

## **Impact of the 14-19 strategy on those in most deprived areas or most deprived circumstances**

### **Introduction**

This briefing, on the impact of 14-19 strategy on those most disadvantaged and vulnerable to underachievement, complements evidence presented in East Sussex APA 2007 and the review of the CYPP 2006-07.

### **Areas of deprivation**

East Sussex is a poor county with pockets of high deprivation. In 2002, only three other counties in England had a gross value added (GVA) per head that was lower than East Sussex. 28% of children in East Sussex live in low income households. Hastings has 46% of all children in the borough living in low income households. Eastbourne is the second most deprived area in this respect with more than 6,000 children (39%) living in income deprived households.

### **Young people in deprived circumstances**

East Sussex analyses the performance of a wide range of groups identified as vulnerable to underachievement, this includes: young people living within areas of high disadvantage; young people entitled to free school meals; learners with learning difficulties and disabilities; looked after children and care leavers; teenage mothers; young people from some minority ethnic groups and dual heritage backgrounds; young offenders; young people who misuse substances; young people who are mobile and those who are not in education, employment or education (NEET); and young carers.

Learners entitled to free school meals (FSM) form a significantly large group (15.5%) of learners in East Sussex (489 in Y11 2006). In January 2007 just over 2200 children and young people had statements for special educational needs (SEN); there were just over 4100 children at school action plus and just over 7100 children at school action under the SEN Code of Practice. The proportion of the school aged population with a statement of special educational needs maintained by East Sussex has, for some time, been below the national average.

There are 445 (ages 0-18) children who are looked after by the County Council. 55% are boys, 45% are girls, 12% are from ME groups (9% of whom are of dual heritage). 7% have severe disabilities. Overall there has been a 4.6% reduction in East Sussex teenage pregnancy rates towards the national target of 50% reduction by 2010. The rate has risen slightly in Hastings, but dropped in Eastbourne. The number of teenage mothers is estimated at 420, of whom we know 349. No single minority ethnic group has a significant population in East Sussex as a whole and no ethnic minority forms a significant population within a district, town or borough - in fact, only six ME groups had more than 20 pupils. There is evidence of increases in Eastern European migrants and asylum seekers. They tend to be resident in areas of high deprivation, notably Hastings and Eastbourne, and are represented in larger proportions in specific schools. The Youth Offending Team works with around 700 young offenders; most of those are between the ages of 14-19 and the majority of these are in Eastbourne and Hastings. In the past year, there has been an overall increase in substance misuse of young people presenting for treatment, from a total of 351 to over 400, with a significant hotspot in Eastbourne Downs PCT. High levels of mobility occur in the most disadvantaged areas, frequently with young people experiencing multiple problems. 8% of young people in East Sussex are NEET, 4.53% are unknown (average figures November 2006 - January 2007). It is difficult to collect data on young carers and one of the areas of focus has been a review of our young carers strategy. We have recently spoken to all headteachers about improved strategies for identifying these young people and monitoring their progress. This complements a recent focussed visit by the School Improvement Service (SIS) to every school to discuss young carers' progress.

Many young people experience multiple problems and this increases the likelihood of poor outcomes. However no specific combination of problems occurs significantly more than others.

### **Key Issues –young people in significant areas of deprivation**

In 2006, 56% of students achieved 5+A\*-C. Analysis by local area shows considerable variation in performance across the county. For example the figure for schools in Hastings is 41.5% compared with 60.8% for the rest of the county; a performance gap of 19%. Young people who are NEET are similarly concentrated in specific areas namely the urban coastal strip: 8.76% of young people in Eastbourne are NEET and 11.84% of young people in Hastings. Historically there has also been a large gap in performance between schools in Eastbourne and the rest of the county, however the last three years have seen year on year improvement that has closed the gap in 2006. These improvements are also evident in Eastbourne at 19 at both L2 and L3.

