

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides background information regarding the Final Report of the Literacy Level Scrutiny Review.

1. Background

At the meeting of Children's Services & Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th September 2008, the Work Programme for the Committee was agreed. One item on the programme was Literacy levels at the time of the children leaving primary schools (end of Key Stage 2).

At the meeting of Children's Services & Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11th November 2008, the Scope Document for the review was agreed. The three spokespersons, Councillors Sheila Clarke, Frank Doyle and Tony Smith were also appointed as the members of the Literacy Level scrutiny panel. The panel has been supported by a Scrutiny Support Officer, Alan Veitch.

2. Focus for the Review

The main issues for the review were identified in the Scope document as:

- the review will include both reading and writing.
- why are levels of achievement so much lower in writing than in reading?
- why are there a number of primary schools below the national average for the percentage of children reaching Level 4 for reading at Key Stage 2?
- why are there a larger number of primary schools below the national average for the percentage of children reaching Level 4 for writing at Key Stage 2?
- what interventions are in place in schools where a significant number of children do not reach Level 4?
- what interventions are in place in schools where only one or two children do not normally reach Level 4?
- are schools satisfied with the support that is available?
- is there a gender issue regarding attainment levels?
- how do deprivation levels affect the attainment levels of children?

3. Evidence Gathering

The Panel have used a number of methods to gather evidence for the review:

School visits
School questionnaire
Individual meetings with key officers
Written evidence

The Panel expresses its thanks to all those who have assisted the review by so readily giving their time, experience and suggestions.

4. The Final Report

The Final Report, which includes twenty-four recommendations, is attached for consideration by the Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the contents and recommendations of the Literacy Level Scrutiny Review be supported;
- (2) that the Literacy Level Scrutiny Report be presented to the next appropriate Cabinet meeting;
- (3) and that further reports be presented to this Committee to update members regarding the outcomes of the recommendations.

Sheila Clarke, Frank Doyle, Tony Smith
Panel Members
Literacy Level Scrutiny Panel
Children and Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Committee
05/01/2010