

Cumbria LEA

Education Department Strategic Plan - Summary

The Education Department Strategic Plan sets a clear agenda for the Department over the period 1999-2002. It is subject to annual review. The key elements of the plan are the Department's vision and values, its aims, priorities for improvement, supporting activities and monitoring, review and reporting arrangements. These are detailed in this summary.

Aims 1999-2002

- ◆ To promote and support school improvement and improve the standards achieved by pupils in school
- ◆ To ensure effective support for children and young people to enable them to make the most of the educational opportunities open to them
- ◆ To increase lifelong learning opportunities for the people of Cumbria irrespective of age or background
- ◆ To apply the principles of best value and achieve efficient and effective use of resources in pursuit of these aims

Vision and Values

We believe that education is a liberating force that enables people to develop their social, intellectual, physical, spiritual and economic well-being.

We strive to help the people of Cumbria achieve their full educational potential and so enjoy the best quality of life and maximum employment opportunities whilst maintaining environmental and community well-being.

Our overriding purposes are to enhance educational opportunity, to raise the educational achievements of all learners and to help create outward looking communities which foster a continued desire to learn in the people of Cumbria.

In working towards this vision we will be guided by a number of core values and beliefs. These are:

- The interests of the learner will be at the heart of policy development and implementation.
- Educational opportunities should be available for people of all ages irrespective of background.
- All learners will be equally valued and all should benefit from access to high quality educational opportunities.
- Educational opportunity and provision will be maximised when strong partnerships are promoted involving learners, parents, governors, school staff, dioceses, business and local communities.

This vision is ambitious. It presents great challenges not least because resources will inevitably be limited. But it provides a sense of purpose for our work over the coming years. We must acknowledge that maximum progress towards it will only be made if we work effectively, corporately within the County Council and with other partners who share this ambition. We must also acknowledge the collective wisdom that exists amongst the learning communities of Cumbria. We have no monopoly of good sense and no automatic right to provide or lead. We are, though, in a unique position, which potentially gives us significant influence and the responsibility to draw together those who share these aspirations.

We believe that this vision for the Education Department is entirely in accordance with, and supportive of, that for the whole County Council.

Education Department Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Arrangements

The Department fully supports the need to be monitored and have its work evaluated externally. The following summarises arrangements in place within the Department for internal monitoring, evaluation and review.

Mechanisms for self-review currently in place or being developed:

- An annual survey (each Summer Term) providing all schools with a formal opportunity to comment on the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of services provided by the LEA in support of school improvement. First survey Summer 1999.
- A "health-check" pre-Ofsted inspection of the LEA partly through external review by District Audit in the Summer and Autumn 1999.
- Rolling programme of unit (or theme) reviews undertaken jointly by service staff, other Education Department staff, school representatives and service users. The draft programme for these reviews is:

1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
1. SMT and management effectiveness	1. Consultation arrangements	1. Governor Support
2. Communications with schools	2. The Inspector/Adviser Service	2. Education Welfare Service

- Regular performance monitoring by the Departmental Senior Management Team. This monitoring will include:

Monitoring Report	Frequency
Schools giving cause for concern	Half-termly
Summary of themes emerging in main findings in Ofsted reports	Annually
GCSE, GCE and end of Key Stage tests for the whole LEA, with benchmark comparisons against national averages, statistical neighbours and year-on-year change	Annually
Performance across the LEA against EDP targets	Annually
Individual school performance against QCA benchmark tables	Annually
Individual school performance against statutory targets	Annually
Performance of pupils from ethnic minorities	Annually
Performance against Audit Commission indicators	Annually
LEA revenue expenditure against budget	Quarterly
Staff absence monitoring	Quarterly
Investors in People indicators	Termly
Complaints	Annually



Education Service

Strategic Plan Summary

July 1999

Priority 1

Improvement in Strategic Management and Leadership

- 1.1 Develop departmental audit, monitoring and review processes
- 1.2 Review and develop the Departmental Strategic Plan to cover the wider work and interests of the LEA
- 1.3 Implement *Fair Funding* regulations and develop the LMS Scheme
- 1.4 Prepare for Ofsted inspection of the LEA
- 1.5 Review departmental structure, personnel, IT, IIP and communication needs
- 1.6 Lead and/or support Education Action Zone bids and pursue other opportunities that draw in additional resource which supports the Department's aims
- 1.7 Implement the Infant Class Size Plan
- 1.8 Oversee, monitor and contribute to the promotion of the Asset Management Plan

Priority 3

Improvement in Access to Education

- 3.1 Establish a School Organisation Committee and produce a School Organisation Plan
- 3.2 Review and improve collaborative arrangements between admission authorities
- 3.3 Rolling programme of access improvements for pupils with disabilities
- 3.4 Support for a review of school and college transport policy and practice

Priorities and Activities in the Education Department Strategic Plan

Priority 4

Improvement in the Provision of Services for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

- 4.1 Make full timetable provision for all pupils excluded for more than 15 days
- 4.2 Implement, monitor and review the Behaviour Support Plan
- 4.3 Implement the SEN "Programme for Action"
- 4.4 Implement the action plan following the District Audit report on SEN
- 4.5 Expand and develop links with Health, Social Services and other agencies

Only activities which will begin in 1999 or have already begun are included at this stage. Recurring, pre-existing activity is omitted.

Priority 2

School Improvement

- 2.1 Standards of literacy
- 2.2 Standards of numeracy
- 2.3 Performance in external qualifications at Key Stage 4
- 2.4 The quality of teaching and learning
- 2.5 The quality of management and governance
- 2.6 The inclusiveness of education

Priority 5

Improvement in Lifelong Learning

- 5.1 Lead on the establishment of the Lifelong Learning Partnership and contribute to the production and implementation of the Lifelong Learning Development Plan
- 5.2 Support the work of the Early Years and Childcare Partnership and the development of integrated early education and childcare services and Early Excellence Centres
- 5.3 Support for nursery schools in the introduction of local management
- 5.4 Expand the *New Start* initiative and provide increased educational opportunities for children leaving care and for young offenders
- 5.5 Review the work of the Awards Unit to align it with emerging statutory requirements
- 5.6 Help shape and respond to national and local initiatives relating to the future of the Youth Service
- 5.7 Model and disseminate alternative forms of post 16 funding