Vision for London
2008 - 2011
London Education on the way to world class
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In the long and vibrant history of London it is hard to think of a time when the city has undergone more rapid change, generated greater wealth, or led the world of culture with more dynamism. In the last decade London has been responsible for a fifth of the UK’s economic growth. It generates some £80 billion a year in tax revenue.

We want every young Londoner to receive a first class education. Ten years ago that was an ambition that few believed attainable. School standards were too low. There were many weak or failing schools in the inner city. There were too many vacancies for teachers. And teachers and parents felt a lack of confidence in the school system.

The Government introduced the London Challenge to address these issues head on. London Challenge has provided special support for struggling schools, including new Head teachers and advisers. It has led to the closure of many weak and failing schools and the opening of 34 academies which have proved highly popular with parents; and it has invested in more and better teachers, including the successful Teach First scheme, which now provides more than 200 top graduates per year for London secondary schools.

The impact has been enormous. After years of below average performance, London is ahead of the national average in GCSE results for the fourth year running. Since 1997, London has seen an improvement of 20.5 percentage points in the proportion of 16 year olds securing five or more good GCSEs, compared to 17.6 percentage points nationally. Ofsted reported in 2006 that London’s schools have improved dramatically, and it rated them as better on average than the rest of the country.

But it also noted that “despite these very significant improvements, work remains to be done to ensure London has an outstanding education service.”

We agree. There are still too many schools deemed weak or only satisfactory by Ofsted, and there are still 67 secondary schools where fewer than 30 per cent of pupils achieve at least five grade A*-C in their GCSEs including English and maths. Although attainment gaps have narrowed, there remains a persistent link between deprivation and low attainment. Primary schools have not improved as rapidly as secondary schools and provision for young people over 16 in the capital is patchy in both availability and quality. Many more bright young Londoners could be going on to higher education in or outside London.

And that is before reflecting on the competition that other global cities are providing. The pace of change is quickening, and we cannot rest on our laurels. In the future London will need many more
highly skilled people in professions ranging from teaching and medicine to finance and the arts.

So the Government has committed to continue the London Challenge for a further three years. The key priorities for the next phase of London Challenge are to:

• eliminate failure and address continuing underperformance.
• create many more good and great schools.
• transform post-16 learning and increase the proportion of young Londoners taking up higher education.

We are confident that London has the will, the means and the talent to improve even further. The Government will continue to provide the support necessary.

Andrew Adonis,
Minister for London Schools

Sir Mike Tomlinson,
Chief Adviser for London Schools
Executive Summary – 2011 Pledges

London Challenge was introduced in 2002 to tackle weak, failing or underperforming secondary schools in the capital. Ofsted reported in December 2006 that London schools have improved ‘dramatically’; that the investment in London Challenge had helped schools and local authorities; and it rated London schools as better on average than the rest of the country on overall effectiveness, the quality of teaching and leadership.

- In 2007 and for four years running London continues to **surpass the national average** in terms of the proportion of students achieving five or more A*-C GCSEs in all subjects; with 60.9% of London students achieving compared to 60.1% of students across England.

- For three years running London’s maintained secondary schools have **outperformed** the national average in the proportion of students obtaining five or more A*-C at GCSE **including English and maths** achieving 47.9% compared to a national average of 45.9%.

- **Almost one in three** maintained schools in London now secure outstanding results (over 70% five or more A*-C GCSEs in any subject). In 1997, only 36 schools reached this level.

London Challenge has been extended for a further three years to 2011.

The London Challenge is led by Andrew Adonis, Minister for London Schools and Sir Mike Tomlinson, Chief Adviser for London Schools. It is delivered in partnership with schools, the 33 London boroughs, and all those working in education in the city.

The key priorities for the next phase of London Challenge are to:

- Eliminate failure and address continuing underperformance.
- Narrow attainment gaps.
- Create many more good and great schools.
- Transform post-16 learning and increase the proportion of young Londoners taking up higher education.

London Challenge will continue to focus on secondary schools, so that all schools have at least 30% of their pupils achieving five or more A*-C GCSEs including English and maths and more that are good or outstanding. We will also extend our work with primary schools to all London boroughs, where we will initiate a programme which builds upon that used at secondary level.

Yet more effort will be put into closing the gaps in attainment between schools and between different groups of students. We will also introduce one new area of work: a focus on improving post-16 provision, particularly engagement and attainment at Level 3 and progression by London students on to Higher Education.
Our 2011 Pledges

By 2011, at the end of the London Challenge, we are determined that:

- **All secondary schools in London will be above the floor target** (that at least 30% of pupils achieve five or more GCSEs at A*-C including English and maths), or will be subject to intervention.

- **The proportion of London pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades at GCSE including English and maths will continue to be above the national average.**

- **There will be no primary schools in London which consistently fall below the floor target.**

- **We will more than double the number of Academies open in London, from 34 to at least 70.**

- **We will further narrow attainment gaps between the average performance of pupils in London and pupils from less advantaged backgrounds.**

- **There will be at least two outstanding secondary schools in every London borough.**

- **Every maintained secondary school in London will have a partnership with a Higher Education Institution.**

- **A higher proportion of young Londoners will go on to higher education, including the more competitive universities.**

Education in London in 2011

By 2011 we will have delivered on the pledges and London’s parents will know that their children are attending a good or improving school. The culture will have changed even further to one of attainment and aspiration, where every child, teacher and parent knows that they can achieve to their full, that the school is there to support and enhance their life chances and that the future holds open a multitude of opportunities within the capital and beyond. Teachers will find that London’s schools are some of the most inspiring schools in which to teach. Many of London’s schools and pupils know this vision is achievable: it has been done in all areas to some extent already and now we need to push that to all areas all of the time. Schools, pupils, teachers, local authorities and government are building a future of achievement and success that is self improving and self sustaining, where opportunities are open to all.
London Education in Context

In the maintained sector, more than 1.1 million children and young people attend 1820 primary schools, 420 secondary schools and 50 colleges in London. Children and young people come from a wide range of ethnic communities, with more than 60 per cent coming from a minority ethnic group.

Thirty-eight per cent of pupils in London have a first language other than English. Forty-two per cent are eligible for free school meals (FSM).

There is considerable variation in the performance of schools across the capital. There are some very high performing schools, with 87 secondary schools and 249 primary schools categorised as outstanding by Ofsted since 2005. There are also six outstanding colleges, with five having Beacon Status.

Conversely, three secondary schools require special measures and 67 fall below the Government’s target of 30 per cent of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs grade A*-C including English and maths.

At Key Stage 2, children’s attainment in English and maths is in line with national averages. However, there are 135 schools in London which are below the current floor targets at the end of primary school (Key Stage 2), where too great a proportion of pupils fail to achieve the expected levels in English and maths.

And by Key Stage 3 they have fallen behind both in terms of attainment and progression. This continues into Key Stage 4.

This aggregated data masks dramatic variation between schools and local authorities. When looking at the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4+ in both English and maths at KS2, there is a 21 percentage point difference between the lowest and the highest performing local authorities. At KS4, the difference between the lowest and highest performing authorities for pupils attaining five or more GCSEs Grade A* - C, including English and maths is 28.7 percentage points.

Although the free school meals (FSM) attainment gap is narrower in London than nationally, it is still unacceptably wide. In 2007, 64 per cent of London pupils who received FSM achieved the expected level in English at the end of KS2, compared with 85 per cent of pupils who did not receive FSM. At GCSE, only 31.2 per cent of London pupils who received FSM achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and maths, compared with 52.8 per cent of pupils who did not receive FSM. Levels of attainment are particularly low for those boys receiving FSM who are: mixed white and black Caribbean; white; or black Caribbean.

After the age of 16, 74.1 per cent of young people in London reached the Level 2 thresholds (five or more GCSEs grade A*-C or equivalent) by age 19 and 50.5 per cent reached Level 3 (two A-Levels grade A-E or equivalent) compared to national averages of 73.9 per cent and 48 per cent respectively (2007). Eleven per cent of young people across London are not in education or work based training, compared to 18 per cent nationally.
Our Vision

In December 2007, the Government published the Children’s Plan which outlined how it will make England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up. As part of this, the Plan set out the next steps that need to be taken to achieve world class schools and an excellent education system for every child across the country.

