their practice in marking and feedback.

Summary of Cohort 2 Projects

Cluster	Brief details of the project
Filey Primary Partnership	Can the use of modern technologies increase parental involvement and engage hard-to-reach parents and families by implementing a much more accessible and interactive online solution to learning within the school and home setting? Will greatly enhanced collaboration between children, parents and staff, within the cluster of schools involved in the project, have an impact on accelerating learning and closing the gap with a specific focus on writing?
Castle Alliance	How can we improve parental engagement to 'close the gap' for our most vulnerable groups of children from two years old funded across the primary age range up to Year 6 transfer to secondary school?
Catterick/Colburn	Does a specifically targeted mathematics initiative close the gap for individuals and groups of Year 2 and Year 3 pupils? This is a pilot mathematics collaboration between the seven cluster schools as part of an Improvement Partnership to raise standards in Year 2 and Year 3 mathematics through an initiative entitled Catterick Counts.
STAR Learning Alliance	Does raising the profile and importance of self-esteem and wellbeing in children and their families have a direct impact on their academic achievement?
Caedmon College Whitby and the Coastal Primary Group	How far can gaps in literacy be further reduced by the involvement of parents and older siblings - through a "book club" approach – to support tailored individual literacy interventions designed to enable pupils to make rapid, sustained progress in their weakest areas thereby 'close the gap'?
North Star Teaching School Alliance	Continuation of Year 1 project.

# Annex C: 2015 results for North Yorkshire

2015 results demonstrate that outcomes for some key groups of pupils have improved in North Yorkshire. However, there is a continued need to raise achievement and narrow gaps at all Key Stages. North Yorkshire Local Authority and schools are committed to raising achievement for all pupils and to narrowing gaps in attainment and progress.

Disadvantaged pupils

Attainment of disadvantaged pupils has improved at all key stages in 2015, and has risen so that is in line with national outcomes at Key Stage 4. Although improvement is evident at Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, disadvantaged pupils were again less likely to attain expected standards than the national average and the gap between outcomes of disadvantaged and other pupils is wider. The disadvantaged gap between FSM6 pupils and other pupils is wider than 2014 national averages at Early Years, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.

The Key Stage 4 disadvantage gap narrowed by 4% in 2015, which compares favourably with no change nationally. At Early Years and Key Stage 2 there was little change either nationally or in the County.

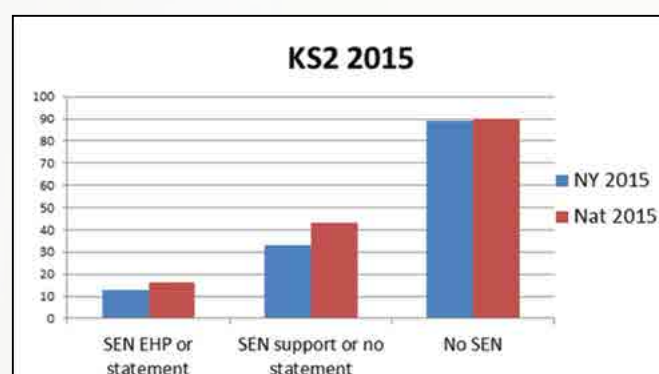| Attainment	North Yorkshire 2014	North Yorkshire 2015	National 2015	North Yorkshire improvement 2014 - 2015	National improvement 2014 - 2015
Early Years achieving a good level of development (FSM)	40%	45%	51%	+5	+6
Key Stage 2 level 4+ in reading, writing and mathematics (FSM6)	60%	62%	70%	+2	+2
Key Stage 4 5 GCSEs A*-C including English and mathematics (FSM6) (Provisional)	33%	37%	37%	+4	+0
Attainment gaps Difference between attainment of FSM6 pupils and other pupils	**North Yorkshire 2014**	**North Yorkshire 2015**	**National 2015**	**North Yorkshire change 2014 - 2015**	**National change 2014 - 2015**
Early Years	23%	24%	18%	Wider by 1%	Wider by 1%
Key Stage 2	21%	21%	15%	No change	Narrowed by 1%
Key Stage 4 (Provisional)	33%	29%	27%	Narrowed by 4%	No change
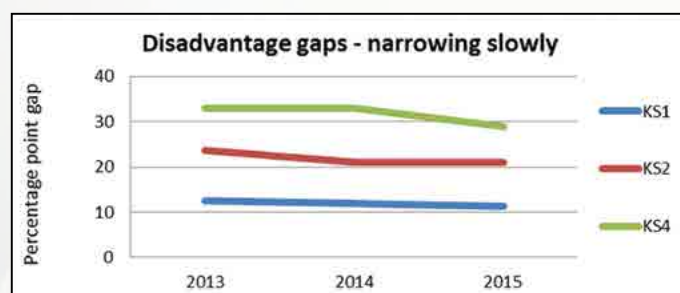
Progress of disadvantaged pupils (FSM6)	North Yorkshire 2015	National 2015	North Yorkshire FSM6 progress gap 2015	National FSM6 progress gap 2015
Key Stage 1- 2 reading	85%	88%	8	4
Key Stage 1- 2 mathematics	78%	86%	12	5
Key Stage 2- 4 English	54%	58%	20	17
Key Stage 2- 4 mathematics	50%	50%	26	23

