

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services **DATE:** 5 December 2013
Scrutiny Panel

CONTACT OFFICER: Robin Crofts, Lead for Education (Cambridge Education
working with Slough Borough Council)

(For all enquiries) (01753) 787645

WARD(S): All Wards

PORTFOLIO: Cllr Pavitar Mann, Lead Member for Education and Children's
Services

PART I

FOR CONSIDERATION & COMMENT

VULNERABLE GROUPS AND EDUCATION

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide information about particular vulnerable groups and their education (those Not in Education, Employment or Training: NEET; Looked After Children: LAC; children missing education: CME and those pupils on Free Schools Meals: FSM).

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

- 2.1 That the Panel consider the information provided in the report, scrutinise what has been presented and make recommendations regarding future practice and developments in these areas of work.

3 Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

- **Economy and Skills**

The work in this area is to raise the achievements of these vulnerable groups and bring their attainment in line with that of their peer group. This is important in improving their life chances and increasing their prospects in the workplace.

- **Health and Wellbeing**

The focus on these vulnerable groups is to improve their life chances and well-being. The emphasis is on promoting their engagement, development and educational achievements to place them in a stronger position to gain from and contribute to their communities.

Cross Cutting themes:

Civic responsibility – successful young people will be in a stronger position to contribute to and gain from the community in which they live. Promoting success and leadership in young people can lead to residents who can play a dynamic role in implementing the Strategy and being champions in improving Slough for themselves and for the benefit of everyone.

Improving the image of the town – the focus of supporting vulnerable groups is to strengthen their opportunities and life chances. This in turn can lead to these groups making a stronger input to a successful community through their life and work contributions.

4 **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

The JSNA highlights the educational successes across the town and its relationship with other aspects of life. The JSNA examines outcomes at each life stage from entry into school, through transition to secondary school and work based learning. It gives particular attention to those who are not in education, employment and training (NEET) and those at risk of NEET with consideration to how this group can be supported for their own benefit and that of the community.

5 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are no direct financial implications.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	None	
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	
Health and Safety	None	
Employment Issues	To increase the employment opportunities of vulnerable groups through educational success and developing skills	
Equalities Issues	To close the gap between the achievements of vulnerable groups and their peers	
Community Support	None	
Communications		To promote the successes of vulnerable groups
Community Safety	None	
Financial	None	
Timetable for delivery	None	
Project Capacity	None	
Other	None	

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights and other Legal implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no need for an Equalities Impact Assessment.

6 Young People Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET)

6.1 The following information provides an outline of the current position in Slough in relation to young people who are NEET.

6.2 The Young People's Service has recently been reconfigured and a completely new management team put in place from October 2013. The Service, as one of its key priorities, has now started to give a focussed and targeted approach to reducing and sustaining low levels of NEETs in Slough.

6.3 Key Actions to meet this priority include:

- Improve usage of the existing management information system enabling a clear understanding of the NEET cohort to better respond to meeting their needs.
- Improve linkages between the NEET agenda with internal and external partners involved in Skills, Regeneration and the Local Economic Assessment/ development
- Link the Raising Participation agenda and work in relation to NEETs to identify young people at risk of being NEET early and working with partners to take remedial action that supports them to secure a smooth transition into further learning, training or employment.
- Through the development of a NEET/Raising Participation Age high level working group, identify gaps, themes and key issues that will enable a strategic and intelligence led approach to sustained low levels of NEET young people.
- Ensure the right opportunities and pathways are in place and marketed to young people, parents and relevant organisations to ensure young people have and are making informed choices about their futures.

**6.4 NEET figures in Slough (September 2013)
Academic Age 16 – 18 (Year Groups 12 -14) Summary:**

The September NEET percentage for Slough was 9.8% (2.2 % decrease on the previous month). This remains higher than the national average of 6.7%. The percentage in September of young people whose participation status is 'not known' was 38.2% which is below the national average of 43.0%. (The percentage of unknowns nationally is always high between September and November – outside these times this figure should be below 10%). Information about 'unknowns' is expanded on later in this report.

6.5 Young people in the Year Groups 12-14 cohort that are not currently engaging in education, employment, or training (NEET)

The three month average comparison between 2012/13 and 2011/12 show an improvement in performance for Slough in relation to NEET. However during this academic year NEETs in Slough have risen based on year-on-year comparisons as it was reported at 8.7% September 2012, compared to 9.8% in September 2013.