London is leading the way. In this vision, we set out how we will help make London a centre for world class education for all children and young people through the London Challenge.

A stepping stone to 2020

The Children’s Plan sets out the early draft aspirations for children and young people by 2020. Although these are being consulted on over the next year to ensure they represent the right national ambitions, our vision for the Challenge is that over the next three years, London will continue to make solid and sustainable progress towards these longer term goals.

London Education – the story since 2002

Standards have risen in both inner and outer London

Standards in London’s maintained secondary schools have improved dramatically since 1997, when standards in London’s schools were lower than in schools nationally.

Remarkable progress has been made in the five London Challenge key boroughs (Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth and Southwark) where the percentage of pupils achieving at least five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C, including English and maths, has improved by an average of 12.1 percentage points since 2003 compared with an improvement of 7.4 percentage points in outer London and 8.4 percentage points in inner London.

Levels of attainment in London’s schools have risen every year since 1997; the rate of improvement has accelerated since the start of London Challenge in 2002.
Vision for London 2008–2011: London Education on the way to world class

Percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving 5+A*-C

Year


Inner London  London  Outer London  England (maintained)

Percentage of 15 year olds achieving 5+A*-C including English and maths

Year

2003 2004 2005 2006 2007

Inner London  London  Outer London  England (maintained)
### Pupils from some disadvantaged groups are faring better in London than in England as a whole

The attainment gap between pupils who receive free school meals (FSM) and those who do not is narrower in London than in England as a whole.

The attainment of Pakistani pupils at GCSE is 10 percentage points higher in London than in England as a whole. At Key Stage 2, attainment rates for Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils are higher in London than nationally in both English and maths.

### There are fewer struggling schools

At the end of the 2001/02 academic year there were 37 London primary and seven London secondary schools in special measures. Today, there are 18 primary and three secondary schools.

### There are more schools with a strong culture of achievement

There are now twice as many secondary schools in London where 70 per cent of pupils get five good GCSEs compared with five years ago. Almost one in three secondary schools now secure outstanding results. In 1997, only 36 schools reached this level.

### Many schools benefit from excellent leadership

Ofsted has found that a higher proportion of secondary schools in London have good or outstanding leadership and management compared with secondary schools nationally.

### There are more excellent teachers

Since the start of London Challenge, vacancies for London teachers have fallen significantly, and at a faster pace than national trends. The vacancy rate in London has fallen from 2.7 per cent in 2002 to 1.1 per cent in 2007.

The number of teachers in London (FTE) is now 64,300 and this has risen from 61,600 – an increase of 4.4 per cent since 2004. Over the same period the national increase was 1.7 per cent.

### Effective data tools have supported school improvement

The Families of Schools dataset enables schools to benchmark themselves against high performing statistical neighbours. The dataset has helped to heighten expectations about what can be achieved, particularly by schools serving disadvantaged communities.

### Support for local authorities

London Challenge has facilitated inter-borough and pan-London collaboration by supporting the London School Improvement Partnership Group and the work of the Association of London Directors of Children’s Services.
The specialist schools programme is driving improvement

The specialist schools programme (SSP) helps schools to establish distinctive identities through their chosen specialisms, in partnership with private sector sponsors and supported by additional Government funding. More than 90 per cent of London’s schools have a specialism and a quarter of London’s specialist schools have high performing specialist school (HPSS) status – a slightly higher proportion than for specialist schools elsewhere in England.

Where it has proved especially difficult to break the link between deprivation and low attainment, radical solutions are bringing positive change

There are a number of well established and robust strategies to turn around weak and failing schools - these include academies, ‘collaborative restart’, ‘hard federations’, trusts, interim executive boards (IEB) and the use of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) to rationalise poor secondary provision. There are 34 academies open currently and at least a further 36 will open by 2011.
Strengthening Schools Facing the Biggest Challenges

Secondary Schools

London’s secondary schools outperform schools nationally at the end of Key Stage 4, but there are still too many secondary schools where attainment is low. In particular, there are 67 secondary schools where fewer than 30 per cent of pupils gained five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and maths in 2007. That level is not acceptable to pupils, parents, colleges, universities or employers.

Some of those schools are on track to reach the target shortly; some are further away and will need more support. Although schools below the floor target tend to be in areas of greater deprivation than their peers gaining higher results, there are London schools in deprived areas that are above this level. This shows that the link between deprivation and attainment can be cut. Some of the schools have improved very substantially from a low base.

Southfields Community College – significant improvement from a low base

Southfields Community College is a mixed comprehensive for 11 to 19 year olds. It is one of the first schools in the country to specialise in sport. Its student population is from a diverse range of backgrounds and around 81 languages are spoken. More than two thirds of students have special educational needs, many with behavioural, emotional or literacy problems and 37 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals.

The school has received support through London Challenge, including help from expert advisers and a tailored package to raise standards. In 1998, only 14 per cent of students achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C or equivalents and 400 young people were excluded on a fixed term basis. Latest GCSE results showed a dramatic improvement with 58 per cent of students now achieving five GCSEs at grade A*-C (37 per cent with English and maths) and fixed term exclusions, once among the highest in the country, are now down to 30 a year. In 2006, the school was one of only 13 nationally which was listed in both the top 100 schools for sustained improvement including English and maths and the top 100 schools for ‘contextual value added’ (which measure students’ improvement through their schools career) scores. The school was recognised as an outstanding school by Ofsted in 2007.

Determined leadership, excellence in teaching, working to improve the self esteem of pupils and a positive ethos are central to all policies at the school. A mentoring programme for black Caribbean boys is also showing positive results.
The secondary Keys to Success programme

We will continue the Keys to Success programme for secondary schools in the most challenging circumstances

The Keys to Success programme is highly respected for its track record in providing fast and responsive support to schools in the most challenging circumstances. The programme complements the role of local authorities and the National Strategies in school improvement, by providing highly targeted interventions where these are needed most. Schools in the most difficult circumstances – intensive schools – are supported by the London Challenge advisers, a team of highly skilled, experienced practitioners, who provide expert challenge, support and advice. The team includes specialists in behaviour and English as an additional language (EAL). The London Challenge adviser works with the school, the local authority and the National Strategies to identify areas of weakness within the school, and agree a set of solutions, which might be provided by the local authority or the National Strategies. In addition, the London Challenge adviser can call upon a range of school improvement services, which fall under three main headings:

- a menu of education services provided under contract to the Keys to Success programme.
- a menu of support from the London leadership strategy led by National College for School Leadership (NCSL).
- bespoke solutions developed by the London Challenge adviser in partnership with the school and local school improvement partners.

Services under contract to the Keys to Success programme range from data analysis and target setting; subject support, particularly in English, maths and science; programmes for pupils to improve learning and aspirations; behaviour support; EAL support; and interim personnel to cover key roles.

London Challenge advisers have devised a wide range of creative solutions to meet particular needs, including whole school training on EAL; induction packs for newly arrived learners; reward schemes for pupils to promote good attendance and positive behaviour; and programmes to raise aspirations amongst disaffected pupils.

Improving schools, which require less intensive support, are supported by school improvement partners (SIPs) – experienced practitioners appointed by local authorities who are part of the school improvement system for every school. Like the London Challenge advisers in the intensive schools, SIPs work with the school, the local authority and the National Strategies to identify areas of weakness within the school, and agree solutions. These might take the form of options from the menu of education services provided under contract to the Keys to Success programme; support from the London leadership strategy; or, occasionally, bespoke solutions developed in discussion with the London Challenge adviser and other school improvement partners.

Schools tend to remain in the Keys to Success programme for two to three years. Since 2003, 120 schools have been involved in the programme.

The programme is aligned to the recently announced National Challenge, which will ensure that by 2011 at least 30 per cent of pupils in every maintained secondary school gets five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and maths. The National Challenge builds on the success and lessons learned from London as well as other school improvement programmes. London Challenge has asked for plans for schools
not currently supported intensively by London Challenge by the end of July this year. That will then allow councils and the Department for Children, Schools and Families to work with all London secondary schools below the floor target to ensure that there are no schools below the target by 2011.

