

<b>CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	AGENDA ITEM NO. 6
<b>16 NOVEMBER 2015</b>	PUBLIC REPORT

## Report of the Corporate Director for People and Communities / Resources

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### VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN EDUCATION INCLUDING CLOSING THE GAP STRATEGY, EAL STRATEGY AND VIRTUAL SCHOOL

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to bring to the committee an update on the English as an Additional Language (EAL) strategy and to share the draft Closing the Gap strategy. The report also outlines the current performance and plans for the Virtual School for Children in Care (CiC).

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The committee is asked to comment on both strategies and, if happy, endorse them for publication and action. The committee may wish to consider future reports on specific actions within either strategy.

#### 3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 Single Delivery Plan - Programme 1 – Creating jobs through growth and improved skills and education.

#### 4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In March 2014, Ofsted published their report on Peterborough's arrangements for school improvement. Our overall assessment was effective but there were 4 recommendations of which one was –

*'focus relentlessly on supporting and challenging schools to improve outcomes for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those supported through pupil premium funding'*

- 4.2 This paper seeks to outline our strategies for dealing with these areas.

#### **Closing the Gap Strategy**

- 4.3 Many children and young people perform to their expectations in our schools but a minority of children do not. There is a clear gap between the attainment and achievement of the majority of children and those from particular groups that are vulnerable to underachievement. Closing this attainment gap is a national and local priority, reflected in our commitment to improve outcomes for all learners.

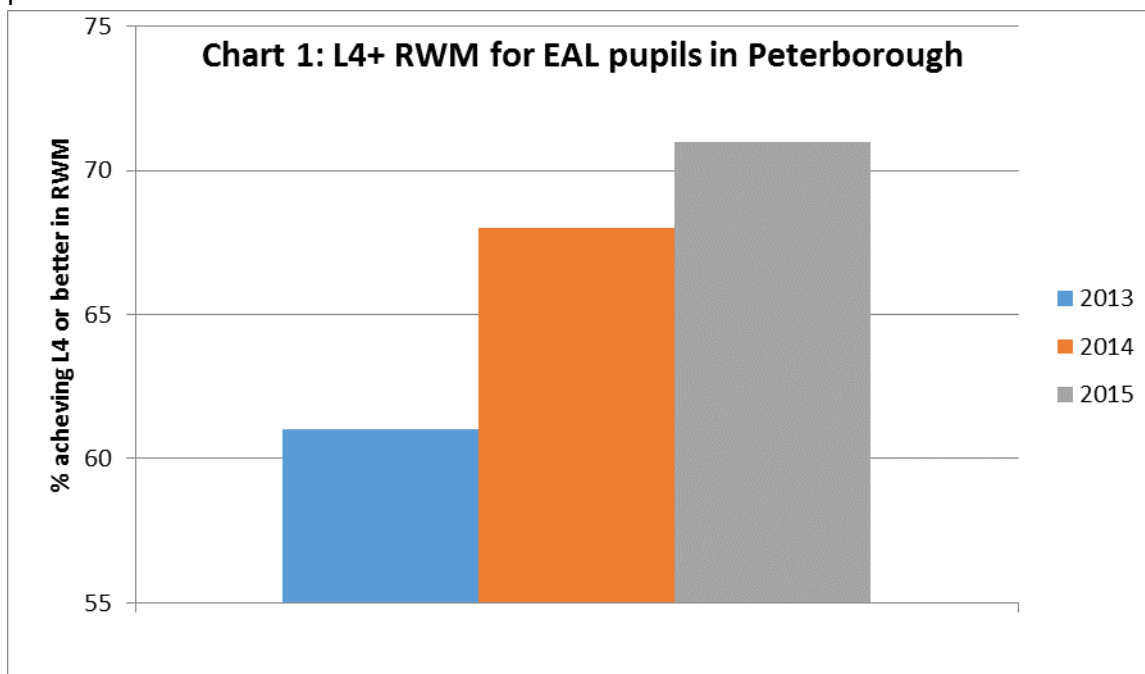
- 4.4 It is also essential to narrow the gaps in educational achievement if we are to break cycles of disadvantage and ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to achieve, thus contributing to the economic and social well-being of individuals, families and communities.

