

ABCD

LSC Greater Manchester

**Post 16 Trafford Review
Annexe- Literature Review**

KPMG LLP

31 July 2006

This report contains 75 pages

rm

ABCD

LSC Greater Manchester
Post 16 Trafford Review
KPMG LLP
31 July 2006

Contents

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	National Context	1
1.3	Regional Context	25
1.4	Local Context	37

1.1 Introduction

This literature review provides further detail to support the material provided in Chapter 3 of the full Post 16 Trafford Review. It covers national, regional and local literature that was considered pertinent as a background and framework to the review.

1.2 National Context

There have been a plethora of government white papers and other literature that provides strong direction for education and training for the foreseeable future. Material covered includes documents relating to 11-18 education in schools and post 16 education provided by further education colleges and other providers.

Documents covered are:

- DfES Five Year Strategy – July 2004.
- Green Paper. Every Child Matter Agenda: Change for Children – 2003.
- The Children’s Act – 2004.
- Education and Inspections Bill – February 2006.
- 14-19 Education and Skills Implementation Plan – 2005.
- FE White Paper. Raising Achievement: Improving Life Chances – 2006.
- FE White Paper. Realising the Potential: Foster Review of the Future Role of Further Education Colleges – November 2005.
- Agenda for Change – 2005.
- Skills Strategy: Lord Leitch Report – 2005.
- LSC National Priorities: Annual Statement of Priorities – November 2005.
- Gershon Efficiency Review – July 2004.

1.2.1 DfES Five-Year Strategy – July 2004

The DfES Five-Year Strategy was written in the context of improvements in education and childcare, in that we now have:

- fewer children born into poverty;
- more at risk children getting better help and protection;
- an education system that is now among the best in the world;
- children at ten-years old as the third best readers in the world;
- many more good or excellent schools for parents to choose from, with specialist and inner city schools improving fast;
- teaching standards higher than ever before;
- many schools with buildings that are a source of pride not shame;
- a record number of students now going to university; and
- more adults learning new skills at work.

But there are still major challenges to face.

The link between social class and achievement has not yet been broken.
The major challenges at each key phase of life remain:

- Under 5s – children who get a poor start tend to fall further behind as they go through the education system. Despite the improvements there are still not enough childcare places provided in a flexible way that meets parents’ needs.
- School age years – there are still too few excellent secondary schools. While standards have risen, they are not yet high enough for all. Parents and teachers worry about truancy and bad behaviour.
- 14-19 year olds – too many pupils drift, become disenchanted with school or get into trouble and/or drop out at 16. Vocational learning is still seen as second best. Pupils leave school insufficiently prepared for the world of work.
- The world of work – the UK lags behind other countries in terms of output and skills. A large number of adults lack vital skills in literacy and numeracy. Too often the training system does not give employers the sort of courses and qualifications that suit their businesses.

There are more general problems underlying these challenges:

- Children’s services and education have been too compartmentalised. Services have not been joined up.
- Funding has been too fragmented.
- Children and learners have not had their needs addressed in a way that fits their specific needs.
- As various governments have, over the years, tried to make improvements, too many of the changes have been organised in a top down way. The result has been to squeeze innovation and the entrepreneurial flair of good headteachers, nursery managers and college principals out of the system.

So progress has to be sustained with new and more radical reforms.

Five key principles of reform underpin the drive for a step change in children's services, education and training:

1. Greater personalisation and choice, with the wishes and needs of children, parents and learners centre-stage.
2. Opening up services to new and different providers and ways of delivering services.
3. Freedom and independence for frontline headteachers, governors and managers with clear simple accountabilities and more secure streamlined funding arrangements.
4. A major commitment to staff development with high quality support and training to improve assessment, care and teaching.
5. Partnerships with parents, employers, volunteers and voluntary organisations to maximise the life chances of children, young people and adults.

For the early years, the offer to children and parents is:

- All parents able to get local one-stop support through Children’s Centres that will provide childcare, education, health, employment and parenting support.

- From birth to two, more opportunities and support for parents to stay at home with their children if they want to.
- A flexible system of 'educare', that joins up education and childcare and provides twelve and a half hours free support per week for three and 4 year olds before they go to school, with more choice for parents about when they use it.
- The development of 'dawn-to-dusk' schools, with breakfast childcare and after-school clubs to help parents juggle their busy lives.
- Children's Trusts bringing together all those who provide services for children and families in each local area, and making sure children at risk get proper care, education and protection.

Once children reach primary school, the offer to children and parents is:

- Every child making the best possible progress in reading, writing and maths, with high-quality teachers and support staff in the classroom giving children more tailored learning.
- A wider school curriculum and the choice for every child to learn a foreign language play music and take part in competitive sport.
- A closer relationship between parents and schools, with better information through a new 'school profile' and more family learning.
- More primary schools working together in networks, supporting each other and challenging failure; and the best heads helping to improve the rest.
- Poor schools turned around quickly or closed.

In secondary education, the central purpose for every pupil over the next five years is to raise the quality of education, teaching and learning and to widen the range of real choices which are available. The achievements of the last seven years will be built on to increase freedoms and independence; to accelerate the pace of reform in teaching and learning; and to extend choice and flexibility in the curriculum. Underpinning each of these is sustained and rising investment in schools.

At the heart of the reforms is the development of independent specialist schools in place of the traditional comprehensive. This is a decisive system-wide advance, giving more independence to all schools within a specialist system.

There will never be a return to a system based on selection of the few and rejection of the many.

Intervention in failing schools will not be abandoned.

The ambitious targets for schools to keep on improving will not be cast aside.

Independence will be within a framework of fair admissions, full accountability and strong partnerships that drive improvement.

Eight key reforms will be put in place:

1. Guaranteed three-year budgets for every school from 2006, geared to pupil numbers, with every school also guaranteed a minimum per pupil increase each year. A dedicated

Schools Budget, guaranteed by national Government and delivered through Local Authorities, will give headteachers and governors unprecedented financial security and confidence, as well as the ability to plan for the future.

2. Universal and better specialist schools. Every school will be able to become a specialist school with a mission to build a centre of curriculum excellence. Specialist schools will be able to take on a second specialism to develop their mission further. High-performing specialist schools will have the chance to become training schools or leaders of partnerships and those without sixth forms will have new opportunities to develop sixth form provision.

3. Freedom for all secondary schools to own their land and buildings, manage their assets, employ their staff, improve their governing bodies, and forge partnerships with outside sponsors and educational foundations. A strict national requirement for fair admissions will remain; any extension of selection by ability, which denies parents the right to choose, will not be allowed.

4. More places in popular schools. There is no 'surplus places rule'. All successful and popular schools may propose to expand. Dedicated capital funding has been introduced to encourage this. A fast-track to expansion will be introduced. Competitions for new schools will be mandated, which will enable parents' groups and others to promote schools, including smaller schools. This will enable successful schools to establish and manage entirely new schools and federations.

5. A 'new relationship' with schools. Inspection, accountability and intervention to tackle failure are essential for independence to thrive properly. But they need to be of high quality and involve minimal bureaucracy. The existing inspection burden on schools will be halved, without scrapping the expectation that schools must constantly improve. A single annual review will be carried out by a 'school improvement partner', usually a serving headteacher from a successful school. In cases of failure, intervention will follow as necessary. High performing schools will only undergo the formal review once every three years.

6. 200 academies by 2010. 200 independently managed academies will be provided for, to be open or in the pipeline by 2010 in areas with inadequate existing secondary schools. Some will replace under-performing schools; others will be entirely new, particularly in London where there is a demand for new school places. We expect there to be around 60 new academies in London by 2010.

7. Every secondary school to be refurbished or rebuilt to a modern standard over the next 10 to 15 years. The 'Building Schools for the Future' (BSF) programme, made possible by a sevenfold increase in the schools capital budget since 1997, will give every school the buildings, facilities and information technology it needs to succeed in delivering 21st century teaching and learning.

8. 'Foundation partnerships' to enable schools to group together to raise standards and to work together to take on wider responsibilities.

The new system of independent specialist schools will be underpinned by a new role for Local Authorities, as champions of parents and pupils, acting as strategic leaders of education in their area.

Within their school, every pupil should have the personalised teaching they need to succeed.

The offer to every secondary pupil is:

- Excellent teaching based on real knowledge of individual pupils, helping all achieve their potential.
- A broad and rich curriculum with more choice and a wider set of out-of-hours opportunities.
- Innovative use of leading-edge technology, with state-of-the art facilities for every pupil and teacher.
- Good discipline, with heads having powers to deal with trouble-makers, and a commitment to traditional values of respect and authority.
- A culture of regular attendance in every school, supporting learning but also cutting down crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Schools at the heart of their communities, working closely with parents to support children.

When they get to 14, the offer to pupils, parents and employers is:

- A much wider choice of what and where to study, with high standards in every subject and new sixth forms and sixth form colleges where they are needed.
- Demanding courses for the most able pupils, whether they take academic or vocational options, and Young Apprenticeships that start at 14.
- Closer links between schools and employers, so vocational learning means something in the world of work.
- Extra support for young people leaving care.
- High-quality advice and guidance to help young people make good decisions, and a wide range of things to do and places to go for young people outside school or college.

The offer to individuals and employers is:

- High quality courses for everyone, and every adult able to get the skills they need for good jobs.
- Free tuition for people learning basic skills, and free tuition and new Adult Learning Grants for adults going for Level 2 qualifications (the equivalent of GCSE at grade c or above).
- Employers in the driving seat, with colleges and training providers who know how to help business and respond to their needs.
- High-quality Further Education, with no funding for poor provision.

For those people who go on to university, the offer to them and to employers is:

- Access to university for anyone with the potential to benefit.
- Grants for students that need them, an end to up-front fees, and a fair way for graduates to contribute to the cost of their course.

- High-quality courses and teaching, with more flexible opportunities to study.
- Better vocational Foundation Degrees designed with and for employers.
- World-class research that keeps us as a leading-edge nation.
- Good engagement between employers and higher education to boost innovation and skills.

This programme is backed by a big increase in resources. Spending on education in England will rise to £58 billion by 2008.

There will be an improvement in productivity and a slimming down of the Department for Education and Skills, reducing central staff by over 1400 (more than 30 per cent). The DfES will become more strategic about the way the system is led.

This is an ambitious strategy for education, skills and children's services. It seeks to address historic weaknesses. It puts a clear focus on children, learners, parents and employers, not just in setting out what we want to offer, but in designing ways of doing it that promote personalisation and choice.

1.2.2 **Green Paper - Every Child Matters Agenda: Change for Children – 2003**

Every Child Matters sets out the national framework for local change programmes to build services around the needs of children and young people so that we maximise opportunity and minimise risk. Five outcomes are key to the well-being in childhood and later life:

- Being healthy.
- Staying safe.
- Enjoying and achieving.
- Making a positive contribution.
- Achieving economic well-being.

It is the aim to improve these outcomes for all children and to narrow the gap in outcomes between those who do well and those who do not. Radical change in the whole system of children's services is needed to achieve this including:

- the improvement and integration of universal services; in early years settings, schools and the health service;
- more specialised help to promote opportunity, prevent problems and act early and effectively if and when problems arise;
- the reconfiguration of services around the child and family in one place, for example, children's centres, extended schools and the bringing together of professionals in multi-disciplinary teams;
- dedicated and enterprising leadership at all levels of the system;
- the development of a shared sense of responsibility across agencies for safeguarding children and protecting them from harm;
- listening to children, young people and their families when assessing; and

- planning service provision, as well as in face-to-face delivery.

1.2.3 **The Children Act - 2004**

The Act establishes for England:

- a Children's Commissioner to champion the views and interests of children and young people;
- a duty on Local Authorities to make arrangements to promote co-operation between agencies and other appropriate bodies in order to improve children's well-being, and a duty on key partners to take part in any co-operation arrangements;
- a duty on key agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- a duty on Local Authorities to set up Local Safeguarding Children Boards and on key partners to take part;
- provision for databases containing basic information about children and young people to enable better sharing of information;
- a requirement for a single Children and Young People's Plan to be drawn up by each Local Authority;
- a requirement on Local Authorities to appoint a Director of Children's Services and designate a Lead Member;
- the creation of an integrated inspection framework and the conduct of Joint Area Reviews to assess local areas' progress in improving outcomes; and
- provisions relating to foster care, private fostering and the education of children in care.

The Children Act 2004 in itself is not enough. Its implementation must be part of a wider process of change, focused on outcomes and taken forward by local change programmes in 150 Local Authority areas set within a national framework.

The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (NSF) sets out a ten-year programme to stimulate long-term and sustained improvement in children's health and well-being. As it is implemented by PCTs, Local Authorities and other partners including other health organisations, it will contribute to the achievement of the five outcomes.

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) will help support a new approach for all children and young people. It is time to bring together into a shared programme of change all the ways in which we are working towards improved outcomes for children and young people.

The 150 local change programmes will be driven by an analysis of local priorities, and secured through more integrated front-line delivery, processes, strategy and governance. The key is integrated services and local change. This model of whole-system change is the children's trust in action. It comprises of five layers:

1. Outcomes for Children and Young People.
2. Integrated Front-line Delivery.
3. Integrated Processes.

4. Integrated Strategy.
5. Inter-Agency Governance.

Local change programmes will be stronger if set within a supportive national framework. The framework is designed to:

- put clearly defined outcomes at the heart of the process;
- clarify what we all want to achieve, locally and nationally;
- show how the outcomes map against Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets and local performance indicators, aligning these with the criteria for local assessment and inspection in an Outcomes Framework for children's services;
- provide a means of implementing the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services and children's aspects of the Public Health White Paper – Choosing Health: making healthy choices easier;
- prioritise national action to support change in practice and service delivery;
- ensure that change will be promoted through an improvement cycle, based on the Outcomes Framework, which helps local partnerships assess their progress and set new ambitions;
- support change through dialogue and joint working between national and local government, promoting learning across local change programmes; and
- ensure effective communications.

The Government wants to work with partners within this framework, developing it as change takes shape. The statutory and voluntary and community sectors have a vital role to play. Voluntary and community organisations are major providers and have expertise in developing strategy and planning services.

Everyone delivering services for children and young people has an important role to play in working towards the five outcomes. This includes those working in childcare settings, schools, health services, social care, youth services, the police and criminal justice system and culture, sports and play organisations.

1.2.4 **Education and Inspections Bill – February 2006**

In the autumn of 2005 the Schools White Paper 'Higher Standards, Better Schools for All' was published. Its aim was to try and ensure that every child received an education that would enable them to fulfil their potential. Many changes outlined in this paper did not require legislation; others were taken forward by the Education and Inspections Bill, published Feb 2006. This bill also included some provision on inspectorate reform. Some of the main provisions in the Bill are as follows:

Trust schools

The Bill will enable all schools to become Trust schools by forming links with external partners who will be able, should the school choose, to appoint the majority of the Governing Body. Trust schools will:

- own their own assets;
- employ their own staff;
- set their admission arrangements; and
- be able to apply for additional flexibilities.

