

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
16 December 2004**

**THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENTS OF CHILDREN LOOKED
AFTER**

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to present to Corporate Parenting Board statistical information relating to the educational attainments of Middlesbrough Children Looked After in summer 2004.

BACKGROUND

2. The educational achievement of children in care has become an increasing cause of concern particularly at a national level and is part of the Government's focus on social exclusion.
3. In response to this, Government has introduced a range of initiatives, targets and guidance specifically aimed at improving the life chances of Children Looked After, with particular reference to their educational attainments.

4. These initiatives have brought notable improvements, however, progress has been inconsistent with fewer than one in four local authorities meeting the 2001 target of half of care leavers obtaining one or more GCSE level qualification.
5. In 2003, just 6% of care leavers aged 16 and over gained five or more GCSE grades A*-C. Furthermore, of those care leavers contacted by councils, 51% were not in education, training or employment and just 1% had progressed to university.
6. Statistics from the Department of Health (DoH) published in 2004, show no significant difference – deterioration or improvement – between the outcome indicator figures for the years ending September 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003.
7. The Children Bill now introduces a new duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children. The Children Bill, together with the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) report '*A Better Education for Children in Care*' and the announcement of revised Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets for 2006, reaffirm the Government's commitment to working closely with local authorities and other partners, to make real progress in improving educational outcomes of Looked After Children.
8. Within Middlesbrough, the educational attainment of Middlesbrough Children Looked After has recently been an area subject to investigation by the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel. Their findings and recommendations are due to be presented to Overview Scrutiny Board on 30 November 2004, prior to presentation at Executive.

CURRENT POSITION

GCSE RESULTS

9. Thirteen Middlesbrough Children Looked After were noted as being in Year 11 at the end of the academic year 2003/2004 and are eligible to be included in the DfES/DoH returns, having been looked after continuously for a period of 12 months plus.
10. Although all thirteen young people are eligible to be reported on, it is worthy noting that seven of these thirteen (54%) did not in fact sit any GCSE or equivalent examinations. Three of the seven pupils who did not sit, were disapplied under Section 364/365 of the 1996 Education Act and five of these seven pupils are noted as having statements of special educational needs (SEN).
11. The GCSE examination results for Middlesbrough Children Looked After are noted as follows:
 - 0% achieved 5 plus GCSE's at grades A* to C.
 - Five young people (38.5%) achieved at least 5 plus GCSE's at grades A* to G
 - Six young people (46.2%) achieved at least 1 plus GCSE at grade A* to G.

12. Comparative GCSE attainment data for Middlesbrough Children Looked After recorded since academic year 2000/01 is noted as follows:

GCSE / GNVQ	At least 1 pass at A* to G	At least 5 passes A* to G	At least 5 passes A* to C
2000 / 2001 <i>n=9</i>	0%	0%	0%
2001 / 2002 <i>n=11</i>	45.5%	45.5%	0%
2002 / 2003 <i>n=24</i>	66%	66%	4%
2003 / 2004 <i>n=13</i>	46.2%	38.5%	0%

13. The revised Public Service Agreement to improve life chances for children in care has the following target:

- The proportion of those aged 16 who get qualifications equivalent to 5 GCSE's graded A*-C has risen on average by 4% each year since 2002; and in all authorities at least 15% of young people in care are to achieve this qualification.
- By 2006 the proportion of children who become disengaged from education is to be reduced, so that no more than 10% reach school leaving age without having sat a GCSE equivalent exam.

