
REVIEW OF EDUCATION STANDARDS AND
ACHIEVEMENTS IN TORBAY

Report 0 SB/3/05 to the Executive

May 2005

Adopted by the Overview and Scrutiny Board
on 16th March 2005

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Foreword

The Review Panel was established because certain weaknesses were highlighted by the OFSTED inspection of last year.

It was set up to examine the standards and achievements of pupils within the schools in Torbay and to consider and suggest how the Council could rectify these weaknesses and influence the advance in attainment and standards within all schools in the Bay.

One of the tasks of the Panel was to investigate how the resources available to schools were used within the schools. Other reasons were to try to isolate the hidden or obscured issues peculiar to Torbay schools, whether schools were aware of the standards required and types of resources available to them and to "firm up" the ways in which Torbay Council supports the drive to improve pupil attainment and standards in every school in the Bay. The data that we used was as up to date as possible - September 2004 - and therefore does not include any information which has become available since then, which may or may not indicate any new trends or tendencies.

The Review Panel went into many schools, both secondary and primary, and talked to Governors, Headteachers and staff and, although hampered by the CPA inspection which greatly prolonged our review, sought the answers to our pre-determined questions. The schools we visited were very willing to assist our investigation although we did face some difficulties in terms of time scales and availability.

On the whole, we believe our survey and conclusions were based upon the honest opinions of the staff, governors and heads that we spoke to and we thank them sincerely for their honesty. The Panel are to be applauded for the seriousness they took with their task and the dedication that they showed in arriving at their conclusions.

We would also like to express our appreciation to Democratic Services for all the help given to produce this report.

Councillor John Dunn
Chairman of the Education Standards Review Panel

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Having undertaken a review of the funding for schools within Torbay, it was felt that a Panel should be established to consider the issues relating to the achievements of pupils within Torbay's schools and how the Council can influence the continued rise in the attainment of pupils.
- 1.2 The Panel gathered information from a range of sources including undertaking visits to schools. Whilst the issues faced by schools vary from school to school, the Panel was pleased to note that there was widespread interest in raising attainment.
- 1.3 Within the LEA there is an increased level of aspiration for Torbay's children and young people and the target setting process has been more rigorous over the past year.
- 1.4 The Panel only scratched the surface in respect of the wider, community issues that influence attainment and it is hoped that future reviews, including the Review of Community Cohesion, will be able to consider these issues in greater detail.

It is recommended to the Executive:

- 1.5 That all schools should set aspirational targets for their pupils to ensure that each and every child and young person within Torbay is encouraged to reach their potential regardless of their background.
- 1.6 That Governors should be more closely involved in the target setting process and that Governing Bodies should be required to put in place effective arrangements for monitoring pupil achievement and challenging headteachers and staff on their procedures for optimising pupil attainment.
- 1.7 That the LEA undertake a year-on-year study of the targets set by schools to consider the rate at which schools extend their targets and to challenge the assumptions about local performance.

It has been agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board:

- 1.8 That a specific review of recent years' GCSE results be undertaken to determine if there is now a downward trend in the results, to determine the cause(s) of the dips in performance in 2003 and 2004 and to consider with schools how any negative trend may be reversed.
- 1.9 That the OFSTED Post Inspection Action Plan and the Council's performance against its targets continue to be monitored by the appropriate Performance Board.

- 1.10 That the wider factors that influence educational attainment be considered as part of the Review of Community Cohesion and that consideration be given to undertaking a review of the effects of local parental involvement on educational achievement.

2. Introduction

2.1 Tobay Council has a strong commitment to education. "Placing learning at the heart of the community" is one of the themes of the Tobay Community Plan and has been one of the Council's priorities in the current year. It will continue to be one of the Council's priorities from April 2005. Tobay Council's vision is that all learners will have access to and enjoy high quality learning experiences that enrich their lives and help them to realise their full potential.

2.2 Included within the service priorities for the School Standards Division is the need to support and challenge schools to raise standards and to ensure that schools are enabled to achieve high standards.

2.3 There continue to be a number of nationally driven development areas within school standards and these are automatically given appropriate priority in Tobay. They include:

- rolling out the English, maths, science, ICT, foundation subjects and behaviour and attendance standards as National Strategies at Key Stage 3,
- implementing the National Primary Strategy, which has a prime focus on English and mathematics, and co-ordinating the work of the Headteacher Consultant Leaders, and
- implementing and expanding the primary interactive whiteboard strategy.

2.4 At the time that the Review was commissioned it was expected that the forthcoming Ofsted Inspection of the Local Education Authority (LEA) was likely to state, as a headline generalisation, that pupils' attainment was satisfactory and standards were generally in line with national averages and similar LEAs.

