



Local Committee in Runnymede

March 11th 2005

EDUCATION REPORT FOR RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH 2003-2004 ACADEMIC YEAR

SUMMARY

This report summarises information relating to the education of pupils within the borough, and highlights some issues that are of concern to headteachers, governors and LEA officers. To avoid duplication, information shared with Children's Services will be covered in the Runnymede Borough Multi-Professional Team report. Electronic copies of this report will be available from the Surrey website.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to identify ways in which their support of schools, and/or pupil groups, can facilitate further improvements to education within the borough.

1. Section One: Borough Context

Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to review education within the Runnymede area, examining both educational attainment and highlighting any relevant issues for the academic year 2003-4. In order to present an accurate picture of education in Runnymede, it is also essential to explain local educational issues and any factors that may have impacted on levels of attainment during the last academic year. For this reason, the report places education within its local context, including both area and pupil group demographics.

Area Profile (See Appendix D)

- 1.2. Indicators of deprivation show Surrey to be a county that is advantaged compared to other Local Authorities. For example, out of 150 County Councils nationally, Surrey is in the top 3% of counties on the Indices of Deprivation¹; and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (7%)² is more than 8% below the national average (16%)³.
- 1.3. Whilst Runnymede is on the whole a relatively affluent area, there are pockets of relative deprivation where disadvantaged communities (e.g. Chertsey, St Anns and Egham, Hythe) sit next to, and contrast sharply with, more advantaged neighbourhoods. Runnymede borough ranks in the top 7% of Local Authorities nationally on the Indices of Deprivation¹. The borough has an average percentage of pupils in Surrey that are eligible for free school meals (7%)². It is also important to remember that Runnymede imports over 23%² of its pupils from outside the borough, and of these only 3%² are from outside Surrey.

Ethnic Minorities (See Appendix D)

- 1.4. The percentage of the pupils from ethnic minority groups in Surrey (7%)² is lower than the national figure (15%)³. Surrey's profile of ethnic minority pupil groups reflects the national pupil profile, with Asian pupils comprising the largest ethnic group, followed by those of Mixed ethnic origin, then Black ethnic origin. However there are relatively lower percentages of each ethnic minority within Surrey compared to the national figures.
- 1.5. Runnymede borough has a slightly lower percentage of ethnic minority pupils than Surrey² as a whole at 5%². For some of these pupils, English may not be their first language. However this often has only short-term impact on learning - although their early attainment may be relatively low, evidence suggests they usually catch up over time.

Number of schools and pupils (See Appendix D)

- 1.6. There are approximately 10,100 pupils² in maintained schools within Runnymede borough. This is a large number of pupils, but remains the smallest pupil cohort of all the districts or boroughs in Surrey. Runnymede has 32 schools: 1 nursery school, 10 infant schools, 5 junior schools, 9 primary schools, 4 secondary schools, 1 pupil referral unit, as well as 2 special schools². Of these schools, four are classed as small schools (i.e. those with typically less than 100 pupils)².

¹ ODPM, Indices of Multiple Deprivation

² PLASC 2004 data. Travellers, categorised as 'White Irish Traveller' and 'White Gypsy Roma', are subsumed within 'White' Ethnicity and not analysed separately. Specific traveller analysis is included in the MPT report.

³ DfES, Research and Statistics Gateway, *Statistics of Education Schools in England 2004 Edition* Statistical Volume V05/2004 (excludes Special Schools). Travellers – as footnote 2

Attainment - Threshold⁴ (See Appendices A and B)

1.7. Measures of pupil attainment in Runnymede schools are based upon performance table 'threshold' results for SATs/ GCSEs.

