

UK National Report to the International Bureau of Education for the International Conference on Education 2008

Section 1: The education system facing the challenges of the 21st century: an overview

1. The British Government's aim is to make the UK the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up. Children, whatever their background or their circumstances, should all have the support they need to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being.

Focus on England

2. As set out in the *Children's Plan* (published December 2007), the Government in England is guided by five principles in working towards this aim:

- government does not bring up children – parents do – so government needs to do more to back parents and families;
- all children have potential to succeed and should go as far as their talents take them;
- children and young people need to enjoy their childhood as well as grow up prepared for adult life;
- services need to be shaped by and responsive to children, young people and families, not designed around professional boundaries; and
- it is always better to prevent failure than tackle a crisis later.

3. These objectives are directly relevant to the Government's policies to promote excellence and equity in education – in short, inclusive education.

4. Over the next three years to 2011, the Government's commitment is to build on earlier reforms with two Public Service Agreements (PSAs) to raise the educational achievement of all children and young people, and at the same time narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. This will deliver the Government's wider objectives namely: excellence, equity and inclusion; and will contribute towards the major priority of improving intergenerational social mobility.

Wales and Northern Ireland

The Welsh Assembly Government's unwavering commitment is to give the children of Wales the best start in life, through providing a first-class education for all children, whatever their social origins or wherever they live. It is also strongly committed to promoting and supporting learning for adults, whether in further education, higher education or community-based learning.

Its programme involves:

- Establishing a right to learning
- Reforming funding
- Ensuring the best start for young children

- Creating 21st century schools
- Developing adult learning

The Learning Country-Vision Into Action sets out future plans for education, which aim to ensure the best possible environment to encourage learning at all stages in people's lives.

The Foundation Phase is the Welsh Assembly Government's innovative approach to delivering a continuum of learning for 3 to 7 year olds which will give children the best possible start. Following a successful trial, it is now being rolled out across Wales.

The School Effectiveness framework is the vehicle for taking forward the Welsh Assembly Government's commitments for younger people, by aligning policies and their implementation to secure better outcomes. It sets out the tri-level approach through which the Assembly Government, schools and local authorities will work together in partnership to systematically drive up learner outcomes and wellbeing. Within the context of this framework, a specific programme of action is being developed, aimed at raising achievement in literacy and numeracy across the Welsh schools system.

The provision for fourteen to nineteen year olds is laid out in *14-19 Learning Pathways*, which aims that:

- By 2010, no pupil will leave full-time education without an approved qualification.
- Young people, by the age of 25, will be ready for high-skilled employment and/or further or higher education.

Vision into Action is also intrinsic to the delivery of the Welsh Assembly Government's Child Poverty Implementation Plan and it will drive both strategies with vigour and commitment.

Equality, the raising standards and the provision of high quality education are core elements of the overall strategy of the Department of Education (DE) in Northern Ireland, which aims through a consistent and transparent approach to ensure that no child gets left behind, and that every young person, regardless of social background, race or gender, has equal opportunity to succeed.

Public Service Agreements (PSAs) have been set in NI to raise the educational achievement of all children and young people, and at the same time narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.

The school system in NI has strengths which enable many pupils to achieve highly: however, this positive performance disguises a significant level of underachievement which must be addressed. As part of its contribution to the improvement agenda, DE has reviewed its current policy on School Improvement and Literacy and Numeracy:

Every School a Good School – A Policy for School Improvement is a new, pupil-centred, policy with equality and improvement at its heart. It has been developed following discussions with teachers and young people about what, for them, drives school improvement and characterises a good school. It sets out how we plan to deliver improvement at every level in our education system – and explains the interventions that will be taken where evidence suggests that things could be better.

Every School a Good School – A strategy for raising achievement in literacy and numeracy. This revised strategy aims to tackle the numbers of children who struggle with reading, writing and using mathematics and those who leave school still lacking in skills and confidence in these areas.