2.5 Given that the drive for improved standards goes wider than the remit of schools and the LEA, it was felt appropriate that a Review Panel should be established to examine the issues relating to the achievements of pupils within Tobay's schools and to consider how the Council can influence the continued rise in the attainment of pupils.

2.6 The scope of the review was:

- (i) To gain an understanding of the wider issues that affect the attainment and achievement of pupils within Tobay's schools.
- (ii) To consider how schools use the resources available to them to improve pupil attainment and achievement.

- (iii) To review the ways in which Torbay Council supports the drive for improved standards and greater pupil attainment and achievement.
- 2.6 The Project Plan, which sets out the full details of the Review, including the methodology and processes employed, is attached as Appendix 2.
- 2.7 The membership of the Panel comprised Councillors Bye, Cope, Dunn, Hayman, Monaghan and Pentney together with two parent governor representatives (David Beazley and Julie Cook) and two Diocesan representatives (Mark Lord-Lear and Valerie Wilkinson).
- 2.8 The data that was used for the Panel's review was based on the examination results for 2003.

3. Background and Key Findings

How is attainment measured?

- 3.1 The National Curriculum sets out the subjects that schools have to cover. It applies to all children in compulsory education (ie. those children between the ages of 5 and 16). The National Curriculum is split into four Key Stages as shown in the chart below:


	Primary SchoolLevel						Secondary SchoolLevel					
SchoolYearG roup	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Age ofpup ils	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Key Stage	Key Stage 1			Key Stage 2				Key Stage 3			KS 4	

- 3.2 Attainment describes a pupil's performance in teacher assessed or externally marked tasks or tests. Achievement describes the progress that pupils make towards reaching their potential.
- 3.3 Pupil attainment is measured through national tests (known as SATs (Standard Assessment Tests)) and teacher assessment at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. The national tests are in the Core Subjects of English (reading and writing), maths and science. Teacher assessments are also made on these subjects at Key Stages 1 and 2. At Key Stage 3, teacher assessments are made of work in non-core subjects (and, for pupils working below certain levels, in the core subjects).
- 3.4 At age 16 (Key Stage 4), attainment is measured by public examinations (ie. GCSEs or GNVQs). Post 16 study is not compulsory and students have a choice about whether or not to continue with their education. If they do continue, they are able to take vocational qualifications or CEAS and A Level examinations at ages 17 and 18.
- 3.5 Following the assessment at the end of each Key Stage, pupils' work is graded using National Curriculum Levels of Attainment (from 1 to 8) for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and grades for GCSEs and GNVQs. Table 1 on the next page shows the expected Level of Attainment at the first three Key Stages.

Table 1 – National Expected Levels of Attainment

	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Age at end of Key Stage	7	11	14
Level 1			
Level 2	EX P E C T E D L E V E L		
Level 3			
Level 4		EX P E C T E D L E V E L	
Level 5			EX P E C T E D L E V E L
Level 6			EX P E C T E D L E V E L
Level 7			
Level 8			
EP			

EP = Exceptional Performance

 Shaded levels are above the expected level of attainment for pupils

Note:

Most pupils will achieve the expected level for their age. However, it is important to remember that pupils learn at different rates and therefore some will not achieve this level whilst others will exceed it.

For example, in relation to Key Stage 2, this means that:

- pupils working towards the expected level will achieve Level 3
- pupils working at the expected level will achieve Level 4
- pupils working above the expected level will achieve Levels 5 and 6

- 3.6 Regardless of the level of attainment achieved, pupils are expected to make two levels of progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (i.e. if a pupil achieves Level 2 at Key Stage 1, he or she would be expected to achieve Level 4 at Key Stage 2). Between Key Stages 2 and 3 pupils are expected to make one level of progress.
- 3.7 Data is prepared by the LEA to show this Value Added data for the Authority as a whole and by individual schools.
- 3.8 Most primary and secondary schools also give tests such as NFER Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs). These give teachers a view of pupils' ability and potential but do not measure attainment. The results of CATs are also used within the Value Added calculations that measure the progress that pupils make in comparison with the average progress made by their cohort as a whole.
- 3.9 To supplement this information, schools are increasingly collecting data on pupil attitudes, preferred learning style and emotional literacy to ensure that they have as full a picture as possible of each pupil. All of this information enables schools to set appropriately high expectations for their pupils.

What are the targets for improving standards?

3.10 There are different levels of targets for improving standards.

3.11 Nationally, the Government has set itself targets for the achievement of children at each stage of the education system set out in Table 2.