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities at primary schools

Attainment % of pupils with SEND	North Yorkshire SEN pupils without a statement 2015	National SEN pupils without a statement 2015	North Yorkshire rank 2015
Early Years good level of development	20%	24%	109
Key Stage 1 level 2+ reading	58%	64%	127
Key Stage 1 level 2+ writing	47%	55%	128
Key Stage 1 level 2+ maths	70%	73%	100
Key Stage 2 level 4 + reading, writing and mathematics	33%	43%	136

Changes to the way special educational needs are classified under the Code of Practice mean that 2015 outcomes are not directly comparable with previous years. North Yorkshire has a relatively small proportion of pupils who have been registered as having special educational needs: 16% of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, in comparison with national average of 19%. The LA is exploring whether or not this is because only pupils with a higher need for support are on the register, and whether this may explain relatively low outcomes.

Gender

Girls have higher attainment than boys in all Key Stages, both nationally and in North Yorkshire. The gap is most evident in indicators relating to learning and development in early childhood. Gender gaps in North Yorkshire are typically broadly in line with national gaps. Outcomes for boys in North Yorkshire are above those for boys nationally in Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4 and post-16. Outcomes for girls are above national girls at Key Stage 4 and post-16.

North Yorkshire 2015	Girls	Boys	Gender gap
EYFSP % GLD	75%	58%	17%
KS2 % RWM4+	81%	79%	2%
KS4 % 5A*CEM	67%	56%	11%
KS5 Points Per Student	803	781	22 pps

Pupils from service families

In 2014 and 2015 a gap has developed at Key Stage 2 between outcomes for pupils from service families and other children because outcomes have improved more rapidly for pupils who do not have a parent in the armed forces.

North Yorkshire 2015	2014	2015	Gender gap
Children from service families	71%	72%	17%
Children not from service families	78%	80%	2%
Gap	7%	8%	11%

Note: Figures may differ from data published subsequently by the DfE.

Annex D: What works - a survey of recent national publications

There is a growing evidence base of what works in this policy area. This Annex summarises the main conclusions from a number of recent national publications. **Annex E** contains weblinks.

1.   *The Ofsted Analysis from "Unseen Children"* emphasised "getting the best leaders and teachers to where they are needed most". High quality teaching is crucial for pupil progress but especially for disadvantaged pupils.

2.   There are numerous other relevant Ofsted reports into the Pupil Premium (PP), with summaries of what does and doesn't work. The following are seen as *successful approaches:*

- PP funding ring-fenced to spend on target group
- Maintained high expectations of target group
- Thoroughly analysed which pupils were under-achieving and why
- Used evidence to allocate funding to big-impact strategies
- High quality teaching, not interventions to compensate for poor teaching
- Used achievement data to check interventions effective and made adjustments where necessary
- Highly trained support staff
- Senior leader with oversight of how PP funding is being spent
- Teachers know which pupils eligible for PP
- Able to demonstrate impact
- Involve governors

…and the following are seen as less successful approaches:

- Lack of clarity about intended impact of PP spending
- Funding spent on teaching assistants, with little impact
- Poor monitoring of impact
- Poor performance management system for support staff
- No clear audit trail of where PP money was spent
- Focus on level 4 or grade C thresholds, so more able under-achieved
- PP spending not part of school development plan
- Used poor comparators for performance, thus lowering expectations
- Pastoral work not focused on desired outcomes for PP pupils
- Governors not involved in decisions about the PP spending

3.   *The Effective Pre-School, Primary and Secondary Education project* identified a range of practices and pedagogical techniques associated with improved outcomes for disadvantaged learners. They included:

- Improving the quality of feedback to learners
- The effective use of one-to-one and small-group teaching
- Encouraging pupils to be actively involved in decision making.