- 4.5 All schools will have some disadvantaged pupils as part of their community so it needs to be a priority that all senior leaders in our schools ensure that their workforce recognises their responsibility to identify the gaps, design and implement strategies to narrow gaps, monitor progress in narrowing gaps and celebrate success when gaps are narrowed.
- 4.6 Peterborough has focused on whole school improvement for many years and seen notable success in Ofsted outcomes and attainment. However, our pupils who are disadvantaged continue to underperform and we need a clear focus on raising attainment of the most vulnerable in the city. Therefore a new strategy has been developed to ensure the gap is closed for these children and young people.
- 4.7 **EAL Strategy**
- 4.8 On the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2013, Peterborough's first EAL strategy was brought to the committee for consideration. At this time, the attainment of Peterborough pupils with EAL (including those who may have had all of their education in Peterborough) was very low compared to the national performance of such pupils (23 percentage points adrift at GCSE, nine percentage points at Key Stage 2). Raising the attainment of pupils with English as an additional language was therefore central to raising overall standards and closing the significant gap to national attainment.
- 4.9 The EAL Strategy arose from a pilot project in 2013 responding to increasing numbers of new arrivals in Peterborough schools with little English. As part of the pilot a diagnosis was produced which identified the attainment and progress of more advanced learners of English as an additional, major issue facing many schools.
- 4.10 The key elements of the strategy were:
- preparing schools and settings for the growth in numbers of pupils with EAL;
  - addressing the specific needs of newly arrived pupils with a particular focus on those from East European Roma backgrounds;
  - closing the attainment gap for the large cohort of advanced EAL learners by enhancing their academic language skills;
  - engaging bilingual families and communities in raising attainment;
  - creating a city-wide network of highly skilled professionals with accredited EAL expertise;
  - Identifying and supporting the development of schools and settings as potential centres of excellence and facilitating school to school support.
- 4.11 Following discussion and consultation the EAL Strategy was agreed from September 2013. Subsequent data underline the need for the strategy. The number of EAL pupils in Peterborough schools increased by 1,653 between 2009 and 2012. Since 2012 it has increased by 3,736. EAL attainment has increased substantially in Peterborough since the start of the EAL Strategy. Without that increase overall results would be static. For example, at Key Stage 2 attainment overall has risen from 71% L4 in reading, writing and mathematics (RWM) in 2013 to 74% in 2015. However, if EAL attainment had remained at the 2013 level of 61%, overall attainment would be 70.5%. In fact, EAL attainment has risen to 71%.
- 4.12 The first iteration of the strategy put in place a number of measures, supported through our commissioned partner, the EAL Academy. This has included consultancy, training, materials and support in the class room. Highlights include -
1. In 2014/15 attendance at city wide training increased by 47% (against the 2013-14 baseline) to 837. Attendance courses (i.e., all courses excluding the masters level course and online course) was 675 (at an average cost per delegate of £65). School based training saw an increase of 123% to 1228. The number of schools receiving school based training and consultancy tripled to 36. This work is much appreciated and valued at all levels. One Primary Teaching Assistant (TA) said: "I attended 'Don't panic' EAL training today and wanted to say how much I enjoyed it. I have lots of ideas to implement in the school and am thrilled about the online training available. It was also refreshing to work with someone who genuinely understood the pressure and daily struggles of being 'just' a TA." A secondary assistant head said: "I found that the series of courses, as well as the