Table 2 – Government Targets for Achievement

Key Stage 2 – Achievement of 11 year olds

- By 2006, 85% will reach Level 4 or above in the English and mathematics tests with this level of performance sustained until 2008
- By 2004, 35% will separately reach Level 5 in the English and maths tests with this level sustained until 2006
- Every LEA should have at least 78% at Level 4 or above separately in the English and maths tests

Key Stage 3 – Achievement of 14 year olds

- By 2004, 75% will separately achieve Level 5 or above in the English or maths tests and ICT teacher assessment and 20% in the science test
- By 2007, 85% will separately achieve Level 5 or above in the English and maths tests and ICT teacher assessment and 80% in the science test (with this level of performance sustained until 2008)
- By 2004, no LEA will achieve less than 65% of their 14 year olds at Level 5 or above in the English and maths tests and 60% in the science tests
- By 2004, no more than 15% of pupils will fail to attain at least one Level 5 qualification at Key Stage 3 in English, maths or science
- By 2008, in all schools, at least 50% of pupils will achieve Level 5 or above in each of English, maths and science

Key Stage 4 – Achievement of 16 year olds

- By 2008, 60% will obtain 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C
- Between 2002 and 2006, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A*-C will increase by 2% per year, with at least 38% achieving this standard in every LEA by 2004
- No school will have fewer than 20 percent of pupils achieving five higher grades at GCSE
- 92% will obtain five or more GCSEs at grades A*-G including English and maths

3.12 Each year the LEA agrees a set of targets for itself in consultation with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Today Council's targets are set out in Table 3.

Table 3 – Torbay Council Targets and Outcomes for Achievement

Key Stage 2 – Achievement by 11 year olds

Indicator	03/04 Target	03/04 Outcome	04/05 Target	04/05 Outcome*	05/06 Target^	06/07 Target^
% achieving Level 4 or above in English	82	76	80	78	83	82
% achieving Level 4 or above in maths	83	73	78	74	82	84
% achieving Level 5 or above in English	33	25	31	27	33	35
% achieving Level 5 or above in maths	30	31	32	30	33	34

Key Stage 3 – Achievement by 14 year olds

Indicator	03/04 Target	03/04 Outcome	04/05 Target	04/05 Outcome*	05/06 Target^	06/07 Target^
% achieving Level 5 or above in English	75	71	77	71	76	79
% achieving Level 5 or above in maths	78	72	80	74	78	81.5
% achieving Level 5 or above in science	74	70	74	68	76	79
% achieving Level 5 or above in ICT	78	54	80	62	74	81.5

Key Stage 4 – Achievement by 16 year olds

Indicator	03/04 Target	03/04 Outcome	04/05 Target	04/05 Outcome*	05/06 Target^	06/07 Target^
% achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C	87	52	59	53	57	59
% achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-G	95	89	93	91	94	95

* = provisional data for KS3 and final data for KS2 and GCSE (data relates to Summer 2004)
 ^ = some 05/06 and 06/07 targets are now being revised to reflect an aggregate of school targets

3.13 In relation to Key Stage 3, the targets for 2006/2007 have been included within the Local Public Service Agreement that has been made between the Council and the Government. As part of that agreement, the Government will make a "pump priming" grant to the Council in support of the work that is undertaken in achieving these targets. If the Council achieves these targets, the Government will make a further grant (known as a "performance reward grant") to the Council. The LPSA targets aim to stretch the Council towards the national targets for Key Stage 3.

3.14 In setting targets with the LEA, the DfES does not take account of pupil transience. In terms of promoting social inclusion, schools and the LEA

should have the same ambitions for all pupils regardless of their background.

3.15 Of course it is the responsibility of individual schools to ensure that pupils themselves reach these targets. Therefore, each school within Torbay sets targets (in consultation with the LEA) that are based on performance targets for individual pupils.

3.16 Since 2000, Torbay Council has met none of its targets set by the DfES and the aggregation of all of the targets set by schools has never met the LEA target. There is a general view that the targets expected of Torbay's schools were increasingly aspirational but were not necessarily not well enough informed by local circumstances.

3.17 However, this year has seen a change in the rigour with which targets are set between the LEA and schools. Communication with schools started in September when guidance was issued (including guidance from the DfES). The key principles to underpin school target setting are that targets should be:

- based on the prior attainment and expected progress of the individual children in each cohort
- ambitious
- focused on equity as well as excellence
- owned

3.18 In terms of ownership, everyone within each school should be signed up to the targets that they set themselves. A whole school approach to target setting (including the Headteacher and leadership team, class teachers and teaching assistants) will ensure that the process is well informed. Governing bodies should be closely involved in the target setting process and must have access to appropriate performance data and to LEA monitoring reports so that they can challenge and support their schools in achieving high standards.

3.19 Schools should set aspirational targets based on reliable data. The targets that are set for individual pupils should be recognisable to each pupil (ie. each pupil should have a clear idea of the standards of achievement that are expected of them). It is acknowledged that setting aspirational targets can in itself have an impact in terms of increasing the attainment of pupils. This leads to the need for the LEA to balance its role in challenging schools about their targets between the aspirational and the realistic.