The Government is providing £400m of targeted investment to support the National Challenge. This is in addition to the £160m already provided to the City Challenges. City Challenge areas are already funded for much of the work that the National Challenge will support. But we will look at whether there are additional gaps that need to be supported, including where structural solutions including academies, National Challenge trusts, federations and trusts may be needed to help schools that are at most risk of not reaching the target. More detail about the National Challenge can be found at www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/nationalchallenge

Support will be on offer to strengthen subject leadership, launch pupil tracking, introduce one-to-one tuition and to improve progression. In most schools below the floor target, attainment in maths is below that in English. The National Strategies are developing a new offer to provide additional support for senior leaders in supporting, managing and evaluating maths and science departments.

To deliver consistent and improving attainment, schools need to have effective systems for performance management, lesson planning and pupil tracking using Assessing Pupils’ Progress (APP). The National Strategies will develop a programme to support them in coming up with stronger management systems.

London Challenge advisers will draw on the wider range of improvement support available to all schools, such as support packages on behaviour or attendance available from the National Strategies, effective use of assessment for learning tools and effective use of the school’s funding for personalised learning.
The Chief Adviser to London Schools, Sir Mike Tomlinson, who was formerly Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools, has agreed to chair the Panel of National Challenge Expert Advisers. That is a group of people experienced in school improvement who will be available to provide support to local authorities that face the biggest challenges. Professor David Woods, Principal Adviser to the City Challenges and a long standing London Challenge adviser; Dr Liz Sidwell, Chief Executive of Haberdashers Aske’s Federation and Executive Head of the Haberdashers Academies at Hatcham and Knights; and Kevan Collins, Director of Children’s Services at Tower Hamlets, have all agreed to serve on the Panel. This will bring gains to London, as experience will be shared across the Panel and across London.

Pledges

- **By 2011, all secondary schools in London will be above the floor target (that at least 30 per cent of pupils achieve five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and maths) or will be subject to intervention.**

- The proportion of London pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades at GCSE including English and maths will continue to be above the national average.

Primary

Overall, the proportion of pupils in maintained schools in London who achieve the expected levels in English and maths at Key Stage 2 is the same as the national average. However, in 2007, there were 135 schools in London below the current floor targets at the end of primary school (Key Stage 2), where too great a proportion of pupils fail to achieve the expected levels in English and maths.

So the next phase of London Challenge will see concerted efforts to turn around underperforming primary and secondary schools, particularly schools below floor targets.

**There will be a new focus on support for primary schools in the most difficult circumstances**

As well as the 135 primary schools in London which are below the floor targets, there are currently 46 London primary schools in Ofsted categories – 24 in special measures and 22 requiring significant improvement. To tackle this effectively, we will deploy a range of carefully targeted interventions. We have recruited a cadre of highly skilled London Challenge advisers, who will be at the centre of the programme.

The primary programme will have four key elements:

- **Keys to Success schools**

  Up to 30 schools in the most challenging circumstances will benefit from support from London Challenge advisers. London Challenge advisers will be able to call upon a menu of programmes to improve teaching and learning in English and maths, as well as support from a cadre of 60 primary consultant leaders.

- **Primary Schools working in Partnership**

  Building on work already underway in individual authorities, a further 30 weak but improving schools will work alongside stronger schools in small groups relating to a particular theme, such as attainment in maths or English, or a focus on EAL. Some groups will focus on leadership, and will pilot teaching and learning immersion programmes developed by the London leadership strategy. Consultant leaders will have an important role to play.
• **Good to great**
  There will also be work with a further group of good schools aspiring to become great, with input from deputy heads in outstanding schools. Each school will carry out targeted work with underperforming groups.

• **Borough-wide working**
  Some London boroughs have an unusually high number of schools below the floor target. London Challenge advisers will work closely with the National Strategies to support local authorities in driving up attainment. London Challenge will provide support to particular local authorities as and when required.

**Pledge**

• *By 2011, there will be no primary schools in London which consistently fall below the floor target.*
Developing Choice and Diversity

By promoting diversity we can help ensure more children, young people and their parents are able to choose provision that reflects their particular needs

London Challenge is part of the Government’s investment in the longer term success of schools. In time, the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme will enable all schools to be rebuilt or refurbished, alongside radical structural changes. The aim of the primary capital programme is to create primary schools that are equipped for 21st century teaching and learning, and are at the heart of their communities with children’s services in reach of every family. The programme will rebuild, remodel or refurbish about half of primary schools. All contribute to a strategy for establishing a successful schools system in London that harnesses the potential of external partners to add drive, dynamism, diversity and capacity through strong governance. This approach is complemented by the strategic leadership of local authorities championing the interests of pupils and parents.

Where it has proved especially difficult to break the link between deprivation and low attainment, radical solutions are bringing positive change

There are a number of well established and robust strategies to turn around weak and failing schools. These include academies, ‘collaborative restart’, ‘hard federations’, trusts, interim executive boards (IEB) and the use of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) to rationalise poor secondary provision.

The academies programme has shown both in London and nationally that it can bring a radical change to the ethos, leadership, structures and support in a school and there is growing evidence of the success of academies in turning around the most challenging schools. There are currently 34 academies open in London and we expect to more than double this number so that 70 are open by 2011. We will continue to urge local authorities to consider academies as an option for dealing with persistently weak or failing schools.
Where these are needed, we will continue to deploy radical structural solutions, including academies, hard federations and now, National Challenge trusts

London Challenge will continue to work closely with the Office of the Schools Commissioner and local authorities in their developing role as commissioners of school provision. This will ensure that immediate school improvement strategies are accompanied by longer term structural changes in governance to provide radical solutions for the weakest schools (especially those achieving below 30% GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and maths). Solutions might include academies, trust status, including National Challenge trust status, federations, or closure without replacement where surplus places need to be removed. Twenty-seven schools in London have closed or been replaced by academies since the start of London Challenge, and others are making the transition currently. And an increasing number of schools are working collaboratively with other schools or external partners, and some are moving to a more formal structure such as a hard federation.

Haberdashers’ Aske’s Knights Academy, London Borough of Lewisham: a rapidly improving academy

The academy is helping to restore confidence in local education. It is part of the Haberdashers’ Federation and works closely with Haberdashers’ Aske’s Hatcham College, a former city technology college.

The Federation is led by Dr Liz Sidwell, whose strong strategic vision, together with the determined leadership of the academy’s Principal, Yvonne MacCullum, have led to the good rise in standards. Haberdashers’ Aske’s Knights Academy opened in September 2005, and has just received significant praise in its first full inspection.

There is a strong contrast with the past. Only a few years ago, at the predecessor school, just 9 per cent of pupils left with five good GCSEs in all subjects. Absence was running at nearly 20 per cent and the school was a deeply unpopular choice with parents.

The London borough of Lewisham therefore worked closely in partnership with the Haberdashers’ Livery Company to secure a smooth transition to a new academy.

London Challenge also supported the school through its transition to academy status by providing youth workers to improve attendance and punctuality; ICT support; pupil mentoring; support for teaching and learning and staff retention. 94 per cent of the staff in post in the final term at the predecessor school were in post in the new Academy in September 2005.

By 2007, 42 per cent of pupils at Knights Academy were getting five good GCSEs and although the proportion including English and maths still needs to top 30 per cent, all the indications are positive, as the recent inspection confirms. Since opening as an academy, GCSE passes including English and maths have risen by nearly 13 percentage points in two years.

The growing success of the Knights Academy shows how a strong school’s ethos can be transferred successfully to a partner school, resulting in vibrant new educational opportunities for local children.
Pledge

- By 2011, we will more than double the number of academies open in London, from 34 to at least 70.

Effective data tools have supported school improvement

The ‘Families of Schools’ dataset enables schools to benchmark themselves against high performing statistical neighbours. The dataset has helped to heighten expectations about what can be achieved, particularly by schools serving disadvantaged communities.