- **Key Stage 1 (Infant)** – The expectation nationally is that most pupils will achieve a Level Two, and a certain percentage of higher performing pupils will achieve a Level Three in the core subjects (reading, writing, mathematics and science). Runnymede performs above the national average for both Levels, with the exception of writing at Level Three. Compared to other districts and boroughs in Surrey, Runnymede generally achieves lower levels of attainment, however since last year results have improved more than most other districts and boroughs.
- **Key Stage 2 (Junior)** - The expectation nationally is that most pupils will achieve a Level Four, and a certain percentage of higher performing pupils will achieve a Level Five in the core subjects (reading, writing, English, mathematics and science). Runnymede performs above the national average for both Levels. Compared to other districts and boroughs in Surrey, Runnymede generally achieves similar or higher levels of attainment for writing, English and mathematics, but lower levels of attainment for reading and science. However, compared to last year, results have improved more than other districts and boroughs, except for science which has improved less compared to other districts and boroughs.
- **Key Stage 3 (Lower Secondary)** - The expectation nationally is that most pupils will achieve a Level Five, and a certain percentage of higher performing pupils will achieve a Level Six in the core subjects (English, mathematics and science). Runnymede performs above the national average for both levels. Compared to other districts and boroughs in Surrey, Runnymede generally achieves lower levels of attainment, but since last year, results have generally improved in line with other districts and boroughs.
- **GCSE/ Key Stage 4 (Upper Secondary)** - The expectation nationally is that most pupils will achieve 5 passes graded at A*-G (87%), and just over half the pupils will achieve 5 passes graded between A*-C (52%). Runnymede performs above the national average at Key Stage 4. However, compared to other districts and boroughs in Surrey, Runnymede generally achieves lower levels of attainment, but results have improved since last year.

1.8. Considering the relatively large flow of pupils into the district (23.6%), Runnymede Borough may be more accurately compared to its five neighbouring boroughs (e.g. Windsor and Maidenhead). When using this comparator group, Runnymede's attainment is generally average.

Attainment – Value added⁵ (See Appendix C)

1.9. Examining threshold levels in isolation, however, does not give any indication of how far pupils have progressed, and as such, may not show the whole picture. . In order to rectify this, the government produces 'value added' results for schools, to allow a fairer comparison between schools with different pupil intakes. For example, students attending school 'A' may achieve above average results when they take their exams while students at school 'B' may achieve below average. In value added terms, however, the students at school 'B' may have made more

⁴ Initial data feeds from Four S, University of Bath and Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The data refers to the attainment of pupils in schools that were operating through the 2003-4 academic year. Data is provisional for Key Stages 2 and 3, and final data may be significantly different.

⁵ School Performance Tables 2003/4, DfES website (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/contents.html>). – data only available for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4

progress than other students nationally, relative to their starting point, and therefore have a higher value added 'score' than school 'A'.

- **Key Stage 2 (Junior)** - Surrey's performance (100.3) was average compared to the national performance (100). In general, across schools in Runnymede, value-added is in line with this.
- **GCSE/ Key Stage 4 (Upper Secondary)** - Surrey's performance (988.7⁶) was slightly lower than the national performance (991.2). Runnymede's value-added score is below both the national and the County average (984.9).

2. Section Two: Issues for Future Consideration

Admissions

- 2.1. Surrey LEA is in the process of implementing recent national legislation on co-ordinated admissions for secondary schools, and following statutory requirements, is using the consultation period to review its admissions criteria for September 2006. Surrey LEA is also currently conducting a separate pre-consultation with parents, head teachers and governors. This pre-consultation aims to determine stakeholder preferences across a range of issues, such as catchment areas, sibling priority, and calculation method for home-to-school distances. A key objective of the pre-consultation is to determine whether stakeholders favour an admissions process with a preference weighted scheme or one that operates on equal preferences. Following statutory requirements, the outcome of the pre-consultation will be validated the following year (2006), and any changes would then be implemented in 2007. The outcomes of the pre-consultation will be presented to the Select Committee and Executive in Summer 2005.
- 2.2. A further issue, affecting secondary schools⁷ admissions (particularly those near the county borders), is parental anxiety over expression of a single set of preferences through their 'home' LEA. Parents generally appear to favour an equal preference scheme, but some schools are concerned about how this will impact on them. This is also being consulted upon in the pre-consultation discussed above in paragraph 2.1.

Budget

- 2.3. The outturn position for schools at the beginning of 2004/5 was a reduction in balances of £2.5 million. This indicates that the majority of schools successfully managed the significant financial pressure placed upon them, and some ended the year with surpluses. However the balancing of budgets was at a cost to many schools and required significant cuts to expenditure. This has meant, in some cases, loss of staff, shortened school days, larger class sizes and fewer curriculum resources. A small minority of schools continue to face significant difficulties, exacerbated in some cases by falling rolls. These schools have had to set licensed deficit budgets which are being closely monitored by Surrey LEA through Four S. In Runnymede area one school has a licensed deficit over 5% of their total budget, and three schools have a licensed deficit of less than 5%.
- 2.4. Spending pressures continue with workforce reform and teacher salary progression causing immediate concern. The government's Five-year Strategy for Children and Learners guarantees three-year budgets for schools from 2006, geared to pupil numbers, with every school also guaranteed a minimum per pupil increase each year. The guaranteed minimum pupil increase has been set at 5% for primary schools and 4% for secondary and special schools. Standards Fund increases are set at 4%. It is not anticipated that there will be major changes to funding in

⁶ Value-added calculated from prior attainment at Key Stage 3

⁷ The primary admissions scheme will not involve co-ordination between other LEAs.