Percentage of Year Groups 12-14 who are NEET

	2012-13				2011-12			
	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sept-13	Ave	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sept-12	Ave
England	6.5%	7.2%	6.7%	6.8%	6.3%	6.6%	7.3%	6.7%
South East	5.7%	6.1%	8.2%	6.4%	5.5%	5.8%	7.3%	6.1%
Slough	13.9%	20.4%	9.8%	14.7%	15.9%	34.9%	8.7%	17.8%

6.6 Participation Data Year 12-14

The following table shows the total Year Groups 12-14 (16 to 19 year olds) cohort of young people and their activity in September 2012

Destination Type	Number of Young People
EET TOTAL	2610
In Education	2397
Sixth Form	1052
Further Education	0
Higher Education	1034
Part Time Education	292
Gap Year Students	8
Other Post 16 Education	7
In Employment	4
Apprenticeship	203
Employment combined with accredited training/part-time study	90
Employment with non accredited training	8
Employment without training	48
Temporary or Part-Time Employment	29
Self Employment (from April 13)	1
Self Employment combined with part-time study (from April 13)	27
Working not for reward combined with part-time study (from April 13)	0
In Training	0
EFA Funded Work Based Learning	0
Training Delivered Through the Work Programme	3
Other Training	3
Traineeships (from Sept 13)	0
Re-Engagement Provision (from April 13)	0
NEET Group	287
NEET – Available to the Labour Market	276
NEET – Unavailable to the Labour Market	11
Current Situation Not Known	1795

Not Known	1795
Cannot be Contacted	0
Refused to Provide Information	0
12-14 Cohort Total	4695

N.B. For the purposes of this exercise, the NEET figures shown in the table above are based on the actual number of young people, without the NEET adjustment applied by DfE, therefore NEET % is lower than that reported to DfE.

6.7 Year Groups 12-14 cohort whose current situation is unknown or where contact has been lost

At the beginning of September all local authorities are required by the Department for Education (DfE) to make the status of every young person in the Year 12-14 cohort 'unknown', (traditionally in Slough, this exercise has taken place in July). Authorities then are required to confirm the actual status of all the young people. It is expected that by end of November that 'unknowns' are less than the 10% of the actual cohort.

Following the completion of the Annual Activity Survey the level of 'not knowns' in February 2013 was 3.6%. This is currently in the peak period for 'not knowns' (September – November). In September 2013 the 'not knowns' were 38.2%, compared with 56.1% September 2012.

As a result of improved tracking processes and ensuring that the 'not known' levels are kept as low as possible, NEET levels increase as contact is established with young people that are subsequently not in education, training, and employment.

During September 'not knowns' in Slough were lower than the national and regional average for the South East: 62%; and lower than three of the closest match statistical neighbours: Hillingdon 43.6%, Redbridge 49.7% and Hounslow 58.8%.

Percentage of academic 16 – 18s whose participation status is 'not known'

	2012-13				2011-12			
	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sept-13	Ave	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sept-12	Ave
England	12.7%	16.6%	43.0%	24.2%	11.0%	11.9%	41.8%	21.5%
South East	12.1%	13.2%	62.8%	29.1%	15.5%	16.0%	52.6%	27.9%
Slough	42.8%	40.4%	38.2%	40.5%	65.1%	72.7%	56.1%	64.6%

6.8 Benchmarking Data – Sept 2013 National and Regional Averages, Statistical and Geographical Neighbours

The following table details the September 2013 NEET, 'not known', and in learning comparative data for the national and regional averages, in addition to statistical and geographical neighbours.

National and regional comparisons - Sept 2013 data

Name	Academic Age 16-18 (Y12-Y14) NEET %	Academic Age 16 - 18 (Y12-Y14) NK %	Academic Age 16 - 18 (Y12-14) In Learning %
National Average	6.7	43%	50.8%
Regional average	8.2	62.0%	31.9%
Slough	9.8%	38.2%	53.1%

6.9 Statistical neighbours

The DfE define our '*closest match*' statistical neighbours as Hillingdon, Luton, Hounslow and Redbridge. The remaining areas listed below are defined as '*somewhat close*' in a match.