### **Key Issues – young people in most deprived circumstances**

There are large disparities at all ages between the attainment of children entitled to and those not entitled to free school meals. The under achievement of this vulnerable group has been highlighted to all schools over the past few years and pupil with FSM status are identified and monitored in the annual target setting exercise

Participation in EET for young people with Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD) is 78% across the county but significantly lower in Hastings (72%); close to a third of the total NEET group are LDD. Transition for such young people has not been equally well supported in all areas of the county. Young offenders in EET averages 66.5%. Participation in EET of 19 year old care leavers has been consistent (at 72-73%). Participation of young mothers in EET is low (20%) with the vast majority identifying themselves as not available for EET.

### **Barriers – higher attainment and participation**

Data analysis and research into student attainment and achievement have identified barriers that are of particular significance in our endeavours to raise standards and realise the positive outcomes of the ECM agenda for all our young people. The barriers that present some of the greatest challenges and have the most significant negative impact are:

- A focus on the outcomes for cohorts of learners at the attainment thresholds can hide variations in attainment across groups of learners and across geographical areas. This can mean that underachieving learners are not sufficiently well identified. Learners who experience significant disadvantage are more likely to make slower progress and experience a widening gap in attainment, between themselves and their peers, as they move through the school.
- Limited family engagement in the child's education directly through the school and indirectly through support structures at home is a significant barrier to learners making good progress and progression to FE and employment. In a significant number of cases, the barriers faced by these young people are compounded by an inter-generational history of NEET.
- Many young people experience multiple problems; these are our most disadvantaged young people and they face the greatest barriers to engagement in EET. They are much less effective at negotiating transitions and making the best choices and their chances of experiencing poor outcomes are high. However, no specific combination of problems occurs significantly more than others. There is a lack of a common pattern to their difficulties, to which a blueprint solution can be applied; this is a major challenge to service providers.
- Not all learners can access a curriculum that provides a broad and relevant mix of opportunities. The impact of this is felt most severely by those who are most disadvantaged.
- 80% of employers in East Sussex are small/medium employers (SMEs); engaging and forming meaningful links between schools and workplaces presents additional

challenges. Providing all young people with high quality work-related learning and work-based experiences is a considerable challenge and there are not sufficient opportunities for all to progress to sustainable employment particularly those young people who do not wish to continue in education and training after the age of 16. This is compounded by the often unrealistic expectations young people have of the jobs that will be available to them and reluctance from many such employers to engage young people, particularly those who are vulnerable to underachievement.

- Too many young people who are NEET experience significant challenge with finding suitable permanent accommodation. Many of these are not known to support services and are “sofa-surfing”.

### **Strategies to secure improvement**

Key strategies have been identified, these include:

- developing flexibility in the delivery of the 14-19 strategy: ensuring entitlement for all, but the greatest access / support for those who need it most. These individuals require timely, well-co-ordinated, highly personalised solutions and support and long term sustained commitment
- developing preventative systems: mitigating the risks associated with negative outcomes before they arise; doing more to build young people's resilience and intervening as soon as possible when problems arise
- co-ordinated multi-agency prevention and intervention, ensuring infrastructures are developed to personalise services around a young person's needs and developing sufficient local capacity to make a high quality, enduring, personalised response. The building blocks for this multi-agency work are the 14-19 development team, the SIS and the developing Youth Development and Support Service teams
- closing the gap strategies focussing on personalising learning, taking a structured and responsive approach to each learners progress and engaging parents in that process.
- conducting and documenting high quality evaluations of our actions to provide a strong evidence base for systematically identifying what works; this leads to the development of a framework for targeted, early interventions that have sustainable impact.
- proposals to the DfES to develop a federated solution in 3 Hastings schools to develop high quality teaching and learning to close the attainment gap.