There will be safeguards around the acquisition of Trusts.

Local authorities

Local authorities will take on a new strategic role including:

- duties to promote choice, diversity and high standards for every child;
- a duty to respond to parental concerns about the quality of local schools;
- acting as decision-maker on school organisation matters; and
- responsibility for making sure young people have a range of exciting things to do in their spare time.

Fair access

The Bill will tighten the admissions framework to ensure fair access for all:

- reaffirming the ban on new selection by ability;
- a ban on interviewing;
- strengthened status for the Code on School Admissions;
- new powers for admissions forums; and
- an extended duty on local authorities to provide free transport for the most disadvantaged families.

The Bill will also:

- create a power for staff to discipline pupils;
- extend the scope of parenting orders and contracts;
- improve provision for excluded pupils;
- put in place a new entitlement to Specialised Diplomas for young people;
- establish new nutritional standards for food and drink served in maintained schools; and
- merge several existing inspectorates into a single inspectorate to cover the full range of services for children and young people, as well as life-long learning.

1.2.5 14-19 Education and Skills Implementation Plan - 2005

The main aim of this plan is to develop a system of 14-19 education matching the best anywhere; where all young people have opportunities to learn in ways which motivate

and stretch them and through hard work qualify themselves for success in life; where educational opportunity and chances in life are uniformly available to all young people.

In the White Paper, 14-19 Education and Skills, policy proposals were set out for introducing the qualifications and curriculum changes that would be necessary to create this system.

The Government will put in place a new national entitlement....

The centrepiece of reform is the creation of a new national curriculum and qualifications entitlement. Every young person will be expected to master the basics and will receive a sufficiently broad education to be able to progress further in learning and into employment.

There will be a choice of routes for achieving this. Young people from the age of 14 onwards will be able to choose between pursuing:

- General qualifications - including a new 'General Diploma', awarded to those achieving the equivalent of 5 A*-C grade GCSEs including English and maths.
- New, employer-designed 'Specialised Diplomas', which will develop young people's knowledge, understanding and skills through a mixture of general and applied education.

There will be 14 sets of Specialised Diplomas, at three levels up to advanced level, covering the occupational sectors of the economy.

The design of these Specialised Diplomas is employer-led. They are not intended as a direct preparation for an occupation. They require young people to develop good basic skills, develop the broader skills employers want and are a basis to make further progress in learning. They will often contain GCSEs and A levels. Young people succeeding at level 2 (the equivalent of five A*-C GCSEs) will be fully prepared to go on to level 3 Diploma courses, A levels or an Apprenticeship. Those succeeding at level 3 will be prepared for higher education or for occupationally-specific training.

The first five Diplomas will be available in 2008, the next five the year after and the final four in 2010. Following a three year programme of evaluation, the national entitlement will be introduced in 2013.

...with mastery of the basics at its heart.

On all routes, young people will be expected to achieve functional skills: the ability to use basic English, maths and ICT in a range of practical settings.

These qualifications will be incorporated within the new Specialised Diplomas and within GCSEs in English, maths and ICT. Passing these functional skills qualifications will be a requirement for achieving a C or better in GCSE English, maths or ICT. Young people will therefore have to master the functional skills in order to achieve a General Diploma, a Specialised Diploma or an Apprenticeship.

Functional skills qualifications will be piloted nationally from 2007, for introduction into Specialised Diplomas from 2008, and into GCSEs in English, maths and ICT.

This will mean a major national programme of change.

The government is also committed to increasing the degree of stretch and challenge in A level, through the introduction of an extended project (which will also be a compulsory part of Specialised Diplomas) and through the introduction of more stretching questions (which will be mirrored in the Diploma structure).

So that more young people are well prepared for the choices ahead, we will free up the Key Stage 3 curriculum, so that schools have more scope to stretch young people and to help those who fell behind at primary school to catch up.

The changes to the way that upper secondary and post-secondary education will be delivered in practice are also significant. The government will support every area to develop a system in which schools and colleges can offer more to young people through working together than they could on their own.

It must be ensured that the workforce is fully trained to implement the changes and that every area has the facilities it needs to provide the full entitlement.

A priority is to drive up attainment and participation year on year.

The long term ambition is to transform participation, so that by 2015, 90% of 17 year olds are participating, compared to 75% now.

The Implementation Plan sets out to deliver three key priorities:

1. Developing the qualifications and curriculum.
2. Supporting every area to deliver.
3. Improving the system for today's young people.

1) Developing the qualifications and curriculum.

This will be done ahead of the timetable previously set out:

- Standards are being developed now.
- There will be a full consultation on these standards from early 2006. It is critical that we ensure that the standards deliver what employers and others are seeking.
- Qualifications will be trialled in 2006/7.
- A full national pilot will begin in 2007.

Specialised Diplomas are being developed to the following timetable:

- Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs), led by employers, have been set up to develop the content of the Diplomas.
- The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has provided advice on the structure of the Diplomas.

- DDPs are consulting widely and working with awarding bodies to specify content for the first five Diplomas by June 2006.
- DDPs will continue to work with awarding bodies as the qualifications are developed for accreditation by June 2007.
- Diplomas will be available to schools by September 2007, for them to prepare for first teaching in September 2008.

Additional challenge is being brought in to A level study, through a new extended project and through more challenging questions in formal a level exams. QCA will be trialling the extended project from 2006, for first teaching from 2008.

GCSEs in English, maths and ICT are being altered to include the new functional skills content. Full, two year pilots begin in 2007, with national accreditation.

The new English and ICT GCSEs will fully replace existing specifications by 2009, following evaluation of the pilot.

Maths GCSE is being changed more significantly, following the report of Professor Adrian Smith's Inquiry into Post-14 Mathematics Education, the Smith Report, and new specifications will be fully in place the following year.

It will be ensured that progression between Specialised Diplomas and Apprenticeships is straightforward.

Supporting every area to deliver.

There can be no uniform, nationally-imposed model of delivery. There is great variability between areas which will need to be reflected in very different ways of delivering the entitlement. There is a great deal to learn from the areas which have made the most progress so far, through 14-19 Pathfinders, the Increased Flexibility Programme, Area Inspections and other locally-led initiatives.

The delivery model will need to involve:

- Only the minimum level of national prescription needed to secure delivery.
- A large amount of local discretion.
- A mechanism to enable all areas to learn from those which have done the most.

Nationally, the government will:

- Seek, through the 2006 Education Bill, to put duties on the Local Authority (in relation to 14-16 year olds) and the LSC (in relation to 16-19 year olds) to ensure that there is sufficient provision in the local area.
- Seek to put a duty on schools to ensure that young people on their roll have access to all the Diplomas available locally.
- Expect every area to establish a 14-19 partnership, led by the Local Authority and local LSC.
- Expect Local Authorities and local LSCs to draw up a prospectus during 2006, which will set out in full the courses available to young people in the area.

Locally:

- Schools, colleges and work-based learning providers will decide which courses they wish to offer and these will be set out in the prospectus produced during 2006.
- 14-19 partnerships will decide how to deal with the key local delivery issues, including: governance arrangements; a common curriculum framework; transport; underpinning systems; data; and complaints procedures.
- This will be underpinned by a mechanism for enabling everyone to learn from the areas which have made the most progress, including a programme of learning visits, through which we will support people to examine and experience some of the most effective existing practice.

The government will make sure that professional development is available, so that changes to curriculum and qualifications can be introduced effectively.

To support piloting of functional skills from 2007 and introduction of Diplomas in 2008:

- The Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) will lead work to design and develop teaching and learning materials for the first five Diploma lines during 2006/7, working alongside DDPs and awarding bodies as the qualifications are designed.
- QIA and the SSAT will lead work during 2007/8 to support schools, colleges and training providers to deliver the first five Diploma lines from 2008.
- QIA and the National Strategies will provide support during 2007/8 on the teaching of functional skills.
- The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) will lead work in some pilot areas to integrate work on initial teacher training and the development of support staff to deliver Diplomas.

The government will also ensure that there is sufficient provision in place:

- LSC will publish guidance on the 16-19 capital fund in December 2005.
- LSC will hold 16-19 competitions from January 2006.
- By March 2006, 400 Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) will be established.
- The first 40 Vocational Specialist Schools will be in operation by spring 2006.
- The LSC will make its first allocations of capital from the 16-19 capital pot from June 2006.
- In autumn 2006, the new National Skills Academies will begin to operate.
- In developing their visions for future waves of Building Schools for the Future, Local Authorities will need to demonstrate how they will enable the 14-19 entitlement to be delivered in the area.
- By September 2007, the first new providers of 16-19 provision entering the system through competitions will open.
- By September 2008, the government will have created up to an additional 50,000 16-19 school, college and work-based learning places.
- By September 2008, 200 Vocational Specialist Schools and 12 National Skills Academies will be established.

Improving the system for today's young people.

The aim is to ensure that, year on year, there are improvements in participation and achievement. In particular:

- More young people will achieve level 2 and level 3 qualifications by the age of 19. At least 70% of young people will achieve Level 2 by 2006, and at least 72% by 2008.
- More young people will complete Apprenticeships, at least 75% more by 2007/8.
- More young people will participate in education and training post-16 – at least 90% of 17 year olds by 2015.

1.2.6 **FE White Paper: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances - 2006**

Purpose

Our future as a nation depends on our education and training systems. We need systems that prepare for life and develop skills that underpin our economy and way of life. People need support in the development of these skills and this is the core purpose of colleges and training providers that make up the FE system. This system must be the powerhouse for delivering skills at all levels needed to sustain an advanced, competitive economy and make us a fairer society, offering equal opportunities for all based on talent and effort, not background.

The challenge of skills

Recent improvements in results achieved by the education and training system owe a great deal to FE: significant increase in prop 19 year-olds achieving L2 qualifications – up 3 % to 69.8%; improvement in completion rates for full Apprenticeship frameworks - 31% in 2003/04 to 40% in 2004/05; recent increase in post-16 participation to new record levels; the overall improvement in success rates in FE from 59% in 2000/01 to 72% in 2003/04.

Improvements are seen as due to the skill, dedication and hard work of all those working in the FE system and to substantial investment. Since 1997, participation in post-16 training has expanded, with total learner numbers rising from around 4 million in 1997/98 to around 6 million in 2004/05.

The Government increased investment in colleges by 48% in real terms between 1997/98 and 2005/06. Formation of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), brings together all forms of funding for post-16 education, training and skills outside HE. This has enabled tackling of the artificial funding and organisational barriers between different parts of the system.

However, by international standards, there are still major areas of weakness. The proportion of young people staying on in education and training post-16 is very low: the UK ranks 24th out of 29 developed nations. The country lags well behind France and Germany in the proportion of our young adults achieving a level 3 qualification in their early twenties. The number of adults in the workforce without relevant skills at level 2 for productive, sustainable employment in a modern economy is much too high: in that area

we rank 17th out of 30 countries. As a nation we still need to raise our ambitions for skills.

The 14-19 and skills strategies have already begun to put in place far-reaching reforms to address weaknesses; this process needs to speed up. In the initial report, autumn 2005, Lord Leitch, when writing of the skills needs of the economy in 2020, presents a daunting picture of the rate at which other nations such as China and India are improving their skills base, and the challenge we must set ourselves if we are to keep pace. Even achieving all our current targets for raising skills among young people and adults would mean that in 2020 we would be no better than mediocre in the international rankings.

Aim:

- Virtually all young people staying on to age 19 and half going on to HE.
- All adults supported to up-skill and re-skill throughout life.
- All employers seeing skills as key to success.

From this can come productivity growth that will sustain us as a leading world economy.

Reform principles

The FE system needs to be fit for purpose to deliver the 2 strategies, transforming 14-19 education and training and up-skilling the adult workforce. This requires major reform for colleges and training providers, so that FE gains the esteem it deserves as the engine room of a successful economy.

Evidence and key lessons since 1997 have been that:

- high quality vocational learning to 14-16 year olds, often in colleges, can help boost post-16 staying on rates;
- delivering well-designed training at work can result in employees getting a higher rate of return from the qualifications they gain;
- encouraging colleges to work with employers and specialise in particular occupational areas can raise performance; and
- giving employers and learners greater choice in the design and delivery of training raises their motivation and satisfaction.

Measures set out in the White Paper build on these lessons and on the public service reform principles that the Government has adopted in other sectors, most recently in the Higher Standards, Better Schools for All - White Paper on school reform. The government are raising the bar on standards:

- tough approach to both inadequate and coasting providers;
- encouraging a diverse and high quality set of providers;
- promoting learner choice; tailoring provision so that is responsive to the needs of all learners; and
- ensuring there is clarity of role between commissioners, providers and regulators, with a reduction in bureaucracy across the whole system.

The White Paper also builds on recent secondary school reforms, the 14-19 and skills strategies, the Success for All programme, and the LSC's agenda for change reforms. It also responds to the important independent report published recently by Sir Andrew Foster on the future role of colleges. It sets out a far-reaching programme of reform in six main areas.

Mission and specialism

Foster set out a clear mission for FE, focused on the employability and progression of learners. He suggests that the economic mission of the sector should be at the heart of FE's role. Its central purpose might be to equip young people and adults with the skills, competences and qualifications that employers want, and which will prepare them for productive, rewarding, high-value employment in a modern economy. This includes developing the skills and attributes for enterprise and self-employment.

A new specialist system will require every college to develop one or more areas of specialist excellence (CoVEs will be central to this). Programme of National Skills Academies (NSAs) will be extended as part of this drive for specialisation. This emphasis on vocational/occupational specialism does not exclude the importance of general education at levels 2 and 3 still seen as important by employers and as a preparation for life and work.

FE colleges will be encouraged to strengthen their HE provision in areas that link with their economic and social mission. Lifelong learning network programmes will be used to develop HE in regions where access to HE is limited.

Strong specialist network will drive improvement and be characterised by their strong links with employers, raising standards, reputation and motivation.

The 6th Form College sector is seen as central to delivering 14-19 reform and will be promoted and strengthened.

Meeting employer and learner needs

Measures will be introduced that should put learners and employers needs as the focus in determining what is funded and how services are delivered.

A programme of learner accounts will be trialled; designed to motivate learners and encourage them back into learning.

Every college governing body will include learner representatives.

A new entitlement to free training will be created to enable young people to complete their initial education and training to Level 3 up to the age of 25. Through the continuing roll out of the Adult Learning Grant (ALG), we will also provide help with maintenance costs for those on low incomes.

A Train to Gain programme will help employers, supported by brokers, to get training delivered in the workplace to meet their needs. Trials will extend this cover to level 3 and plans are in place to test the introduction of work-based training at HE level, eventually providing employers with skills from basic skills to degree level, through a single broker.

Such changes will be underpinned by qualification reform which ensures better progression routes for young people (through Specialised Diplomas) and greater simplicity and navigability for adults (through the Framework for Achievement).

A national strategy for better teaching and learning

A single Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) will be responsible for supporting providers in driving up the quality in their own organisations. It will lead the implementation of a single, national Quality Improvement Strategy for teaching and learning in FE. The strategy will support increasing personalisation, so that individual needs and circumstances are built into the design and delivery of education and training.

A Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirement will be introduced, requiring all staff to undertake a minimum amount of CPD each year. This should ensure proper training to develop and update skills regularly, responding to changing needs and new challenges.

All new college principals will need to gain a new leadership qualification and building on the work of the Network of Black Managers and the Centre for Excellence in Leadership in relation to race equality, the quality strategy will be centred on a commitment to equality and diversity.

Spreading success and eliminating failure

There will be support for the development of the more personalised system by taking decisive action to eliminate failure and creating structures that help the best providers to spread their influence. Any provider or provision judged to be failing or coasting will be subject to an improvement notice. Colleges and other providers will receive support to address the problems immediately. If the problems are not addressed within a year, the LSC will be able to act decisively – changing governors or the leadership of the college, opening up the provision to competition or seeking merger with or help from a strong provider.

New structural models will be encouraged, including federations, collaborative partnerships and Trusts to make it easier for the best providers to spread their influence across the system and lead change. There will be a presumption that colleges meeting criteria to be designated ‘high performing’ will be able to expand their provision for 14-19 year olds, particularly to provide new Specialist Diplomas.

New competition arrangements will encourage new providers to enter the system, where significant expansion of high quality provision is needed. New structures and funding provision will enable good existing colleges to expand, federate or create a Trust, or enable independent and voluntary sector training providers to enter the sector, or wholly

new institutions to be established, depending on needs. It will be underpinned by a new LSC remit to promote diversity, choice and specialisation.

A new balanced scorecard and single performance indicator (along the lines of the local authority CPA system) will support college self improvement, provide greater transparency and information for learners, and strengthen public accountability for colleges.

Funding

The funding system should be organised to support these initiatives. Funding will be targeted on priority areas and follow the needs of learners and employers. The funding gap between schools and colleges should be further reduced.

There will be a new entitlement to free tuition for all 19-25 year-olds studying for their first level 3 qualification which will be funded in full. Other provision we will move towards a 50% fee contribution for adults who are not entitled to free tuition. Low-income learners will continue to be supported to ensure that they are not prevented from participating in priority programmes and will extend the ALG to full national coverage from September 2007, to help meet the additional costs of learning.

Regional and local plans to improve the quality and diversity of provision, determining the pattern of new capital investment will support these funding changes. Local authorities will be asked to expand the scope of Building Schools for the Future visions to include FE provision for 14-19 year-olds, so as to develop a fully comprehensive strategy for delivering the 14-19 reform program. LSC capital will be directed to implementing this vision, alongside BSF resources. A more level playing field for capital funding will be created to ensure that the way capital projects are funded in schools and colleges do not obstruct the development of the best patterns of institutes to meet 14-19 needs.

A new relationship with colleges and providers

A central finding of the Foster report was that the FE system is overregulated and too complex. If colleges and training providers are to meet the challenge they are set, they must have the space and freedom to do so. A simplified system for planning and funding provision will be implemented, which will make clearer the links between national priorities and local action, and enable colleges to play more fully to their strengths.

There will be a single gateway process for all publications and data returns, which will ensure that only relevant, clear and important communications are sent as a matter of course to providers. Improved arrangements for data collection will ensure that data is collected once and used many times.

Roles will be clarified and bureaucracy at every level reduced. The DfES will focus on its core purpose of strategic leadership and policy formulation. The LSC will remain the key body responsible for planning and funding the FE system, ensuring the right pattern of colleges and providers are delivering high quality programmes. To ensure that the FE system is fit for purpose to meet the 14-19 and adults skills challenges, the LSC will need

to continue to reform in line with the direction of travel that it set out in agenda for change.

The LSC will strengthen its regional capacity. This is necessary to oversee the performance of general FE colleges, to plan with regional partners the skills infrastructure needed across the area to meet the needs of employers and adults, and to oversee competitions for new provision.

Legislation will ensure a new curriculum and qualifications entitlement for 14-19 year-olds, through the current Education and Inspection Bill. This will place new duties to secure sufficient provision to meet the entitlement, on local authorities in relation to 14-16 year-olds, and on the LSC for 16-19 year-olds. Both the local authority and LSC have crucial roles in delivery and their funding powers will need to be used to enable them to play those roles effectively.

Local authorities will be expected to play the strategic leadership role, consistent with their leadership role in children's services overall, ensuring the integration of the delivery of 14-19 reform with the wider agenda for children and young people in the locality. Within that, the LSC remains the primary partner for the local authority, using its funding and powers to secure rapid and high quality implementation of the 16-19 entitlement in every area.

In the major cities, including London, links between jobs, adult training, regeneration and economic development will be improved, all with a strong employer lead.

The more powerful regional role, together with the local partnership teams and stronger links between jobs, training and skills in cities, means that the current structure of 47 local LSCs will need to change. They will require new, streamlined accountability structures, which secures strong engagement from employers and other stakeholders. Further simplification and reduction of bureaucracy will come through reform of the inspection, quality improvement, qualifications and data collection operations.

Impact

By 2008 the measures set out in this White Paper will have led to real benefits for learners and employers. Amongst these:

- young people will be benefiting from five new Specialised Diplomas, with all 14 Diplomas available nationwide by 2013;
- adults will be benefiting from the first stages of a clearer, simpler, qualifications framework, designed by employers and fully implemented from 2010;
- 19-25 year-olds will be benefiting from a new entitlement to free tuition for their first full Level 3 qualification, which will be extended over time as the new qualification framework is introduced, to cover the lower level courses that provide the best stepping stones through to Level 3;
- adults in pilot regions will be benefiting from a learning account giving them funds towards the cost of a level 3 course at a provider of their choice, together with information and advice tailored to their needs; and

- employers throughout the country will be benefiting from training delivered in the workplace, by a provider of their choosing, delivered to suit their operational needs. Training for basic skills and level 2 will be free, and there will be access to level 3 and HE.

In addition by 2008 there will be a new dynamism within the system:

- All FE colleges will have a clear economic mission, specialising in areas of distinctive excellence. Standards will be improved by strong specialist networks across colleges and training providers.
- New high quality providers will be encouraged to enter the FE system to drive up standards, raise innovation, and expand the range of training available. The LSC will have stopped funding any inadequate colleges, providers or departments, levering up standards through radical change such as merger or federation with another stronger college, or a change in leadership.
- There will be much closer collaboration between schools and colleges, with 14-19 pupils able to study courses in the institution best placed to meet their needs and interests. There will be a closer relationship between colleges and universities, with easy progression from level 3 onto Foundation Degrees, and from there onto honours degree courses.

Through these changes, the FE system will realise its potential to be a key driver of economic growth and competitiveness and an engine of social justice and equality of opportunity.

1.2.7 **FE White Paper: Realising the Potential - Foster Review of Future Role of Further Education Colleges – November 2005**

Positive proposals include:

- Colleges' central identity should be about developing the skills of the UK workforce; closer employer engagement is vital to this.
- A new entitlement to free study for a first full level 3 qualification for 19 to 25 year olds from 2007-08.
- A new system of learner accounts for adult learners, focused on level 3 qualifications.
- Bringing forward the national rollout of the Adult Learning Grant to 2007-08.
- Recognition of important role of CPD with respect to quality.
- A simplified strategic framework that leaves colleges freer to use their experience and expertise to respond to local need.
- A stronger role for colleges in the delivery of HE.
- A £20 million per annum skills package aimed at women in response to some of the recommendations of the Women and Work Commission report.

However:

- There are no strategies here to increase employer investment in training.
- The harms of the contestability measures may outweigh the benefits.
- A missed opportunity to deal with the plethora of oversight organizations.

- The pay gap between FE and other comparable professions will make the recruitment and retention of bright young people into further education difficult.

1.2.8 **Agenda for Change - 2005**

LSC agenda for change has 6 themes:

1. The LSC will work together to create colleges valued by employers as the partner of choice for developing the skills they need.
2. They will work together to improve the quality of provision, funding excellence and promoting the very best to serve as beacons to others.
3. They will radically simplify their funding methodology and allocation process, making it more transparent and more responsive to changing needs.
4. They will sweep away the complexity that causes colleges to divert resources to collecting data of variable benefit.
5. They will develop their capital investment strategy to free back-office resources and support improved management systems and processes to thus improve their business excellence.
6. They will work with colleges to identify ways in which they can secure their reputation as pivotal to delivering the education and training needs of the UK.

1.2.9 **Skills Strategy – Lord Leitch Report - 2005**

How Leitch sets out the challenge:

The UK has a strong economy and world-leading employment levels, but its productivity trails many key comparator nations; poor skills are a key contributor to this problem and have an impact on social welfare.

Over the last decade, the skills profile of the working age population in the UK has improved. For example, the proportion of adults with a degree has increased from a fifth to over a quarter of the population.

Despite these improvements, the UK still does not have a world-class skills base:

- Over a third of adults in the UK do not have a basic school-leaving qualification – double the proportion of Canada and Germany.
- Five million people have no qualifications at all.
- One in six adults do not have the literacy skills expected of an 11 year old and half do not have these levels of functional numeracy.

Looking ahead to 2020, global, demographic and technological change will place an even greater premium on the UK's skills profile.

New analysis conducted by the Review shows that, if the Government meets its current ambitious targets for improving the UK's skills, by 2020:

- the proportion of working age people without any qualifications will fall to 4 per cent; and the proportion of adults holding a degree will increase from 27 per cent to 38 per cent; and
- this will have significant benefits for the economy – increasing annual productivity growth by 0.2 per cent with a net benefit to the economy of £3 billion a year, equivalent to 0.3 per cent of GDP.

However, even if the UK can meet the current challenging targets, the nation's human capital will still fail to be world-class. Considerable problems will remain; at least 4 million adults will still not have the literacy skills expected of an 11 year old and 12 million would not have numeracy skills at this level.

The Review has analysed more ambitious scenarios for 2020:

- tackling the stock of low skilled adults without qualifications, basic literacy and numeracy;
- investing more in intermediate skills; and
- further increasing the proportion of adults holding a degree.

In all of the scenarios, the analysis shows the significant economic and social benefits that would result from higher productivity and employment gained through improving skills. The Leitch Review believes that the UK must urgently raise its game and set itself a greater ambition to have a world-class skills base by 2020. The final Leitch report is due out later in 2006.

1.2.10 **LSC National Priorities: Annual Statement of Priorities – November 2005**

The Government's priorities for FE for 2006/07 were set out in the grant letter of 30 October 2005 from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (the Secretary of State) to the Chairman of the LSC. The Secretary of State expects the LSC, working with key partners, to continue to deliver the Government's long-term reform strategy, including driving forward Success for All, the Skills Strategy including Skills for Life, and the 14–19 Strategy, particularly in relation to these priorities.

The Secretary of State's key targets are set out in Annex A to the grant letter. The LSC published its Annual Statement of Priorities in November 2005, which identified the following priorities:

- Ensure that all 14–19 year olds have access to high-quality, relevant learning opportunities.
- Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults.
- Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change.
- Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs.
- Improve the skills of the workers who are delivering public services.
- Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally.

All providers of FE should ensure that the provision they plan and deliver supports these annual priorities. (The Annual Statement of Priorities is available on the LSC website www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/Keyinitiatives/OurAnnualStatementOfPriorities/default.htm).

Key Changes for 2006/07

The LSC published Priorities for Success in October 2005, which stated the following key changes for 2006/07:

- Funding rates for 16-18 year olds will be increased by 3.4 per cent in line with the minimum funding guarantee announced by the Secretary of State.
- Funding rates for 19+ learners will be increased by 2.5 per cent.
- The taper and cap will be replaced in 2006/07 by the maximum funding per learner.
- The national fee assumption will be increased in 2006/07 to 32.5 per cent of the national base rate.
- Very short courses, which are below 9 guided learning hours, will be ineligible for funding in 2006/07.
- Courses in Health and Safety, Basic Food Hygiene and First Aid that are used to meet the responsibilities of employers will be ineligible for funding in 2006/07. It is expected that where this is the case, the employer will meet the full cost.

1.2.11 Gershon Efficiency Review – July 2004

In August 2003, Sir Peter Gershon was commissioned to conduct a review of efficiency in the public sector. In commissioning the review, the Government's aim was to improve service delivery by releasing resources to 'front line' services that meet the public's highest priorities.

The Gershon Review was published in July 2004 to coincide with the Government's 2004 Spending Review. A target saving was set of £21.5 billion of efficiency gains a year across the public sector by 2007-08.

The target is a mix of cashable and non-cashable gains. Cashable gains consist of reductions in inputs which do not adversely affect the quality of outputs. For example, reforms which allow a hospital to purchase the same quantity and quality of medical supplies at lower costs would generate cashable efficiency gains. Overall, around two thirds of the £21.5 billion target is expected to release resources for 'front line' uses in this way. The remainder will be in the form of non-cashable gains where the quality of outputs increases while inputs remain the same. For example, a job centre would be able to claim non-cashable efficiency gains if it introduced changes that improved the quality of service provided to jobseekers without needing any additional funding. Although no resources have been freed up, the job centre would be using its resources more efficiently.

Key Themes

Gershon identifies a number of key themes where action should be taken to support the delivery of efficiency plans, promote a culture of efficiency and which suggest the scope for savings.

- **Financial Management** - Strong financial management is viewed as essential to the efficient use of resources and a pre-requisite to the delivery of major efficiency programmes.
- **Procurement** - Strategic management of supply and service markets and greater 'professionalisation' of procurement. Visibility of, and influence over, totality of spend to ensure value for money from better aggregation of the goods and services.
- **Modernising transactional services** - E-enabled transactional service, increased rationalisation of back office functions and improvements in productive time of staff.

Areas for Savings

The Governments Spending Review identifies six main areas for savings based on the findings of Gershon:

Back office (Corporate Services)	e.g. Finance, HR, ICT support, legal services, facilities management, communications.
Procurement	Goods and services such as ICT, professional services, temporary staff, social care, construction.
Transactional services	Payment of bills, collection of income, collection and exchange of information.
Policy, funding and regulation	Strategy, policy and inspection needs to be at a level proportionate to their added value.
Policy, funding and regulation of the private sector	Compliance costs of legislation and regulation.
Productive time of front line staff	Front line staff deliver key services and reducing time spent away from this is part of efficiency.

1.3 **Regional Context**

1.3.1 **North West Regional Skills Priorities – 2006-2007**

The North West Regional Skills Partnership (RSP) has identified eight Skills Priorities for 2006/07 that will drive the planning, purchasing and investment activities of key partners and stakeholders in the North West within the next 12 months and beyond.

Two of the priorities are underpinning priorities – changes required to make the skills development process in the region work more effectively. The others address specific supply or demand issues. Within all of the priorities it is recognised that effectively addressing issues of equality and diversity will be central.