The strategy has three main aims:

1. Raise the levels of attainment for all young people in literacy and numeracy;
2. Narrow the current attainment gaps, in particular between those most and least disadvantaged; and
3. Narrow the gap between the highest performing and lowest performing pupils and schools, after 12 years of compulsory education.

Policies which promote inclusive education in Scotland are highlighted separately at pages 14-18

Section 2: Policies within the UK to promote inclusive education

The UK concept of inclusive education: excellence and equity

5. The UK approach to inclusion is founded on five key principles:
 - a. Every child has a **right** to an excellent education, and to achieve the highest standards assessed against the common benchmark of an inclusive national curriculum.
 - b. However, children have different educational **needs**. Therefore the state must secure a wide diversity of high-quality educational settings – in mainstream schools, special schools and specialist units, and otherwise than at school, as well as accessible places at pre-school and for post-compulsory phase.
 - c. Inclusion is not achieved by forcing children into a single format, but rather by giving parents a genuine **choice** within a diverse, quality-assured offer of schools and other learning settings, backed up by appropriate learning support.
 - d. The best way to secure both excellence and inclusion is to **personalise** learning to enable every child, whatever their needs, to access the full curriculum and achieve good progress at every Key Stage. Personalised learning is best delivered as a partnership between pupils, parents, educators and support services. The outcome of effective personalised learning is that every young person, regardless of background or educational needs, can achieve his or her full potential.

- e. The best measure of inclusiveness of an education system is not attendance and participation – important as these are – but variance in attainment levels. In the UK, it is a top priority to **narrow the gaps** (variances) in progress and attainment between pupils from disadvantaged social backgrounds and their peers. This entails setting high expectations for **every** child, nationally, locally and at school and teacher level, and eliminating excuses for under-performance based on the pupil's origin or family circumstances. In the UK some key social gaps are narrowing, notably those by ethnicity, first language and migrant status. The gap by poverty is also reducing, but too slowly, so the Government has committed itself (via new Public Service Agreements in 2007) to achieving even more by 2011 and beyond

In short, within the UK 'inclusive' education is education which delivers **excellence and equity** for all pupils and young people.

The vision for the future

As noted above, the UK has set itself challenging objectives to narrow the gaps between disadvantaged children and their peers. Public Service Agreements (PSAs) are transparent commitments for which the UK Government is held accountable. PSAs are an integral part of the Government's public expenditure framework, helping to ensure value for money from public services. Progress in delivering these targets is monitored closely and reported in annual Departmental reports. The Government has set a number of PSAs relating to outcomes for children which range across several Government Departments.

PSA Delivery Agreement 11 published October 2007 sets out this vision:

The Government's aim is a society where all children and young people achieve their full potential and where the momentum of success, enjoyment and learning continues into their adult lives.

There have been major improvements in educational standards at all Key Stages over the last ten years. It is a considerable achievement that there have been gains across the board, and that the gap between children from lower income and disadvantaged backgrounds has not widened. International comparisons assign high rankings to UK education. However, the improvements of the past decade have not delivered equal chances for all children and young people.

Over the next three years the Government's commitment is to build on earlier improvements to narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.

In PSA 11 the proxy measure used for disadvantage is eligibility (by reason of low parental income) for a daily **free school meal (FSM)**. Approximately 15% of children at primary phase and 12% at secondary phase are FSM-eligible, and this group therefore comprises roughly the bottom one-eighth of children by family income.

The attainment of the FSM group is significantly below that of their peers. In 2007 the figures were as follows:

2007 England	% of cohort achieving national expectations		
	FSM	Non-FSM	Gap
Age 11 (end of Key Stage 2)	52%	75%	23%
Age 16 (end of Key Stage 4)	21%	49%	28%

These gaps have narrowed since 2003 but PSA 11 aims to narrow them further over the period to 2011. In England the supporting delivery strategy is underpinned by the five principles set out in the *Children's Plan* (see Section 1) It is founded on the promotion and development of integrated children's services that work together (nationally and locally) to secure improved outcomes for all - and at the same time to ensure co-ordinated support for those most in need. Measures to strengthen childcare, to improve safeguarding and to promote positive approaches to well-being at school and college will remove barriers to learning, and create the essential conditions for children and young people to achieve. The strategy is thus part of an integrated approach across Government to support and develop children, young people and their families or carers. Northern Ireland also recognises the challenges facing the FSM group and has identified its own PSA (19): 30% of students with entitlement to Free School Meals gaining GCSEs A*-C in English and Maths by the time they leave school by 2011.