Using ‘Families of Schools’ data at Whitefield School, London Borough of Barnet

Whitefield School is a mixed 11-18 comprehensive with specialist sports college status. Seventy different languages are spoken at the school and nearly half of pupils receive free school meals. Whitefield School has been making use of the ‘Families of Schools’ data since it was first published in 2003. When analysing attainment in different subjects at GCSE, the school studied attainment data for schools with similar cohorts, but which were getting better results. Visits were arranged to learn from effective practice in subject departments in other schools. Whitefield School has also made use of the data for whole school inset training at the start of the school year and shared the data with the school governing body and the school council. Since 2003, the percentage of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C, including English and maths, has risen by 10 percentage points from 15 per cent to 25 per cent.
Narrowing the Gap

Low attainment amongst disadvantaged groups

Schools in London serve some of the most disadvantaged communities, alongside some of the most affluent. The roots of low attainment may start outside school, but the Government does not accept that a low income should consign pupils to poor results. Turning around underperforming primary and secondary schools in London will bring great benefits to some of the most deprived communities in the country. To achieve real progress for some of the most disadvantaged groups, we will also need to look beyond the performance of individual schools, focus on patterns of attainment at borough level and across London and target resources where they are most needed.

Although the FSM attainment gap is narrower in London than nationally, it is unacceptably wide. In 2007, 64 per cent of London pupils who received free school meals achieved the expected level in English at the end of KS2, compared with 85 per cent of pupils who did not receive FSM. At GCSE, only 31.2 per cent of London pupils who received FSM achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and maths, compared with 52.8 per cent of pupils who did not receive FSM. Levels of attainment are particularly low for mixed white and black Caribbean; white; and Black Caribbean boys in receipt of FSM.

In some London boroughs, the attainment gap between children in receipt of FSM and their peers is 10 percentage points or below; in others, it is more than 30 percentage points.

In 2007, just 4.4 per cent of Gypsy, Roma and traveller pupils and 10 per cent of pupils who are travellers of Irish heritage in London achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C, including English and maths. The attainment of black pupils and of mixed white and black Caribbean heritage pupils is also below the average for all London pupils. Overall, only 34.3 per cent of black Caribbean pupils achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and maths – a level similar to the attainment of pupils receiving FSM. Attainment rates for black Caribbean boys are particularly low.

London Challenge will support the dissemination of learning from the joint Local Government Association (LGA) and DCSF project on narrowing the gap. It will also support London boroughs in sharing emerging and good practice on raising attainment and achievement levels among marginalised groups. London Challenge will continue to play an active role in Young London Matters in partnership with the Government Office for London, with a particular focus on raising the achievement and attainment levels of looked after children and black boys.
English as an additional language (EAL)
More children in London than elsewhere have English as an additional language. The numbers reflect both a growing number of new arrivals who need rapid induction and the ability to access the curriculum in English – and also a growing number of children of first and second generation immigrants who, while fluent and literate in English to a certain level, still have additional language needs if they are to achieve their full potential. This implies the need for more specialist EAL teachers and support staff in local authorities and schools as well as in wider community roles, linking EAL and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision. At the same time, all teachers and school leaders need a fuller understanding of EAL issues, and so there is a need for better mainstream continuous professional development (CPD) in these areas.

The Department, working with the Training and Development Agency (TDA), is developing a national strategy to address these workforce needs:

- We are carrying out a national audit of supply of accredited and non-accredited CPD opportunities, and the demand from local authorities and schools.
- We plan to develop within the integrated qualifications framework, through TDA, new pathways for advancement and recognition of EAL skills for school and local authority leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The objective is that by 2011 the available specialist support for EAL pupils will be radically improved, and mainstream teachers and school leaders will be better able to hold these pupils into the pace of the whole class, so that they achieve their full potential across the whole curriculum.
- Alongside this national approach we plan some work specific to London, where the incidence of EAL is so high. From September 2008 we will work with London boroughs to develop new approaches to meeting EAL needs, pairing best-practice local authorities with others where provision needs improvement.

Northumberland Park School, London Borough of Haringey – new arrivals excellence programme

Following an audit of the school’s EAL provision by a London Challenge specialist adviser at the end of 2005, an Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) Action Plan was drawn up to implement changes to EAL provision. The additional resources made available have enabled the school to put in place a comprehensive structure for the induction of new arrivals. Pupils have benefited from a clear curriculum focus, good cognitive challenge and use of effective EAL pedagogy. In addition, partnership working with mainstream staff is also developing well, with both EMA specialists and subject teachers showing growing confidence in working with linguistically diverse classes.

The school has moved relatively rapidly from a situation where EAL provision was virtually non-existent to a position where the quality of the work is very good.
Rokeby School, London Borough of Newham

Rokeby is an 11–16 boys’ school in Newham. The school serves a very disadvantaged inner-city community. The proportion of boys from minority ethnic groups is higher than in the great majority of schools and about one fifth of the boys are at an early stage of learning English.

In January 2004, Rokeby was placed into special measures. London Challenge has provided support including an induction mentor, speech and language therapy coaching, middle manager good practice visits, behaviour support, EAL training and in developing an induction programme for new arrivals. The school was removed from special measures in June 2005 and in September 2007 Ofsted judged the school to be a good one.

Attainment has also improved rapidly. In 2003, 17 per cent of pupils achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and maths. In 2007 this had increased by 20 percentage points to 37 per cent.

Going the extra mile to tackle deprivation

The Department carried out a project which looked at 50 secondary schools working in the most deprived wards in England, but which had a great track record of success with their pupils. Despite the material deprivation of many of their pupils, these schools have created a culture of aspiration and achieved impressive examination results. Their pupils take confidence, pride and hope from school.

Of the ten local authorities in the trial, two were London boroughs - one inner (Newham) and one outer (Merton). The first phase of the project will be complete by summer 2009. If successful, we will expand it to more areas including other London boroughs.

As well as doing all the things that good schools do, these schools also go the extra mile for the children of their deprived communities. They implement some deliberate, specific extra measures designed to turn local school culture from suspicious boredom to upbeat aspiration.

- They go out of their way to bring in local heroes, characters, and successes as role models so that pupils can see that success is possible for people from their walk of life.
- They teach pupils what they need to know about ways of talking, writing and behaving in the wider world, so they have the repertoire to succeed in formal and unfamiliar environments. They educate for equality.
- They define non-negotiable standards of behaviour and a culture of mutual respect, something which plays well with local parents who value the twin traditions of discipline and personal caring. They apply this culture to teachers as well as pupils.
- They provide cultural opportunities beyond the budget of local families so that pupils get a taste of sports, arts and activities from which they are otherwise excluded.
- They are socially attuned. New teachers tour the catchment area before they start to teach, they take time to talk about local concerns with pupils each day, and learn how to meet, greet and converse in ways that are not patronising. They empathise with the local community and local values.
Knowing that poverty can induce feelings of emptiness and hopelessness, they work harder than other schools to provide rewards and incentives to pupils. Their notice boards are invariably plastered with honours, rewards, mentions, certificates, prizes. They are always praising positive behaviour, small steps forward and extra effort.

Teachers assume that they have to earn the pupils’ respect and attention. They work to gain natural (rather than forced) attention and make children associate school with learning that is fun, interesting and active. They use interactive teaching techniques, play to topical or local interests and are skilled in holding in weaker learners.

The schools do more outreach work than most. Some offer out of hours support because their pupils come to seek the support from sympathetic staff. Most work with families. Some have workers dedicated to the neediest pupils and some target well-networked pupils who are opinion leaders in their cohort.

No-one gets away with not working, not behaving, not co-operating, not trying or not attending. Avoidance and disengagement are seen in the same light as disruptive behaviour – as something to be resolved. Resilience, in fact, is one of the key characteristics they seek to give to children who sometimes lack other support to fall back on. The ‘no excuses’ culture maintains high expectations. Ultimately, it insists on success.

**Pledge:**

- **We will further narrow attainment gaps between the average performance of pupils in London and pupils from less advantaged backgrounds.**
Vision for London 2008–2011: London Education on the way to world class

Partnership with Parents

The engagement of mothers and fathers in their children’s education can contribute to educational attainment. In fact, it is a more significant influence on attainment than quality of school during primary years, and remains significant up to the age of 16. London schools and local partners reach out to parents from all backgrounds and encourage them to foster a positive attitude to learning in their children.

The role of parents and families in raising the aspirations and supporting the educational attainment of children cannot be overestimated. Parents’ influence is the single most important factor in shaping their children’s well-being, achievements and prospects.