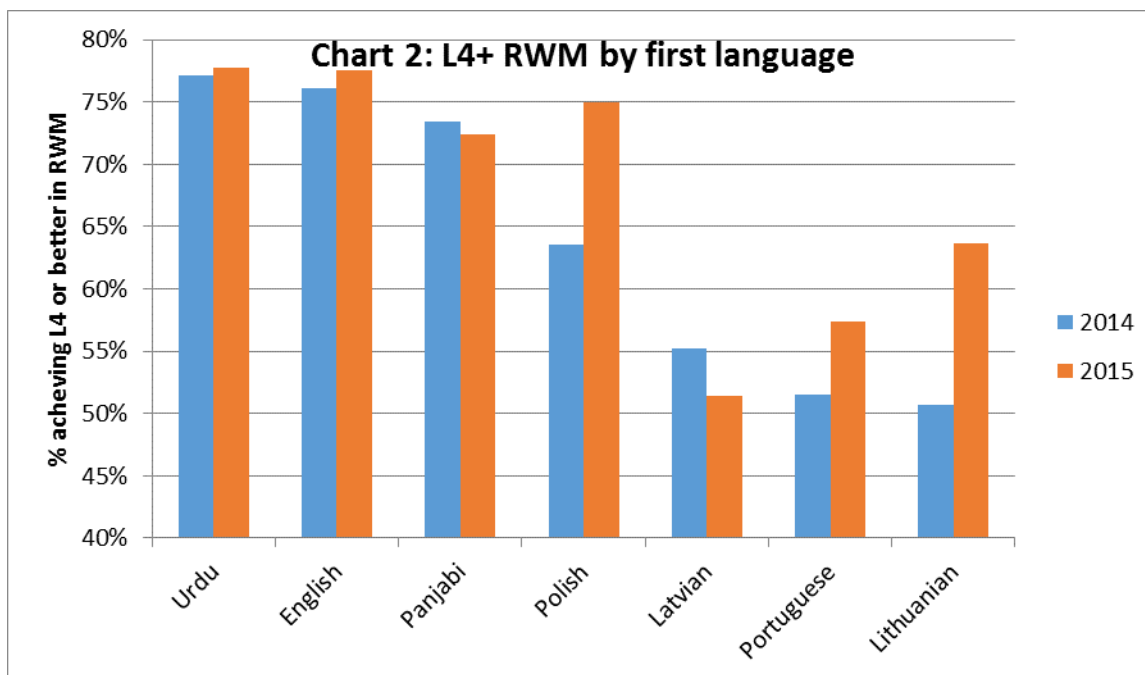
in-house tailored support have enabled us to critically review our practice and processes to such an extent that we are now in a much stronger position to receive new arrivals, monitor and track their progress as well as support teaching and learning across the curriculum. Thank you!”

2. Two major conferences were held.
  - a. In February the hub schools who had received intensive support in 2013-14 gave presentations on how they were developing their approaches to EAL issues. Many delegates commented on how refreshing it was to hear from their peers about what is working in schools now. A handful of conference delegates came from outside Peterborough. One from Boston wrote: “If only we had something like this in Lincolnshire!”
  - b. In June we held a spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) conference to launch SMSC guidance that covered British values and made links with promoting equality. The guidance materials and SMSC word clouds are other resources that were widely welcomed and schools are still requesting the SMSC resources and equalities template.
3. The Peterborough EAL Handbook was updated and distributed in hard copy and electronic form between February and April.
4. A Summer School on advanced writing was delivered for Year 5 pupils.
5. The EAL self-evaluation tool has been widely used.

4.13 Provisional data for 2015 shows that attainment is up for EAL pupils at Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and GCSE and that attainment gaps are falling across the board too. At Key Stage 1 the average point score for EAL pupils is up from 14.0 in 2013 to 15.6 this year while reducing the gap with pupils whose first language is English from 1.8 to 1.2. Chart 1 shows a ten percentage point gain in two years at Key Stage 2. This has seen the attainment gap fall from fifteen percentage points to under seven. At GCSE we estimate the proportion of EAL pupils achieving 5+ A\*-C grades including English and mathematics is just over 40%, a five percentage point increase since 2014, with the attainment gap falling from 20 percentage points to around 12 percentage points.



4.14 We have been able to analyse the Key Stage 2 outcomes in more detail. As the chart shows there is a significant and very welcome increase this year in the attainment of Polish and Lithuanian speaking pupils.



4.15 At Key Stage 2 there is evidence of a correlation between engagement with the EAL Strategy and higher levels of attainment.

4.16 A reference group of volunteer EAL practitioners and enthusiasts has now evolved into a larger, slightly more formal body consisting of two head teachers, one deputy head, four assistant heads and four school EAL leaders. Its terms of reference are to:

- review the overall strategy for raising the attainment and achievement of pupils with EAL and promoting their wellbeing;
- promote the EAL strategy;
- monitor the implementation of the EAL Strategy.