Statistical neighbours Academic Age 16 – 18 (Year 12-14)

Name	Academic Age 16-18 (Y12-Y14) NEET %	Academic Age 16 - 18 (Y12-Y14) NK %	Academic Age 16 - 18 (Y12-14) In Learning %
Slough	9.8%	38.2%	53.1%
Hillingdon	3.2%	43.6%	53.8%
Luton	6.0%	36.2%	59.3%
Hounslow	6.2%	58.8%	37.9%
Redbridge	4.3%	49.7%	47.1%
Enfield	7.3%	63.0%	33.6%
Coventry	6.3%	32.6%	61.4%
Birmingham	11.0%	81.4%	14.2%
Blackburn with Darwen	6.4%	11.2%	80.0%
Bradford	5.9%	22.1%	70.9%
Wolverhampton	6.1%	18.9%	74.5%
Mean indicator statistical neighbours	6.3%	41.7%	53.3%

6.10 Geographical neighbours Academic Age 16 – 18 (Year 12-14)

Name	Academic Age16-18 (Y12-Y14) NEET %	Academic Age 16 - 18 (Y12-Y14) NK %	Academic Age 16 - 18 (Y12-14) In Learning %
Windsor & Maidenhead	4.3	23.6	70.0
Bracknell	9.5	39.4	48.8
South Bucks	3.9	19.9	74.7
Reading	9.6	39	50.2
Slough	9.8	38.2	53.1

6.11 September Guarantee

The September Guarantee is carried out annually during the months of April to September. The purpose of the September Guarantee is to ensure that every Year 11 and 12 has an appropriate offer of learning for the new academic year.

At the end of September, Slough reported 97.8 % of Year 11 (2013 cohort) had a confirmed offer of education or training and 88.1% of Year 11 (2012 cohort) had a confirmed offer of education or training. This is in comparison with national average for 95.4% Year 11 and 88.2% Year 12.

6.12 Characteristics of the NEET Group – September 2013

The following statistics relate to the 'actual' number of young people in the NEET group as at September 2013 (therefore the total number of young people appears lower than the NEET adjusted detailed earlier).

At the end of September, the combined total of young people with a NEET and Not Known status equated to 44.3 % of the overall Years 12-14 cohort of young people. Historically, the highest proportion of young people with a Not Known destination is with the Year 14 cohort. This continues to be the largest group of 'Not Knowns' accounting for just under half (46.9%) of the total Unknown. It is increasingly difficult to maintain contact with young people as they leave education and contact details become out-dated. In an effort to reduce these numbers – early tracking work (telephone calls and door stepping) have been undertaken over the autumn period with the Year 13 (rising Year 14) group of young people. Schools have provided information to the Local Authority of young people in Year 13 that have applied to University and this has enabled the LA to focus resources on contacting Year 13s without offers of learning. As a result of this, young people leaving education and without definite plans for September have been identified earlier and support has been put in place.

6.13 Actual numbers of young people year 12 -14 recorded as NEET and Not Known at the end of September 2013.

The number of Year 12 is low with only 43 young people who are NEET in this cohort. However the corresponding number of unknowns for this cohort remains

high and once unknowns are tracked may impact on the number of NEETS in this cohort.

6.14 Actual number of young people year 12 -14 recorded as NEET, EET and Unknown by year group

Destination Type	Number of Young People				% of 12-14 cohort
	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14	Total	
NEET	43	107	137	287	
Not Known	635	320	840	1795	
Total	678	427	977	2082	

Due to the time of year, the proportion of 16 year olds in the NEET group reports as low due to the majority of Year 12's having reached their 17th birthday. At the older end of the cohort, the same applies as the majority of Year 14's will have reached their 20th birthday and are no longer reported in the 12-14 cohorts. Slough Borough Council has a responsibility to continue to track and support young people with LDD until their 25th birthday.

6.15 NEET by Status – Availability/unavailability to the Labour Market

The NEET group is categorized into those young people that are 'available' to the labour market and those that are 'not available' to the labour market due to personal circumstances. Of the 287 NEET young people, 276, (96.5%) of the NEET group were available to the labour market. The remaining 11 young people (3.8%) were not available to the labour market of which 7 young people (63.6%) were unavailable due to pregnancy or being a teenage parent.

6.16 NEETs by Wards

In September, there were 8 out of the 14 Slough Wards with 20 + NEET young people. The main hotspots are Chippenham Meadows, Kedimister, Baylis and Stoke and Central with 40 % of the total NEET population residing in these 4 wards.