To facilitate implementation of these strategies reviews of core policies and activities have been undertaken with stakeholders including:

- the 14-19 Education, Employment & Training Strategy which has been further developed and a NEET Overview developed to focus the strategy on those most disadvantaged and particularly vulnerable to poor outcomes. The NEET Overview draws on an earlier planning framework which provided a tool for Connexions to engage with schools to share the challenge of the NEET agenda. To enhance the impact of activity with regard to NEET prevention and reduction there is a tight focus around three strands of action providing a focus for multi-agency work and a clear line of sight through the delivery chain. Within each of the strands our activities involve identifying and addressing the needs of those already experiencing poor outcomes and monitoring to identify those more likely to experience poor outcomes in the future and intervening early.
- IAG provision as part of a contract review process to ensure that all young people receive timely appropriate help and advice to ensure the identification of progression pathways and smooth transitions through learning to employment.
- EBL contract and provision to ensure there are sufficient opportunities for employer engagement and links to deliver high quality work related learning and work experience; increased provision for apprenticeships and jobs with training and supported transition to work for those vulnerable to making poor transitions.
- provision and outcomes in Hastings at KS4 and post-16 leading to radical restructuring of Post-16 provision and proposals for reorganising through a federation across the three 11-16 schools

- establishing links between high-achieving and underperforming schools
- developing of range of partnerships to share good practice and develop enhanced provision e.g. The East Sussex Partnership of Specialist Schools, LPCs.

Developments in strategy and outcomes from review processes have generated a high level of activity, this list provides information of generic activities, further detail is contained in the review of the CYPP and Annual Self Assessment (APA) 2007. There is also a performance improvement plan for the 14-19 Education, Employment and Training Strategy and a NEET Strategy.

- the use of data to better understand the characteristics and capabilities of the NEET group in combination with an early tracking and monitoring programme that focuses on prevention and early identification and intervention;
- support for transition and tailored provision for LLDD eg work preparation courses for 20 learners from KS3/4 - an entry level course using the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN COPE) award scheme;
- targeted intervention for disengaged learners likely to experience poor outcomes and are at high risk of becoming NEET, including young offenders, eg an entry to employment (E2E) project run through Sussex Downs College - 38 participants; a literacy support programme targeting vulnerable young people; a Progression to Employment programme - series of taster opportunities - 15 learners to facilitate progression at the end of Key Stage (KS) 4;
- provision of better transition for young offenders moving from Year 11 to college or suitable employment and increase the number of specialist PAs to three;
- development of a subsidised employment project for vulnerable young people;
- targeted information, advice and guidance (IAG) and a better understanding by providers of the aspirations of teenage mothers to support the development of appropriate provision in a context that reflects their current and longer term;
- opportunities for employment and training within the public sector for looked after children (LAC) and care-leavers;
- targeted intervention to improve performance Level 2 at 19 and enhance progression in each local area for L3 learners eg Learning Skills Council (LSC) funded Increasing Participation at 17 project jointly run by Hailsham Community College and Sussex Downs College - 60 learners engaged at levels 2 and 3;
- planning for the implementation of the September Guarantee (2007);
- development and implementation of the area based prospectus and individual learning programme (ILP);
- support for increased practical and work-based learning opportunities providing a variety of courses and progression routes in individual schools and across local area partnerships - East Sussex Schools Forum provided nearly £1 million from Headroom funds last year and £675,000 this year for Local Area Partnership Boards (LAPBs) to extend practical and applied learning opportunities;
- activities to close the gap between the average performance of different groups of pupils;
- targeted provision for ESL In Eastbourne through a roll-on/roll-off programme providing 2 hours a week of support to develop literacy skills for non-English speaking learners to support their access to the curriculum and raise level 1 achievement;
- development of data management at county and LAPB level to implement NEET reduction strategies involving the identification of young people who are NEET and the provision of suitable opportunities. Effective data management is also key to NEET prevention and has been used for the development of systems to monitor participation and performance and support collaborative action to re-engage those at risk of disengaging. Each LAPB has been supported with LSC funds to undertake a specific NEET prevention or reduction project, initial reports from the projects indicates positive learner outcomes;
- development of a 'Vocational Centre' Strategy to enhance facilities and extend provision e.g. Wealden Skills Centre; and
- development of a county-wide strategy for reducing homelessness.