What is the Council's role in raising standards?

- 3.20 Setting targets is just part of the story in raising standards. The Council's role goes wider than that and the following paragraphs set out details of some of the other functions of the Council in relation to this issue.
- 3.21 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a duty on local education authorities to promote high standards of education in primary and secondary education. This Act also places a duty on LEAs to produce an Education Development Plan (EDP) for its area. The EDP should provide a clear, target-based framework designed to help LEAs to carry out the duty to raise standards in their schools.
- 3.22 Torbay Council's EDP is structured around eight priorities:
- Raising pupil attainment and achievement
 - Inclusion
 - Transfer, Transition and Mobility
 - Teaching and Learning
 - Staff recruitment, development and retention
 - Embracing new educational technologies
 - Leadership, management and governance
 - Parents and the community
- 3.23 The LEA's role is to support self-improvement in all schools. This involves monitoring information about all schools and facilitating the sharing of best practice among local schools and more widely. Through a rigorous review of data about schools, in particular attainment data at Key Stages 2 and 3, the LEA allocates resources and consultants' and advisors' time (in respect of raising attainment) according to the needs of each school within the area. Intensive support programmes are put in place in those schools where attainment at Key Stage 2 is significantly lower than expected.
- 3.24 Equally Bay-wide initiatives are also facilitated by the LEA. An example of such an initiative is the Interactive Whiteboard Project. (Interactive whiteboards allow the user to project an image from a computer screen onto a large whiteboard. The screen is interactive and the user can use their finger to move images and text around the board. Interactive pens and rubbers allow the user to annotate images and pictures directly onto the screen with no need for a keyboard.) Torbay was one of five authorities selected to be part of the Year 2 and 3 Interactive Whiteboard Pilot. This initiative has now been rolled out throughout the primary phase in Torbay. This longer term investment will improve the quality of the teaching and learning environment and will lead to an improvement in standards.
- 3.25 Data is published throughout the year as national comparative data becomes available to ensure that the Council and schools are able to monitor the performance and arrangements are made for Council

officers and advisors meet with school representatives to discuss this data. All schools within Torbay are entitled to a minimum of three days of consultancy per year from a link advisor.

3.26 Data is used within schools on a regular basis. There is a build up of knowledge about pupils throughout their school life to ensure that individual targets are challenging enough. Parents are informed about their children's progress in SATs, CATs and teacher assessments. Some schools are more confident than others in their use of performance data.

3.27 The recent Ofsted inspection of the LEA stated the "standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are broadly in line with the averages in similar LEAs and nationally. Rates of improvement are above average, despite a dip in performance 2003." However, the report of the inspection went on to state that:

"The LEA has agreed challenging performance targets with the DfES but is unlikely to meet them. There is a significant and growing gap between the LEA's targets and those of its schools, particularly at Key Stage 2 where there is also too wide a variation in the performance of individual schools. Schools are provided with detailed performance data to support target setting. Too many schools, however, have set targets that lack ambition, and, in some of these cases, governors have been insufficiently challenged by link advisors."

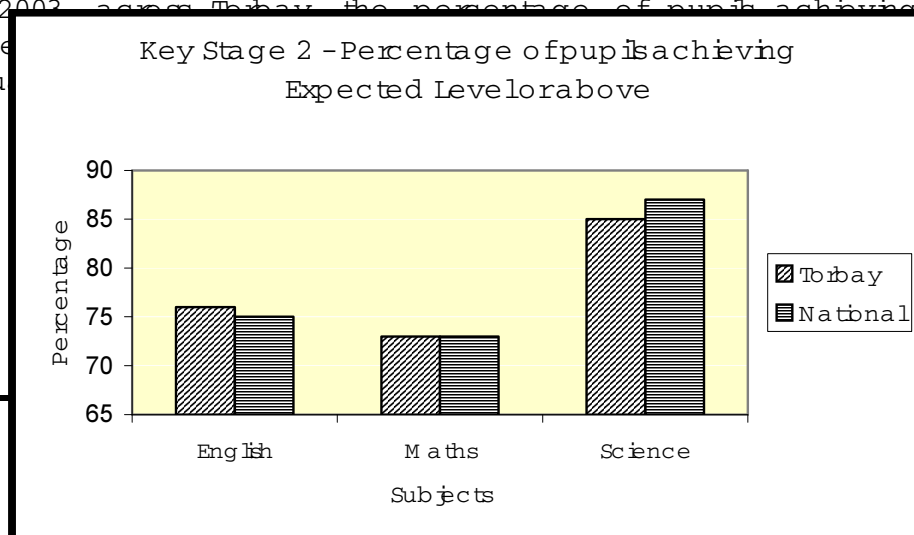
What is the role of schools in raising standards?