We want to create conditions where more parents can engage as partners in their children’s learning and development, from birth, during school and into youth. Children’s centres and extended schools are helping this to happen.

**Children’s Centres**

Sure Start Children’s Centres support children under the age of five and their families, providing easy access to health services, parenting and family support, advice and support for parents including drop in sessions, outreach services, integrated early education and childcare and links to training and employment opportunities.

Greenford High School, London borough of Ealing, has a unique and innovative pastoral system where professionals other than teachers are assigned to each year group and support school/parent relationships. This team produced DVDs in community languages, exploring the home school agreement and empowering parents to engage with schools and learning. The team ran specific sessions for travellers, looked after children and their carers, refugee and asylum seekers – in one-to-one and small-group settings.

**Haling Manor High School, London borough of Croydon** runs Family Food and Fun nights with parents, students and staff from the English as an Additional Language and music departments. This has proved a great way to get parents for whom English is not a first language through the door and has led to poetry and illustration classes for parents and students, as well as basic English skills and GCSE classes for parents. This promotes learning and communication throughout the school and at home.
Of the 2,907 Sure Start Children’s Centres already up and running, 474 are located in London, providing access to services for more than 404,900 children under five and their families. By 2010, there will be 3,500 children’s centres across England – one for every community.

The latest National Evaluation of Sure Start report (March 2008) shows that Sure Start Children’s Centres are having a positive impact on the life chances of children, and providing the support parents want. Ofsted have also found that individuals and families were served well by the children’s centres that they attended. Services which had been used by the most vulnerable parents were reported to have transformed the lives of some parents and had positive effects on their children. The focus on parenting skills resulted in very positive outcomes for parents and their children. For example, the vast majority of parents felt better able to manage difficult behaviour, understood child development and nutrition more clearly, felt less isolated and gained self-confidence.

All children in London will have access to a children’s centre by 2010 and London boroughs are currently working on how many centres they need to meet this commitment.

Extended schools

More than half the schools in London are now providing the full core offer of extended services, including childcare or a safe place to be combined with a varied menu of activities; parenting support; swift and easy access to health and social care services; and opening up their facilities to the wider community. This is ahead of the 2008 target for half of primary schools and a third of secondary schools to be offering access to the full core offer. It is well on the way to meeting the 2010 targets for all schools to be offering access to the core offer outlined above.

Ofsted has found that these extended services are having a positive impact upon achievement and personal development. They are helping to improve attainment, attendance, motivation, behaviour and attitudes towards learning. They found that the focus on parenting skills was successful and was having “life-changing” impact for many parents, especially the most vulnerable. Extended schools also encouraged greater parental involvement in children’s education, built better relations with local communities and helped to promote community cohesion.

Of London’s 2,440 schools, 1,377 currently offer access to the full core offer of extended services. This means more than 60 per cent of London’s one million children have access to the life changing opportunities which extended services offer.

A number of London boroughs are involved in pathfinder and pilot projects. Redbridge and Enfield are parent support advisor pilot local authorities until the end of September 2008. Newham and Croydon are extended schools subsidy pilot local authorities in 2008/09. These pilots aim to increase take-up and relevance of extended services for economically disadvantaged children and looked-after children.

Hillingdon was one of four local authorities in the Every Child Matters (ECM) extended schools leadership project pilot through to March 08. It was run jointly by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) and the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA). Ten local authorities nationally are being selected currently for a wider project covering 150 schools. The focus is schools which have yet to make significant progress on the extended schools full
core offer delivery and engagement with the ECM agenda and supports school leaders in planning for change and to meet needs (using the school improvement planning framework).

Croydon, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark were seven of the 12 local authorities involved in the Accelerating Extended Schools / Guns Gangs and Knives project in 2007/08 which aimed to address some of the underlying causes of gun, gang and knife crime in urban areas through extended services. The lessons of this work are being mainstreamed through the extended schools and positive activities for young people agendas.

Kidbrooke School – London Borough of Greenwich

Multi-award winning TeenTalk@ Kidbrooke is a drop-in health centre based on Kidbrooke School’s premises – the first of its kind in London. The centre is a ‘teacher-free zone’, led by a multi-disciplinary staff in partnership with a wide range of specialist services running regular clinics and sessions, and offering confidential counseling for students who may be unlikely to seek support in more formal health settings. The services are well attended, with some clear successes, notably a reduction in birth rates, and with the smoking cessation workshops. The model has now been rolled out to six other schools in Greenwich.

Woolmore Primary School in Tower Hamlets serves an area of considerable social deprivation and has a very large number of pupils with English as an additional language. The school has a successful breakfast club, with up to 60 children regularly attending. The club has been used to support wider Every Child Matters (ECM) objectives. Woolmore also provides parenting support, signposting to help from other agencies, childcare and help with transition to nursery.

The school recognises the impact in improved health and concentration levels, fewer absences, improved attainment and improved relationships with parents.
Developing Leadership and Management

We will continue to focus on developing world class leaders

The London leadership strategy, developed by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), will support senior and middle leaders of London schools through a range of high quality programmes, based on peer-to-peer coaching models and school-to-school support involving input from middle leaders and advanced skills teachers (ASTs). The consultant leader programme, led by highly experienced head teachers, has had a transformational effect on a number of schools in highly challenging circumstances.

Nationally, NCSL provides a wide range of programmes including Leading from the Middle (for Heads of Department) and the National Professional Qualification for Headship (for aspiring Head teachers). These are complemented by a range of programmes specifically designed for the London context, for both new and established middle and senior leaders.

Newly appointed Head teachers are able to take part in an induction programme designed and delivered by practising London Head teachers. The programme involves a residential workshop, coaching, and the opportunity to visit a school.

Newly appointed Head teachers, Deputy Head teachers, senior and middle leaders can also take part in networking leadership visits to London schools in a similar context. There is also an introduction programme for those who are new to middle management, delivered by serving practitioners who are experienced in working in London schools.

Established middle and senior leaders are able to take up leadership coaching and senior leaders can also take part in two day visits to another London school to exchange ideas and build links.

Consultant leaders

Consultant leaders are outstanding Head teachers who coach other Head teachers in challenging schools, helping them to develop their leadership skills. They are extremely successful Head teachers, who complete a rigorous training programme in coaching and leadership development. Consultant leaders generally work alongside recipient Head teachers for a year, for up to one day per week. In some cases, consultant leaders offer school-to-school support, provided by senior leaders and ASTs from the consultant leader’s home school. Consultant leaders’ home schools also benefit from the learning and development consultant leaders bring back.
Bentworth Primary School, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Bentworth is a 3-11 community Primary School. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and over half of pupils speak English as an additional language. More than half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal starting points is also higher than average. Children’s attainment on entry to the nursery is well below national expectations.

Bentworth was inspected by Ofsted in December 2005 and given a notice to improve. It was provided with a primary consultant leader from London Challenge to provide school to school support.

The primary consultant leader worked with the school for over a year and together they determined an action plan for improvement which included:

- ensuring that raising attainment was an absolute priority
- developing leadership capacity
- restructuring the leadership team and teaching and learning priorities
- empowering the Head teacher to lead a change agenda.

Attainment at the school has improved significantly. In 2007 the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 at Key Stage two for English increased by 14 percentage points to 82 per cent. In maths, improvement was even more marked – in 2007, 79 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 at Key Stage two – an increase of 23 percentage points since 2006. The notice to improve was removed in March 2007.

We will maintain a cadre of primary and secondary consultant leaders and will expand the cadre of national leaders of education working in London

In addition to the strong team of primary and secondary consultant leaders that are identified and trained by the National College for School Leadership, increasing numbers of NCSL’s national leaders of education (NLE), with their national support schools, are being deployed effectively in the capital. NLEs are Head teachers of outstanding schools, who, with the support of their staff, are providing additional leadership capacity and school improvement work in those schools facing the most challenging circumstances.

In addition to working with schools in difficulties, we will task them with working with schools which are capable of becoming good or great.

We will pilot the new teaching leaders programme in London

From September 2008, London will pilot the teaching leaders programme being developed through a partnership between ARK, NCSL and Future Leaders. This aims to develop exceptional teachers and middle leaders who are committed to working in some our most challenging
schools, and prepare them for challenging senior leadership roles.