The key elements of the 'narrowing the gap' strategy include:

- Raising visibility, awareness and aspirations: drawing to schools' and local authorities' attention the large gap in performance of FSM pupils, and causing them to put in place measures to address it. To this end the Government is introducing from January 2009 (for 2010) a requirement for local authorities to set targets to narrow this gap. This will shine a stronger spotlight on the issue at national, local, school and indeed teacher, class and subject levels.
- Early years and engaging parents in learning: unless rectified, the gap which already exists in cognitive development by age 5 is extremely hard to overcome – the gap will widen further, and our investment in schools will not be fully realised. The strategy aims to equalise opportunities through targeted intervention to support families and raise aspirations.
- Teaching and learning: targeted support, and deploying the best teachers: recognising that the gaps are in attainment of necessary competence in English and mathematics, the strategy identifies means to re-target resources towards FSM pupils under-attaining in these subjects. This will include measures to encourage teachers to move to challenging schools, or within a given school, to take on the classes with high proportions of pupils needing extra help.
- Life chances 0-19: extended schools, other services, the community learning: the delivery of extended services after school and at weekends, for children on roll, their parents and indeed other families from the community, is proving very successful. Well over half of all schools are now delivering such services. The Government will extend opportunities to target such services at disadvantaged pupils and their families.
- School and local authority (LA) accountability and funding: building on the introduction of LA targets, the Government intends in its review of school

funding to consider how best to ensure that each school has the additional resources it needs to meet higher costs associated with significantly increased attainment for disadvantaged pupils. As a corollary, it will ensure that the accountability regime provides incentives and rewards to ensure that an excellent school is one which does not only improve average outcomes but narrows the poverty and disadvantage gap.

Narrowing the Gap: poverty and other pupil characteristics

As noted above, PSA 11 is a commitment to narrow variances in pupil attainment by disadvantaged pupils using the proxy of eligibility for free school meals (FSM). This is the Government's highest priority because family poverty is a stronger predictor of under attainment, and the gaps it reveals are larger, than any other readily measurable pupil characteristic. However the Government intends to monitor closely gaps in attainment by other pupil characteristics, and work to reduce these two wherever possible.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) pupils

With respect to ethnic minorities, the UK can report progress in narrowing the gap over recent years. Roughly one in eight children in England comes from an ethnic minority. Some of these groups (eg Indian, Chinese and Irish) pupils have for many years outperformed the majority on key indicators. Other groups still underperform the majority but are narrowing the gap rapidly, and in some cases have closed it.

For England, in 2003 the Government set out its *Aiming High* national strategy for raising the academic achievement of ethnic minority pupils. The strategy helped to make minority ethnic pupils' attainment a mainstream issue to be addressed through whole school policies. Partly as a result, the recent trend in England has been sharply positive for most minority groups. Thus at Key Stage 4 (16 year olds):

- 49% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved 5+A*-C in 2007 compared to 42% in 2005, and 33% in 2003. This 16%pt gain is double the national gain.
- 58% of Bangladeshi pupils achieved 5+A*-C in 2007 compared to 53% in 2005, and 46% in 2003. This 12%pt gain is well over the national average.
- 53% of Pakistani pupils achieved 5+A*-C in 2007 compared to 48% in 2005, 45% in 2004 and 42% in 2003. This 11%pt gain is well over the national average.

There are similar trends at Key Stage 2 where 7 out of 15 BME groups now outperform the national average in English tests.