3.28 Schools are the organisations that are dealing with pupils and students on a day to day basis. They are required to make effective use of their resources (including staff) based on the individual needs of their pupils. To ensure that these needs are met, it is vital that schools have robust systems in place to store and analyse data and a rigorous system for setting aspirational targets. Schools also need to positively engage with the National Strategies set by Government.

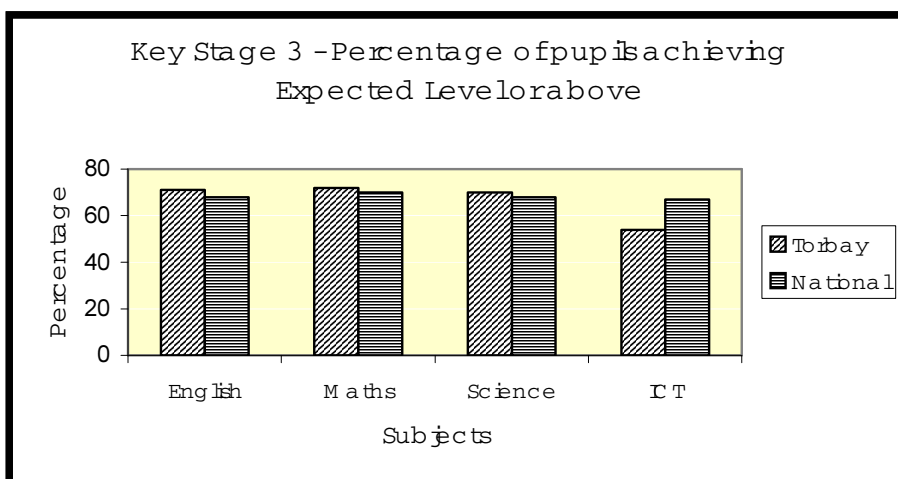
3.29 Governors have a key role to play in monitoring pupil achievement and in challenging headteachers and staff about their procedures for optimising pupil attainment.

What levels of attainment do pupils in Torbay achieve?

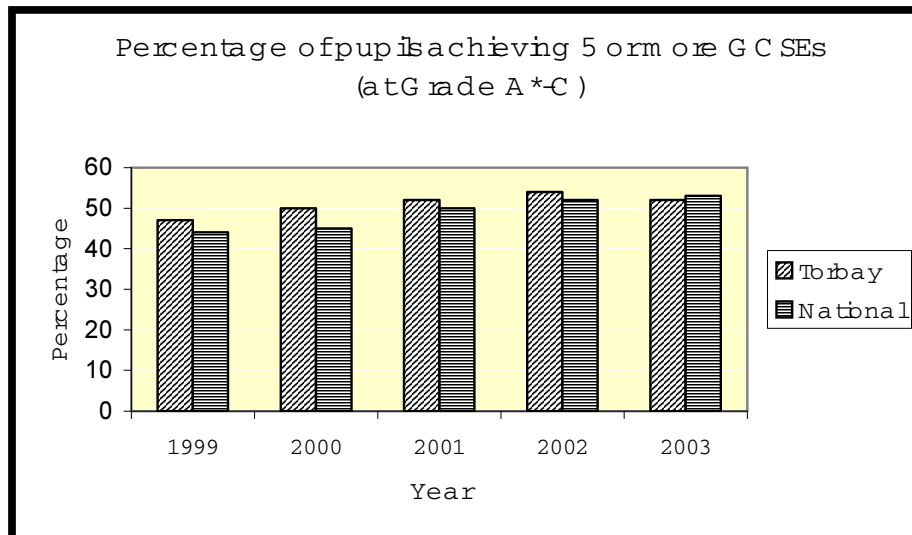
3.30 In 2002, across Torbay, the percentage of pupils achieving the Expected Level or above



- 3.31 At Key Stage 3, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in English, maths and science was above the national average. However, in ICT the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above was 54% against the national average of 67%.



- 3.32 At GCSE, the percentage of pupils within Tobay achieving 5 or more A* to C grades was slightly below the average for England and Wales (52% against 53%). However, this was the first time that this figure had dropped below the national average since 1999. (At the end of the Review the Panel were aware that the data for 2004 showed that Tobay was again below the national average in terms of GCSE results.)



What factors affect standards and attainment in Tobay's schools?

- 3.33 A range of factors affect the levels of pupils' attainment within the schools in Tobay. From the visits to schools, the Panel found that these factors vary depending on the particular circumstances of each school. A good quality learning environment (from the ability and enthusiasm of staff to suitable class sizes to the ethos of the school) all help to raise pupils' attainment. The factors that can hinder

improvement within schools include social deprivation, high levels of transience and a lack of pre-school education.