NEET Years 12-14 breakdown by ward:

Ward Name	Number of Young People
Upton	7
Colnbrook with Poyle	13
Langley	14
Farnham	15
Haymill	16
Wexham	19

Chippenham Central	21
Britwell	21
Foxborough	23
Chalvey	23
Chippenham Meadows	24
Kediminster	26
Baylis and Stoke	29
Central	36
TOTAL	287

6.17 Apprenticeships summary Quarter 4 August 2012 – July 2013

Ongoing monthly monitoring of apprenticeships applicant data is now undertaken by the Young People's Service. Particular emphasis is on the young people that are applying for apprenticeships but have been unsuccessful. Telephone contact is made with young people if they have unsuccessfully applied for 5+ apprenticeship vacancies to provide support and to ascertain what their current destination is – this is another way of identifying NEET young people that require support.

Starts across all ages group 16-24 and 25+ have increased by 3.7% (37) to 1026 against comparable neighbours' decrease of 4.1%. However, this is significantly lower than starts in year-on-year comparison. Additionally, there was no increase in 16 year olds.

The biggest increase was with the older age group 19+ of 6.4%, compared with an increase of 3.2% for 16-18 year olds. The gender breakdown within 16-18 year olds is almost an equal split between 51.8% females and 48.2% males. The increase for the 16-18 year olds is at intermediate level. The starts by LDD group have seen a significant growth for 16-18 year olds, rising from 8.1 to 17.3%.

Business admin, hairdressing and vehicle maintenance are the sectors with the highest starts for 16-18 year olds. Small firms continue to dominate apprenticeship recruitment (42%), while very large firms (5,000+ employees) account for 21%.

Number of starts by apprenticeships vocational areas for young people age 16-18

Sector	Number of starts
Business Admin	46
Hairdressing	19
Vehicle maintenance & repair	18
IT and telecommunication	14
Children's care learning and development	11

Customer service	10
Hospitality and catering	9
Active leisure and learning	9
Retail	7
Elector technical	5

The number of 16-18 active registrations has increased from 676 2011/12 (full year) to 838 in 2012/13.

7 **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND THEIR EDUCATION**

7.1 **Overview of LAC Population**

- at the present time, figures indicate that there are 204 children and young people (105 females and 99 males) who are 'looked after' (or LAC);
- 118 LAC are of school age;
- of school age children, 46 young people are placed and educated within Slough and 72 are placed and educated out of borough (OOB).

Table A shows the break down of the LAC population by ethnicity

Ethnic origin	Number of LAC	Ethnic origin	Number of LAC
White British	98	Asian or Asian British (Pakistani)	9
White other	17	Bangladeshi	1
Irish Traveller	1	Asian nay other background	7
Gypsy Roma	3	Asian/Asian British Sikh	1
Asian Indian	1	Black/black British Caribbean	4
White and black Caribbean	11	Black/black British African	6
White and black African	7	Black any other background	1
White and Asian	5	Any other ethnic group	4
Mixed background	8	Other mixed background	1
Black African	1	Asian or Asian British (Pakistani)	9
Asian or Asian British (Indian)	8	Bangladeshi	1

In addition, there are 82 children and young people from other local authorities who are currently placed in Slough.

7.2 **Priorities**

Research shows that:

- The educational attainment of looked after children continues to be considerably worse than the attainment of the rest of the school-age population. The Slough statistics are not recorded within the national data as the small numbers of children within each key stage are too small for meaningful comparison.

- Stability of placement correlated highly with educational attainment of LAC.
- Successful educational outcomes correlate with positive mental health outcomes, a reduction in risk of offending and positive health outcomes.
- Whilst young people entering care may not have special educational needs, advances in neuroscience indicate that the effect of disruptions to significant relationships can affect (or delay) brain development in relation to behaviour regulation and the skills that underpin engaging in learning. There are also hopeful findings, however, with neuro-scientific evidence indicating that children's brains have a higher capacity to compensate for any delay (known as brain plasticity) up to the age of 25 years.

All Local Authorities have a statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Improving the educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers is reliant on effective multi-agency working with colleagues in social care, education support services, schools and external partners. Government guidance on good practice for looked after children cites the use of a corporate parenting approach and virtual head to focus on promoting educational attainment and long term well-being.