The key priorities for 2006/ 07 are:

- Increasing the proportion of young people with the skills and qualifications needed for employment, and fostering progression to Higher Education.
- Equipping adults with the skills required for employability, including the Skills for Life of literacy, language and numeracy.
- Addressing employers' skills needs:
 - Equipping individuals with the level 3 skills required within the economy, particularly in key regional sectors.
 - Ensuring that the skills needs of the regional economy, and in key sectors in particular, are addressed at level 4.
- Tackling cross-sectoral leadership and management skills gaps.
- Developing innovation and enterprise skills.
- Tackling worklessness by linking people, jobs and training.

Underpinning priorities

- Stimulating the demand for investment in skills from employers and individuals.
- Providing high quality responsive support to meet regional skills priorities.

The successful tackling of these priorities will be dependent upon:

- Suitable finance for learners' support.
- Practical support for learners and job seekers appropriate to their needs.
- Best use of technology to deliver skills and support learners.
- Appropriate information, advice and guidance.

1.3.2 **Greater Manchester Economic Development Plan – 2004/05-2006/07**

The plan incorporates the cities of Manchester and Salford and the metropolitan boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

The document presents the vision and plan adopted by the Greater Manchester Forum for delivery by partners involved in the wide-ranging consultation process involving the private sector, local authorities, statutory agencies, voluntary sector, colleges and universities.

The Plan provides an over-arching framework that will enable partners to bring forward and deliver agreed economic development programmes and initiatives that are of sub-regional or regional importance. Local developments will remain the responsibility of the respective Local Strategic Partnership and their Community Strategy, though the Plan's framework provides the context for local economic priorities.

Greater Manchester is the economic centre of the North West and is the largest sub-regional economy outside London and the South East. Recent economic performance has been strong – more people are in work, the population of the area is increasing after years of decline and output has grown at a rate above that of similar areas not only in the UK but also across Europe. Forecasts predict that this strong growth will continue over the next decade with Greater Manchester expected to make an increasing contribution to regional and national growth.

Greater Manchester is placed to become a major force in the global knowledge economy as a consequence of the Manchester: Knowledge Capital Initiative. The initiative capitalises on the unique assets of Manchester at the heart of Greater Manchester and the North West and presents opportunities that will be of benefit across the conurbation.

Greater Manchester has achieved considerable success in its regeneration activities to deal with the consequences of the economic decline of previous decades, and there is a determination for best practice to continue, to create a sustainable 21st century environment for residents and businesses alike.

The Economic Development Plan provides the strategic framework for investment priorities for the delivery plans of the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council; Jobcentre Plus; Connexions; Business Link; the inward investment agency, MIDAS; the Universities; the Manchester: Knowledge Capital Partnership; and other local implementation bodies. It also acts as a framework for more detailed local authority and Local Strategic Partnership plans; and, in doing so, seeks to establish an integrated approach to the conurbation's needs within the wider policy context emerging for the region

Following consultation with partners, transport has been identified as one of the most critical areas which the Economic Development Plan must influence strongly in order to achieve our vision and objectives for economic growth. This is not only to facilitate businesses' access to customers and suppliers, and the consequent impact on

competitiveness, but also because of the need to maximise the labour pool and provide access to job opportunities for all the residents of Greater Manchester.

Vision

The vision for Greater Manchester as set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy is: “A world-class city-region at the heart of a thriving North West”.

By the year 2015, Greater Manchester will be:

- One of Europe’s premier city-regions, at the forefront of the knowledge economy, and with outstanding commercial, manufacturing, cultural and creative activities.
- World Class, successfully competing internationally for investment, jobs and visitors.
- An area where all people have the opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, the investment and development of their city-region.
- An area known for, and distinguished by, the quality of life enjoyed by its residents.

Strategic Drivers

Based on the analysis of the Greater Manchester economy and informed by the strategic influences, six key themes or drivers have been identified for the Plan:

1. Building Competitive Businesses.
2. Attracting and Retaining Investment, Visitors and Talent.
3. Creating World Class Skills.
4. Achieving Economic Inclusion.
5. Ensuring the Best Transition to Working Life for all our Young People.
6. Securing a Modern, Integrated and Efficient Transport Network.

Greater Manchester is seen as the economic engine of the North West, generating 40% of its GVA, and at an estimated £35 billion in 2001 is the largest sub-regional economy outside London and the Greater South East.

Greater Manchester has been extremely successful in increasing employment and thereby reducing the rate of unemployment. The conurbation’s employment rate has risen since 1992, with 71.6% of the workforce in employment

After three decades of decline, Greater Manchester’s population has begun to grow again, and since 2000, population trends are upwards, driven in particular by the sharp growth of Manchester and the boom in city living. By 2002, Greater Manchester was home to 37% of all North West residents, with population growth expected to continue and spread across the conurbation supported by the implementation of Housing Market Renewal initiatives in Manchester/Salford and Rochdale/Oldham, and the growth of new urban communities such as New East Manchester.

Greater Manchester has restructured its economic base, transforming into a strong and diverse economy. Greater Manchester’s economic growth has been driven by the rapid expansion of private sector services. The growth in business services and Greater

Manchester's position as a leading UK centre for financial intermediation, especially insurance, have led to it becoming a national as well as regional service centre.

Greater Manchester is also a national centre for trade services (especially the wholesale/retail trade), transport, storage and communication, mainly due to the scale and importance of Manchester Airport and links to the national motorway network.

The area has a large and diverse manufacturing base, with over 7,800 workplaces (41% of the regional total) employing nearly a fifth of the workforce. Alongside enduring strengths in traditional industries, the conurbation has developed a number of high-value niche specialisms, in areas such as electronics, chemicals, textiles and food.

There have been considerable advances in productivity, utilising new technologies which have helped maintain the strength of this sector. Forecasts suggest that for some manufacturers, employment will decline by around 15,000 jobs by 2008 as the restructuring of the economy continues; however, GVA is expected to increase (especially in electronics, motor vehicles and other transport equipment, instruments and pharmaceuticals) illustrating the strong shift of manufacturing up the value chain in response to national and global competition.

Greater Manchester has the region's largest concentration of strategic facilities and services which are essential to attracting and sustaining internationally competitive growth sectors, with six of the North West's 16 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), including the two largest nationally, underpinning its major role as the Knowledge Capital. As well as being major employers, the Universities and health sector undertake considerable research, mirrored by the presence of some major corporate R&D activities. This research presents a wealth of opportunity for the development of new products and processes for a wide range of business sectors.

The Manchester: Knowledge Capital initiative will harness and apply Manchester's strengths in the knowledge economy, in order to bring about significant economic, employment and social benefits across the region. Manchester: Knowledge Capital will increase business growth, support urban development and enhance technology transfer. Nurturing the key sectors and clusters and innovation that characterise the Knowledge Capital, the initiative aims to bring fresh strategies for growth in the creative, cultural, digital and biotech and other target sectors. It will also act as a catalyst for major regeneration schemes, infrastructure and transport improvements and increased digital connectivity. Skills development, knowledge transfer activity, business support programmes and centres of excellence will all contribute to the Manchester: Knowledge Capital strategy, as critical elements of the drive for enhanced global competitiveness.

Forecasts for employment growth are extremely positive: economic scenarios estimate, taking account of recent trends, policy development and expected future trends, at least 100,000 new jobs will be created between 2002 and 2015, with the conurbation less dependent on manufacturing and the public sector for employment by 2015.

Although the economy is expected to grow, there are constraints that could threaten or undermine this growth. Greater Manchester has very wealthy and successful areas, but

also some of England's poorest neighbourhoods. It also has areas which are more rural than urban in nature and these have different constraints to growth.

There are also many actual skill shortages. As such, disadvantage falls disproportionately on certain sections of the community and some parts of the conurbation suffer very poor levels of educational attainment, structural unemployment and high levels of economic inactivity in excess of national and regional averages. The Plan aims to ensure that Greater Manchester's growth benefits all residents and counteracts the dangers of polarisation.

Despite these successes and the potential for future growth, significant challenges for the area remain:

- **Skills** – There is a need to strengthen the resident skill-base for those in work and those seeking employment or changing career. Employers need to be actively engaged in training their own employees alongside initiatives to attract and retain talent including graduates, getting them into key occupations to grow the area's population and to strengthen the local skills base. Far more young people need to be trained in critical skill priority occupations at NVQ levels 2, 3 and 4.
- **Increasing value added** – Although employment in manufacturing has declined across the conurbation, GVA in the sector has not decreased over the last five years showing that labour productivity within the sector has been improving. The challenge remains to assist businesses outside existing growth hot spots to move up the value chain, exploiting high-level skills and new opportunities. Additionally, new firm formation and sustainability of companies are below national levels so more effective support for new businesses is essential.
- **Spreading the benefits** – Taking action to grow the knowledge economy across the whole of Greater Manchester will help to reduce the polarisation that currently exists across the conurbation. A key part of this will be to integrate better the skills, employment, business development, transport, regeneration, health and environment agendas; particularly programmes which occur in similar areas of activity but are driven by different authorities/agencies/funding lines. The transport infrastructure, while a major asset, also presents significant challenges for the future because of congestion, fragmented local public transport, under-investment in the rail network and funding for the Metro link expansion. Better connections will be required to help bring people and job opportunities closer together.
- **Increasing participation in work** – Greater Manchester has a significant legacy of people who are inactive in the labour market, often concentrated in small areas and when combined with other social and economic problems, giving rise to some of the most deprived areas in the country. Youth unemployment is a particular issue, with the proportion of 16-24 year olds amongst Greater Manchester's unemployed increasing faster than the regional or national averages between 1996 and 2004. Ensuring that young people can participate in the economic and social development of Greater Manchester will be a particular feature of the Economic Development Plan.

1.3.3 Greater Manchester Forum’s Skills Priorities

The major drivers for change in Greater Manchester are outlined as:

- **Political** – work-life balance; government support for science and research and development; shifts in political focus; and EU regulations.
- **Economic** – pensions reform; costs of living increases; rising education costs; globalisation; and rise of SMEs and self-employment.
- **Social** – relative incomes; technology; and opening up of professions.
- **Demographic** – population mix/pensions effect; housing demand; and multiculturalism.
- **Technology** – increasing requirement; and multi-skilling.

There was £2 billion of investment in the city centre alone last year.

There was high growth in key sectors, such as the professional and financial, and this growth was driven by businesses in high value-added sectors, rather than by public spending. The feeling is that the economy is being transformed from one that was production based, to one that is knowledge-based.

Greater Manchester has a resident active labour pool of over 1.1 million. Forecast growth in net new jobs between 2002 and 2015 should be around 100,000. In addition jobs created by replacement demand during this period should create around 600,000 gross job opportunities.

Along with Bury, Salford, Stockport and Tameside Trafford has over 40% of its residents travel to work outside the district. This contributes to over 5 million people travelling to work across Greater Manchester, the 2nd largest travel to work population in the UK.

Between 1991 and 2001 there was a strong shift in occupation towards skilled white-collar occupations.

Table below illustrates the likely changes to jobs in industrial sectors between 2002 and 2015.

Industrial Sectors (figures rounded to nearest 500)	Level in 2002	Likely changes 2002 - 2015
Agriculture Mining and Utilities	11,000	-2,500
Manufacturing, Food and Drink	26,500	-7,500
Manufacturing, Textiles and Clothing	19,500	-9,500
Engineering	29,500	-11,500
Other Manufacturing	92,500	-19,000
Construction	75,500	-4,000
Retail and Distribution	234,000	26,000
Hotels and Catering	75,000	11,000
Transport and Communications	98,000	9,500
Banking, Finance and Insurance	39,500	-3,500

Professional and Business Services	211,00	87,000
Public Admin, Education and Health	295,500	18,500
Other Services	76,500	18,500
Total Employment	1,284,500	103,000

Over the next 10 years there is expected to be:

- A continued demand for higher level skills:
 - 75% of all jobs will have a requirement of NVQ level 2 or above;
 - 50% will require level 3 or above.
- That employment in traditional industries will continue to decline.
- That they will be replaced by high-value, creative activity.

The report recognised that skills/labour shortages are most likely to be found in those occupations that:

- Require high levels of specialist qualifications.
- Lack parity of esteem.
- Have poor working conditions.
- Are comparatively poorly paid.
- Are in a sector with strong forecasted growth.

The Centre for Future Studies suggests that in 2010 the areas of greatest shortage will be:

- electricians;
- plumbers;
- builders;
- nurses;
- care assistants;
- lab technicians;
- chefs;
- electrical engineers;
- teachers; and
- specialist call centre operatives.

In 2015 these are likely to be:

- plumbers;
- nurses;
- chefs;
- scientific and research and development technicians;
- specialist call centre operatives;
- butchers;
- teachers;
- electrical engineers;
- care assistants; and

- builders.

By 2020 these are likely to be:

- specialist call centre operatives;
- scientific and research and development technicians;
- nurses;
- teachers;
- media/creative technicians;
- electrical engineers;
- scientists/research and development professionals;
- print specialists;
- care assistants; and
- doctors.

Half of recruitment difficulties nationally are felt to be due to generic skills shortages in the following areas:

- Communications.
- Customer Handling.
- Team-working.
- Problem Solving.
- Specific technical/practical skills.

These skills shortages range from level 2 through to level 4 skills.

22% of Greater Manchester employers and 30.9% of Manchester employers report skills gaps in these same areas.

The education and skills profile for Manchester is as follows:

- 39.5% of students achieve 5 or more GCESs at grades A* to C compared with the national average in England of 53.7%.
- 7.8% of students don't achieve any GCSEs compared to 4.1% average across England.
- 13.6% of school leavers are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) compared to an average in England of 7.5%.
- NVQs by working age of the population are:
 - 27.7% at level 4;
 - 16% at level 3;
 - 17.7% at level 2; and
 - 14.4% at level 1.
 - 24.2% have no qualifications.
- Basic Skills:
 - 28.9% have poor literacy skills; and
 - 31.4% have poor numeracy skills.

80,000 people (one in three of the working population) are not in work and unemployment is three times higher in BME communities than in the white population.

The conclusions drawn from this is that Greater Manchester has a buoyant economy, with further substantial growth expected. Skills supply is seen as critical for this growth and it is suggested that key partners are committed to delivering these skills needs. However, it is recognised that there is a need to communicate the changing pattern of jobs and skills requirements to individuals and intermediaries.

Overall job implications are that whilst there are increases in wage rates the cost of living is relatively low. There are job opportunities across all the sectors, even in those that are in decline, however, there may well be a need to travel across Greater Manchester to access these. This has implications for the transport network and systems.

The implications for education and training are that there needs to be greater thought about the strengths and weaknesses of any individual so that these can be related to future job patterns and skills development. Maths, science and languages are thought to remain important to support economic growth areas and higher education will substantially strengthen people chances of employment.

To be emphasised is the value employers place in good generic and employability skills, including attitude and adaptability.

1.3.4 **LLSC Greater Manchester's Annual Plan**

To take their plan forward and achieve their vision over the next 3 –5 years Greater Manchester Local Learning & Skills Council (GMLLSC) intends to work with partners to:

- transform learning and skills provision so that they better meet the needs of young people, adults and employers;
- improve the skills of the workforce to meet the challenges of the future labour market; and
- continue to focus on ensuring that those who are disadvantaged are able to access appropriate learning.

