

1 Introduction

The School Organisation Plan (SOP) is a statutory plan in which the Local Education Authority (LEA) sets out a five-year plan for monitoring and reviewing its statutory responsibilities in respect of the provision of school places. The plan has to be reviewed in the summer on a three-year basis and submitted to the School Organisation Committee (SOC) for approval after a period of statutory consultation.

Following the LEA Ofsted report in February 2002, a new wholly-owned company of the City Council, 'Education Leeds' was established and now delivers proposals in respect of school provision, on behalf of the LEA, to the Executive Board of the City Council and to the School Organisation Committee.

Following new guidance from the DfES implemented in June 2003, the format and content of the School Organisation Plan has been revised. The plan begins by establishing the vision for education in Leeds in the context of school organisation. Following an overview of the demographic context, the plan provides a sectoral analysis of school organisation issues outlining the principles underpinning the planning of school places, and covers both actions achieved since the last published plan and future actions for the period 2003-2008. The plan provides a summary, by wedge, of the need for future school organisation actions. This is followed by tables of individual school data, Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision and appendices of other relevant data.

2 The vision for education in Leeds

Leeds is a world-class city and deserves to have a world class education system. We need all our schools to be good schools, improving schools and inclusive schools... places where every child and every young person can be successful and high achieving... whatever it takes!

We know that learning is the key to health, wealth and happiness and that people are our most valuable resource. Education Leeds aims to help all schools raise educational standards through a coherent and focused approach to school improvement, working with our colleagues in the City Council and our partners across the city to we aim promote regeneration, support community cohesion and provide lifelong learning opportunities for all.

The vision for education in Leeds is shaped and influenced by strongly held local and national opinion and a number of important strategic policies. The Council's Corporate Plan '*Closing the Gap 2002-5*' is founded on the core values of countering poverty and equality of opportunity and partnership. It focuses its attention on five key themes, of which "making the most of people" sets a very clear agenda for education services in the city.

The Education Leeds' 2003-6 Strategic Plan takes that corporate vision and translates it into the priorities for driving through improvement in how we deliver education services to the Leeds community. Four priorities will shape our business over the next three years:

- ★ improving leadership and management;
- ★ improving service efficiency and effectiveness;
- ★ improving our performance management systems; and
- ★ improving our resource management systems.

... and in the first year our focus towards schools is:

- ★ delivering the primary review;
- ★ delivering the secondary and post-16 review;
- ★ building partnerships and federations; and
- ★ improving behaviour and attendance.

The Council's Education Development Plan (EDP), plays an important role in identifying and integrating the resources and activities dedicated to making step changes to our school improvement strategy. It prioritises for the LEA and other stakeholders the work needed to ensure that the high local expectations for children and communities are met. The Council has produced a new EDP2 for 2003-2007 following the review of its first year, to take account of the ever-changing context for schools and learning and to ensure the quality and effectiveness of its education provision.

The EDP2 priorities address areas of concern determined locally and embrace the national agenda for educational reform. They are based on a commitment to:

- ★ raising the attainment and achievement of pupils in all Key Stages;
- ★ closing the attainment gap for groups of pupils: Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African Caribbean pupils, boys and children in public care;
- ★ ensuring high quality education in Early Years and the Foundation Stage;
- ★ supporting multi-agency working and community cohesion;
- ★ meeting the specific needs of individual children, for example Special Education Needs (SEN), gifted and talented, vulnerable or disadvantaged;
- ★ improving school management and governance through professional development and fostering of collaborative working;
- ★ addressing the under-performance of schools; and
- ★ ensuring city-wide coherence in the provision of school places and securing a more diverse secondary system.

The first year of EDP2, 2002/3, saw major strides forward in key activity areas and new initiatives, such as the primary and secondary reviews and Investment for Reform projects, which provide a very sound springboard for the SOP and work of the SOC in the next few years. The new EDP2 2003-2007 takes these projects forward and further embeds the principles across primary and secondary phases.

Further impetus for the LEA in reforming its strategies was the OfSTED and Audit Commission Inspection report of July 2002. This identified key strengths in several areas including leadership of Education Leeds, financial support services and quality of advice to elected members. Areas that were still not satisfactory and link clearly to the SOP, were aligning resources for SEN to pupils' needs, asset management planning, effectiveness of services to support school improvement and provision for Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) pupils. The LEA has a clear plan to address the recommendations made by Ofsted, dovetailing with the EDP in terms of school improvement issues.

There are a range of education plans which provide detailed strategies for dealing with specific challenges within the priorities outlined above - the Inclusion and Special Educational Needs Strategy, the Behavioural Support Plan, the Race Equality Action Plan, the Early Years and Childcare Development Plan, the Asset Management Plan and as importantly, plans managed through other stakeholders in the City, into which education has a significant input, such as the Learning Plan and the Learning and Skills Council Corporate Plan.

The School Organisation Plan is part of a substantial and inter-dependent strategic approach which sets clear priorities and responsibilities for all contributors and enables Leeds to maximise its full potential in delivering a world-class education service.