When considering Slough's looked after children, the Slough Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers Strategy 2012-15 states that:

'Slough's Children's Partnership is committed to Children and Young People who are Looked After. In Priority 1, the Partnership will ensure that:

- *Looked after children do as well as their peer group in education, health and moving towards independent living. Providing additional support for Looked After Children and young people to ensure that historical gaps in achievement against all outcome areas are reduced. Corporate parenting activity by all agencies offers children and young people in care the best possible opportunities to do well in life. There is shared problem solving where individual or collective problems arise for Looked After Children.'*

In the year 2012 to 2013 we have sought to address practically the notion of corporate parenting within Slough by professionals from education and social care developing working relationships to form a virtual school. The Virtual School consists of a Head Teacher, 2 Education Support Workers (one for children under 16 years and one for 16-18 years), a specialist Educational Psychologist for looked after and vulnerable children, a School Improvement Consultant for vulnerable children and a Business Support Officer. This is complemented by designated teachers at the schools where the children attend and they work closely with the virtual school to provide corporate parenting on a practical level and promote positive educational outcomes for looked after children.

7.3 How priorities are being addressed to reduce the attainment difference

In September 2012, an analysis was conducted to evaluate practice to support the educational attainment of looked after children. Table B shows the needs identified in the analysis and the actions taken to address those needs during the year 2012 to 13.

Table B: Identified needs 2012 and progress to date

Needs/Challenges	Actions taken
Need for systems to gather accurate data which allows analysis as an overview, identifies LAC at risk of under attainment and how the pupil premium is being used by schools to target effective use of funds for LAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a data collection form which reflect changes in the education system and records relevant information such as end of key stage targets and pupil progress. • Termly data collection, development of databases which allow review. • Termly analysis by the School Improvement Consultant, Education Psychologist and the Virtual School Head to identify children who they are concerned about, agree on what action is needed and how it will be addressed. • Dissemination of information to schools and other agencies.
Events prior to and transitions whilst in care increase the vulnerability of LAC. Issue: Effective use of funds and professional time to reduce potential vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is a major protective factor in terms of children's resilience and has therefore been a focus for provision. • Reformulation of the designated teacher forum to include training, sharing of resources and good practice. All resources now held within the educational Psychology Service so that teaching staff in Slough and OOB schools can access it. • Continuation of the Promoting Resilience for LAC (or PRLAC) project with lead professionals for personal education plans. • Use of ring fenced funds by the virtual head to promote positive transitions whilst in care.
Raising awareness of new services for LAC on offer and promoting engagement with new data collection methods and raising the profile of LAC within professional practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head teachers, SENCo's, social care staff and designated teacher invited to a one day conference to launch changes in provision and to gain feedback on data collection form. • Standing article on LAC in Psychology Service newsletter which is distributed to all schools and key personnel from other agencies. • Increase communication on upcoming training and data collection, as requested by school staff.
Raising literacy and numeracy standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of ring fenced funds by the virtual head to promote academic attainment. • Ongoing partnership work between psychology Service and schools.
Ensuring that the adults supporting LAC are aware of recent developments in the psychological evidence base related to LAC and are able to apply it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of psychological research, approaches and resources through the designated teacher forum, foster carer training and fostering newsletter.

7.4 How our looked after children and young people are achieving

Below is a summary of the educational attainment of our looked after children from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4 who have been in care for at least 1 year on 31st August 2013. Comparisons with national data have been given for information where applicable, however, caution needs to be given to any direct comparison due to the small number of LAC in the Slough sample

Key Stage 1 Results

Number of pupils tested	Maths level 2 or above	English Level 2 or above	Reading Level 2 or above	Writing level 2 or above	Science level 2 or above
4	(3) 75%	(3) 75%	(3) 75%	(3) 75%	(3) 75%
	National % for LAC=71%	National %NA	National % for LAC = 67%	National % for LAC= 57%	National % NA

Key Stage 2 Results

Number of pupil tested	Maths level 4 or above	English level 4 or above	Reading level 4 or above	Writing level 4 or above	Science level 4 or above
8	(3) 37.5%	(4) 50%	(5) 62.5%	(4) 50%	(5) 62.5%
	National % for LAC= 56%	National % for LAC %= 60%	National % NA	National % NA	National % NA

Key Stage 3 Results

Number of pupil tested	Maths level 5 or above	English Level 5 or above	Science level 5 or above
4	1 pupils= 25%	1 pupil=25%	1 pupil=25%
	National % NA	National % NA	National % NA

Key Stage 4 Results

	No. of pupils	% of LAC	National figure for LAC 2012
5 or more A*-C grades or equivalent	3	23 %	37%
1-5 or more A*-G grades	9	69%	68%
5A*-C including English and Maths	2	15%	15%
Passed ESOL	3	23%	NA
Other Exams (entry level)	1	7.7%	NA
Exams not taken	1	7.7%	NA