**We will extend the Future Leaders programme**

The Future Leaders programme has been successful in the development of urban school leaders, building a cohort of passionate, skilled individuals who are committed to urban education, to narrowing the achievement gap and to delivering the best education possible for every child. The programme is helping address the recruitment challenges in London, with the first cohort already established in senior leadership positions across London. There were 20 Future Leader participants in September 2006, 29 in 2007 and 30 in 2008. We expect there to be 40 a year so that by September 2011, there will be almost 200. The first cohort of future leaders filled a third of the deputy head positions advertised in London in 2007.

We aim to build on this success by expanding to other City Challenge areas and extending the programme to prepare and place talented individuals with proven leadership credentials but without teaching experience into urban schools.

**Investing in Diversity**

NCSL’s London leadership strategy offers a range of specific and bespoke programmes. For example, the Investing in Diversity programme, led by the London Centre for Leadership in Learning at the Institute of Education, University of London, aims to address the disproportionately low numbers of ethnic minority school leaders in London. It provides leadership development for experienced black and ethnic minority middle and senior managers who aspire to become deputy heads and Head teachers.
London is a great world city which deserves world class schools.

During the next phase of London Challenge, we will help more good schools to become outstanding schools. This increase in the number of outstanding secondary schools in London will mean that 25 per cent are rated as outstanding by Ofsted by the end of the Challenge in 2011. Universal elements of Challenge support will help enable this, but we must also raise aspirations and expectations and encourage innovation across the Capital. We need to showcase and celebrate best practice and encourage more of it.

We know that nationally about 14 per cent of secondary schools are outstanding. There are 87 outstanding secondary schools across London and this represents 20 per cent of all the schools in the capital.

Pledge:
- There will be at least two outstanding secondary schools in every London borough.

Going beyond the Ofsted categories, we want all London schools to aspire to become great schools.

Great schools have:
- high levels of attainment and progression, including positive trends over at least three years.
- opportunities for pupils to take part in cultural or sporting activities and clubs.
- a high proportion of pupils taking up full time post-16 learning and progressing to Higher Education (HE).
- a link with an HE institution.
- a learning environment, where the whole school workforce is committed to continuous improvement, including Investors in People (IiP) status.
- a moral commitment to supporting other schools to improve.

The Good to Great programme will be targeted at schools which have the potential to become outstanding

Head teachers of these schools will be linked to consultant leaders, and participation in the programme will give their staff access to the London leadership strategy programmes, the latest research in this area, the Teacher Development Agency’s work on school improvement and the Gifted and Talented programme.
We will pilot four secondary teaching schools in London

Building on the success of the school-to-school support provided through the London leadership strategy, we will pilot four secondary teaching schools. These will be schools which:

- are outstanding schools, and have been so for a sustained period of time.
- have a track record of working effectively with Keys to Success secondary schools.
- are led by consultant leaders or national leaders in education.
- have a cadre of high quality staff, accredited by the London leadership strategy, who can provide coaching and mentoring and teaching and learning programmes.

Teaching schools will be able to respond rapidly to the needs of Keys to Success schools. They will provide a range of programmes developed by the London leadership strategy – the teaching and learning syllabus; student leadership; behaviour management; project management; data management; and behaviour of teams.

As well as benefiting other schools, designation of teaching school status will recognise outstanding school teams. As well has helping to retain outstanding school leaders, teaching schools will contribute to succession planning by providing aspiring school leaders with valuable development opportunities through their work with Keys to Success schools.

With the other outstanding schools in London, teaching schools will work to raise the standards of the education they provide above what is currently accepted as excellent. The ‘Beyond outstanding’ programme, facilitated by the National College for School Leadership, will link these schools with other world class schools in England and across the world. The focus will be on further improving the quality of the learning experience they provide for their students. The lessons they learn will be shared with all schools in London.

We will build collaborative networks and expect all successful schools to share their learning with others

We want to enable schools which have the potential to become good and great schools to benefit from the expertise of schools which are a step ahead. We want to create expectations that all successful schools will share their learning with others, either in pairs or through larger collaborative networks. In time, we want to see more good and great schools, so that every borough has several good schools and at least two great schools. In turn, we will expect those schools to work with neighbouring schools, and help them to raise their game.
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There are more excellent teachers

Teach First, Chartered London Teacher status, Advanced Skills Teacher status and high quality development programmes have enhanced the status and quality of London’s teaching force. Although it is still harder to attract and retain teachers in London than elsewhere, recruitment and retention issues are no longer preventing schools from improving.

Attracting and retaining a world class teaching force

Teach First recruits talented graduates who have the qualities to succeed as teachers in challenging schools, as well as the potential to become outstanding leaders in any field. Participants commit to working in a school for two years, and work to achieve qualified teacher status (QTS) at the end of the first year. Since the start of the programme in September 2003, 856 participants have been involved in the programme. A recent Ofsted report found that half of trainees achieved the QTS standards at an outstanding level. Around half of those who completed the two-year programme remain in teaching. Head teachers have commented that participants have had a positive impact on pupils’ achievement, personal and social development and their aspirations. Ofsted also found that participants had had a beneficial impact in subject departments. Of those who joined the programme in 2006, at least 40 per cent were given leadership positions in their schools after just one year.

Maria Zacharia at West London Academy was promoted to the role of Transition Leader for Literacy (an Excellence in Cities funded position) at the start of her second year of teaching. She has organised a Year 8 reading group, a whole-school celebration of World Book Day, a Carnegie shadowing scheme for gifted and talented pupils, and a day when local business-people come to the school to read to year 6 and 7 pupils, in order to encourage literacy and raise aspirations.

Alison Chadwick, Deputy Head, Wembley High Technology College has commented: “Teach First teachers have made a significant contribution to improving the quality of teacher and learning. The enthusiasm, motivation and creativity of participants have inspired pupils and helped raise levels of achievement and attainment at our school.”

Two former pupils, who were taught by Teach First participants at West London Academy and Wembley High Technology College have now joined the scheme and have praised their former Teach First teachers for raising their aspirations to strive for academic and professional success.

Maria Zacharia, due to her success and impact as Transition Leader this year, has secured the post of Deputy Curriculum Leader for English at West London Academy from September 2008.

Transforming Teaching and Learning
Chartered London Teacher (CLT) status recognises and rewards the skills and expertise of teachers who are committed to working in London. After registering with the scheme, teachers spend two years undertaking professional development as they work towards the CLT standards, which recognise the particular skills needed to teach effectively in the capital’s schools. CLT status is only available to teachers who have at least four years’ experience of working in London schools. Over 38,000 teachers have registered and over 2,100 teachers have achieved CLT status since the start of the scheme in 2004.

The role of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) was devised to reward excellent teachers who wished to remain in the classroom and spend the equivalent of one day a week supporting other teachers in developing their skills and experience through the sharing of best practice ideas and approaches. In January 2008 there were 690 ASTs in London. There are more ASTs in London than in any other region and the percentage of all teachers in London who are ASTs is above the national average. Through the London leadership strategy, a number of ASTs are providing school-to-school support in schools in particularly challenging circumstances.

The Key Worker Living Scheme helps teachers and other key workers in London to buy their first home or a family home. Equity loans of up to £50,000 are available to London teachers who meet the eligibility criteria. The scheme also enables teachers to rent new homes, built by registered social landlords, at an affordable price.

London teachers in secondary schools below the GCSE floor target can access the new Masters in Teaching and Learning

Teachers in National Challenge schools and London secondary schools below the threshold will be eligible to access the new Masters in Teaching and Learning being introduced from 2009.
Transforming Post-16 Learning

In 2007–08, London achieved its highest ever number of post-16 learners staying on, maintaining the highest participation rate in England. Over the last four years, the proportion of young Londoners who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) has been dropping year on year, and is now below the national average. NEET numbers continue to fall. Between March 2007 and March 2008, NEET figures fell from 7.6 per cent to 6.6 per cent in London.

Post–16 attainment is improving and at the age of 19, Londoners are more likely to hold a Level 2 or a Level 3 qualification than young people nationally.