Agenda for change means changing not only what is delivered, but how it is delivered, whether in a college, a community setting or on an employer's premises in order to transform learning and skills. The new focus on skills and employer engagement provides a clear direction for colleges and other providers that should change the future shape of learning.

Progress against targets includes:

- 64% young people now in learning, 66,611 of 16-18 year olds.

- Increased investment in learning directly contributing to national, regional and local priorities – e.g. proportion for Further Education (FE) adult provision from 44% of to 72% - an additional £34m invested to deliver priorities.
- Improvement in overall success rates within FE and Work Based Learning (WBL).
- Employer Training Pilot - colleges and other providers have worked with more than 2,900 employers to help over 27,000 employees (This year the pilot will be replaced by the new national Train to Gain initiative and will focus on encouraging colleges and other providers to respond positively to meet the needs of local employers).
- Quality improved –up to 51% of colleges judged to be good or outstanding.
- Success rates for young people in FE and WBL provision have increased by more than 10%.
- Failing WBL provision being reduced from 22% at the end of 2003/04 to only 4% at the end of 2004/05.
- Approximately £65 million contributed in grants towards the cost of capital projects worth over £173 million.

There is a need to focus on the key elements of the economy in the Greater Manchester City Region. High levels of economic growth within the Manchester City Region will be an essential component in closing the £29 billion productivity gap between the north and the national average. GMLLSC will support the key actions set out in the Regional Economic Strategy and the City Region Development Programme to accelerate the growth of the Manchester City Region as a major net contributor in closing this productivity gap.

The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) is the result of extensive consultation involving joint working such as Sector Skills and Productivity Alliances leading to stronger future collaboration at regional and local level. The North West Learning and Skills Council has responsibility for major elements within the RES and is accountable for delivering key aspects through its position as a lead partner within the Regional Skills Partnership. The implementation of agenda for change theme 7 will enable the LSC to bring greater focus to regional skills, economic development and the key issues identified allowing increasingly closer partnership working with the North West Development Agency.

LLSC Priorities

The six priorities for 2006/07 as stated in the LLSC's Annual Statement of Priorities are to:

1. Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities.
2. Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults.
3. Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change.
4. Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help individuals into jobs.
5. Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services.
6. Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally.

Regional Priorities for the North West

In order to deliver key aspects of the Regional Economic Strategy, the Regional Skills Partnership has published the North West Statement of Skills Priorities 2006/07. The six main priorities focus on specific labour supply or demand issues with two underpinning priorities relating to changes needed to make the skills development process in the region work more effectively. The North West regional priorities are:

- Increasing the proportion of young people with the skills and qualifications needed for employment, and fostering progression to Higher Education.
- Equipping adults with the skills required for employability, including the Skills for Life of literacy, language and numeracy.
- Addressing employers' skills needs: - Equipping individuals with the Level 3 skills required within the economy, particularly in key regional sectors. - Ensuring that the skills needs of the regional economy, and in key sectors in particular, are addressed at Level 4.
- Tackling cross-sector leadership and management skills gaps.
- Developing innovation and enterprise skills.
- Tackling worklessness by linking people, jobs and training.

Underpinning priorities

- Stimulating the demand for investment in skills from employers and individuals.
- Providing high quality responsive support to meet regional skills priorities.

Targets

Under priority 1, for young people:

Increase the proportion of 19 year-olds who achieve at least level 2 by 3 percentage points between 2004 and 2006, and a further two percentage points between 2006 and 2008, and improve attainment at level 3.

Nationally there is a need for an additional 31,000 young people to gain a level 2 in 2005/06 compared to 2003/04 and a further 22,000 in 2007/08 compared to 2005/06.

Locally in 2004/05, 22,992 young people achieved level 2 by age 19, representing 67% of the cohort. The LSC anticipate this increasing to 23,844 in 2005/06 (69% of the cohort).

Therefore, an additional 1,147 young people need to gain a level 2 in 2006/07 compared to 2005/06 and an additional 520 in 2007/08 compared to 2006/07.

Under priority 2, for adults:

Reduce by at least 40 per cent the number of adults in the workforce who lack an NVQ level 2 or equivalent qualification by 2010.

Nationally, in 2006/07, there is a need to increase the numbers of full level 2 achievements through further education and work-based learning to 117,000 (excluding National Employer Service and Train to Gain). In addition the roll out of Train to Gain will increase the LSC contribution to this target.

Locally The LSC plan to deliver 5,137 full level 2 achievements through further education and work-based learning in 2006/07, which is an increase of 588 compared to 2005/06. In addition, they plan to deliver 3,633 first full level 2 achievements through Train to Gain.

Under priority 2, for adults:

Improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010, with a milestone of 1.5 million in 2007.

Locally, between April 2001 and July 2005, 75,790 adults gained Skills for Life qualifications that counted towards national targets. The LSC plan that in 2006/07, 17,016 learners will achieve Skills for Life qualifications that count towards national targets.

Underpinning both priorities 1 and 2, for Apprenticeships:

The LSC has agreed a new Performance Indicator for Apprenticeships. The aim is for 75 per cent more people to complete their apprenticeships in 2007/08, compared to 2002/03.

Nationally the LSC aim to raise the number of completions to 70,000 in 2006/07 supporting the achievement of Level 2 and Level 3 qualification targets.

Locally, in 2004/05 they achieved 3,399 completions. The LSC anticipate this increasing to 3,674 in 2005/06 and aim to raise the number of completions to 4,200 in 2006/07.

The LSC also work with key partners to contribute to the following targets:

- Increase the proportion of young people and adults achieving a level 3 qualification.
- Reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training by two percentage points by 2010.
- Increase participation in Higher Education towards 50 per cent of those aged 18 to 30 by 2010.

1.4 **Local Context**

1.4.1 **Inspection Reports**

1.4.1.1 **Colleges**

North Trafford College

Ofsted Inspection: Nov 2003

General Further Education College

Provision is almost entirely vocational or general vocational

CoVE for gas installation and maintenance, 2003 and Chemical Industry

Strengths:

- The college's provision in all but two of the areas inspected is good. It is good in science, construction, engineering, business and management, ICT, health, and social care, numeracy and literacy, and ESOL.
- Strong strategic leadership.
- High pass rates.
- Good teaching and learning.
- Thorough development of teaching and learning.
- Well-informed and committed governors.
- Strong commitment to widening participation.
- Productive partnerships with other organisations.
- Strong promotion of equal opportunity.
- Good staff development.
- Accurate and evaluative self-assessment.
- Good student support.
- The college's response to education and social inclusion is good.
- Guidance and support for students are good and sensitive to individual needs.

Areas for improvement:

- Provision is satisfactory in performing arts and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Retention rates.
- Monitoring of action plans at curriculum level.
- The use of information learning technology in teaching and learning.
- Student attendance.
- Students views:
 - issues to do with the refectories (too small, limited choice, no ethnic food, queues, cost).
 - sports and social facilities.
 - cost of photocopying.
 - external noise disrupting some lessons.

- information technology (access, reliability of networks, use in lessons).

South Trafford College

Ofsted Inspection date: Jan 2006

General Further Education College

Provision includes; vocational, academic, small work-based programmes, employer training pilots.

Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) in hospitality, sport and recreation and in health care.

Overall grade 1: Outstanding

Strengths:

- Outstanding achievements. Success rates on most courses are significantly higher than the national averages and many place the college in the top 10% of colleges nationally.
- Excellent development of work-place skills.
- High quality teaching and learning. The highly effective lesson observation system has supported well the development of teaching methods.
- Excellent assessment and monitoring of learners' progress.
- Wide range of programmes promoting progression and social inclusion.
- Outstanding activity to support workforce development.
- Excellent guidance and support.
- Very effective additional learning support.
- Outstanding leadership and management. The principal provides inspirational leadership and is ably supported by the senior team. Curriculum managers share good practice and use management information effectively to support rigorous self assessment and their drive for improvement.
- Excellent governance.
- Their progression to further education, employment and higher education is very good.

Areas for improvement:

- Low success rates on a minority of GCE and work-based learning courses.
- Insufficient information about enrichment opportunities for some learners.
- The use of ILT is underdeveloped in some areas.
- Enrichment opportunities are satisfactory but some learners do not receive sufficient information about them.

1.4.1.2 **Schools**

Altrincham Grammar School for Boys

Inspection Date: Oct 2004

Type of School: Single Sex Selective Grammar, Foundation Category

Age Range: 11-18

Specialist Language College from Sept 2003

Strengths:

- Boys achieve well. There are no significant differences in the achievements of different groups of pupils.
- Standards are high at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are very good and a significant factor in boys' personal development.
- Relationships and attitudes are very good and play an important part in the effective learning atmosphere in the school. The school is a racially harmonious community.
- The school provides a wide range of enrichment activities to support learning beyond the curriculum. Support for learning beyond the school day is very good.
- Leadership sets a clear goal of high academic standards and students understand that much is expected of them as a result. (6th Form)
- Teaching is good; students learn well as a result and their achievement is good. (6th Form)
- Students appreciate the support they receive, the quality of teaching and the adult relationships that are fostered between teachers and students. (6th Form)

Weaknesses:

- The development of the learning opportunities provided by the language college need to be more closely monitored and co-ordinated.
- Assessment data is not used as well as it could be to support learning. Although there is some good practice, marking does not consistently tell pupils how to improve.
- Statutory requirements are not met in the provision of religious education in the sixth form and a race equality policy for the whole school. The requirements of the National Curriculum are not fully met for physical education in Years 7 to 9.
- Accommodation for physical education is poor and affects standards.
- Students are frustrated by the limitations and restrictions of their social environment and these affect their attitudes to the extent that they have mixed feelings about their overall experience of the sixth form. (6th Form)
- There is no provision for religious education and students' achievement is affected as a result. (6th Form)

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Make better use of assessment data to support learning and improve the effectiveness of the marking of pupils' work.
- Co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate the development of the learning opportunities provided by the language college.
- Improve accommodation for physical education.
- Provide religious education in the sixth form.
- Implement and monitor the effectiveness of a race equality policy.

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls

Inspection Date: November 2005

Type of School: Single Sex Grammar, Foundation Category

Age Range: 11-18

Specialist Language College

Overall Effectiveness: Grade 1

Strengths:

- Altrincham Girls' Grammar is an outstanding school.
- Pupils make excellent progress. Pass rates in public examinations are very high and improve year on year.
- Teaching is very effective and the school prides itself on its reputation as a learning community.
- Pupils' personal development and the care and support provided for them are outstanding. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent.
- The formal curriculum is augmented by a wide range of enrichment activities and an increasing variety of links with schools in the local area and abroad.
- Language college status supports the raising of standards in all subjects and both primary and secondary schools nearby benefit from the expertise of Altrincham staff.
- The leadership of the school is outstanding. It is managed efficiently and provides excellent value for money.
- Senior and middle leaders, governors, teachers and associate staff work together in harmony for the benefit of the pupils in their care.
- Excellent use is made of statistical data to monitor and improve the performance of both pupils and teachers.
- The sixth form is very effective and students speak highly of the teaching, support and guidance they receive. Sixth form students have a wealth of responsibilities outside their formal lessons and do much to support and mentor younger pupils.

Weaknesses:

- Improvements need to be made in the accommodation for physical education and music, if these subjects are to continue to perform at the highest level. The school recognises this.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- The school has no significant areas for improvement, however in order to further improve its very effective performance, it should:
- develop the effective assessment practice even further to ensure that all departments are using assessment to enhance learning in a systematic and rigorous manner.
- increase pupils' access to ICT in order that they are given more opportunities for personal research and independent learning across all subjects.
- Ensure there is an even sharper focus on learning objectives within the already outstanding teaching.

Ashton-on-Mersey School

Inspection Date: Jan 2006

Type of School: Mixed, Foundation Secondary Modern School

Age Range: 11-16

Specialist Sports College, 1998, High Performing Specialist School Status, 2005,

Vocational Specialist College Status

Overall Effectiveness: Grade 1

Strengths:

- Ashton on Mersey is an outstanding school.
- Pupils make excellent progress during their time at the school, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well catered for. The school works very hard to meet the needs of all of its pupils; for example, through providing tailored mentoring and extra help in lessons outside the school day.
- Pupils are fully involved in their learning and have a very good understanding of how to improve.
- Well managed partnerships with outside agencies enhance the work of the school.
- A strong emphasis on healthy living is evident, and sports college status impacts positively on pupils' overall achievement.
- Pupils are actively involved in making decisions about the school; the school council, healthy schools group and the sports council gather the views of pupils and meet regularly in order to discuss initiatives and improvements.
- The majority of teaching is of good quality, with some excellent practice.
- Assessment systems are excellent.
- An outstanding curriculum and a clear and consistent focus on pupils' individual needs are important factors leading to high achievement.
- A number of parents of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly appreciative of the care and support provided for their children, which enable them to achieve so well.
- Overall, the school is very well led and managed.

Weaknesses:

- There is no unsatisfactory teaching, but a significant minority of lessons is less than good.
- The school periodically seeks the opinions of parents and carers and considers these views when making decisions, however a small minority of parents feel that consultation is not sufficiently regular and widespread.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Develop effective strategies to ensure that all teaching is of at least good quality.
- Implement systems to seek the views of all parents and carers on a regular basis.

Blessed Thomas Holford

Inspection Date: Sept 04

Type of School: Mixed, Roman Catholic, Voluntary Aided Secondary Modern

Age Range: 11-16

Strengths:

- Achievement is good throughout the school as a result of good, and often very good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils studying art achieve very well in Years 7 to 9 due to effective teaching Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve very well in history and physical education as a result of very good teaching.
- The school is very effectively led by the head teacher who has created a climate of high expectations and success. He is supported well by effective senior and middle managers.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and attendance are very good.
- Mathematics and computing college status has resulted in good use of ICT across the curriculum, where access allows.

Weaknesses:

- Although improving rapidly, achievement is unsatisfactory in music in Years 7 to 9 due to pupils' immature attitudes to work.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and for strategic planning are not sufficiently rigorous to contribute fully to school improvement.
- The National Curriculum programmes of study for ICT are not fully covered in Years 10 and 11.
- The learning resource centre does not yet have sufficient books to support independent learning.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Continue to address the underachievement of pupils in music in Years 7 to 9.
- Implement rapidly planned improvements in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and in strategic planning.
- Ensure the National Curriculum programmes of study are fully covered in ICT in Years 10 and 11 and improve access to ICT across the curriculum.
- Ensure there are sufficient books to support independent learning in the learning resource centre.
- Develop policies for literacy and race relations.
- Ensure the programme for work-related learning is taught.
- Produce an access plan to ensure the school meets the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Broadoak School

Inspection Date: Jan 06

Type of School: Community, mixed secondary modern

Age Range: 11-16

From September 2005, the school entered into a partnership with Ashton on Mersey School, sharing an executive Headteacher and joint management committee.