KEY STAGE 3 SATS RESULTS

13. Fifteen Middlesbrough Children Looked After were noted as being in Year 9 at the end of the academic year 2003/2004 and eligible to be included in the DfES/DoH returns, having been looked after continuously for a period of 12 months plus.
14. Only one of these fifteen pupils was disapplied from these tests, with the remaining fourteen being entered for, and attending at least one test. Five of the fifteen young people (33.3%) had SEN statements.
15. The collective results of these pupils are noted as follows: -

SUBJECT	Number of pupils who attained Level 5 +	Mean Percentage
English	5	33.3%
Maths	7	46.7%
Science	6	40%

16. Comparative Key Stage 3 attainment data for Middlesbrough Children Looked After recorded since academic year 2000/01 is noted as follows:

Key Stage Three	English	Maths	Science
2000 / 2001 Level 5 or above <i>n=24</i>	21%	21%	17%
2001 / 2002 Level 5 or above <i>n=14</i>	36%	7%	21%
2002 / 2003 Level 5 or above <i>n=15</i>	13%	20%	27%
2003/2004 Level 5 or above <i>n=15</i>	46.7%	33.3%	40%

KEY STAGE 2 SATS RESULTS

17. Seven Middlesbrough Children Looked After were noted as being in Year 6 at the end of the academic year 2003/2004 and eligible to be included in the DfES/DoH returns, having been looked after continuously for a period of 12 months plus.
18. Two of these seven pupils were assessed by teacher assessment only, not sitting their Key Stage 2 SAT's. Two of the children have SEN statements.
19. The collective results of these pupils are noted as follows:

SUBJECT	Number of Pupils who attained Level 4 +	Mean Percentage
Maths	1	14.3%
English	3	42.8%
Science	2	28.6%

*Please note that the DfES/DoH do not publish national statistical information on Year group cohorts consisting of less than ten pupils.

20. Comparative Key Stage 2 attainment data for Middlesbrough Children Looked After recorded since academic year 2000/01 is noted as follows:

Key Stage Two	English	Maths	Science
2000 / 2001 Level 4 or above <i>n=11</i>	18.20%	18.20%	54.50%
2001 / 2002 Level 4 or above <i>n=15</i>	40%	40%	73%
2002 / 2003 Level 4 or above <i>n=8</i>	37.5%	37.5%	50%
2003 / 2004 Level 4 or above <i>n=7</i>	42.8%	14.3%	28.6%

*By 2006 outcomes for 11 year olds i.e. Key Stage 2 pupils in English and Maths are to be at least 60% as good as those of their peers.

KEY STAGE 1 SATS RESULTS

21. Eleven Middlesbrough Children Looked After were noted as being in Year 2 at the end of the academic year 2003/04 and eligible to be included in the DfES/DoH returns, having been looked after continuously for a period of 12 months plus.
Two of these eleven children did not sit their Key Stage 1 SAT's, one of these being disapplied. Two of the children have SEN statements.
22. The collective results of these pupils are as follows:

SUBJECT	Number of Pupils who attained Level 2 +	Mean Percentage
Reading Task	8	72.7%
Reading Test	7	63.6%
Writing	3	27.3%
Maths	7	63.6%

23. Comparative Key Stage 1 attainment data for Middlesbrough Children Looked After recorded since academic year 2000/01 is noted as follows:

Key Stage One	Reading Test	Writing Task	Maths
2000 / 2001 <i>n = 13</i> Level 2 or above -	54%	69%	69%
2001 / 2002 <i>n = 10</i> Level 2 or above -	30%	60%	60%
2002 / 2003 <i>n = 18</i> Level 2 or above -	61%	55%	83%
2003 / 2004 <i>n = 11</i> Level 2 or above	63.6%	27.3%	63.6%

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

24. Not applicable to this piece of work.

FINANCIAL LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

25. There are no financial, legal or ward implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

26. It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board note the contents of this report.
27. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons:
- Both national and local targets have been set by which the educational attainment of Children Looked After is to be measured, reported on and monitored.
 - Valuing and supporting the educational achievements of Children Looked After is one of the most important contributions Middlesbrough Council, as Corporate Parent, can make to the lives of children and young people in care.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

24. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:
- 'Every Child Matters – The Next Steps' published on 4th March 2004.
 - The Children Bill – Section 44 Page 35 – 'Duty of Local Authorities to Promote Educational Achievements'
 - Social Exclusion Unit Report – 'A Better Education for Children in Care' published 8th September 2003.

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