2005/6, however from April 2006 the government has pledged to introduce a new system via a Dedicated Schools Grant. There will be a consultation on its specific proposals in the Spring 2005.

Confederations

- 2.5. This year, eleven new confederations, in addition to the original five, have been given start-up funding to explore ways of collaborating to improve outcomes for children, young people, families and communities. To date, 42% of Surrey's schools, 176 in all, are now members of confederations. Runnymede has two confederations; Chertsey Partnership (5 schools) and Runnymede South Partnership (9 schools). This totals 14 of 32 schools, equating to 44% of schools in the area.
- 2.6. Each confederation is focusing on activities that suit local needs, including shared training and technical support. Multi-professional teams are working in partnership with confederations, to provide locally determined support especially for pupils with additional needs. Support for confederations is developing through the year, with advice on employment and legal issues, and encouragement to extend their activities into the community. Activities include study support, family learning, parenting support, childcare provision, sports and arts, ICT support, lifelong learning, health and social care, sharing knowledge, sharing resources, procurement of goods and services, access to additional funding for projects and involvement with the community.

Governor Recruitment

- 2.7. The overall number of school governors in Surrey is approximately 6,569. There are about 1,015 vacancies, which equates to 15.5%. This is higher than the national average of approximately 12% (the statistical data is only available from 1992), but is in line with other South East Regions. (The data on vacancies within each borough or district is not currently available, although it may be possible to obtain this in the near future.)
- 2.8. To date, 65% of schools within Surrey have reconstituted their governing body under the requirements of the 2002 Education Act. This is a factor in the vacancy rate, as some schools are holding over vacancies until reconstitution has been completed. The result of this process has been an average net loss of one governor per school in order to achieve the optimum size required by the governing body.
- 2.9. 86% of governing bodies buy into Surrey's Four S Governance Consultancy Service Level Agreement. The level of support received is in relation to the level of service purchased, but where a school is on the Additional Support and Intervention Programme (ASIP), and a governing body is judged as being in need of additional support, this is provided and financed through the Education Development Plan. 41% of individual governors have attended at least one training event and 74% of governing bodies have been represented at training over the past year. Four S has delivered 93 centre-based training events and 132 in-house sessions for schools. However this only represents a total attendance at LEA provided training of around 35% of governors. Uptake of governor training may therefore be an issue for schools, although some may be accessing it from other sources such as the dioceses or in-house sessions led by staff or independent trainers. The new Ofsted inspection framework grades governing bodies on their effectiveness. With the constant changes to education law and practice it is important that governors keep abreast of new initiatives and have the opportunity to meet with other governors to discuss them.

Local Strategic Partnerships

- 2.10. The Local Education Officer Team attends the Runnymede Community Learning Partnership and regular meetings with officers from Runnymede Borough Council by way of support for strategic partnership.

Recruitment and Retention

- 2.11. The LEA was successful in its application to become a 'designated recommending body' for primary school graduate teachers training, and the first cohort of trainees qualified at the end of the summer term.

- 2.12. Teacher vacancy levels fell in 2004 (June) by approximately 23% to their lowest level in over 4 years. Although most posts are filled, difficulties still remain in recruiting headteachers, some subject specialists in secondary schools and good quality supply teachers. Recruitment and retention is still a time consuming issue of concern for both headteachers and governors.

School Re-organisation

- 2.13. Surrey is continuing to closely monitor pupil numbers in Runnymede and any future proposals for change will be subject to full consultation.

Workforce Remodelling

- 2.14. Remodelling is a national change programme that aims to improve attainment of pupils through reducing the workload of teachers. This reduction in workload is intended through changing the basis on which support staff may be deployed with respect to teaching and learning. Under new regulations, support staff may undertake specified work, including Planning, Assessing, Delivering and Reporting.