## **Impact**

This summary provides headlines about impact in relation to the outcomes of strategy and actions, detail can be found in the review of the CYPP 2007 and APA 2007.

### ***Impact – young people in significant areas of deprivation***

- In East Sussex all 14-19 year olds in state schools and colleges were accessing provision that was judged in Section 5 inspections to be satisfactory or better: there are no schools or colleges in an Ofsted category. In schools that have undergone Section 5 inspections Ofsted identified provision, and quality of care and guidance in 4 out of 5 Eastbourne schools as good or better; provision in 5 out of 8 Hastings and Rother schools as good or better and quality of care and guidance as good or better in 6 out of 8 schools. This has been achieved through co-ordinated intervention and support, across a number of services in CSD, to support and develop inclusive practices through curriculum development and improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Learner outcomes at KS4 in our most deprived wards in Hastings show a steady improving trend, the proportion of learners leaving school at 16 with a qualification has risen from 91% in 2001 to 96% in 2006. This is a result of focused and targeted pilot work, in collaboration between the five secondary schools, training providers, services in CSD and the Excellence Cluster. However in 2006 outcomes for learners at the 5+ A-C attainment thresholds were mixed: although schools had added considerable value to the achievements of the lowest quartile learners, the achievements of the most able were not as strong. Learner outcomes at KS4 in Eastbourne show strong improving trends, particularly noteworthy is the outstanding achievement of learners at +5A\*-C in two schools in the most deprived wards; one school showing contextual value added (CVA) in the top quartile of schools in the country and another just 0.2 outside the top quartile.
- Learner outcomes post-16 across the county show improvement in 2004-05 and again in 2005-06 when the post-16 average point score per entry improved. L2 learner outcomes show year on year improvement; the Local Area Agreement (LAA) target for the county has been met and Hastings shows an outstanding 14% improvement in 3 years. This improvement is noteworthy and much can be attributed to the radical re-structuring of provision in Hastings and Rother, through a partnership involving LSC, CSA, schools, colleges and the district council to address issues of long-term underachievement in the area.
- East Sussex has very good learner outcomes across a range of vocational and practical learning provision e.g. learner outcomes on Youth Attainment (YA) are significantly higher than the national average; IF programmes have good retention and outcomes and show year on year improvement in both respects. Schools in Hastings and Eastbourne have used the Increased Flexibility programme to develop targeted provision for those learners most vulnerable to underachievement, disengagement, exclusion and ultimately EET. The schools identified key barriers for vulnerable learners, and developed a curriculum package to address these barriers. In Hastings (Routeways) is offered to all ten H&R schools and special schools, and is delivered by the 3FE colleges, training providers and the schools. This year 180 14-15 year olds are studying for Level 1 prevocational qualification. To address the challenge of progression it is intended to develop the provision to Level 2 in 2007 – 2008. The personalisation of the curriculum across Eastbourne schools has developed differentiated timetables where learners access the curriculum at different times and in a range of contexts, this includes a part time re-integration timetable across the LAPB.
- Hastings College of Arts and Technology (HCAT) have addressed weaknesses in participation in the town and have piloted a 'fast-track' course for young people who were NEET in January 2007. Uptake was very strong, 64 young learners were recruited at entry and levels 1, 2 and 3 and early indicators point to strong retention. In addition they have provided new Level 3 provision through Academy 6 and recruitment figures for September 2007 indicate that approximately 52 new learners have expressed interest.
- Collaboration has been key to much of this success. The CSA & LSCS have an established, mature and highly effective partnership, as reflected in the good Area 14-19

Inspection (2004), positive feedback from Government for the South East (GOSE Oct 06) and the outstanding outcomes of applications for piloting specialised diplomas (Mar 07). Outstanding collaboration has had a major impact on the breadth & quality of provision for 14-19 year olds and creates the capacity to improve still further. LAPBs have made highly successful bids to pilot diplomas in 2008; their success can be attributed to accurate assessment of their preparedness for developing provision, clear identification of their next actions, and recognition by GOSE / DfES of their capacity to develop outstanding provision by 2008.