Destination of 2012-2013 Year 11 Cohort

Of the 13 young people young people in this year's cohort:

- 11 have progressed to college
- 1 was successful in securing an apprenticeship at a local nursery
- 1 young person is presently not in Education, Training or Employment

Progression to University

4 young people have progressed to university this year. We now have a total of 7 young people at university as detailed below:

University	Course	End Date
Cambridge University	Bio Chemistry	2014

Kingston University	Marketing & Media	2014
Wolverhampton University	Film Studies	2014
West London University in Ealing Broadway	Accounting & finance BA course	2016
Weston-Super-Mare College	Foundation Degree.	2016
Bristol University	Media	2016
Brighton	Engineering	2016

7.5 How the gaps in attainment are being closed between LAC and their peers

- A programme of training of key school staff and foster carers. All training is now evaluated. Results show that attendance to the forum increased in the last year and training is adding value to professional practice within schools.
- Providing feedback and challenge on use of the Pupil Premium and pupil outcomes through consultation with school improvement consultants, via personal education plan meetings.
- Using the new data collected, a sustained programme has been implemented to raise awareness of the needs of LAC and provide feedback and support for individual schools and children.
- Using existing strengths and resources within the Borough. Autumn 2013, piloting of an early intervention approach for children and young people at risk of not making age expected progress in association with the Psychology Service. This tells us whether LAC are making expected progress and triggers intervention when they are not. This information is given to the Psychology team, who have a good working relationship and regular contact with schools in Slough and triggers the young person being raised with the SENCo, review of progress and support to date. In addition, assistance is offered for further intervention, and guidance is given on evaluation and evidencing effectiveness. The schools where students are placed out of borough are also offered telephone consultations to promote early intervention. Individual pupil progress data is being recorded and tracked.

Summary of Early Intervention tracking data (Summer 2013)

Key stage	Number in cohort	Achieving at least expected progress		Achieving Expected progress		Not achieving age expected progress	
		In borough	Out of borough	In borough	Out of borough	In borough	Out of borough
1	12	4	5	3	1	0	0
2	24	2	12*	4*	1	4*	1
3	19	0	8 *	3*	7	1	6
4	20	2	2*	5	8	3*	4*

- *please note, where figures do not add up to the total, this means that assessment indicates a range of scores with regard to expected progress across national curriculum subjects (achieving expected progress in English and Maths but not Science, for example). The summary therefore represents overall performance across subjects with the star to indicate partial variation across subjects.*

7.6 Challenges and issues for 2013 to 14

There remain some challenges in collecting data and ensuring the best standards of provision for LAC. The table below identifies those challenges and actions being taken to address them:

Challenge/Issue	Actions being taken
Data return	Funding used for Data Manager post, creating closer links with schools and working with schools to improve return rates
Quality of data achievement and use of pupil premium	SI consultant feedback, Lead professionals providing challenge within PEP meetings
Working in line with educational reform (0 to 25 year remit)	Specialist EP piloting and evaluating the use of the Education Health and Care plan for LAC
Maintaining effective tracking given the rapid rate of change within the population	Data Manager: management of data base and access to ICS improving liaison and information flow between social care and education
Tracking and monitoring LAC from other local authorities who are placed in Slough	Extension of piloted database to include this group
Increased focus on early intervention for early years LAC	Virtual school to invite a member of the Early Years Team to participate in Corporate Parenting Interventions
Effecting change within schools Autonomy of Schools versus LA statutory obligation	Consultation with School Improvement Consultant to identify areas which need to be addressed to comply with best practice for LAC Evaluation of PEP meeting practice and coaching to address the changing relationship between schools and the LA Improving communication links with the LAC social care team regarding individual pupil progress and expected progress

8. **FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) AND ATTAINMENT**

- 8.1 The following figures provide baseline information for 2012 which will need to be updated over the months to come when results for 2012-13 are validated. This information is included as it is an important component of Priority 4 of the Children and Young People's Plan: High Quality and Effective Education, which relates to FSM and particularly in the areas of Montem and Foxborough.

National figures 2012:

36.3% of children on Free School Meals (FSM) achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs, including English and Maths, compared to 62.6% of children not on Free School Meals.