- 3.34 To enable pupils to reach their potential, there is a need for investment in a range of resources. Schools have set up a number of clubs (such as homework clubs, breakfast clubs, family clubs and booster clubs) which have the ultimate aim of increasing pupil attainment. A number of other initiatives are in place in schools across the area to support pupils (and their parents) in improving attainment.
- 3.35 The views expressed by the representatives of schools that the Panel met were split on usefulness of the "value added" measures of attainment. Whilst some schools felt that they gave a true picture of pupils' achievement, others felt that they did not take into account other factors relating to attainment.
- 3.36 The support that schools received from the LEA was generally welcomed and was said to have improved over recent months. The provision and availability of courses and seminars was highlighted as one of the areas that had a positive impact on helping schools to raise standards. However, concerns were raised about the range of support and advice that was available given the size of the Authority. Comments were also made that there was too much emphasis on targets. Some schools were unaware of who was their link advisor.
- 3.37 There was little evidence of schools making use of the statistical information available about other schools in the area in setting targets. Although many schools were sharing best practice to help to raise standards, from the Panel's visits this was found not to be consistent throughout the whole of the Borough.
- 3.38 The Community Plan sets out the priorities that the Torbay Strategic Partnership has identified in connection with its priority of "Placing learning at the heart of the community". However, pupil attainment is affected by a wider factors than education in its purest terms. The other themes of the Community Plan, such as "Creating sustainable communities", "Improving Torbay's economy" and "Developing Torbay's culture" would have knock on effects on pupils attainment. These issues will be considered as part of the Review of Community Cohesion within Torbay.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 From the information that has been gathered during the course of the Review it is clear that the issues faced by each school within Torbay are different. It is difficult to make generalisations in relation to attainment within Torbay because of the diverse range of schools in the area.
- 4.2 Within the LEA there is an increased level of aspiration for Torbay's children and young people. The LEA has been more rigorous and challenging in the target setting process this year than in previous years. Data about individual schools is used to target resources to support schools raise attainment. There are guaranteed minimum levels of link advisor support for each school within Torbay. The LEA is responding positively to the recent OFSTED report.
- 4.3 The quality of the data prepared by the LEA is impeccable and the Panel believes that maintaining this quality is a sensible investment of resources. The Panel was impressed with the data literacy of schools and is satisfied that personnel within schools use the data effectively.
- 4.4 From the schools that the Panel visited it is clear that there is a widespread interest in raising attainment. It is pleasing to note that schools are looking to raise attainment in all subjects rather than the just the core subjects that are the focus of national initiatives and targets. The majority of schools are setting aspirational targets for their pupils which is leading to an increase in standards and raised attainment. All schools now need to be encouraged to set aspirational targets. The rationale for target setting within each school should be made clear to enable comparisons between schools to be made. The LEA should continue to challenge the target setting within individual schools.
- 4.5 It was pleasing to note the consistent rising trends in attainment between 1997 and 2002. In relation to GCSE results, it is concerning that the apparent dip in results in 2003 also occurred in 2004. The Panel feel that GCSE results should be examined further to determine whether this will become a trend.
- 4.6 The support received by schools from the LEA was generally welcomed although there were some issues raised about the availability and quality of specialist advice given the size of the Authority. The Panel also expressed concern about the proposed reductions in Education Welfare, Education Psychology and Behaviour Support divisions of the LEA and the impact this would have on standards within schools.
- 4.7 From the information gathered during the course of the review, it is clear that some governors lack an adequate involvement in the target setting process. Governors need to have a challenging as well as supporting role in attainment. If there was more active involvement of

Governors in raising attainment this would have a positive impact. The recent OFSTED report also highlighted these points.

- 4.8 If the Council is working to improve the quality of life for everyone in Torbay, the LEA needs to ensure that improvements in attainment are met in all schools. There is a need to make comparisons with schools in other parts of the Country rather than just making comparisons with other schools within the Borough. However, the Panel accepts that the degree of support from Central Government varies depending on the issues faced by particular areas and that Torbay does not always benefit from the ways in which funds are made available.
- 4.9 The role of parents in raising attainment should not be forgotten. Parental support for pupils is vital. The Panel feels that there are some good initiatives within the primary sector to build partnerships with parents but that this partnership does not always exist within the secondary sector when the relationship can be more complex.
- 4.10 Wider community factors can also influence standards and attainment. These factors include poor housing, availability of high paid jobs and social change in general. It is hoped that by working towards the goals within the Community Plan these linkages will be highlighted and that there will be a positive impact on Torbay's children and young people.

