

**REPORT TO:** Children, Young People and Families Performance and Policy Board

**DATE:** 1 September 2014

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Young People and Families

**SUBJECT:** Education Reforms Update

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To provide Performance and Policy Board members with a summary of recent and forthcoming changes in education.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Members note the contents of this report.**

### **3.0 Early Years Curriculum**

3.1 A new, slimmed down early year's curriculum for 0-5 year olds, more focused on making sure children start school ready and able to learn, was introduced in September 2012. The number of early learning goals was reduced from 69 to 17. The learning goals are more closely aligned with Key Stage 1 to smooth the transition from reception class to Year 1.

3.2 The EYFS framework focuses on three prime areas of learning critical to making sure children develop healthily and happily. These areas form the foundations on which children can then master the basic literacy skills they need for school. These areas are: personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language.

### **3.3 Assessment**

The revised EYFS assessment arrangements identify if children have reached expectation. There are 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG's) and, at the end of reception, a judgement is made through continuous observations, against whether:

- The child has achieved the ELG - identified as **expected**
- The child has not reached the ELG - identified as **emerging**
- The child has exceeded the ELG - identified as **exceeding**

3.4 Prior to this final assessment, children's progress is continually monitored and assessed against ages and stages. This enables next steps to be planned for and early intervention targeted.

3.5 Two national indicators in respect of the profile are now being used:

3.5.1 A "**Good Level of Development**" (GLD). This is based on the percentage

of children reaching expected level or above, in the 3 Prime areas of learning (Communication & Language; Personal, Social & Emotional Development and Physical Development) as well as reaching expected or above in Literacy and Mathematics.

- 3.5.2 **Average total point score.** If a child is emerging in an ELG, they receive 1 point; if they are reaching expected level they receive 2 points and if they are exceeding the ELG, they receive 3 points. There are 17 ELG's in total.

#### 4.0 **2014 Primary National Curriculum**

4.1 The ambition is to align England with those countries that have the highest-performing school systems. The intention is that by raising standards in basics such as reading, grammar, fractions and basic scientific concepts, children will be equipped to do more advanced work once they start secondary school.

4.2 There is no statutory document to say 'how' to teach the new national curriculum; rather the curriculum sets out the 'what' with a high level of content understanding. As a result it allows greater freedom; how it is implemented will be down to individual schools. The Programmes of Study are generally shorter, setting out the core content, especially in foundation subjects. They are for key stage 1 and 2 maths and English; this is because they are considered to be especially important.

4.3 The National Curriculum defines the minimum that schools must teach – there is an expectation that each school will establish its own 'school curriculum' which includes the statutory requirements and more. This means that schools can still cover topics that are of particular interest to the children even though they are no longer in the national curriculum.

4.4 The government has maintained the requirement for the teaching of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, music, and physical education across all the primary years. In addition Foreign Languages becomes a **statutory subject at Key Stage 2 from September 2014.**

#### 4.5 **Time Line for Reform of the Primary National Curriculum and Assessment**

September 2014 - Implementation of the new National Curriculum, except Y2 and Y6 for English, Maths and Science. (The exception is because pupils in these years will be tested against the previous curriculum.)

- May 2015 - Final KS1 and KS2 tests based on the previous curriculum.
- September 2015 - Schools have a choice – continue to use EYFS Profile or implement the new baseline assessments for reception pupils.
- September 2015 - 2014 National Curriculum to be used in **all years** for all subjects.
- May 2016 - KS2 tests based on the new curriculum introduced.
- September 2016 - EYFS Profile becomes non-statutory and all schools implement new baseline assessment in YR.

## **5.0 Assessment and Accountability Framework**

5.1 National curriculum levels will be removed and not replaced. From September 2014, the new national curriculum will make no mention of levels. Teachers will continue to track pupils' progress and provide regular information to parents. How they do so will be for schools to decide, suited to the curriculum they teach. The Department for Education has not and will not prescribe a single system for ongoing assessment and reporting.

### **5.2 Floor Standards**

A new requirement is that 85% of pupils should meet the secondary readiness standard in all the floor standard measures (including writing teacher assessment). Therefore, 85% of pupils will have to achieve at least the expected standard (roughly equivalent to a current Level 4b) across reading, writing and maths. The bar has been raised significantly from the current floor target of 65% of pupils reaching Level 4c.

### **5.3 Progress Value added measures**

The precise score required on the progress measure will be set nearer to the introduction of the new measures in 2016. However, the value-added score required to be above the floor standard is expected to be between 98.5 and 99 (a value-added score of 100 represents average progress).