It is encouraging that the gaps have closed so rapidly against the main threshold indicators. However the Government remains committed to closing the gaps that remain for certain ethnic minority groups:

- in performance at the higher national curriculum levels, as opposed to basic national expectations;
- in combination with other factors correlated with low achievement, eg FSM-eligible Black Caribbean boys in the teenage years, and
- children from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, for whom

outcomes appear to remain well behind those of other children but low data continuity and self-ascription issues weaken the reliability of the evidence.

The Government will introduce from January 2009 a slimmed-down but strengthened regime of targets for narrowing gaps for underperforming ethnic minority pupils as well as pupils in poverty (eligible for free school meals). These targets will bite on local authorities in England for 2010, but will eventually apply also to schools.

Children with minority ethnic backgrounds make up 6.4% of the school population in Wales. These include asylum seeker children, refugees and children of migrant workers. A much higher proportion of minority ethnic pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM) than pupils of white ethnic background. In March 2008, the Welsh Assembly Government published the latest statistics on academic achievement by ethnic background. Data was aggregated (a combined 3 year average for 2005, 2006 and 2007) so that the number of pupils in each ethnic background was larger, thus enabling more robust conclusions to be drawn about the attainment of pupils in each group. In terms of achievement at Key Stage 4:

- 38.3% of pupils from a black ethnic background achieved 5+A*-C
- 50% of pupils from an Asian ethnic background achieved 5+A*-C

Children of migrant families and children with English as an additional language

In England, some 12% of pupils speak English as an additional (second) language – typically as either first or second generation immigrants to the UK. They are provided with significant personalised support in acquisition of fluency in English, both through normal school grants and through the ring-fenced Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant worth £176m rising to £206m in 2010-11.

Other things being equal, having English as an additional language is a positive indicator of educational attainment up to the threshold levels; and EAL children are disproportionately represented amongst high attainers. Against this, there is evidence that some EAL learners fail to reach their potential across the whole curriculum because their English is not sophisticated enough. The Government is engaged in a review of EAL support, and intends to implement new strategies to upskill the EAL workforce – both classroom teachers and support staff, and specialist EAL subject leaders in schools and Local Authorities – from 2009.

Overall it is a highly encouraging feature that children from migrant families with good English typically do well in English schools. The absorption of large numbers of children of migrants from A8 countries (new accessions to the European Union) has resulted in fewer problems than in some other OECD countries.

Children in care

The under-performance of the roughly 0.5% of children in the care of a local authority (ie not living at home) has been a major concern across the UK since 2000. As part of the Children Act 2004 a specific duty was placed on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of the children in their specific care. In June 2007 the Government published *Care Matters: Time for Change*, a White Paper which sets out a wide range of measures designed to improve further the educational attainment of children in care and to properly prepare them for the transition to adulthood.

The attainment of the 60,000 children in care in England has improved recently but remains very poor when compared to their peers. The proportion achieving national

expectations at age 11 in 2007 was 43%. Those gaining 5 A*-C GCSEs rose from 7% in 2000 to 12% in 2007. Those participating in education, employment or training at age 19 increased from 46% in 2002 to 63% in 2006, reflecting the beneficial impact of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. In 2007, as part of PSA 11, national targets for 2011 were set for attainment of children in care at ages 11 and 16, and each local authority must set its own targets and put action in hand to achieve them.

In Northern Ireland, the Looked After Children in Education project was established in 2001 and is a partnership between Include Youth, Save the Children, Voice of young People in Care (VOYPIC), The Department of Education (DE), the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). Currently the project is at phase three which further develops the idea of using a holistic, multi-agency and interdepartmental approach in its overarching aim to improve the educational outcomes for children and young people in care. Other development initiatives being taken forward by the Department of Health and Social Services in Northern Ireland include the Fostering Achievement Scheme, ¹Former Carers Scheme and the Northern Ireland version of Care Matters.

In Wales the Government's strategy for children in need, including looked after children and care leavers, will build on education measures introduced in July 2007 as part of the *Towards A Stable Life* policy which set out new duties on local authorities to improve the health and well-being of looked after children.