#### Virtual School for Children in Care (CiC)

4.17 The Peterborough Virtual School (PVS) monitors the education of all children looked after by Peterborough City Council wherever they are placed. The staffing of PVS consists of: Head of the Virtual School, an Advisory Teacher and a Business Support Officer. Our aim continues to be ensuring the best possible outcomes for all children and young people. We expect all concerned to have high aspirations for all our children.

4.18 At October 2015 the number of CiC of school age in Peterborough is 314 This includes the two years pre-school and two years post year 11 – a significant increase in the numbers of children for whom PVS has responsibility. Of the cohort -

- 43% are Girls and 57% are Boys;
- 29% have a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education Health Care Plan;
- 6% are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC);
- 52% are placed out of the city.

4.19 The published priorities for PVS are –

- Developing the PVS as a driver for providing outstanding academic outcomes 2015 – 2016.
- Improve progress and achievement outcomes through effective professional development of the team; advising schools on innovative and effective interventions; using termly data to track performance and improve educational outcomes for all CiC.
- Heighten profile of PVS and highlight statutory role in improving educational outcomes for CiC through attendance at head teacher briefings, foster carer meetings etc.
- Evaluate the use of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+ - an additional sum provided to all schools with CiC on roll) and develop a new process for allocation to schools of funding alongside

review of Personal Education Plan (PEP) documents to reflect the responsibility of schools to use PP+ effectively to raise attainment.

- Support partners to raise outcomes for Peterborough CiC
- Increased engagement with schools to identify and implement effective interventions aimed at raising standards in reading, writing and maths for younger learners and those underperforming across 5-16 cohort.
- Further develop the end of Key Stage 2 and 4 project to ensure early identification of underachievement and ensure provision of interventions to maximise achievement.
- Improve knowledge and skills of Designated Teachers, social workers, Foster Carers and school Governors on strategies to raise outcomes through the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training programme.
- Develop partnership with Early Years and Quality Improvement Team to monitor provision and progress of pre-school CiC.
- Develop the partnership with Nene Valley Primary to support Key Stage 1 and 2 literacy.
- Develop partnership with Post 16 partners to increase capacity of PVS to support students beyond Year 11.

4.20 We try where we can to place Children in Care in a good or outstanding schools. However on occasions the rating for a school changes whilst the child is on roll. In these circumstances we work with the school to ensure they are able to meet the needs of the child rather than disrupt friendships. These children are closely monitored and the school consistently challenged. The latest position is shown in the table below -

Ofsted Status	Number of CiC	Percentage of CiC
<b>Total of School age CiC</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100</b>
Outstanding	26	11.4
Good	157	68.8
Requires Improvement	25	11.0
Inadequate	8	3.5
Academies with no formal Ofsted Report	8	3.5
UASC – to be placed in school	4	1.8

The 4 UASC are recently arrived and we are waiting for confirmation of age and care placement.

4.21 We also monitor on a regular basis the attendance of our Children in Care in their placements. This can be seen in the table below -

Overall Average Reception	Overall Average Years 1-10	Attendance Average Years 1 and 2	Attendance Average KS2	Attendance Average KS3	Attendance Average Year 10
2013-2014					
-	97%	97%	98%	96%	96%
2014-2015	Reception to year 10				
96%	96%	98%	98%	96%	92%

4.22 As a result of timing differences (late starting due to not being statutory school age and early ending dates depending on schools for exams), both Year 11 and Reception attendance data were not included in 2013-2014 data . 2014 -2015 data includes Reception data but not Year 11. Generally Peterborough children and young people’s school attendance is excellent and highly comparable with national rates. This reflects the level of support provided by foster carers, social workers and school staff. Attendance data continues to improve from previous years and we have worked well with schools to collect this data. We are alerted to any attendance issues by social workers, carers or designated teachers and advise that an emergency PEP meeting is arranged to address the issues causing the attendance concern.

4.23 The outcomes for CiC in Peterborough is shown in the table below. The table is divided into two sections – the top being all Peterborough Children in Care in all schools i.e. out of city and in city. The second is all Children in Care regardless of where they are educated.