Slough figures 2012:

The figure for Slough pupils on Free School Meals is 43.6%, compared to 74.8% not on Free School Meals, for pupils achieving 5+ A* to C inc E&M.

	Nursery and Primary	Secondary	Special	All Schools
Slough: Percentage of pupils eligible for FSMs	15.8	12.9	36	15 Lowest of all statistical neighbours: range 15 to 32.1
England: Percentage of pupils eligible for FSMs	18.1	14.8	35.8	16.9

	Slough	Slough percentages	Nationally
Entitled for FSM	5,400	25% of roll	21% of roll
Registered and claiming: 'known to be eligible and claiming'	3.900	18% of roll	18% of roll
Taking FSM	?		14%
Not claiming	1.500	28% of those eligible: 11 th highest nationally in line with N.E. Lincs, Wokingham and Windsor/Maidenhead	14% of entitled not claiming

2012 results: FSM pupils:

Primary

- 14 out of 25 primaries have improved performance over the last 4 years
- FSM gap has narrowed in 11 schools
- In 4 schools the FSM pupils are doing better than their peers: Colnbrook, Montem, Priory and Khalsa

Secondary

- 5 out of 7 non-selective schools have improved over the last 4 years
- 4 out of 7 have significantly narrowed the gap in the last 4 years
- 3 secondaries have higher results with FSM pupils than their peers.

8.2 Closing the gap between those on Free School Meals (FSM) and their peers (Key Stage 2 and 4)

	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
a. Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stages 2 (level 4+ in E&M).				
FSM	44	55	57	64
No FSM	72	76	77	81
Gap	28	21	20	17
b. Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stages 4 (5+ A*-C inc E&M).				
FSM	30.8	33.6	38.7	35.6
No FSM	64.3	68.4	72	71
Gap	33.5	34.8	33.3	35.4

Key Stage 2 percentage attaining Level 4 or above in EN and MA 2012

	FSM pupils	All others	Percentage point gap
Slough	64	81	17
SE England	60	82	22
England	66	83	17

Key Stage 4 percentage attaining 5+ A*-C GCSE including EN and MA 2012

	FSM pupils	All others	Percentage point gap
Slough	35.6	71.0	35.4
SE England	29.9	63.2	33.3
England	36.4	62.8	26.4

Specifically in relation to Free School Meals pupils there has been increasing emphasis on these pupils receiving healthy and good quality food to promote their physical development, well being and educational attainment and progress by the following steps:

- Identifying those who are eligible for FSM through the electronic checking system run by the School Services Team: currently all but two schools use this service
- Encouraging the take up of school meals as only at 35% in Slough schools
- Encouraging the take up of free school meals where eligible (of those eligible, 25% are not taking up this availability, compared with 14% nationally)
- Providing healthy, balanced and attractive meals
- Using electronic systems to monitor what children are eating
- Supporting parents in being aware about healthy eating options
- Providing supplementary food through breakfast clubs, and after school clubs which emphasise healthy and responsible eating and physical activities and exercise
- Preparing for the availability of universal school meals for all Key Stage 1 pupils in the near future.
- Focused use of the additional funding through the Pupil Premium to boost the achievement of those pupils on FSM

8.3 Schools are very clear about their responsibilities to provide high quality and effective education. They are very alert to the importance of having strong and sustainable schools with high educational standards, particularly for vulnerable groups, such as those with special educational needs (SEN), pupils on free school meals (FSM), looked after children, particular ethnic groups, travellers and forces children. They are aware that these areas of responsibility are the focus of Ofsted inspections and that they will be viewed as failing unless they succeed across all of these aspects.

8.4 Schools take seriously their need to be responsible for their self improvement and that mutual support between schools is a useful approach in increasing robustness. This is now leading to many schools in Slough converting to academy status as an important part of the solution to strengthening schools and raising standards. The strength of multi-academy trust arrangements is seen as a secure route to consolidating their position and building in sustainability and this is the route being taken by Montem as a school requiring improvement and Foxborough which is in special measures. Montem is becoming an academy on 1 December 2013 and Foxborough on 1 January 2014.

9 EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

All children, including those who are vulnerable, must be provided with education. The following sections summarise the steps taken to ensure pupils are provided with education and remain in education.

9.1 **Excluded Pupils**

The number of pupils permanently excluded from Slough schools remains low by national standards. This is a result of a number of initiatives, including monitoring pupils at risk of exclusion through the primary Behaviour Panel and secondary PEAR (Pupils Educationally at Risk) Panel and then taking action to prevent exclusions. This may include managed transfers and the use of hard to place funding to assist with the integration of pupils in new schools and the provision of transport in exceptional cases.