Overall effectiveness: Grade 3

Strengths:

- Under the dynamic leadership of the Executive Headteacher, supported by the Associate Headteacher, Broadoak has recently sharpened its focus on raising standards.
- Expectations, both regarding work and behaviour, have been articulated and raised clearly.
- The new and varied vocational curriculum courses for pupils aged 14 to 16 years are well matched to their needs, proving popular and increasing motivation.
- Pupils are well supported and staff make a great deal of effort to identify obstacles to learning and to provide help to overcome them.
- Standards and progress are satisfactory.
- Attainment by the end of Year 9 is below national levels. However, in 2005 there was a significant improvement in the standards reached in the national tests when compared to 2004. Although attainment in English and mathematics remains significantly below national levels, attainment in science is now in line with the national average.
- The school has introduced a robust system for tracking pupils' performance and highlighting unsatisfactory progress.

Weaknesses:

- Not all are reaching the high standards expected.
- Behaviour and attitudes to learning are satisfactory but many pupils do not approach learning with enthusiasm or expect to enjoy it.
- Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall, too few lessons actively involve pupils in their own learning.
- Attendance is below average and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Raise standards throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning with particular emphasis on the rigorous and systematic teaching of the basic skills in English, mathematics and ICT.
- Enable pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning by providing more opportunities for them to be active and creative.
- Continue to improve attendance and punctuality.

Flixton Girls High School

Inspection Date: Feb 04

Type of School: Single sex secondary modern

Age Range: 11-16

Awarded Sportsmark in 2002

Strengths:

- The great majority of girls achieve well considering their generally below average attainment on entry to the school. Girls achieve well and in English and design and technology they achieve very well. In art and design their achievement is excellent.
- Girls' literacy skills develop well as they move through the school.
- A significant amount of teaching and learning is very good and occasionally excellent.
- The Headteacher provides very clear direction for how the school can improve.
- The great majority of girls have positive attitudes to school and work hard.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is good and there is a high level of participation by girls.

Weaknesses:

- There is underachievement in history and cross-curricular ICT.
- The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory because there is insufficient ICT in several subjects and the requirements of the local agreed syllabus for religious education are not met.
- A significant minority of girls arrive late for lessons or school.
- The unacceptable behaviour of a very small number interferes with the progress of others.

- There is too little extra support for girls with special educational needs.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Improve teaching in history and cross-curricular ICT so as to increase girls' achievement.
- Improve the attendance and punctuality of girls.
- Consistently apply procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- Provide more support for girls with special educational needs.
- Ensure that there is continued improvement in the provision of ICT in all subjects.
- Meet requirements for collective worship and for teaching the local agreed syllabus for religious education.

Jeff Joseph Technology College

Inspection Date: May 05

Type of School: Mixed Technology College

Age Range: 11-16

Special measures are required in relation to this school.

Strengths:

- Students achieve very well in health and social care, and achieve well in English and physical education.
- The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is good; students achieve well on the vocational courses.
- The school has forged good links to help other schools through its specialist status.

Weaknesses:

- Standards are well below average and students' achievement is poor, because of poor teaching, well below average attendance and an unsatisfactory curriculum.
- The school has made poor progress since the previous inspection, as a result of poor leadership and management that do not have an accurate picture of standards and achievement or support teachers adequately.
- Students' attitudes are unsatisfactory and their behaviour is poor.
- Students' achievement is unsatisfactory or worse in mathematics, science, art and design, citizenship, design and technology, history, music and religious education.
- Students no longer report bullying because they do not trust staff, other than senior staff and the receptionist, sufficiently.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, science, design and technology, history, music and religious education.

- Ensure that students receive sufficient lessons in art and design, citizenship and music.
- Improve the behaviour of students, both in and out of lessons, and their attendance.
- Improve leadership and management, especially in the areas of data analysis, the curriculum and support for teachers.
- Rebuild the trust that students have in staff, so they will report incidents of bullying.
- Provide a daily act of collective worship for all students.
- Meet requirements for the teaching of art and design and music.

Loreto Grammar School

Inspection Date: Dec 05

Type of School: Single sex (girls), voluntary aided grammar school (although more like a comprehensive)

Age Range: 11-18

Overall effectiveness: Grade 1

Strengths:

- An outstanding school that provides good value for money.
- Its caring and fully inclusive ethos creates a supportive and co-operative learning environment for all students.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and in the sixth form it is outstanding.
- Students make excellent progress and achieve very high standards by the end of each key stage. The school continues to strive for higher standards of attainment.
- The small number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified accurately and supported appropriately. Those with gifts and talents are challenged relentlessly.
- The curriculum provision is outstanding.
- Students are prepared well for making decisions about future routes into further education, training or employment.
- The school has recently received specialist science college status. The vision and potential for improvement are clearly evident.
- The care, guidance, support and personal development of students are exemplary reflecting the school's catholic ethos.
- The students' attitude to school and one another is outstanding. Their manners, behaviour and moral respect are a credit to all concerned.
- The leadership and management provided by the Headteacher, governors and the senior leadership team are outstanding.
- The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are outstanding. Standards at GCE advanced level have been consistently well above average for the last 3 years, even though results dipped slightly in 2005.
- Students respond very well to the additional responsibilities they are given and play an active role in the school and wider community.
- The consultative leadership and management of the sixth form are highly effective.

Weaknesses:

- Planning does not yet include consistently clear and sharp measures for success.
- There are cramped conditions in some classrooms.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Strengthen further its development planning process through the provision of sharper and more measurable success criteria.
- Continue to seek funding to address the problem of cramped conditions in some classrooms.

Lostock College

Inspection Date: Feb 06

Type of School: Mixed, Community Secondary Modern

Age Range: 11 -16

Specialist status for Performing Arts and holds the Artsmark Award

Overall Effectiveness: Grade 4

The college was given a Notice to Improve

Strengths:

- The curriculum offered is satisfactory overall with strengths in vocational provision at Key Stage 4.
- Staff know the students well and appropriate support is available when needed.
- Good provision is made for students with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language.
- Its capacity to improve is satisfactory because the recently appointed Headteacher has articulated clearly an ambition for the college and is leading staff resolutely in pursuit of this. Supported by a new senior team, suitable systems are being established to bring about the range of improvements required.
- There is a good system of setting annual targets based on students' prior attainment and their progress towards these targets is monitored closely.

Weaknesses:

- Significant improvement is required because the standards students reach in English and mathematics by the time they leave the college are not high enough. Girls make poor progress in developing the basic skills in these subjects.
- In Years 7 to 9 students do not do well enough in the foundation subjects, including performing arts, which is the college's specialism.
- Teaching and learning is not consistently of sufficient quality to ensure that all students make the progress of which they are capable.
- In too many lessons, teaching does not engage and enthuse students so that many lack a positive approach to learning.

- Lack of consistently high expectations regarding standards of both work and behaviour.
- The personal development of students is unsatisfactory.
- Behaviour in lessons is unsatisfactory.
- Attendance is currently well below average. Punctuality to college and to lessons is slack.
- The specialist area of the college's work is not acting as an effective catalyst to improve teaching and learning.
- Provision for gifted and talented students is undeveloped.
- Staffing difficulties hamper continuity and consistency in the delivery of the curriculum.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching to engage students more effectively in their learning.
- Improve the use of assessment in lessons to raise expectations and ensure that all students reach their potential.
- Ensure that behaviour is managed consistently well across the college in support of students' personal development.

Sale Grammar School

Inspection Date: Dec 01

Type of School: Mixed, Selective Community Grammar School

Age Range: 11 - 18

Strengths:

- Results in tests and examinations are very high.
- The leadership and management of the school are good and their key focus on learning and teaching has led to achievement of a high standard in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils and sixth-form students have very positive attitudes to their learning; relationships are very good.
- Teaching in Years 7 to 11 is good and frequently very good; teaching in the sixth form is very good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and almost always seek to do their best.
- The school is a pleasant and purposeful place in which pupils behave with a sense of responsibility. Exclusions are few.
- Pupils grow in responsibility and maturity at a fast rate.
- The curriculum is responsive to the learning needs of pupils and the aspirations of sixth formers. Pupils and students undertake a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils with special educational needs do well as a result of teachers' awareness of the targets set to meet their needs.

- The effective management is successfully encouraging an ethos of self-evaluation that leads to a consistently improving school.
- Overall sixth-form provision is very good. The results achieved by students are very high.
- The leadership and management of the sixth form are very good.
- There are very good procedures for assessment, diagnosis and support of students' academic progress in the 6th form.

Weaknesses/key action points/areas for improvement:

- There is some underachievement in lessons amongst a small minority of pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- Some individual subject teachers do not set targets in relation to pupils' past attainment or track success in the progress pupils make. This contributes to the reasons why a small minority of pupils do not achieve their full potential.
- The provision of ICT is unsatisfactory. The use of ICT does not meet statutory requirements in some subjects.
- The school still does not meet statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship.
- Arrangements for personal, social and health education, whilst under review, are not well organised at present.
- Standards and achievement in chemistry and French could be better and more in line with other subjects in the sixth form, especially amongst students capable of higher attainment.
- Library provision is inadequate and does not provide sufficient support for students' independent learning. (6th form)

St Ambrose College

Inspection Date: Nov 05

Type of School: Catholic Voluntary Aided, Single Sex (Boys) Selective Grammar School

Age Range: 11 - 18

Came under local authority jurisdiction in 1999 following previous independent status.

Maths and computing specialist school (2005)

Overall Effectiveness: Grade 2

Strengths:

- The boys attain high standards but make especially good progress in their personal development, which produces well rounded and caring young adults.
- The college is well led and managed and has built up the capacity to improve even further.
- There is a real awareness of what needs to be done to move the college forward. Strengths and weaknesses have been accurately identified and the college has a clear program of how to make things even better.
- Teamwork is central to this process and effective teams are being established.
- A caring ethos pervades the whole college philosophy and culture.

- The sixth form is good overall. Examination results are well above the national average and students make good progress.
- Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding lessons. (6th form)
- Personal development is a strong feature, with students taking responsibility for mentoring younger boys. (6th form)
- The quality of care is outstanding and the guidance students receive is a particular strength. (6th form)
- The curriculum is fit for purpose and appreciated by students and their parents; enrichment opportunities are many and these are well supported. (6th form)
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although there is much good teaching and a minority is outstanding.
- Leadership and management are good overall, including in the sixth form. The Headteacher has managed the transition from the independent into the state sector effectively.

Weaknesses:

- There remains a need to ensure consistency of good practice across the whole college in all curriculum areas. The teaching must consistently match the potential of the boys.
- Where learning is predominantly teacher led, or where the range of tasks and questioning is too limited, boys have insufficient opportunity to learn actively for themselves, become passive learners and less motivated.
- While design and technology has benefited from some new accommodation, limited space prevents all aspects being taught. The college currently has no access to suitable accommodation for the study of food technology.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Continue to develop teaching and learning by disseminating good practice to all areas of the college to engage boys and provide real challenge to support their learning.
- Continue to develop and make more effective use of assessment to inform boys about their progress and how they can improve.
- Ensure that all middle managers are effective in putting improvements into place across the whole curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all boys.

St Antony's Catholic College

Inspection Date: Oct 05

Type of School: Mixed, Voluntary Aided Secondary School

Age Range: 11 – 16

Specialist Status as a Business and Enterprise College since Sept 2003

Overall Effectiveness: Grade 2

Strengths:

- This is a good and improving school with some outstanding features.
- The Headteacher is an inspirational leader who provides a clear direction.
- In all areas of the school there is an indisputable agenda for improvement to raise standards and achievement.
- Through effective management and considerable energy from all staff, the school has progressed from a position of falling pupil numbers to being popular and oversubscribed.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- The school's commitment to every pupil and its highly inclusive approach is demonstrated by the fact that virtually everyone achieved at least one pass at GCSE in 2005.
- Good systems are in place for the assessment, tracking and monitoring the pupils' progress.
- Every child matters in this school where the Catholic ethos underpins all aspects of its work and ensures that everyone in the school's community is equally valued and supported. Pupils feel safe, well looked after and enjoy coming to school.
- Levels of literacy, curriculum provision, ICT and support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the setting and monitoring of pupils' progress have all improved.
- Pupils make good progress, achieve well in all years and most meet their challenging targets.
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- The curriculum is good and is continually reviewed to ensure that the needs of all pupils are well served.

Weaknesses:

- Pass rates are low in some subjects and the overall number of pupils achieving A*-C passes is below the national average.
- There is inconsistency in the way the system is implemented in subject areas. Attendance is below the national average.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Raising the number of high grade passes at GCSE.
- Improving attendance.

- Ensuring that pupil review systems are implemented consistently across all departments.
- Continuing to address weaknesses in some subject areas.

Stretford Grammar School

Inspection Date: Mar 06

Type of School: Mixed Community Grammar School

Age Range: 11 - 18

Overall Effectiveness: Grade 3 (Grade 2 for sixth form)

Strengths:

- Standards are high and most pupils make adequate progress during their time at the school.
- The school provides a harmonious multicultural environment for learning; pupils behave well and demonstrate very positive attitudes towards the school.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in the main school, and the curriculum is broad and balanced.
- The school cares for its pupils well and staff demonstrate high levels of commitment.
- Staff work hard to identify and support those pupils whose need for additional language development is greatest.
- The new Headteacher has started to work effectively with staff in order to identify areas for development and implement strategies designed to bring about improvement.
- The quality of provision in the sixth form is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy school life.
- Pupils' cultural development, especially multicultural, is a real strength, and their moral and social development is good overall.
- Most teachers possess good classroom management skills.
- The transition from primary school is well handled, with most students settling quickly into school; there are appropriate strategies to address the needs of the minority who experience some difficulties.

Weaknesses:

- There are some pockets of underachievement.
- Tracking systems are used in order to set targets for pupils, but these are not always sufficiently focused on analysing the progress of individuals; limited resources mean that the school is not currently able to use ICT in order to support and refine this process.
- The school does not fully meet statutory requirements in delivering the National Curriculum programs of study for ICT in Years 10 and 11.
- The needs of a significant and growing minority of learners who have English as an additional language are not, at present, fully met, and this impacts upon the achievement of these pupils.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Further refine and develop pupil tracking systems, using ICT, so that these can be used to support all pupils in achieving their full potential.
- Introduce a program of study that fulfils National Curriculum requirements in ICT for all pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- Ensure that the needs of those pupils who do not have English as a first language, and require additional support, are fully met.

Stretford High School Community Language College

Inspection Date: Nov 05

Type of School: Secondary Modern Community School

Age Range: 11 – 16

Specialist status in community language and became part of a joint extended school in 2005

Overall Effectiveness: Grade 3

Strengths:

- HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.
- Effective leadership and management have transformed the school, which provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and is improving.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school.
- Standards achieved remain well below national average. However, good teaching means that pupils make satisfactory progress overall and are improving rapidly.
- The pupils have benefited from a new curriculum which better meets their needs.
- They are well cared for and supported, and this encourages them to develop healthy lifestyles, work hard and to develop their self-confidence as learners. They behave well, feel safe and are proud of their school.
- The Headteacher's vision and clear direction has rebuilt confidence.
- Senior and middle managers know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and this has enabled them to make good progress in all of the areas requiring improvement.
- There is a strong team spirit in the school and the pupils, teachers, other staff and governors have a shared commitment to further improvement.
- The quality of teaching has improved and as a result more pupils make good progress in lessons.
- Awareness and celebration of different cultures is a particular strength.
- The best teaching is characterised by outstanding planning, good subject knowledge, effective use of questions and a wide range of briskly paced activities, which engage and motivate pupils.
- The school has robust procedures to identify vulnerable children and works well with a wide range of agencies to support them.

