

KEY PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION 2004 - 2007

The key priorities for 2004-07 are:

- ❖ *To raise the skills, qualification levels and employability of the population of Liverpool so that they are in line with national standards by 2006.*

Poverty is one of the key indicators of low achievement. The City Council is committed to working with parents through Children Centres in order to support parents in accessing employment and training, and promotion of their child's learning and development. Recent research has provided significant evidence to prove that support in the early years increases achievement in later life. This priority, therefore, involves challenging and supporting all Liverpool schools and the private/voluntary sector to assist them in raising standards across key stages. An important development in the delivery of this priority is the creation of Learning Networks. These will enable schools to share and develop best practice and undertake vigorous self-review validated by colleagues within the network. Learning Networks will also encourage the development of collaborative working to bring about benefits to schools and their pupils. It is promoted in the Adult Learning Service by a focus on basic and key skills and work related learning, and also through the Family Learning Scheme tackling the problems of low self esteem and aspiration which affect the performance of many young people.

- ❖ *To continue to develop the educational workforce of the City through the strategy for continuing professional development of teaching and non teaching staff, including the national strategy for workforce remodelling.*

This priority is being achieved through the development of Learning Networks and the exchange of good practice. The use of advanced skills teachers and specialist schools to facilitate the development of best practice in specific areas of learning, but also to tackle areas of identified weakness. The City Learning Centres are providing an important focus for supporting schools in the effective and creative use of ICT across the curriculum. The support for the training and development of Newly Qualified Teachers is also a focus of priority. In addition the City has worked with colleagues in Further Education and adult learning to ensure a supply of good quality learning support assistants.

The City Council is also supporting the development of the childcare workforce to meet the 10 Year National Childcare Strategy requirements for Extended Schools. Sure Start funding is supporting practitioners in accessing Play-work qualifications for work with the 5-14 year age group

and this will continue to be a key target. Practitioners are also able to access a range of professional development courses including first aid, health and safety, safeguarding etc.. The agreement of the structure for the professional Accreditation of Support Staff provides a cohesive system for the development and remuneration of Extended School posts.

- ❖ *To ensure that all children, young people and adults in the City have access to high quality and appropriate education with clear routes for progression.*

This is being achieved through the increasing and developing use of ICT in the curriculum and work to identify preferred learning styles and personalised education programmes. In Adult Learning all students have access to guidance support to ensure that they are able to take the routes most appropriate to them.

Work with Connexions supports children aged 13+ in making career choices. The Childcare Workforce Recruitment Campaign includes a leaflet and video of case studies of men and people with a Black/Ethnic Minority identity working in childcare including the developing extended/out of school services. The nationally accredited 'Making Choices' and 'Take 5 for Play' programmes are available for adults and consideration is being given to adaptation of these programmes for school age pupils aged 14-19 years.

- ❖ *To encourage positive participation by young people and adults in their local community and improved participation in local democratic processes and the reduction in juvenile crime and disorder.*

To achieve this priority there is support for the development of School Councils within every school community and a Schools and Youth Parliament operating at a City-wide level. These activities engage young people in debate about their school, their communities and the issues and challenges facing the City. The Youth Service works closely with the Police, Youth Offending and Social Inclusion teams and Connexions to engage young people in a range of diversionary activities. Partnership with Leisure Services and the Health Service has made a range of sporting and healthy lifestyle activities available to young people in sports centres throughout the City.

- ❖ *To ensure that the most vulnerable members of the Community have access to quality education and support in sustaining their participation in lifelong learning.*

This priority is achieved by working in partnership with those communities representing some of the most vulnerable groups in the City. This has led to the establishment of the Virtual School for children in public care which supplements their school experiences and supports their educational attainment. Also this supports after school provision for Somali and Yemeni young people who still under perform against all other groups.

Similarly adult education and youth services are focused on some of the most vulnerable communities.

- ❖ *To encourage families to remain in, or come into, the City to educate their children.*

This priority seeks to stem the decline in the school population. A major focus is on the raising of achievement across all schools which will attract parents back into the City and also to upgrade school buildings making them attractive places for parents and pupils.

- ❖ *To help all sectors of the population to recognise the value of education.*

This priority was tackled during 2003 when the year was declared Year of Learning and a range of activities was offered to raise the profile and value of education. The City has an extensive programme of parent education and extended school activities, all of which are focused on raising aspirations and helping parents to understand and value education.

- ❖ *To ensure that greater numbers of young people remain in education or high quality training through the implementation of the plans for the entitlement curriculum for students in the 14-19 age range.*

This priority is being developed through the formation of 14-19 collaboratives across groups of schools and in partnership with the Further Education College. The collaboratives will ensure that children in an area will have a choice of progression routes including 'A' level and vocational options, some of which are delivered through the Further Education College or work-based learning providers. These choices alongside some opportunities for work based learning in year 10 and 11 are important initiatives in widening participation through an improved and broader offer.

- ❖ *Through the Building Schools for the Future initiative, ensure that school buildings are of good quality and suitable for curriculum needs in the 21st Century.*

Ten years ago the school building stock was in a very poor state. Since that the improving of school building stock has been a priority for the City. Whilst there have been significant improvements much remains to be done particularly in the area of suitability.

- ❖ *To continue to implement the necessary changes arising from the Children Act and the DfES Strategy for pupils with SEN, "Removing Barriers for Achievement".*

The Education Service and the Children's Service in Social Services will be joined in April 2005 to form Children's Services. However, considerable progress has already been made in joint working to build upon. The SEN Strategy for the City is already resulting in much more inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream schools. As a result, six special schools have already closed and by 2014 four special schools will remain to support children with the most severe difficulties. A range of

Behaviour Support Services have been developed including Student Support Centres, Behaviour and Education Support Teams, support for negotiated transfers and alternative education opportunities.

- ❖ *To further develop a co-ordinated and integrated early years service which meets the needs of children and their families and reflects City Council and Government childcare policy.*

This priority is being implemented through an integrated early years assessment service ensuring their parents have only one referral point across Children's Services, Social Services and Health. In addition, the network of Surestart provision, including Children's Centres will facilitate much more co-ordinated service provision.

There is significant development of integrated and inclusive early education and childcare places. Foundation Stage Consultants and Teacher Advisors work across schools and the private/voluntary sector to support the delivery of a high quality Foundation Stage for all children and to ensure appropriate transition between key stages including the Birth to 3 Matters Framework and Key Stage 1 in line with the National Primary Strategy. Last year, the City exceeded the required targets for teacher support and practitioner access to Foundation Stage training. The City is developing seventeen Children's Centres by 2006 with a teacher-led curriculum and is building on its substantial nursery class provision to create integrated childcare in extended schools. Proposals within the 10 Year National Childcare Strategy are welcomed as the City seeks to support all families in accessing employment and training.

- ❖ *To develop extended provision for children and their families in line with City Council and Government policy.*

Three full-service extended secondary schools are already developing alongside a range of provision across primary schools. Many schools already provide breakfast clubs and after school care. Children's Centre developments are strongly linked to named schools with a number of schools being the major partner/site for service delivery. A significant number of secondary schools have adult education provision in the evening and some offer youth work activities in association with the Youth Service. Specialist Sports Colleges are developing provision alongside Leisure Services.

With the development of Children's Services the City will focus on the five priorities set out by the Government in Every Child Matters. A very significant priority in the context of the City is "Being Healthy" and there is a major focus on health, diet and physical activity.