4.   The *Sutton Trust (2011)* review of international and UK research concluded that the effects of high quality teaching are especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

"Over a school year, these pupils can gain 1.5 years' worth of learning compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers. In other words for poor pupils, the difference between a good teacher and a bad teacher is a whole year's learning."

5.   *The Joseph Rowntree Foundation* challenge the suggestion that the barrier is purely low parental aspirations, quoting research showing that 97% of mothers at birth of low income families wanted them to go to university. JRF suggest that the current evidence base on what helps close the attainment gap sees:

A few interventions with good evidence	• Parental involvement • Home instructions for parents of pre-school children • Family literacy initiative • Effective engagement of family by schools in pupil learning
A few interventions that are promising but not compelling	• Mentoring • Aim Higher • School-based peer mentoring • Extra-curricular activities • Study support • Non-academic school-based learning which may improve self-worth and connect us with learning

6.   Similarly the *Institute for Effective Education (University of York)* found that successful classroom strategies are not specific to any grouping of vulnerable young people. They locate initiatives on a cost/impact axis and found:

High Impact/Lower Cost
- Feedback to learners
- Early years intervention
- Cognitive and self-regulation strategies
- Peer tutoring and peer assisted learning
- Collaborative learning
- Phonics
- Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL)
- Small-group interventions
- Behavioural interventions

Low Impact/Higher Cost
- Ability grouping
- Physical environment
- Performance pay
- Teaching Assistants (*per se*)
- School uniform

7.   *The Tail (Paul Marshall)* does not find that the greater autonomy offered to schools improves the lot of disadvantaged students in the lower tail of the education distribution – "at best only small beneficial effects on overall pupil performance or very little evidence of improvements for tail students". It does not find that increased floor standards, rigorous inspections and forced academy conversion are the solution. "Even if you get rid of all of the underperforming schools the situation is only marginally better – only a few more disadvantaged children perform well."

8.   *Professor Alan Dyson, Manchester University,* challenges what he calls single strand interventions focussing, for example, only on what happens in the classroom as only getting us so far. What happens in the classroom affects only 30% of the variance in pupil outcomes. He describes how "health" has a longer history and language around "social determinants of health rather than obsessing on the quality of GP practice".

9.   There is some evidence that engagement with enterprise education has directly provided both inspirational and practical support that has enabled young people to move on with business ideas. Enterprise learning "had proved sticky – its principles and lessons seemed to linger long in the minds of the young people we studied". (*Reading University*)

10a.   *Careers 2020 Options for Future Careers Work in English Schools (T. Hooley, J. Marriott, A.G. Watts and L. Coiffait, 2012)*. Careers work can support learning goals by enhancing student motivation, attainment and progression. It has been found to increase students' aspirations for post-secondary education, their levels of planning and readiness to transition, and their levels of successful completion.

10b.   *Advancing Ambitions: The Role of Career Guidance in Supporting Social Mobility Tristram Hooley, Jesse Matheson, A.G. Watts October 2014 (University of Derby)*. Findings are consistent with previous research which has found that career guidance can impact on attainment at school, engagement, successful transition to further learning and work, and longer-term life success.

11.   *The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)* has undertaken a review of parental engagement in education, with a particular focus on closing gaps in attainment for disadvantaged primary pupils. The evidence emphasises that it is important for schools to engage with parents in a variety of ways, rather than restricting contact to formal parent–teacher meetings. Ofsted's (2011) research sought to identify good practice in parental engagement through visits to 47 schools (including 18 primaries) in varying socio-economic circumstances. All the schools used new technologies to a greater or lesser extent to communicate with parents. The authors noted that schools demonstrating the best home-school liaison practice took the approach that no family, however hard-to-reach, is unreachable. Schools used sensitive phone calls, home visits and meetings at unthreatening, neutral locations, and there were many instances of individual staff "going the extra mile" to engage with parents. Similarly, O'Mara et al. (2011), who reviewed the effect of family and parenting support interventions on children's achievement and whose work features further in the following chapter, recommend that schools tailor their approach to the individual parent. Likewise Menzies (2013) writes of meeting parents "on their own terms", making them feel comfortable, understanding their needs and interests, and involving other members of their communities.