Weaknesses:

- Not all pupils achieve as well as they can
- Pupils do not experience a daily act of collective worship.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Raise the standards achieved by pupils at Key Stage 3 and 4.
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

Urmston Grammar School

Inspection Date: Feb 06

Type of School: Mixed Foundation Grammar School

Age Range: 11 – 18

Specialist Science College Status

Overall Effectiveness: Grade 1 (Grade 2 - Sixth form)

Strengths:

- Pupils progress very well during their time at school and standards are extremely high.
- Pupils' excellent attitude and behaviour.
- There is a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development throughout the school, and all are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils and students enjoy coming to school, and attendance and punctuality are excellent.
- Pupils are committed to making a positive contribution to the wider community.
- Pupils are proud of the school and appreciate the opportunities presented to them.
- The majority of teaching is of good quality, with some excellent practice.
- The curriculum is well matched to the needs of pupils, and several recently introduced courses have enhanced provision.
- The school provides a safe and supportive environment for all learners, and this is reflected in the high levels of achievement, coupled with the fact that the great majority of 16 year olds choose to stay at the school to study in the sixth form.
- The school is well led and managed, with some outstanding work carried out by middle and senior managers.
- The student prefects are a strength of the sixth form; they organise many excellent charitable events involving younger students.
- There is a very effective buddy system provided by Year 9 pupils for new Year 7 pupils, which provides excellent support for those making the transition from primary school.
- Regular monitoring of pupils' progress in Years 7 to 11 helps the school to identify and address weaknesses effectively.

Weaknesses:

- Although a significant number of outstandingly able pupils have been identified, such pupils are not always sufficiently challenged during lessons.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Ensure that all of the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged in such a way as to enable them to fulfill their potential.

Wellacre Technology College

Inspection Date: Apr 02

Type of School: Single Sex (male) Community, Secondary Modern

Age Range: 11 to 16

Strengths;

- GCSE results are improving rapidly, much faster than national trends of improvement. Pupils in most subjects achieve well.
- Standards in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and ICT rise to average by Year 9 and a higher proportion attain A*-B grades at GCSE in these subjects than in others.
- Teaching in history and in drama is very good overall; some teachers are inspirational.
- Pupils' moral development and social development are both very good.
- The school looks after pupils very well.
- Careers education and guidance are excellent.
- The leadership and management of mathematics, science, design and technology, history, geography and modern languages are very good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good.
- Pupils are generally proud of their school and respect it.
- Very good moral and social development.
- The Headteacher provides excellent leadership and, with very good senior managers, is moving the school rapidly onwards and upwards towards the next phase of its development as a Technology College.

Weaknesses/Key action points/area for improvement:

- The small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching.
- Leadership and management of physical education.
- Recognition given to gifted and talented pupils, particularly to raise the proportion of pupils attaining A*-B grades at GCSE in most subjects.
- Weaker teaching encourages a small number of pupils to disturb classes.
- Limited work related or vocational courses.
- Academic assessment and support is good overall but varies between unsatisfactory and very good across subjects.

Wellington School

Inspection Date: Feb 02

Type of School: Mixed, Foundation Secondary Modern.

Age Range: 11 to 18

Achieved Technology College Status

Strengths:

- The purpose and vision of the excellent leadership of the school provides the key to its many successes.
- Pupils achieve well in relation to their previous attainment, and standards are improving rapidly.
- Overall, teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection.
- The quality of relationships, attitudes and behaviour are outstanding strengths of the school.
- The school cares very well for its pupils, with excellent provision for their personal, moral and social development.
- The range of extra-curricular opportunities is excellent.
- Strategic planning for improvement is very strong, and is underpinned by very good financial management.
- Pupils like school and are very committed to their work.
- Behaviour is consistently very good.
- Relationships are excellent, and pupils grow in responsibility and maturity at a fast rate.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are good, and have improved considerably.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Moral and social development are excellent.
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

Weaknesses/Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Pupils' attainment and progress in ICT in Years 7-11.
- The curriculum in Years 10-11 is unsatisfactory because not all pupils take design and technology; this is a statutory requirement.
- Current temporary arrangements are not providing appropriate coordination and leadership for work with pupils with special educational needs.

Brentwood Special School

Inspection Date: Mar 04

Type of School: Mixed, Community Special School

Age Range: 11 to 19

Strengths:

- The Headteacher is a very effective leader and the school is moving from strength to strength.
- The school very effectively fosters students' personal qualities, which helps them to be proud of their school and achieve well.
- The school goes to great lengths to include all students and involve them through seeking and acting on their views.
- The curriculum for the sixth form is very effective and prepares students very well for future life.
- Most teaching is good or better.
- The achievement of students with autism is very good and the achievement of all other students, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, is good.
- The curriculum for students in Years 7 to 11 is well planned and effective, and in the sixth form there is very good provision.
- The school provides an especially wide and interesting range of extracurricular activities.

Weaknesses:

- Students of secondary age do not achieve well enough ICT.
- Subject coordinators do not yet evaluate teaching and learning so they cannot be sure that their subject is always being taught well.
- Lessons are too long, which makes it more difficult for some students to maintain concentration.

Key action points/Ares for improvement:

- To raise achievement in ICT.
- To further extend the role of subject coordinators to include the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- To reduce the length of lessons.

Delamere Special School

Inspection Date: Mar 06

Type of School: Mixed Community Special School

Age Range: 2 to 11

Grade 1

Strengths:

- Delamere is an outstanding school. The warm, welcoming atmosphere is evident from the entrance and permeates the whole of the school.
- Every child is precious.
- Professionals from many disciplines work seamlessly together to provide high standards of care and education.
- Children, including those in the Foundation Stage, make good, and often very good progress in their learning and personal development.
- Teaching is good with some outstanding features and the curriculum is suitably tailored to meet the pupils' individual needs.
- Excellent teamwork and positive relationships between adults and children are at the heart of why the children enjoy school so much.
- Leadership of the school is outstanding. The Headteacher and her deputy have established high expectations and set clear direction. Their challenging yet supportive style has encouraged a culture where honest self-review is routine with the result that staff have an accurate view of the school's strengths and its priorities for development.
- The children have a sense of achievement and pride in their work and all thrive in the positive and happy atmosphere.
- Parents express total confidence in the school's ability to keep their children safe and happy. Staff are particularly well trained in moving and handling children who depend upon them.

Weaknesses:

- A few lessons the pace is too slow and this limits opportunities for pupils to develop their broader subject knowledge.
- The school's plans do not make clear the expected improvements in children's learning.

Key Action Points/Areas for improvement:

- Ensure that a brisk pace is maintained in all lessons so that children make the most of the time available to develop their understanding and skills across all subjects.
- Ensure that the school's plans for development make clear the expected improvements to children's learning and achievements.

Manor High School

Inspection Date: Jan 04

Type of School: Mixed Community Special School

Age Range: 11 - 18

Strengths:

- Teaching is good overall; pupils learn effectively and make good progress, particularly in English, and personal social and health education in which achievement is very good.
- Pupils are happy in school and they enjoy and appreciate its encouraging and warm atmosphere.
- The school develops the personal qualities of its pupils very well. Pupils' attitudes are very good and they behave very well.
- The school is very well led by its Headteacher and has good management and governance.
- There are very good academic and social learning opportunities both in the classroom and outside the school day. Vocational courses prepare students, very well, for life after school.
- The school seeks out and values the opinions and suggestions of pupils and students and takes very good steps to ensure their health, welfare, and safety.
- The school has very effective links with parents, the community and with other schools.

Weaknesses:

- The school does not yet have sufficient detailed and reliable information about pupils' performance and targets set for pupils are insufficiently precise.
- A minority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve less than they can because the qualification requirements of some courses they follow are insufficiently challenging.

Key action points/areas for improvement:

- Systematically, assess the performance and track the progress of each pupil and group of pupils, using a measure that shows up sufficiently clearly the small gains that they make over time, and use the data gained to help in the setting of precise individual and challenging, overall, performance targets.

1.4.2 Trafford Economic Development Plan – Nov '05

The performance of City Regions as a primary driver of economic growth in the UK, and in the north in particular has been recently emphasised nationally and the potential role of City Regions in this respect is considered to be very evident in Manchester, an area that represents one of the fastest growing economies outside London and the South.

In Trafford this need for a single, coherent framework to help guide economic activities and provide a basis for more effective dialogue with external partners has resulted in the new Economic Development Plan. This plan provides a single reference point for economic development issues in the borough and will ultimately provide a much clearer sense of the priorities for investment in the borough.

The following statistics highlight the scale of Trafford's economic contribution, both realised and potential, to the City Region:

- Trafford has a business density rate of 49 firms per 1,000 residents, significantly higher than anywhere else in Greater Manchester.
- Trafford is one of the few districts in the City Region that is a net importer of labour, with a net inflow of 15,000 commuters on a daily basis. Only Manchester itself exceeds this inflow.
- We account for 16% of sub regional employment in the financial, professional and business services sector, 18% in media and creative industries and 28% in IT services (compared with a population share of 8%). These are all identified as key growth sectors for the City Region.
- Partly as a result of this sector composition, GVA per head in Trafford (£20,500) is significantly in excess of the national (£15,500) and regional (£14,025) average.

Features of Trafford that contribute to this economic success, including a strong residential skills base, good connectivity, housing offer and an array of cultural, retail and leisure attractions.

The Economic Development Plan identifies three core challenges:

- Overcoming problems created by rapid growth. Trafford experiences shortages of labour and skills, acute congestion at times and a shortage of available land for development. These have the potential to constrain economic growth and impact on the competitiveness of the existing business base.
- Tackling disadvantage. 22 of the 138 neighbourhoods in the borough are within the top 20% most deprived areas in England, nine are within the top 10%. These communities face similar issues, including relatively low rates of employment and enterprise. However their populations have the potential to provide many of the solutions to the recruitment difficulties and skill shortages being faced by local firms.
- Boosting profile and recognition. Trafford's role as key driver of the sub regional economy often goes unrecognised amongst external stakeholders. There is scope for officers and elected members at all levels to be more influential in making Trafford's case with external strategic and delivery partners. The aim is to seeking to exert greater leverage over policy and funding decisions.

The economic vision for Trafford is to:

- continue growth as a high performance economy;
- provide a powerful contribution to sub region/city region growth; and
- with a contribution from all.

Trafford's target is to reduce the levels of inactivity across the borough reducing the number of residents (27,000) who are currently economically inactive.

Eight strategic priorities have been identified to help deliver this vision. Collectively these provide a framework that will be used to shape thinking and investment decisions.

The top four priorities will require close co-operation and liaison with sub regional and regional partners:

- Sector Champions - the goal is to capitalise on and develop the sector specialisms in the Trafford economy, focusing on concentrations in sub regional priority sectors.
- Centre for Enterprise - growing and extending Trafford's role as a centre of enterprise for the sub region.
- Releasing Potential - capturing the untapped potential of some of Trafford's more disadvantaged communities through raised economic activity and employment.
- Responsive Skills - ensuring the most appropriate response to the emerging skills needs of local employers.

The other priorities require more direct action from Trafford MBC and local partners:

- Sites and premises: - capturing the potential of the various commercial development opportunities that exist within the borough.
- Transport - building on the existing infrastructure and ensuring the businesses and residents of Trafford benefit from a first rate transportation systems.
- Vibrant town centres - continued development of Trafford's town centres as commercial, retail and leisure hubs providing a range of employment opportunities and attractive locations for small business.
- Profile and leadership - raising recognition of the economic strengths and opportunities of the borough, involving leadership at all levels.

1.4.3 **Trafford 14-19 Strategy and Plan**

The Trafford ‘vision’ for their 14-19 age range is: “To ensure all young people in Trafford experience high quality inclusive provision that suits their needs and talents and results in success for all”.

Trafford’s strategy has been produced in response to the national 14-19 agenda which is underpinned by a series of key documents including:

- 14-19 Opportunity and Excellence.
- 5 year Strategy for Children and Learners.
- Success for All.
- SEN – Removing Barriers to Achievement.
- Disability & Discrimination Act.
- Education & Skills White Paper.
- Every Child Matters.

Trafford’s Strategy is directly linked to the key outcomes of Every Child Matters and will make a particular contribution to “enjoy and achieve”, “make a positive contribution” and “achieve economic well-being”.

National challenges to be resolved locally include:

- Skills – upskilling and equipping young people with the skills they need to play an active and positive role in working life.
- Standards – ensuring young people have the basic skills in literacy and numeracy and challenging and stretching our more able learners.
- Engagement – removing the barriers that prevent some young people accessing learning.
- Curriculum – raising the status of vocationally related and occupational education and training.

Regionally future employment growth is more likely to be created by ‘replacement demand’ than by new employment growth, (although there is some of this forecast). There is a clear pattern of those occupations of greatest future demand, these being:

- Retail.
- Personal service occupations (such as hairdressing etc).
- Education related (school assistants and teachers).
- Health and care related (nursing related).
- IT related (software and telecommunications).
- Specialist financial and professional occupations.

Trafford became a Children & Young People’s Pathfinder Children’s Trust in 2002. This promotes an integrated approach across services to meet the needs of young people. The

14-19 Strategy reflects this integrated approach with a range of partners working together to achieve its aims.

Trafford is a region of diverse needs. 8.4% of the population is from minority ethnic background with high concentrations of ethnic minority pupils in a small number of wards. There are major socio-economic differences between wards in Trafford and high numbers of lone parent families with dependent children.

There is a diversity of academic performance linked to the relative affluence of wards. There is a high correlation between low educational achievement and those children and young people in receipt of free school meals. This remains between 12%-15% of school population. The range of Free School Meals eligibility is large – from 0.8% to 72%.

Educational attainment in Trafford is high and significantly above the national average. Results in the core subjects of English, maths and science at all ages are consistently in the top quartile of performance nationally and at all Key Stages the highest in the North West.

The majority of occupation types in the south of the borough are professional, managerial and senior occupations. Lower salaried jobs tend to be found in the north of the borough; over one third of employment in the north is in customer services and elementary occupations.

There has been an increase in the number of young people with a level 2 qualification aged 16-18 who are not in employment across the borough.

Locally the key priorities are:

- Raising awareness of progression opportunities for all young people.
- Developing partnerships between a range of providers and organisations in Trafford.
- Developing a co-ordinated approach to supporting young people to sustain their engagement.
- Ensuring we have appropriate provision for all our young people particularly the most vulnerable.
- Supporting the work with targeted groups in Trafford.
- Enhancing the transition process.