### **5.4 Key Stage 1 (KS1)**

Changes at KS1 are relatively minor. Children in Year 1 will continue to take the phonics screening check. Assessment at the end of KS1 will continue to be largely teacher-assessed, with judgments informed by children's performance in externally set and internally marked reading and maths tests. There will, however, be a new grammar, punctuation and spelling test introduced from summer 2016, and all tests will be updated to reflect the content of the new curriculum.

## **6.0 Summary of reforms in key stages 1 and 2:**

- Introduce more challenging tests at key stage 1 and 2 that will report a precise score rather than a level;
- Make detailed performance descriptors available to inform teacher assessment at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. These will be directly linked to the content of the new curriculum;
- Improve the moderation regime for KS1 and 2 ensuring that teacher assessments are more consistent

## **7.0 Secondary Curriculum**

### **7.1 General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) Reforms**

Pupils sitting GCSE exams in summer 2017 will be awarded a numerical grade, with one at the bottom and nine at the top, replacing the current A\* to

G grades. Where performance is below the minimum required to pass a GCSE, students will get a U.

7.2 Assessment by coursework will be scrapped in most subjects, although science experiments and geography fieldwork have been mentioned as exceptions, and courses will no longer be broken down into modules. This means that in most cases GCSE grades will be decided by a single final examination at the end of two years of study.

7.3 Content of the new style GCSEs extract from OCR

*Mathematics - a much larger, more 'challenging' GCSE in maths with more emphasis on solving problems which require multi-step solutions. There will be new topics such as ratio and proportions. Students will be expected to learn key mathematical formulae by heart.*

*English Language - students of the new GCSE in English language will be expected to read 'a wide range of texts' (there will be no set texts). There will be greater emphasis on accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.*

*English literature, which is no longer compulsory, focuses on four areas of 'classic literature'. Unseen texts will be a new requirement.*

7.4 Implementation

The reforms will mostly be introduced into classrooms in 2015, with pupils to sit the first new-style GCSE exams in 2017. English language, English literature and mathematics will be the first three subjects to be marked and graded under the new system. The bulk of the remaining GCSE subjects – such as sciences, history and modern languages - will change to the new grades from 2018. This means that pupils taking their GCSEs in 2017 face a hybrid set of results combining the old and new systems.

## **8.0 Accountability System for the secondary phase**

### **8.1 Progress 8 and Attainment 8**

At pupil level progress will be measured from the end of Key Stage 2 to the end of Key Stage 4. At school level, individual pupil data will be scaled up. Progress and attainment will be measured in the pupil's best grades in eight subjects (Progress 8 and Attainment 8) which are defined below.

8.2 Progress 8 subjects include the following:

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Basket 1 | English and mathematics (English will be double weighted if the pupil has taken English Literature) |
| Basket 2 | Any three EBacc subjects (these are likely to be science subjects)                                  |

Basket 3 Any three further subjects drawn from the list of approved GCSE subjects and vocational qualifications. English Literature is included in this set.

### **8.3 Disadvantaged Pupils**

Schools will be held to account for the progress and attainment of pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium. This will focus on:

- (i) Attainment;
- (ii) Progress;
- (iii) The in-school gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others
- (iv) The performance data published will include three year rolling averages for Pupil Premium cohorts.

### **8.4 Floor Standards**

There will be one floor standard and this will be based on the Progress 8 measure. Progress is currently measured the '1000' methodology. This will change and progress will be reported in terms of grades. Schools will fall below the floor standard if pupils on average, make an average of half a grade less progress across the 'Progress 8' subjects.

### **9.0 Implementation**

The reforms will be implemented in the 2015/16 academic year. This will mean the tables in 2016 will be based on the 'legacy' GCSEs. Tables in 2017 will be based on a combination of the revised English and English Literature and mathematics GCSEs and legacy GCSEs in other subjects.

10.0 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms will be reported in detail in November.

### **11.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The introduction of more challenging tests and the raising of the floor standards will have an impact on the performance of our schools. Schools not meeting the raised floor standards, if inspected, might be placed in an adverse Ofsted category with the expectation that they should become sponsored academies.

### **12.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

### **13.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

13.1 **Children and Young People**

Halton has high expectations and is ambitious for its children and young people. The proposed changes will be a challenge to schools. The council will continue to work with its schools through the Learning and Achievement Strategy to tackle the changes. School to school support and professional development opportunities will be provided in order to secure continuous improvement across all phases.

**13.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

N/A

**13.3 A Healthy Halton**

N/A

**13.4 Halton's Urban Renewal**

N/A

**14.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

14.1 The attainment and progress of vulnerable groups will kept under scrutiny and particular the use of the Pupil Premium to improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

**15.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None