12.   *The Structured Conversation, Achievement for All* (AfA) programme is available across England and involves a framework which aims, among other goals, to improve pupils' progress and parental engagement. A key aspect is the use of the "structured conversation" to facilitate communication between school staff and parents. This focuses dialogue about the specific needs of pupils and their parents and enables more personalised approaches to teaching and learning. Many AfA schools are developing evaluation tools to further customise structured conversation to their context, and report enhanced data collection and tracking of pupil progress and attainment.

13.   *Goodall et al. (2011)* found that:

- There is robust evidence of the impact of family learning, literacy and numeracy (FLLN) programmes.
- FLLN impacts positively on disadvantaged families.
- The benefits of FLLN outlast the duration of the intervention.
- Partnership and multi-agency arrangements are essential, and enable a range of external expertise to be drawn upon.
- Information-sharing between schools and other local services is likewise important

14.   *"Cracking the code: how schools can improve social mobility" (October 2014)* seeks to define the role that schools can play to improve social mobility and in particular to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The report proposes five key steps that all schools can take to close the gap in attainment and in life chances and boost social mobility:

1. Using the Pupil Premium strategically to improve social mobility – this means primary and secondary schools using the dedicated funding they receive

through the Pupil Premium to narrow attainment gaps between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and others.

2. Building a high expectations, inclusive culture – this means being ambitious and "sharp-elbowed" for all children, with the school leadership team and governors sending a clear message from the top that they have high expectations of all staff and all students.

3. Incessant focus on the quality of teaching – this means placing the provision of highly effective teaching, perhaps the single most important way schools can influence social mobility, at the centre of the school's approach.

4. Tailored strategies to engage parents – this means having high expectations of parents and building engagement (and – where necessary – the confidence of parents in dealing with teachers) by, for example, considering meeting parents on neutral ground outside of the school, finding creative ways of getting those who did not have a good experience at school themselves to engage and helping parents to be effective in supporting their children's learning – not passively accepting lack of involvement.

5. Preparing students for all aspects of life not just for exams – this means supporting children's social and emotional development and the character skills that underpin learning. It also means working with students to identify career goals early and providing excellent careers advice, treating extracurricular activities as key to the school experience and – particularly

in secondary schools - encouraging a strong focus on working with business and universities, not - as in some schools - treating these things as optional extras.
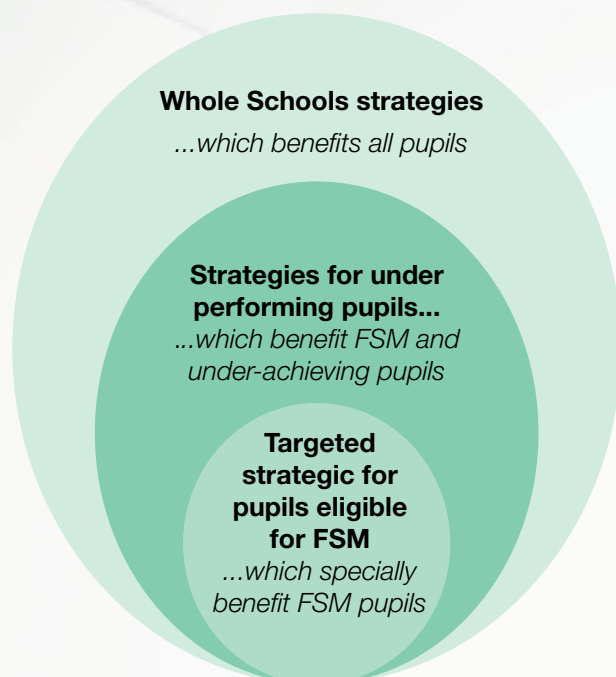
15.   John Dunford, National Pupil Premium Champion, has offered a great many useful insights into these issues, not least in a National College for Teaching and Leadership report that he co-authored, entitled Closing the gap: how system leaders and schools can work together. He advocates the use of intensive tuition in small groups and poses the following questions:

- **Intensive tuition in small groups is very effective, particularly when pupils are grouped according to current level of attainment or specific need. Have you considered how you will organise the groups?**
- **How will you assess pupils' needs accurately and provide work at a challenging level with effective feedback and support?**
- **One to one tuition and small group tuition are effective interventions. However, the cost effectiveness of one-to-two and one-to-three indicates that greater use of these approaches would be productive in schools.**
- **Have you considered how you will provide training and support for those leading the small group tuition, and how you will evaluate the impact of it? These are likely to increase the effectiveness of small group tuition.**