There are significant variations between local authorities. In 2005, the proportion of 17 year olds in education or work based learning ranged from around 70 per cent to 87 per cent. In 2007, the proportion of 16-18 year olds who were NEET ranged from 3 per cent to 10 per cent. The proportion of young people who secured a Level 2 qualification (equivalent to five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C) by the age of 19 ranged from just 56 per cent to 83 per cent, and the proportion who secured a Level 3 qualification (equivalent to two A-Levels) by the age of 19 ranged from 28 per cent to 55 per cent. So, by the age of 19, the chances of getting a Level 2 qualification in one London borough are about the same as getting a Level 3 qualification in another borough.

Furthermore, performance at Level 3 (equivalent to two A Levels) is unsatisfactory in too many London boroughs. That is particularly the case in QCA point score terms where London is well below the national average.

We will transform 14–19 education and training, drive up numbers participating to 18 ahead of a raised participation age, and increase the proportion of young Londoners taking up higher education

London has several world class universities, but too few young Londoners are taking up places in these and other top universities. There is currently a bill before Parliament to raise the age to which young people participate in education and training to 18 by 2015. Participation in learning is critical to achieving good outcomes and to enabling all young people to make a success of their lives. Every young Londoner deserves to be able to continue in post-16 learning to the age of 18.

The legislation is designed to galvanise the system to deliver not just for those in 2013, but to build up choices of learning pathways, support and guidance for those in the system now, and to build post-16 participation gradually on the way to 2013. London Challenge will work to ensure that London is at the forefront of supporting

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1 2005 data (this is the latest year for which local authority breakdowns are available).
2 2007 data.
higher numbers of young people to participate post-16 across the capital.

Success longer term will also depend on the implementation of the 2007 changes to the structure of government. These aim to give local authorities the strategic leadership responsibilities for commissioning 14–19 provision in the future. London boroughs have already taken a lead in establishing how these reforms will best support learners in the capital. They are developing approaches to cross-borough collaboration, working in close partnership with providers and employers to ensure that commissioning plans are soundly based. London Challenge will work with the Government Office for London to support local authorities and other key regional and local stakeholders in making a success of their new arrangements.

**Raising Participation and Reducing NEET**

London has made significant progress in increasing participation and reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in recent years and is now performing better than the national average. However, performance is not uniform across the capital and there are a number of local areas where the proportion of young people NEET remains well above the national average and considerable progress needs to meet our 2010 PSA targets. In the recent local area agreement (LAA) negotiations, 21 London boroughs highlighted NEETs as a priority indicator in their LAAs. London Challenge will work with Government Office for London to provide additional support to those areas struggling to meet their targets.

London Challenge will support raising participation and reducing NEET in the following ways:

- Working with the Regional Planning Group, we will promote the effective implementation of the September Guarantee through a clear pan-London strategy to deliver a place in learning for every young person at 16 and 17 regardless of where they live, and a common applications process (CAP) for all London post-16 providers by 2010.
- A pan-London approach to NEET including supporting London authorities to deliver the CCIS strategy - a tracking system to identify young people NEET moving across borders and engage them in learning effectively.
- Working with partners, promote a London specific focus on provision for the most vulnerable and a programme of approaches to engage with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged building on the success of Aiming High and Targeted Youth support in the capital.
- Encouraging and enabling more flexible provision to be offered in year from all providers.
- Working with priority areas to develop local NEET action plans to reduce NEETs and increase the numbers of young people participating in education and training.
- Encouraging those boroughs that are systematically reducing numbers of young people NEET to share their practice across London and to focus on those areas where NEET numbers are stable.
- Collecting and disseminating good practice among local authorities, schools and colleges on raising participation and reducing NEET.

London Challenge recognises the proven links between poor participation in EET and other poor outcomes for teenagers including
unplanned conceptions, links with youth crime and poor emotional and mental health. London faces particular challenges in these areas with growing concerns around youth violence and victimisation. Our focus on school improvement will aim to reduce the numbers of young people who leave school with few or no qualifications and we will support innovative programmes aimed at re-engaging NEET young people in EET particularly young offenders or young people at risk of engaging in criminal behaviour.

Our measures of success will be:

- A year on year increase in the proportion of young people participating in education and training in London so that London is well placed ahead of a higher compulsory age of participation.
- A systematic reduction in the proportion of young people NEET in London against trends at similar points in the year.
- London boroughs meeting their LAA targets for NEET and raising participation.

**Improving Attainment and Achieving Progression**

It is vital for the life chances of London young people, as well as for the success of the capital as an economically successful international city, that we increase the numbers achieving Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications by age 19. Achieving qualifications to at least Level 2 – that is, equivalent to five good GCSEs – by the age of 19 has been proven to have a continuing impact on success in later life. It is the minimum threshold for employability and we know that young people who achieve Level 2 or above are less likely to be depressed or obese, more likely to earn more and at less risk of social exclusion. The Leitch Review made it very clear that the number of unskilled jobs will decline sharply and more young people must achieve Level 3 qualifications to ensure financial security in the future. Nationally, compared with 2004, there are expected to be 2.6 million more workers at Level 3 by 2020, whereas below Level 3 the numbers are expected to fall by around 5 million.

Nowhere will this have more of an impact than in the capital city.

As more students in London schools gain five or more good GCSE grades, including English and maths, it is vital they have access to high quality Level 3 (A Level or equivalent) provision. They will then be in a position to choose to go on to Higher Education or into high-skilled jobs. At present the post-16 provision across London is not providing in all cases the high quality Level 3 opportunities our young people deserve. In particular:

- The average Level 3 points score for London boroughs in 2007 was 674.1 QCA points per student. The national average was 711.2. This equates to a difference of one grade (30 points) and places our students at a disadvantage compared with those elsewhere in England.
- Of the 32 boroughs, 12 had average QCA points scores above the national average and 20 were below. Overall this placed London at the bottom of the regional performance table.
- The variation between local authorities and within them is far too great. The highest performing local authority had a QCA points score of 829.1 per student whilst the lowest performing had a points score of 542.5. Too many students do not have access to sufficient good post-16 provision within their local authority.
- There are some 152 providers in London with failure rates at A2 above the national average
of 3.4 per cent and some 165 with failure rates at A5 above the national average of 13.5 per cent.

**London Challenge will drive higher attainment and progression post-16 through a pan-London strategy**

This will include:

- A universal commitment to high quality information, advice and guidance for all young Londoners, regardless of where they go to school.
- A commitment that every young person will receive an offer and be able to access a suitable course of their choice. Already young Londoners are able to travel for free across the capital. The common applications process will build on this, enabling every young person who wants to learn at a suitable level to be able to do so.
- Quality and choice at post-16 for every young Londoner, including making sure there is a mix of high quality provision at Level 2 and particularly at Level 3.
- Provide training and support for heads of sixth forms.
- Supporting the Gifted and Talented programme in London.

Our measures of success will be:

- a year on year increase in the proportion of young people achieving Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in London.
- increasing year on year the progression outcomes of young people at age 19 who have left 11–16 institutions.
- a year on year narrowing of the inequality gap for young people achieving L2 and L3 at 19.
- an increase in the proportion of young people in London who go on to Further and Higher Education post 19.
Qualification and curriculum reform in London

The 14–19 reforms aim to create a system in which every young person can prepare themselves through education and training to make a success of their life. At the centre of these plans is the reform of 14–19 curriculum and qualifications. Nationally we are creating a qualifications system in which every young person can learn the right subject for them, at the right level for them, learning in a style that suits them – no matter where they are in the country – and achieve a valuable qualification if they succeed. Putting that in place, together with the right information, advice and guidance and the right personal and financial support arrangements, is a key part of our drive to raise participation in learning post-16 and attainment by 19.

The key components of the reforms include:

- A new curriculum for 11–14 year-olds.
- 17 new Diploma qualifications including extended diplomas covering each of the key sectors of the economy as well as science, languages and humanities, mixing the best of theoretical and practical learning.
- New functional skills qualifications so that all young people have to learn to use English, maths and ICT in practice and a new framework of ‘personal, learning and thinking skills’ – the key skills such as the ability to communicate well and to work in a team.
- A reformed and strengthened general qualification (GCSE and A Level) route.
- An expanded approach to apprenticeships.
- A new foundation learning tier of lower level (entry level and level 1) qualifications so that, for the first time, there will be good progression routes to higher level learning and qualifications for those now working at a lower level.