5. Recommendations

It is recommended to the Executive:

- 5.1 That all schools should set aspirational targets for their pupils to ensure that each and every child and young person within Torbay is encouraged to reach their potential regardless of their background.
- 5.2 That Governors should be more closely involved in the target setting process and that Governing Bodies should be required to put in place effective arrangements for monitoring pupil achievement and challenging headteachers and staff on their procedures for optimising pupil attainment.
- 5.3 That the LEA undertake a year-on-year study of the targets set by schools to consider the rate at which schools extend their targets and to challenge the assumptions about local performance.

It has been agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board:

- 5.4 That a specific review of recent years' GCSE results be undertaken to determine if there is now a downward trend in the results, to determine the cause(s) of the dips in performance in 2003 and 2004 and to consider with schools how any negative trend may be reversed.
- 5.5 That the Ofsted Post Inspection Action Plan and the Council's performance against its targets continue to be monitored by the appropriate Performance Board.
- 5.6 That the wider factors that influence educational attainment be considered as part of the Review of Community Cohesion and that consideration be given to undertaking a review of the effects of local parental involvement on educational achievement.

6. Monitoring Arrangements

- 6.1 The Panel will meet in six months time to review the implementation of the recommendations contained within this Report.

Acknowledgements

The Review Panel wishes to thank the following people and organisations and their representatives for their contribution to the work of the Review :

Brixham Community College

Cockington Primary School

Foxhole Junior School

Gampton Primary School

Isleham Primary School

Paignton Community College

Sherwell Valley Primary School

Torquay Grammar School for Girls

Watcombe Primary School

Tony Porter, Assistant Director (School Standards)

Christine French, Planning and Research Officer

Appendix 1

Implications of the Recommendations

Legal	There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations within this Report.
Financial	There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations within this Report.
Human Resources	There are no human resources implications arising from the recommendations within this Report.
Property	There are no property implications arising from the recommendations within this Report.

The recommendations contained within this Report are in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

The recommendations contained within this Report would not be a Key Decision

Appendix 2

Project Plan

Objective of the Review

To examine the issues relating to the achievements of pupils within Tobay's schools and to consider how the Council can influence the continued rise in the attainment of pupils.

Introduction

Attainment of pupils is measured through National Tests and teacher assessments throughout a pupil's school life. Most primary and secondary schools also give tests such as NFER Cognitive Ability Tests which give a view on pupils' ability and potential. Increasingly schools are collecting data on pupil attitudes, preferred learning style and emotional literacy to ensure they have as full a picture as possible of each pupil. This enables them to set appropriately high expectations.

Measuring attainment and progress and making comparisons between individuals, cohorts, subjects, schools, Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and the national picture is complex and generalisations are difficult. However, in relation to the Best Value Performance Indicators for schools standards, the performance of the schools within Tobay is above the median for its statistical neighbour group and, in all but two subjects, Tobay ranks in the top half of the eleven LEAs in the group.

The forthcoming report of the OFSTED inspection of the LEA is likely to state, as a headline generalisation, that pupils' attainment is satisfactory and standards are generally in line with national averages and similar LEAs.

Scope of the Review

1. To gain an understanding of the wider issues which affect the attainment and achievement of pupils within Tobay's schools.
2. To consider how schools use the resources available to them to improve pupil attainment and achievement.
3. To review the ways in which Tobay Council supports the drive for improved standards and greater pupil attainment and achievement.

Service Background

Tobay Council has a strong commitment to education. Lifelong Learning and Cultural Development is one of its agreed priorities and as such will act as one of the main building blocks of the Council's strategies. Tobay Council's vision is for all learners to have access to and enjoy high quality learning experiences which will enrich their lives and help realise their full potential. Included within the service priorities for School Standards Division of the Learning and Cultural Services Directorate is the need to support and challenge schools to raise standards and to ensure that schools are enabled to achieve high standards.

The Education Development Plan (EDP) is the main priority of the School Standards Division and provides a framework within which to deliver many of its service priorities. One of the key EDP priorities for 2004/2005 is the raising of pupil achievement (including the delivery of national primary and Key Stage 3 strategies).

National/Legislative Background

There continue to be a number of nationally driven development areas within School Standards and these are automatically given appropriate priority in Today with their plans being implemented alongside the EDP. They include:

- rolling out the Literacy, Numeracy, Science, IT, Foundation subjects and behaviour attendance standards as National Strategies at Key Stage 3 with substantial Standards Funding;
- implementing the Primary Strategy and co-ordinating the work of the Council's Consultant Leaders; and
- implementing and expanding the primary interactive whiteboard project.