16.   John Dunford sets out a suggested "nested" approach to school strategies to close the attainment gap:

Whole Schools strategies
...which benefits all pupils

Strategies for under performing pupils...
...which benefit FSM and under-achieving pupils

Targeted strategic for pupils eligible for FSM
...which specially benefit FSM pupils

Whole school strategies might include…

- Quality teaching and learning, consistent across the school, supported by strong CPD culture, observation/ moderation and coaching
- Engaging and relevant curriculum, personalised to pupil needs
- Pupil level tracking, assessment and monitoring
- Quality assessment
- Effective reward, behaviour and attendance policies
- Inclusive and positive school culture
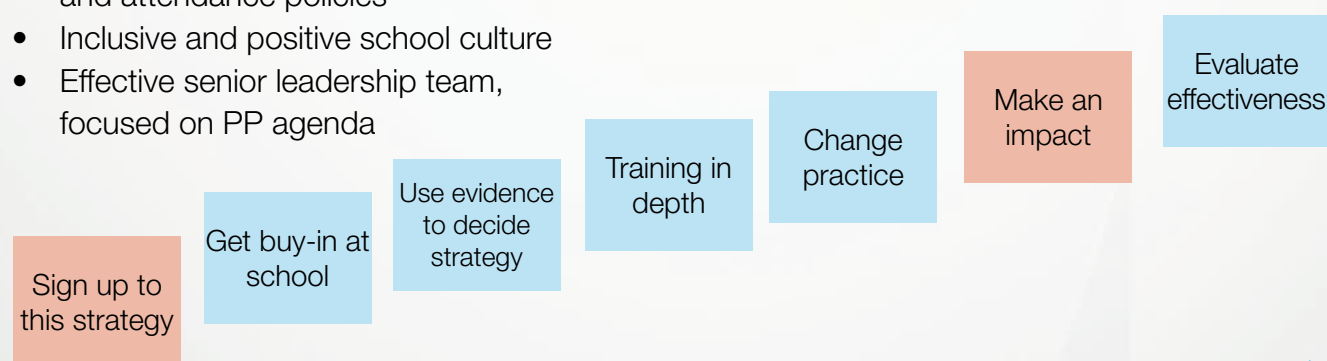- Effective senior leadership team, focused on PP agenda

Targeted strategies for under-achieving pupils might include…

- Early intervention and targeted learning interventions
- One-to-one support and other 'catch-up' provision
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of impact of targeted interventions
- Extended services and multi-agency support
- Targeted parental engagements
- In-school dedicated pastoral and wellbeing support and outreach
- Developing confidence and self-esteem through pupil voice, empowering student mentors, sport, music, or other programmes such as SEAL

Targeted strategies for FSM pupils might include…

- Incentives and targeting of extended services and parental support
- Subsidising school trips and other learning resources
- Additional residential and summer camps
- Interventions to manage key transitions between stages /schools
- Dedicated senior leadership champion

17.   His Conference slides frequently end with the following straightforward approach, which we have adopted in North Yorkshire by replacing the words in the first box with "sign up to this strategy":

Sign up to this strategy → Get buy-in at school → Use evidence to decide strategy → Training in depth → Change practice → Make an impact → Evaluate effectiveness

Annex E: Sources of further information

This Annex gives web references for some of the key supporting research documents and practical sources of help, including some mentioned in Annex D:

Unseen Children: Access and Achievement 20 years on: OfSTED evidence report
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/unseen-children-access-and-achievement-20-years

Other relevant OFSTED reports on the Pupil Premium:
https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-should-ensure-that-all-pupils-achieve-their-best
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/moving-a-school-forward
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-lesson-in-school-improvement
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-route-to-a-good-and-improving-school
https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-schools-use-pupil-premium-well-but-others-still-struggle

Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils Briefing for school leaders (November 2015)
Caroline Sharp, Shona Macleod and Daniele Bernardinelli, National Foundation for Educational Research, Amy Skipp, Ask Research, Steve Higgins, Durham University.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-the-attainment-of-disadvantaged-pupils

The Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit
- "An accessible summary of educational research which provides guidance for teachers and schools on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils."
http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/

Effective classroom strategies for closing the gap in educational achievement for children and young people living in poverty, including white working-class boys C4EO Research Review - A research review showing what works in closing the gap in educational achievement for children and young people living in poverty, including white working-class boys.
http://www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/schools/classroomstrategies/files/classroom_strategies_research_review.pdf