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

In 2006 some 3% of pupils in England had statements of SEN (a formal, legal status), and a further 16% had SEN without statements (school-level process). Children with statements of SEN are supported in education by being admitted automatically to the school named on their statement, whether that school has places or not. 59% of children with statements are educated in mainstream schools and 35% in local authority special schools. Local authority expenditure on SEN has increased from £2.8 billion in 2001-02 to £4.5 billion in 2006-07 (an increase of 60% and representing some 13% of all education spending).

In Northern Ireland, almost 4% of the total school population have statements of SEN (47% more than in 2000) and approximately 14% are at Stages 1-4 of the Code of Practice. The principle is enshrined in legislation that, subject to certain provisos, children should be educated in a mainstream setting. The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDI), has strengthened the right of children with SEN to be educated in mainstream schools where parents want it and the interests of other children can be protected. In response to the rising numbers of children with SEN and the associated increase in expenditure, as well as the growing diversity of needs within the classroom, the Department of Education instigated a Review of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion in 2006. On current plans, consultation on the draft policy proposals arising from the review will take place in autumn 2008.

In Wales the number of pupils with a statement of SEN decreased by 3.8% during 2007, bringing the total number to 14,994 (some 3.1% of the total pupils on roll) at

Former Carers Scheme - This scheme will allow the transition into adulthood to be prepared at a pace that will suit the individual needs of the young person by allowing at 18 years anyone who is not ready for independence to stay in a stable foster care environment, continue in education/ training and prepare to live independently by the age of 21.

January 2008. Overall, the percentage of pupils with statements on school rolls over the last seven years has decreased from 3.4%. Over 91% of the total with statements were educated within their 'home' authority rather than in other authorities. Almost 25% of those pupils educated within their 'home' authority are educated in special schools (3,375 pupils). As in 2007, just over half the number of pupils with statements were educated in ordinary classes, with just over a fifth taught in special classes of mainstream schools. The total expenditure on SEN provision by LEAs in Wales in 2008-09 was budgeted to be £321 million. This represented an increase of 4.5% on 2007-08. Like England, children with statements of SEN in Wales are supported in education by being admitted automatically to the school named on their statement, whether that school has places or not.

Conclusion

The UK Government is confident that a focus on the PSA 11 poverty gap need not cut across a broader approach to reducing gaps by reference to other key pupil characteristics. It is determined to reduce variances for **all** disadvantaged pupils, including all the groups identified in the above section of this report.

Policies which support “excellence and equity”

Early years education

Since 1997 the Government in England has invested over £21 billion on expanding early years and childcare provision, including progressively increasing the proportion of the under five population in England and Wales that has access to integrated services and quality early learning. Details of measures including the Ten Year Childcare Strategy and the Childcare Act 2006 are set out earlier in this report.

In Northern Ireland the main aim of the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme introduced in 1998, is to provide one year of high quality funded pre-school education, in the year before compulsory education, for every child whose parents wish it. In the 2007/08 school year the level of provision in the pre-school phase of education was 94%. The Department of Education is currently developing an early years 0 – 6 strategy to bring Sure Start, Pre-school, the home child care and Foundation Primary together in a cohesive way to support the integration of service delivery to provide better outcomes for children and parents.

The Welsh Assembly Government has, since 2002, funded local authorities to provide a minimum of 10 hours a week of free pre-school education to all 3 and 4 year olds whose parents wish it.

Primary and Secondary education

In England, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 sets the framework for delivering the vision set out in the White Paper *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* (2005). Taken together with the fundamental duties of local authorities to secure sufficient provision and school places under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 and to promote high standards under section 13A of that Act, local authorities now have a duty to secure sufficient school places, and in so doing promote high standards; ensure fair access to educational opportunity; promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential; secure diversity in the provision of schools; and increase opportunities for parental choice.

In Wales, Sections 13 (as amended) and 14 of the Education Act 1996 place a duty

on local authorities to secure sufficient school places, and in so doing promote high standards and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to enable parents to express a preference for a school, to give reasons for that preference and to meet those preferences except in limited circumstances. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to non-selective, comprehensive school provision and promotes a close relationship between schools and the communities they serve.