Permanent Exclusions	Slough 2011/12	National Data 2011/12	Slough 2012/13	Slough 2013/14 to date
Primary	0	(0.02)	0	0
Secondary	9 (0.09)	(0.14)	10 (0.10)	0

(DfE Published Data for 2011/12 and Slough data 2012/13 and 2013/14)

9.2 **Alternative Education**

Alternative Education is provided for children who are school age but not at a school. There is a range of provision available at Haybrook College and East Berkshire College.

The data below is a snapshot from 19 November 2013

Number of Students	Current Age Group	Alternative Education Provider
22	Year 11	Activate*
34	Years 9 – 11	Springboard *
8	Years 9 & 10	Interim *
8	Years 11	Virtual School *
6	Years 2, 8, 10, 11 & 12	Hospital School *
9	Years 9 – 11	Other*
17	Year 11	East Berkshire College

* Haybrook College

9.3 **Children Missing Education (CME)**

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to identify as far as possible children who are not receiving education and provide education as soon as possible. The Pupil Tracking Officer (PTO) works with schools, admissions and attendance staff and also with other teams in education and other agencies to achieve this. Slough's staff guide on CME is in Appendix 1. It explains to staff how they should respond if they come across a pupil who appears to be out of school. The number of pupils that have

required tracking by the PTO has fallen in recent years and this is likely to be a result of systems and procedures becoming embedded.

Academic Year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 to date
Pupils Tracked	228	151	26

On the 19 November 2013 Ofsted published a new report on Pupils Missing Out on Education. This makes a number of recommendations for schools and Local Authorities, many of which are already in place in Slough. An action plan is being prepared to implement the remaining recommendations.

9.4 Home Educated Pupils

Some parents decide to educate their children at home instead of sending them to school. The document in Appendix 2 describes the procedures that are followed. This document was reviewed in September 2013 and is also available on Slough Borough Council's intranet. Once parents have made a decision to home educate, the Attendance Service monitors how the education is provided, as far as possible within the current guidance and regulations. All pupils will receive a monitoring visit each year, providing parents consent to this.

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Number of Pupils Educated at Home (Year End Unless Shown)	55	26	40	29	43 (November 2013)

9.5 Pupils Absent From School Including Persistent Absentees

Schools notify the Attendance Service when pupils' attendance causes concern. The Attendance Service assists schools in improving attendance by either issuing penalty notices or beginning a prosecution. There are 2 indicators for absence. The first is overall absence. This is the percentage of sessions missed at all schools in Slough during a specific period of time. The second is persistent absence. This is the percentage of pupils who have missed more than 15% of sessions at school in an academic year. The absence rates in Slough were either at or below national levels in 2011/12. This is the most recent full year that national data is available. It is expected that Slough will compare well with 2012/13 national data, when this is released in 2014 and absence for the 2013/14 academic year so far is similar to the same period last year.

	Slough 2011/12	National Data 2011/12	Slough 2012/13
Primary Overall Absence %	4.4	4.4	4.7
Primary Persistent Absence %	2.8	3.1	2.6
Secondary Overall Absence %	4.7	5.9	4.7
Secondary Persistent Absence %	4.5	7.4	3.6

(DfE Published Data for 2011/12 and Slough Data 2012/13)

10 **Conclusion**

10.1 Increasingly, at a national and local level emphasis has been placed on supporting vulnerable groups. Particular attention has been placed on improving educational attainment and progress. The government expects the educational gaps to be closed between vulnerable groups and their peers. This is being addressed in Slough with vigour and these gaps are being reduced. This will continue to be the focus in the future for the benefit of the individual pupils, the various vulnerable groups and the benefit it brings to the community.

10.2 Currently the priorities for action are:

- Attendance at school to support learning
- Social and educational inclusive approaches to maintain pupils in mainstream schools
- High quality and effective education
- Attainment and progress
- Knowing the whereabouts of all of our children
- Safeguarding and promoting children and young people's well-being
- Productive engagement of young people beyond their statutory schooling through programmes of education, employment and training

10.3 The Members are asked to note the achievements in this area of work and support its continuation related to the benefits brought to the community.

11 **Appendices**

1 - Children Missing Education (Staff Guide)

12 **Background Papers**

None