	KS2 - Y6					KS4 - Y11
	APS R,W,M	L4+ R,W,M	EPR	EP W	EPM	5+ A*-C incl E+M
<b>2015 Pb CiC in all schools</b>	27	61	88	77	77	17
<b>2014 Pb CiC in all schools</b>	28.9	35	64	53	58	14
<b>2014 CiC National Average</b>	24.6	48	81	82	76	15
<b>2015 Pb CiC in Pb schools</b>	28.2	78	100	88	88	43
<b>2014 Pb CiC in Pb schools</b>	29.3	23	100	100	100	25
<b>2014 CiC National Average</b>	24.6	48	81	82	76	15

*APS = Average Points Score; EP = Expected Progress*

4.24 The cohort information is relevant especially around some of the challenge in this group. For example in the Y11 group above, there were 17 pupils. Of these pupils, the following apply –

- 4 were in mainstream settings in city schools, 1 of whom was statemented (24%);
- 3 were in special schools in city (all statemented) (18%);
- 2 were in out of city mainstream settings, 1 of whom was statemented (12%);
- 7 were in out of city independent specialist provision, 4 of whom were statemented (41%);
- 1 was out of city in a Local Authority Special school and was statemented (6%);
- Overall 59% had statements.

4.25 A more detailed report with a full data set is being prepared for the Corporate Parenting Panel in November. This can be shared with the committee if required.

## 5. KEY ISSUES

### 5.1 Closing the Gap Strategy

5.2 Our proposed strategy can be found in appendix 1. This strategy outlines Peterborough's vision, priorities and expectations in relation to closing the gap in educational achievement for vulnerable children and young people in the city. It builds upon the success of schools in raising attainment and progress and is ambitious for the future. We are beginning to see the gap closing as the strategy elements are put in place. Closing the Gap in educational achievement is a moral imperative. We believe that through educational success, vulnerable children and young people will maximise their life chances and secure their future economic well-being. We are committed to partnership working and believe that everyone has a part to play in addressing this most serious issue.

5.3 The strategy is still in draft and we are waiting for data for the 2014/15 academic year before finalising the tables etc. However work is underway with the proposed actions in the strategy.

5.4 There are 5 core actions proposed in the strategy and £50k of resources has been allocated to support this project –

1. Peer review - Schools working (initially phase specific) in Triads to peer review provision and outcomes in each school;
2. Governance - To make clear for Governing Bodies in maintained schools and academies their strategic responsibility to hold their school to account for Closing the Gap;
3. Free School Meal (FSM) Claiming - To improve FSM registration rates in Peterborough by reducing the gap between entitled to FSM and those actually claiming. Outcomes to include increasing pupil premium and financial wellbeing of families;
4. CiC - To meet the strategy to ensure we Close the Gap for CiC;

5. Achievement for All - Achievement for All is a successful national project enabling schools to Close the Gap. Peterborough is targeting primary and secondary schools subsidising the cost by 50% with for the schools. We have run this scheme since 2012 with considerable success;
6. Primary good practice and Action Research - To identify strategies and projects that schools and settings can use to address the gap in early years and reception. To also identify activities to support the transition of pupils from primary to secondary school. To include working with National Leaders in Education (NLEs) and Local Leaders in Education (LLEs) to identify and share good practice.

## 5.5 EAL Strategy

5.6 The 2015/16 implementation plan has a major new element, which was trialled in 2014/15: the in-class coaching package. In this approach:

- Teachers work alongside an expert practitioner to plan, teach and evaluate a series of lessons;
- Teachers translate what we know about EAL into effective, everyday classroom practice for pupils new to English and those who need to further develop their academic literacy;
- Teachers try out new strategies in a safe, supported environment;
- Teachers reflect with the coach on what has been effective;
- Teachers strengthen their practice and extend their repertoire of teaching strategies;
- Teachers create with their coach new resources customised to the school's curriculum and pupils.