- 2.15. Genuine concerns about remodelling are being raised by some head teachers and governors. These include: insufficient budget; a reluctance to deploy support staff for whole class delivery as a strategy for providing Planning, Preparation and Assessment time; concern at whether remodelling and workforce reform will really raise standards of teaching and learning; and lack of suitable workspace for teachers. In particular, small schools are finding some aspects of remodelling and implementation of the national agreement difficult.

3. Section Three: Updates on Developments

Current Issues for Children and Young People

- 3.1. The past year has seen significant developments, both on the national scene and locally which will impact on the focus and scope of support for schools in Surrey. The government's Five-year Strategy for Children and Learners places children's services, children, parents and learners centre-stage. A "new relationship with schools" is designed to cut the red tape involved in accountability. There is a commitment to increased capital funding for rebuilding and support for the expansion of popular schools. The strategy supports the concept of "Foundation partnerships", where schools work together to take on wider responsibilities.
- 3.2. The government's paper "Every Child Matters: Change for Children" sets out a programme for change to improve outcomes for all children and young people. Five outcomes that are key to well-being in childhood and later life have been identified: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being. The programme aims to improve those outcomes for all children and to close the gap in outcomes between the disadvantaged and their peers. The Children Act 2004 sets out the strategies to achieve this, with the emphasis on the integration of services, such as education, social care for children and health services in order to provide seamless support for children and young people. There is a particular focus on the needs of looked after children and children with disabilities.
- 3.3. Locally, an issue for Children and Young People has been on meeting the government agenda within the context of Surrey children and learners. The integration of the multi professional teams has provided families, schools and communities with a unified service to meet individual needs. The growth of Confederations has enabled schools to establish networks, which provide services and support to meet the needs of their locality.
- 3.4. The Policy and Productivity Review being carried out by Surrey County Council is designed to ensure that resources are focused on front line delivery, targeted to areas of need. While we welcome the requirement for the majority of funding for education from government to be passed to schools, another issue occupying Children and Young People is the financial pressure on local funding for schools improvement. It is important to ensure that the range of local projects supported through the Education Development Plan deliver impact and provide value for money.
- 3.5. A further development from the "Every Child Matters" agenda is the requirement for all Councils to establish a Single Plan for Children and Young People by 2006. The Plan will provide an overarching framework to enable public services to work together to achieve the five outcomes for children and young people. Individual plans, such as the Education Development Plan, the School Organisation Plan and the Behaviour Support Plan will be aligned to this new framework. A major consultation is planned for later in the year with schools, partners, agencies and voluntary organisations, on the shape of Surrey's Single Plan. The views of children and young people will be integral to this process. The involvement of Local Committees, Local Strategic Partnerships and Boroughs and Districts in the consultation will be important, given the emphasis on providing seamless services for local communities. Further guidance from government is expected this month on the breadth and format of the plan.

4. Section Four: What can the Local Committee do?

- 4.1. Local Members are often school governors, and therefore already play a very important role in supporting schools and helping them to develop. However, headteachers in the Runnymede area welcome the commitment from Local County Council Members who visit their schools. They are also appreciative of the practical financial support offered by the Local Committee, which has contributed to environmental improvements and equipment such as inter-active whiteboards.
- 4.2. In terms of more specific support, members may also wish to arrange meetings to discuss relevant issues. These may include Members acting as advocates for the schools, or Members using their influence with local people to encourage them to consider taking up a governorship in a school with vacancies. Members would also be asked to bring any influence to bear on local employers regarding offering appropriate work experience placements. Members are also requested to consider if they could give financial support to any of the confederation projects.
- 4.3. In line with the government's "Every Child Matters" agenda, the involvement of Local County Council Members in the consultation to shape Surrey's Single Plan will be important in providing seamless services to local communities.

5. Section Five: Sources of Further Information

- 5.1. For further statistical and field knowledge information Local Members should read the forthcoming Children & Young People's School Performance Report (2003-2004 academic year). This provides a detailed analysis of performance in Surrey schools. The report is scheduled for release in March.
- 5.2. The Local Education Officer and a school consultant from Four S will be present at the Local Committee meeting to provide more field knowledge and to answer questions that Local Members may have.

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6. Appendices

Appendix A: KS1-4 Attainment Data 2003/4. Comparison to other Surrey Boroughs

Appendix B: KS2-4 Neighbouring Boroughs Attainment Data

Appendix C: GCSE/Key Stage 4 Value Added 2003/4

Appendix D: Area Profile Data