By 2013 every local authority will need to deliver not only full participation for all 17 year olds, but also full access for every young person to the first 14 Diploma lines and to all 17 lines for 16-18 year olds as well as a guarantee of apprenticeship place to those who want one.

The recent white paper *Raising Expectations: Enabling the system to deliver* proposed that local authorities will hold responsibility for the funding and commissioning of all 0–19 children and youth provision, education and training provision from 2010. Through this, the local authority will be able to play its full strategic role in securing provision matched both to the needs of its learners and to the economic development needs of the area.

In London, we want to be at the forefront of supporting local authorities to commission this new offer and to work together to deliver it.

This means that we will:

- Lead in the delivery of diplomas by ensuring consortia across London are well supported in their planning to deliver all lines of learning as they are rolled out and the estimates of participation are achieved.
- Develop innovative models to ensure that all 17 lines of learning are delivered across London by 2011, and using this as a model for urban areas nationally.
- Build on the very good work in London with employers to developing a pan London employer engagement approach bringing big and small employers to share in and deliver the diplomas alongside consortia of schools and colleges.
• Communicate with young people, employers and providers so that all are aware of the potential and challenge of the reforms.

• Bringing together a group of London Higher Education institutions to guide and support the development of the new curriculum offer amongst providers in London.

• Working with employers and work based learning providers to expand the availability of apprenticeships in London.

• Make sure there are clear progression routes from Key Stage 4 to all types of provision post-16 and from Level 2 to Level 3 programmes.

• Ensure there is appropriate provision for all groups of learners across the diversity of London, for example Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities or Special Educational Needs, black and minority ethnic groups, those in receipt of FSM and NEET.

• Have all young Londoners with functional skills qualifications by 2013.

Our measure of success will be:

• Delivery of the entitlement by 2013.

• All students have access to suitable qualifications.

• All students have access to the diploma lines as they become available.
Improving Progression to Higher Education (HE)

The statistics on young people’s progression to Higher Education paint an encouraging picture as more young people than ever before are now going on to university.

In 2005/06, 21 per cent of the national cohort of 18 year olds was engaged in HE but in London, we were ahead of the national picture at 24 per cent. And it’s not just the increasing number of entrants that we should be proud of. The proportion of students who are from state schools, low participation neighbourhoods and lower socio-economic classes is also increasing. In 2006/07, more than 87 per cent of HE entrants came from state schools, nearly 10 per cent from low participation neighbourhoods and almost 30 per cent from lower social classes.

We are making good progress with this, but more needs to be done if we are to persuade young people from all walks of life to consider higher education. We want to get more higher education institutions engaged in their communities. And we want them working more closely with their local schools and Further Education (FE) colleges to actively forge links and highlight the routes to learning beyond compulsory education.

Partnerships between schools and higher education institutions

Every secondary school in London will have an identifiable university link

London Challenge will develop a ‘network of partnerships’ linking together secondary schools, post-16 institutions and higher education institutions (HEIs) across London. This network will also reach out to other prospective partners, including independent school and key universities elsewhere in England.

Evidence suggests that most London secondary schools and colleges already have some form of partnership with at least one HE institution, but the scope is variable and the quality mixed. We want to build on the progress made in recent years – particularly through Aimhigher – and secure, by 2011, a quality partnership with at least one HE institution for every maintained secondary school and post-16 institution in London.

In pursuing this objective, we will capitalise on the diverse missions, strengths and specialisms of the HE sector across London and create fruitful partnerships where the contribution from schools and colleges matches that coming from the HE side. We will look at ways in which we can recognise good partnerships between schools and HEIs.
We will appoint a Higher Education champion for London

A new Champion for HE Partnership in London – Professor Malcolm Gillies, Vice Chancellor of the City University, London – will work closely with HE institutions in particular to encourage the vision of partnership working to become a reality. Together, we shall achieve mutually beneficial relationships that will make a lasting contribution to the quality of education provision across London.

We envisage that partnerships will be based around one or more priorities from a menu of options including:

- information, advice and guidance supporting progression to HE.
- mentoring and coaching relationships for students in London schools.
- involvement in the development of academies and trust schools.
- engagement in institutional governance arrangements, subject to the outcomes of the current review of school governance.
- gifted and talented education, including outreach and other support.
- professional and curriculum development.
- provision of HE-level study in schools and colleges and delivery of diplomas.

We shall work with Aimhigher, London Higher, the Higher Education Funding Council, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, and London’s schools, colleges and universities themselves to translate the broader vision into reality.

**Pledges:**

- **Every maintained secondary school in London will have a partnership with a Higher Education institution.**
- **A higher proportion of young Londoners will go on to Higher Education, including the most competitive universities.**

**Gifted and talented Pupils**

To support our aspirations for participation in higher education, it will be essential to ensure that gifted and talented pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are encouraged to aim high and achieve their ambitions. We know that schools with effective provision for gifted
and talented pupils secure higher attainment for all their pupils. We will create and support a City Challenge-wide network of partnerships involving every comprehensive school, post-16 institution and university. The network will strengthen existing partnerships and co-ordinate and extend large-scale partnership activity, including university-led outreach activities.

The network will include top universities, academies and independent schools and will be central to our plans to create a new model for supporting the progression of disadvantaged London A Level students to the most competitive universities in the region and beyond.

The London ‘Families of Schools’ dataset will be enhanced

In future, this will include new indicators so that schools can work with their statistical neighbours on gifted and talented education and all students’ progression to university – and we will explore ways of extending this service to post-16 settings.

For many disadvantaged students, poverty of aspiration can be the biggest obstacle and there may be financial pressures pushing them towards early employment. In addition, those students who do choose to attend university may not set their sights high enough.

We will continue to deploy Teach First participants and ambassadors as mentors and provide linked university-led events

Teach First is also developing aspiration-raising activities for larger groups, as well as family learning opportunities, and is mainstreaming aspiration-raising support into Teach First training. We will secure at least 100 Teach First mentors across London and provide aspirations-raising activities for at least 5000 learners by September 2009.

From September 2008, 1000 pupils in Year 10 in London who are eligible for FSM will be able to undertake a tailored four-year support programme

This will equip them with the knowledge and skills they require to secure a place on a course at their target university. This programme will continue through transfer between 11–16 and post-16 institutions and will combine in-school/college support with externally provided activities, including university outreach.

These students will receive an entitlement of up to £400 a year

In return for continued progress against challenging termly targets, these students will receive an entitlement of up to £400 a year to spend on relevant external activities which carry a cost, including opportunities provided through the Young, Gifted and Talented (YG&T) Learner Academy.

We will work with all maintained schools – primary and secondary – and FE colleges across London to secure stronger gifted and talented education

Networked support for leading teachers in London will be strengthened and focused more explicitly on the needs of disadvantaged learners. We will extend support into post-16 institutions so that students can enjoy continuity of service if they transfer from an 11–16 setting. We will concentrate particularly on improving identification of underachieving students; securing consistent challenge and support in classroom settings; sustaining a culture of high expectations and on strengthening information, advice and guidance on progression to university to rival the service provided in many independent schools.
Within five years:

- Every London school and FE college will be able to access co-ordinated outreach and support for their gifted and talented learners from HEIs throughout their region and beyond. There will be sufficient high-quality provision to meet the needs of all eligible disadvantaged learners – in London we are aiming to provide 10,000 new outreach places by 2012, with direct HE involvement wherever possible. Other key partners, such as businesses and independent schools, will also be linked into this network.

- Every London school and college will provide effective in-house support for their gifted and talented learners in line with the national quality standards. Every institution will benefit from improved identification of underachieving gifted and talented learners, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, so that all London schools and colleges secure gifted and talented populations that are broadly representative of their intake by gender, ethnic and socio-economic background. By extending support into all London’s post-16 institutions, we will ensure that all gifted and talented students experience effective transition from school to college at age 16.

- Significantly more gifted and talented learners from disadvantaged backgrounds attending London’s schools and colleges will be obtaining the grades necessary to secure places at our most competitive universities, radically improving their own prospects and simultaneously broadening the intake of the universities, so contributing to wider social mobility.