5.7 The EAL Strategy (shown in appendix 2), which has recently been updated, has four strategic objectives:

- to improve progress and attainment of all EAL pupils and enable every school to meet their needs;
- to share good practice to develop system-wide EAL capacity across the City by working with the School Improvement Board (SIB);
- to develop a city-wide workforce with EAL knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to both classroom practice and leadership through a major professional development programme;
- to engage with families and communities, in order to improve progress and attainment of EAL pupils.

5.8 The operational detail of the strategy is broken down into six areas of focus:

- better preparing schools and settings for the growth in numbers of pupils with EAL;
- addressing the specific needs of newly arrived pupils with a particular focus on those from East European Roma backgrounds;
- closing the attainment gap for the large cohort of advanced EAL learners by enhancing their academic language skills;
- engaging bilingual families and communities in raising attainment;
- creating a city-wide network of highly skilled professionals with accredited EAL expertise
- developing the leadership of EAL at all levels.

5.9 Within the overall strategy two operational priorities have been pursued each year and are set out in the table 1. This dual focus is allowing us to move from early awareness raising to secure, embedded school to school support.

2013-14	Raising awareness	Putting systems in place in schools
2014-15	Putting systems in place in schools	Developing Leadership of EAL
2015-16	Developing Leadership of EAL	Developing practice through in class

		coaching
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5.10 At the Schools Forum meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> October, the Forum agreed to continue to contribute £225k to support the costs of running the EAL strategy for the 2015/16 financial year. The Local Authority is responsible for contract monitoring and ensuring outcomes improve.

#### 5.11 Improving Outcomes for Children in Care

5.12 During the period 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015 – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2015, a team of 13 of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMIs) undertook an inspection of Peterborough City Council's Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers, under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

As a result of this inspection, the inspection team have recorded that:

"It is OfSTED's expectation that all children and young people receive the level of help, care and protection that will ensure their safety and help them prepare for adult life."

5.13 The report itself contained some specific points around the virtual school –

1. The majority (85%) of looked after children attend a school rated as good or better by Ofsted. School attendance of looked after children is in line with attendance for all children nationally. However, the educational attainment levels of looked after children vary significantly and are often too low. The educational achievement, and progression, of young people studying beyond school leaving age is good.
2. The virtual school lacks sufficient capacity to monitor all aspects of looked after children's education. Data are not used effectively to analyse the achievement of looked after children, annual reports are not sufficiently incisive in their analysis of performance and the progress of looked after children in school sixth forms is not sufficiently well monitored. Additionally, not enough support is provided for schools to ensure that all children have effective personal education plans with appropriate targets. Use of the pupil premium by schools is not well monitored. Senior managers have recognised this and are bringing in new monitoring and reporting arrangements for the pupil premium.

5.14 One specific recommendation applied to PVS directly (although others of a more general nature were applicable). This was 'Ensure that the virtual school has sufficient capacity to monitor and improve education outcomes for looked after children, including those in post-16'. This is a key focus for PVS.

5.15 In response to this, a detailed action plan has been prepared with the key headlines being as follows -

1. Improving quality of management information on pupils, especially around pupils placed out of area, focused to ensure progress can be effectively monitored.
2. Enhanced training offer for designated teachers / social workers in understand data on Children in Care and the quality of PEPs.
3. Establish School Council for PVS to ensure pupils' voice is heard – this will complement the recently established Virtual School governing body.
4. Review capacity and resources in PVS Team including the arrangements for providing challenge and support for the Virtual Headteacher. It is proposed the school improvement team act as a school improvement partner.
5. Implementing EPEP (Electronic Personal Education Plan) to allow swift monitoring of outcomes
6. New monitoring arrangements for early years and post 16 to ensure all age groups' outcomes are improved.
7. Revised PP+ methodology from January 2016 – ensuring impact is measured beforehand not funded retrospectively.

5.16 These actions will be monitored rigorously as part of the Ofsted overall action plan.



## **6. CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Both strategies are in draft and will be shared with schools following the committee meeting.

## **7. NEXT STEPS**

- 7.1 Once feedback is received, both strategies will be published to schools and the proposed actions undertaken.

## **8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

- 8.1 None.

## **9. APPENDICES**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Close the Gap Strategy 2015 to 2018  
Appendix 2 – Updated EAL Strategy

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