This Strategy is Trafford's response to these emerging issues and our national and local priorities. Trafford's Strategy will grow and change in response to national developments but will remain consistent with the overarching aims nationally of:

- raising achievement;
- extending participation post 16; and
- increasing retention rates.

1.4.3.1 **Trafford's 14-19 Partnership**

The 14-19 Partnership in Trafford steers developments relating to 14-19 and has a key role in monitoring and reviewing the Strategy. The partnership consists of representatives from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the Strategic Learning Partnership (SLP), Schools, Higher Education (HE), Work Based Learning (WRL), Manchester Enterprises (ME), Education Business Partnership (EBP), Colleges, Children & Young People's Service including School Improvement Service (SIS), Connexions, Youth Offending Team (YOT) and Multi-Disciplinary Service.

Trafford commissioned a self evaluation report in July 2004 and followed this with further consultation with key partners and stakeholders. A strategy group have worked together to develop our plan from these findings.

The findings were:

1.4.3.2 **Strengths**

- Trafford's 14-19 strategy reflects the priorities of key partners.
- Wide range of work already undertaken within the 14-19 sphere.
- Learner achievement is good across all key stages.
- Some good achievement on 14-16 link programmes.
- High numbers of young people remain in full time education or training at 16.
- Special schools provide a good range of vocational programmes for learners.
- Steady development of work-related curriculum.
- Successful to engage the NEET group.
- Good standard of teaching and learning across most providers of 14-19 education and training.
- Good education and training facilities across most providers.
- Clear strategic objectives to provide effective guidance and support to young people.
- Productive links between Connexions and other partners.
- Good standard of leadership and management across providers of education and training.
- Some examples of effective co-operation between delivery partners.

1.4.3.3 **Areas for Development**

- No overarching strategic plan for the development of 14-19 provision across the borough.
- Insufficient communication about emerging 14-19 strategic development.
- Little evidence of 14-19 strategic plans being routinely translated into operational activity across the borough.
- No strategic plan in place to ensure the continuation of key 14-16 initiatives.
- Only 26% of apprentices complete their framework.
- Insufficient collaboration between delivery partners to plan provision across the area.

- Little co-ordinated activity to raise awareness among employers, parents or learners about the 14-19 curriculum.
- Insufficient action taken to retain and re-engage young people who leave education and training by the age of 17.
- Insufficient co-ordination of links with HE to encourage the more able to progress.
- Slow progress to extend the 14-16 curriculum offering.
- Insufficient planned opportunities to share good practice and support progression.
- Insufficient planning of curriculum design and delivery to support progression.
- Insufficient information about learners available at key transition points.
- Little evidence of data having been analysed routinely to inform planning or other management activity.
- Lack of clarity around the funding of 14-19 provision.
- Insufficient quality assurance of 14-16 link activities.
- Inadequate equality of access to all elements of the 14-19 curriculum for many learners.

Trafford 14-19 Strategy

Strategic Aims

- Establish an overarching strategic framework for 14-19 education and training in Trafford.
- Develop a range of broad based and flexible provision that meets the individual needs and aspirations of learners.
- Establish a coherent approach to transition and progression.
- Provide appropriate and relevant support so that all young people can access and succeed in learning.
- Secure the vision through effective partnership, communication and quality assurance.

1. Establish an overarching strategic framework for 14-19 education and training in Trafford

Strategic Objectives:

- Establish an overarching framework that is based on:
 - individual learner needs
 - accessibility
 - participation
 - local economy
 - Develop a 14-19 learner entitlement for Trafford in accordance with the key principles for 14-19 education and training.
 - Ensure all stakeholders are represented and engaged in the development and implementation of the framework.
- 2. Develop a range of broad based and flexible provision that meets the individual needs and aspirations of learners**

Strategic Objectives

- Ensure learning provision provides real choice, breadth and opportunities for progression.
- Ensure a flexible and responsive approach that enables young people to achieve success at all levels.
- Promote collaborative planning and working to deliver choice and excellence.

3. Establish a coherent approach to transition and progression

Strategic objectives:

- Develop a responsive and flexible approach to transition to meet the individual needs of young people.
 - Ensure impartial information, advice and guidance are available to all at critical individual transition and progression points.
 - Establish effective mechanisms to ensure the sharing and use of information and data to support individual learners at transition.
 - Develop and build on partnerships to ensure a coherent approach to transition and progression.
- 4. Provide appropriate and relevant support so that all young people can access and succeed in learning**

Strategic Objectives:

- Develop a responsive and flexible approach to meet identified individual needs and challenge young people.
 - Work with a range of support agencies in CYPS as part of delivering the principles of Every Child Matters.
- 5. Secure the vision through effective partnership, communication and quality assurance**

Strategic Objectives:

- Develop and implement a process for quality assuring the Learner Entitlement.
- Develop and implement a 14-19 quality assurance framework for partnership provision.
- Develop and implement a communication and marketing strategy.

Principles of 14-19 Education/Training

The principles of 14-19 education and training for all young people are:

- Placing young people at the heart of education and training.
- Adopting an inclusive and diverse approach to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Developing the whole young person to enable them to benefit from and contribute to the opportunities available.
- Creating a 14-19 programme of learning that encourages the active participation of young people in the process, ensuring that they are challenged and supported.
- Providing high standards of teaching and learning and a commitment to continuous improvement.
- Providing safe and healthy working/learning environments.
- Providing a full range of pathways and progression routes that are coherent and clearly articulated and lead to appropriate qualifications.
- Valuing and recognising achievement/attainment across all stages and all learning.
- Providing timely, impartial and accurate transition guidance.
- Developing quality partnerships and collaborative working that are in the best interests of young people.

The Learner Entitlement

This is core to the Strategy and has been agreed in consultation with young people.

“As a learner you are entitled to have high quality education and training opportunities that suit your needs and talents and help you get where you want to be.”

Young people in Trafford should expect people involved in their education and training to work together with them to succeed by:

Being able to:

- take the right courses;
- learn in a style that suits you;
- move on to the next stage of learning, training or employment;
- build on the life skills you already have; and
- have your say about your learning.

Having:

- the chance to get involved with wider activities;
- a direct experience of work;
- help to make the right choices;
- help with things such as welfare, finance and personal issues;

- extra support if you need it; and
- the chance to regularly review how you are doing and where you are going.

Making sure:

- your achievements are recognised;
- you are challenged to do your best;
- you are able to take responsibility for managing your own learning and development;
- you have your say in reviewing your learning experiences to improve them for you and others; and
- learning environments are healthy and safe.

1.4.4 Trafford Joint Area Review

Headline Information

- Trafford's total population is 211,800 of which 52,548 are children and young people aged 0-19 years. The school population is approximately 34,500 and 8.3% are from black and minority ethnic communities.
- Pre-school learning and care provision is delivered by the full range of voluntary, private and statutory sectors.
- There are 97 schools in Trafford serving the school population.
- Primary education is delivered by 73 schools.
- Secondary education is based on selection at age 11, with seven grammar schools and 11 high schools.
- There are six special schools, three primary and three secondary, which meet the full spectrum of special educational needs.
- Just over a quarter of the schools are denominational.
- There are three Pupil Referral Units in the area.
- Services for children in Trafford are delivered by the Children and Young People's Service, which incorporates early years, children social services, education, Children's Fund, youth offending, Connexions and the youth service.

Outcomes for most children and young people in Trafford are good.

The work Securing the health of children and young people is good.

The work for keeping children safe is adequate.

The work in helping children and young people to enjoy their education and recreation and to achieve well is good.

The work in helping children and young people to contribute to society is adequate.

The work in helping children and young people achieve economic well being is good.

The management of services for children and young people is good.

Strengths (positive)

Outcomes for Children

- Children and young people are generally healthy, appear safe, enjoy school and leisure activities and are achieving well.
- Most children and young people behave responsibly, contribute positively to their communities and are supported to achieve economic wellbeing.
- Services to children and young people with mental health problems are adequate and there has been a significant reduction in waiting times for services in the past 18 months.
- Trafford is at the top of the national league tables for educational achievement including GCSEs and GCE A-levels, with good quality educational provision for the majority of children and young people of school age in the borough.
- Most children and young people feel safe in and out of school
- Outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are adequate.
- Trafford council and partners are making commendable progress in reducing the number of looked after children placed outside the borough and have established effective arrangements to commission and monitor placements.
- Social care services for children and young people have significantly improved in the last 18 months and there is now evidence of improved outcomes for looked after children and those in need of protection.

Being healthy

- There is 100% access to a general practitioner within two working days and to a primary care professional within one working day.
- Children and young people are given support to encourage healthy lifestyles. There is wide participation in the 'Healthy Schools' initiative throughout Trafford.
- A range of effective projects and initiatives address important issues such as sexual health, teenage pregnancy, alcohol and substance misuse and smoking cessation.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) have improved over the last year with reductions in waiting times for access to services.
- 97% of all young offenders are offered screening and those with identified substance misuse needs receive specialist assessments within 10 days.
- Health services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are adequate with some good features.
- The degree of planned change within the local NHS is considerable and involves both acute and primary care services for children.

Staying Safe

- Child protection is a high priority across the council and health services.
- Children assessed as most at risk are protected satisfactorily through multi-agency collaboration. A wider safeguarding culture, through partnership between statutory and voluntary agencies, is developing.

- The responsiveness and quality of front line social work services have improved to a level that is consistently adequate and increasingly good.
- Lessons from recent serious case reviews are disseminated
- An accessible range of family support services is available to reduce the incidence of family breakdown and to support children and young people in need of protection
- Disabled children and their families are positive about the support available.
- There has been marked improvement in the planning and support services for looked after children in the past 18 months.

Enjoying and Achieving

- Provision of early years childcare and education is good. There are well-established multi-agency links in place to provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- The vast majority of children and young people in Trafford achieve highly, attendance in schools is very good and most children have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school.
- Schools are well supported by the council in ensuring that educational provision is of good quality.
- Intervention is well targeted and proportionate to needs.
- The School Improvement Service has provided effective support to schools causing concern.
- The educational attainment of looked after children is satisfactory.
- School provision for children with learning difficulties/and or disabilities is good and meets their needs.
- The council recognises its services to support those who are not educated at school require considerable improvement. Appropriate plans are now in place.

Making a Positive Contribution

- Targeted preventive programmes have been developed effectively by a range of services and these are used well by young people at risk of offending and already known to the Youth Offending Team.
- Overall crime figures show a 16% decline in the last 12 months and youth nuisance incidents have fallen by 13%.
- Children and young people develop positive relationships and many take part in activities that help them to develop a sense of responsibility.
- There are increasing opportunities for young people to take part in consultation activities and in influencing decisions about services for them, particularly at a local level.
- Good support is available to those young people who are experiencing particular difficulties such as teenage pregnancy
- The council and its partners are working effectively to enable children and young people to develop socially and emotionally.

Economic Well Being

- A good range of regeneration initiatives has been developed for the most deprived areas and families make good use of the services provided through the children's centre.
- The borough is implementing its 14-19 strategy, which makes clear the strong commitment to partnership working between the local authority, LSC and Connexions.
- Access that young people have to a broad curriculum at Key Stage 4 has improved significantly
- The Connexions service provides good support to individuals at points of transition.
- Participation rates in post-16 education and training are high.

Service Management

- The work to date on setting shared ambitions is adequate.
- Strong political leadership within the council is committed to improving services for children and young people.
- Work on establishing a new strategic partnership to replace the limited company board is underway. This will provide opportunities for wider partnerships in the delivery of all services.
- CYPP contains a set of relevant priorities and it is currently the subject of consultation.
- A working partnership with shared aims and agreed ways of working together is being developed.
- There are some good examples where priorities have been set leading to improved outcomes for children and families
- Current capacity and that for further improvement is good.
- A director of children's services has been in place since April 2004 and together with senior managers, provides effective and strong leadership.
- Political commitment, through the lead member, is strong.
- Significant additional resources have been found for children's social care services and resources are well managed.
- Services give good value for money.
- Performance management arrangements are generally good. Some imaginative developments in education and social care services and the council is able to demonstrate a number of improvements to services through effective performance management. There is scope to develop joint processes for performance monitoring.
- The work of the Children and Young People's Service Board is gathering momentum and the potential for effective partnership working across the borough is considerable.

Weaknesses (negative)

Outcomes for Children

- A few areas of services are under-developed and are not leading to such good outcomes for some groups of the most vulnerable children and young people. This

includes children who are excluded from schools and attending Pupil Referral Units, and young people who are in need of supported accommodation and housing.

- Services to the comparatively small number of children who are excluded from school are in need of further development. The area recognises this as a priority for improvement.
- There is a good range of post-16 provision but collaboration in planning is inconsistent in some aspects of the service including for some of the most vulnerable young people.
- Some children feel less safe in parts of Trafford due to difficulties of access to transport, and to incidents of bullying on public transport.
- Domestic violence, drugs and alcohol abuse remain relatively high in parts of the borough and are significant components of referrals to social care services.

Staying safe

- Arrangements for establishing the local children's safeguarding board (LCSB) as an influential and accountable entity are yet to be finalised.
- Deployment of police resources and communication across the police force do not always support timely investigations and participation in child protection conferences.
- Implementation of action plans is not monitored rigorously across all services.
- Although care leavers are well supported by the leaving care service, there is a lack of safe accommodation and supported housing.

Enjoying and Achieving

- There is a strategic action plan in place to raise the attainment of looked after children but not all schools are fully aware of this.
- Provision and accommodation is unsuitable and some young people do not receive their full educational entitlement.

Making a positive contribution

- The percentage of young people re-offending (59%) is well above the national average (48%) and an increasing number of looked after young people have received final warnings and convictions at a level that is also above the national average.
- Support is less effective for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities when they move from children's to adult services.

Economic Wellbeing

- The housing needs of some vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds who are not accommodated in their family homes, including care leavers, are not always being fully met.
- While there is a good range of post-16 provision, there is patchy collaboration in the planning of services and services are not consistently good for all young people, including some of the most vulnerable.

- A few schools in the borough offer minimal or no vocational options to the 14-19 age group.

Areas for improvement/Action Points

Immediately

- Improve the quality of behaviour support by ensuring that there is a coherent behaviour support framework that is understood and accessible to all schools and that the behaviour support improvement plan has identified measurable outcomes.
- Improve educational provision for all children and young people who have been permanently excluded from school, including safe accommodation for care leavers.
- Review the housing needs of young people across the borough and formulate a joint strategy and implementation plan to meet the needs of all young people.

Next Six months

- Examine ways to ensure safe access to education and leisure services for all children and young people across the borough.
- Within the 14-19 strategy, strengthen collaboration between post-16 providers to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups and those who find it difficult to access provision are more adequately met.
- Evaluate current arrangements for the engagement of the police in all safeguarding activities and agree joint strategies for improved engagement.

Longer Term

- Review CAMHS to develop effective strategies for outreach services for children and young people with mental health needs.
- Review the provision of dental services and promote more consistent access to dental services by all children.