Challenge Partners: Challenge the gap - "An innovative and ambitious programme developed by Challenge Partners with funding from the Education Endowment Foundation. It is delivered across England by 14 Facilitation Schools and improves the academic performance of pupil premium pupils…"
http://www.challengepartners.org/challengethegap

Closing the gap: how system leaders and schools can work together - NCTL report April 2013. "This report summarises the outcomes and learning for other system leaders from a National College action research project which took place during 2012. The project worked with national leaders of education (NLEs) and teaching school alliances, organised into regional clusters, to examine how they could work with and support other schools to close gaps in attainment and support the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals."
http://www.isospartnership.com/uploads/files/ctg-how-system-leaders-and-schools -can-work-together-full-report.pdf

Evaluation of the Pupil Premium – DfE Research Report DFE-RR282
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243919/DFE-RR282.pdf

Evaluation of the City Challenge programme - DfE Research Report DFE-RR215
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-city-challenge-programme

Closing the Gap: Test and Learn - The Department for Education
http://www.education.gov.uk/nationalcollege/testandlearn

Cracking the code: how schools can improve social mobility (October 2014)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cracking-the-code-how-schools-can-improve-social-mobility

An Updated Practical Guide to The Pupil Premium by Marc Rowland (Author)
Publisher: John Catt Educational Limited (November 2015)
ISBN: 978 1 909717 63 3

Sheffield Pupil Premium Action Research Group -Tackling Educational Disadvantage by Understanding What Works
http://www.nationaleducationtrust.net/Downloads/SheffieldPupilPremiumActionResearchGroup.pdf

Annex F: Links with Young and Yorkshire

North Yorkshire Community Plan & Council Plan	North Yorkshire Safeguard Children's Board Business Plan
Partner Agency Plans & Strategies	North Yorkshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy

North Yorkshire Children & Young People's Plan

Priority 1 Ensuring Education is Our Greatest Liberator	Priority 2 Keeping Families Together	Priority 3 Ensuring A Healthy Start to Life
Looked After Children Strategy	North Yorkshire Safeguard Children's Board Business Plan	North Yorkshire Safeguard Children's Board Business Plan
Statement of Learning Needs	Looked After Children Strategy	Looked After Children Strategy
Final Report of the Commission for School; Improvement	Early Year Offer	Early Year Offer
Closing the Gap Strategy	Youth Justice Strategic Plan	Mental Health & Emotional Well-being Strategy
	Domestic Abuse Strategy	SEND Strategy
	Parenting Support Strategy	Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy
	Young Person's Homelessness Strategy	Tobacco Control Strategy

What are the most effective ways to support disadvantaged pupils' achievement?

Research undertaken by NFER has identified seven building blocks that are common in schools which are more successful in raising disadvantaged pupils' attainment.

Department for Education

nfer Evidence for Excellence in Education

1. Whole-school ethos of attainment for all: Schools have an ethos of high attainment for all pupils and avoid stereping disadvantaged pupils as all facing similar barriers or having less potential to succeed.

2. Addressing behaviour and attendance: Schools ensure effective behaviour strategies are in place, respond quickly to poor attendance and provide strong social and emotional support, including through working with families.

3. High quality teaching for all: Schools emphasise 'quality teaching first' and provide consistently high standards by setting expectations, monitoring performance and sharing best practice.

4. Meeting individual learning needs: Staff identify each pupil's challenges and interests. They seek the best strategies to help each pupil make the next step in his or her learning. Schools provide individual support for specific learning needs and group support for pupils with similar needs.

5. Deploying staff effectively: Schools devolve responsibility to frontline staff, use their best teachers to work with pupils who need the most support and train teaching assistants to support pupils' learning.
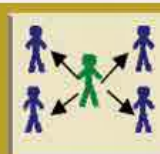
6. Data driven and responding to evidence: Teachers use data to identify pupils' learning needs, review progress every few weeks and address underperformance quickly. They have manageable Assessment for Learning systems, which provide clear feedback for pupils. Schools use evidence to make decisions about their support strategies.
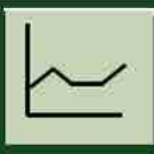
7. Clear, responsive leadership: Senior leaders set ever higher aspirations and lead by example. They hold all staff accountable for raising attainment, rather than accepting low aspirations and variable performance. They share their thinking and invest in staff training.

This briefing, by Caroline Sharp, Shona MacLeod, Amy Skipp and Steve Higgins, is based on national research with primary, secondary and special schools across England. A full research report and a summary for school leaders are also available from the Department for Education and NFER websites:
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/research
and www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/PUPP01

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