- The joint CSA / LSC appointment 4 x 14-19 Development Managers was an important element in much of this success providing considerable support to the work of the LAPBs and enhancing the pace of development and consistency of practice across the county.

### ***Impact - young people in most deprived circumstances***

- The outcomes for learners with FSM (27.4% 5A\*-C) are significantly below those without FSM (58.8% 5A\*-C). Although this difference in performance reflects the national picture this group remains a high priority for schools and the CSA. Within this group there are many of the young people who experience multiple problems and the greatest disadvantage and it is where the development of our personalised response to provision and services will have the greatest impact.
- The achievement of looked after children (39) shows strong improvement. At threshold 1 A\*-G there has been a steady increase over the last 3 years to above national average and at threshold 5+ A\*-C learner performance has improved significantly and was the highest ever at 22% in 2006.
- Better Education for Children in Care Steering Group (BECCS) are leading developments to support young people in our care in their transition to independence with a particular focus on the transition into further and higher education and personal education plans, encouraging participation post-16 and post-19 as the natural route. A recent development is a protocol that has improved liaison between providers and providers and care leavers. Excellent evidence of the impact of the work of BECCS is that 30 out of 34 Y11 LACs are intending to go to college in September 07.
- 16.7% of learners with statements (216 in 2006) achieved 5A\*-C. This increases to 23.1% for pupils categorised as school action. The CVA for these learner groups in most schools indicates that their progress is satisfactory or better.
- There has been development of good practice for supporting LLDD into EET eg a special school in Hastings & Rother has run for some years a transition programme with the local FE college, the programme has particular focus upon those with identity learning needs. The programme supports young people to access programmes and there is evidence of good retention.
- The learning difficulty and disability network facilitated by LSCS has an expanded remit and helps post-16 providers prepare for and meet the needs of students with difficulties and disabilities. They have supported the development of innovative transition work including a project that targets learners in special education in Eastbourne.
- Increased availability of courses at Level 1 and access to apprenticeships, applications for next year are very positive; we are pleased with this progress but we know not only that we can do more but that it will have an impact on those most disadvantaged.
- All minority ethnic groups and groups from dual heritage families performed to a higher or similar standard than the overall county averages. Students with English as an additional language (EAL) attain more highly than those whose first language is English (KS4 2006).
- Learners who are mobile achieve lower outcomes, a learners time in secondary school is strongly linked with final attainment. Within East Sussex learners who had attended the same secondary school from 11-16 attained 58.9 5A\*-C whilst those who had been in their secondary school at the end of Y11 for one year or less attained 23.6% 5A\*-C; a sliding scale of attainment is observed between these two extremes.
- In spite of the introduction of a range of new initiatives, the planned decrease in the number of NEETS has not been achieved and this will make realising the 2010 PSA target extremely challenging. Indeed the data shows a small increase in the number of NEETS,

this trend mirrors the national position. This may have been compounded by a significant reduction in the number of unknown NEETS to 4.53% against a target of 5%. However we are optimistic that there is now much in place in terms of strategy and planning that will ensure rapid progress. An area of success has been the efforts of the Connexions PAs that have dramatically reduced the number of unknown NEETs. It is likely that this has had some impact on our overall NEET figure; however we believe that the process for tracking and maintaining contact with young people who are NEET is working and we are now better placed to plan and develop targeted provision to meet identified need.

- Developments in provision and strategies for engaging, motivating and managing learners have contributed to a 20% reduction in fixed term exclusions and a 37% reduction in permanent exclusions. This has particular benefit for those most at risk to poor outcomes.

All of this represents substantial progress over a two year period towards objectives in the CYPP and is indicative of our capacity for further improvement.