Initial Supporting Documentation

School Standards Division - Business Plan 2004/2005

Learning and Cultural Services - 2003 Summary Audit (Confidential)

Key Stage and GCSE Attainment - Today LEA

The National Curriculum - Briefing Paper

Value Added Analysis (KS2 - KS3 & KS3 - GCSE/GNVQ)

2003 National Curriculum Results - Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3, GCSE/GNVQ and Sixth Forms

Review Panel

Councillor Bye

Councillor Cope

Councillor Dunn

Councillor Hayman

Councillor Monaghan

Councillor Pentney

David Beazley

Julie Cook

Mark Lord-Lear

Val Wilkinson

Timetable for Review and Methodology

Date	Time	Venue	Council/Stakeholder/ Community Representatives	Key Tasks and Questions
Monday 21st June 2004	10.00 a.m.	Town Hall, Torquay		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To receive a briefing on the issues relating to schools standards and attainment in terms of the national and local situation. To receive the data available on schools standards and attainment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is attainment measured? What is the relationship between national, local and school targets? What are the trends in achievement against these targets? What other measures are available to assess pupils' attainment and achievement within the school environment? To gain an understanding of the factors which influence the attainment of pupils in Torbay's schools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the reasons behind the data in relation to school standards and attainment? What can Torbay Council do to influence the attainment of pupils in the area? To agree the Project Plan and Timetable for the Review.
Friday 2nd July 2004	2.00 p.m.	Town Hall, Torquay		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To give further consideration to the data available in relation to school standards

Education Standards and Achievement

Date	Time	Venue	Council/Stakeholder/ Community Representatives	Key Tasks and Questions
Monday 5th July 2004	9.30 a.m.	Torquay Grammar School for Girls	Headteacher, representative of teaching staff and representative of Governing Body	<p>6. To consider which factors affect individual schools within Torbay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do the following factors impact on the attainment of pupils within your school? What are the factors which drive or hinder improvement within your school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Resources * Pupils' attainment on entry * Pupil behaviour and motivation * Parental engagement * Social deprivation * Presence of particular cohorts * Relationships between schools * Ethos * Challenge and support for schools * Admission policies * Contribution to Primary National Strategy, KS3 Strategy and 14-19 Strategy * Innovation * Supply of teachers and quality of teaching Apart from implementing national and local strategies, how does your school support pupils in improving their attainment (e.g. homework clubs)? What impact did the 2003/2004 budget settlement have on your school's ability to address these issues? Will these issues be addressed in the current financial year? What are your views on the "value added" measures of attainment? What support and/or challenge do you receive from the LEA? How effective is this support/challenge? How do you think this support should be provided? What is your view on the new link advisor arrangements? What use does your school make of information related to similar schools in helping to set targets and evaluate existing practice?
Tuesday 6th July 2004	9.30 a.m.	Brixham Community College		
	2.00 p.m.	Watcombe Primary School		
Wednesday 7th July 2004	9.30 a.m.	Isleham Primary School		
	2.00 p.m.	Shewell Valley Primary School		
Thursday 8th July 2004	2.00 p.m.	Paignton Community College		
Friday 9th July 2004	9.30 a.m.	Foxhole Junior School		
Monday 12th July 2004	9.30 a.m.	Gampton Primary School		
Thursday 15th July 2004	9.30 a.m.	Cockington Primary School		

Date	Time	Venue	Council/Stakeholder/ Community Representatives	Key Tasks and Questions
Monday 27th September 2004	2.30 p.m.	Town Hall, Torquay	Learning and Cultural Services Directorate	<p>7. To consider the information gathered by the Panel during the visits to schools.</p> <p>8. To consider how the Panel wishes to progress the Review.</p>
Wednesday 24th November 2004	5.30 p.m.	Town Hall, Torquay	Learning and Cultural Services Directorate	<p>9. To consider the support and challenge provided by the Local Education Authority to schools in relation to standards, attainment and achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the Council's statutory duties in relation to school standards? • How does the Council meet these duties? • How does the LEA set targets? How does the LEA help schools to set targets? How does the LEA ensure that these targets are consistent? • How are the achievements of schools and the LEA measured and assessed against the targets: by schools? by officers? by Councilors? • What did the Ofsted inspection of the LEA say about standards and attainment within Torbay? • What actions are being put in place to address these comments?
Wednesday 23rd February 2005	10.30 a.m.	Town Hall, Torquay		<p>10. To consider the recommendations of the Panel.</p> <p>11. To finalise the Report of the Panel.</p>

The final report of the Review Panel will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meeting to be held on 16th March 2005.

Appendix 3

List of Key Documents

- Briefing Papers prepared by the Assistant Director (School Standards)
- School Standards Division Business Plan 2004/2005
- Learning and Cultural Services 2003 Summary Audit
- Key Stage and GCSE Attainment for Torbay LEA
- Briefing Paper on the National Curriculum
- Value Added Data 2003
- Pupil Progress Data
- Copies of letters to All Headteachers/Principals and Chairs of Governors to all Torbay Schools re target setting
- OFSTED report of Torbay LEA