The Government in England has increased school funding to support the delivery of higher standards. By the end of 2007-08 funding per pupil will be £1,800 (66%) higher in real terms than in 1997-98. The new Primary Capital Programme will see an additional £150 million invested in primary schools in 2008-09 rising to £500 million from 2009-10. This will support the Government's aims to rebuild, remodel or refurbish at least half of all primary schools over 15 years. In addition, there are 35,700 more teachers and 172,00 more support staff compared 1997.

In Wales 'One Wales' commits the Welsh Assembly Government to providing more funding during the lifetime of this current Assembly. Funding of over £672m will be provided during the period 2007-08 to 2010-011. The Assembly Government is also working with a number of local authorities to drive forward collaboration on issues such as procurement, project management and the sharing of best practice on large scale school capital projects.

A revised curriculum, which is being introduced into Northern Ireland schools on a phased basis from September 2007 to June 2010 will place greater emphasis on developing the skills children need and will give schools and teachers greater flexibility over how they deliver the curriculum to meet children's needs generally. In addition, there will be a new requirement on schools through the Entitlement Framework to provide every pupil, regardless of their background, school or where they live, with access to a minimum of 24 courses at Key Stage 4 and 27 courses at post-16. At least one third of courses will have to be vocational and at least one third academic.

In Wales the curriculum consists of three main phases: Foundation Phase curriculum for 3-7 year olds based on active learning and including elements of play and assessment for learning; a skills-based curriculum for 7-14 year olds that builds upon the philosophy of the Foundation Phase and prepares for their 14-19 year old education and training; and a Learning Pathways programme for 14-19 year olds, providing enhanced choice and flexibility, including attractive vocational offers for all abilities.

From September 2008, the Welsh Assembly Government is rolling out the Foundation Phase and revised school curriculum that are learner-centred and skills-focused. A Foundation Phase framework for children's learning (3-7 year olds) sets out requirements for early years. The school curriculum comprises a set of revised subject Orders; a framework for personal and social education; a framework for careers and the world of work; a non-statutory skills framework; and a national exemplar framework for religious education.

14-19 education and further education

In England the Government's aim is to develop a system of 14-19 education which prepares all young people for success in life. Good progress has been made in improving levels of participation, with record numbers of 16 year olds now in full-time

education. As at end 2006, the proportion of 16-18 year olds participation in education and training is estimated at 77.3%.

Financial incentives have been introduced to encourage disadvantaged young people to stay on in learning. Over half a million learners have benefited from Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) payments of up to £30 per week (in 2006-07). Since the introduction of the EMA participation has increased to its highest level ever among 16 year olds, with 89% in some form of learning in the last academic year, and an increase of 1.8 percentage points in participation of 16 year olds in full-time education between 2003-04 and 2004-05 alone.

The Government has introduced legislation to raise the statutory age for participation in education or training from 16 to 18, to help all young people gain a strong grounding in later life. Subject to passage of that legislation, every young person completing primary school this year will continue in education and training to at least their 18th birthday.

In Northern Ireland the Skills Strategy, Success through Skills, was published in February 2006. It outlines the challenges we face; from the need to increase the levels of numeracy and literacy in our adult population, right through to a need to improve our workforce's management and leadership skills and puts in place suitable interventions.

In Wales, Learning Pathways 14-19 has been introduced to provide young people with enhanced choice and flexibility, including vocational offers for all abilities, participation in a wide variety of experiences, with accreditation of learning wherever possible, together with appropriate learning and personal support. Following a successful pilot, the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification post-16 at Advanced and Intermediate levels has been rolled-out from September 2007. From September 2009 it will also be rolled-out at Foundation level and Key Stage 4 and new applied learning from the Diplomas being developed in England will be implemented within the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification is designed to accredit learning in a wide ability range and from the full range of leaning pathways.

In Wales, poverty currently affects one in four children and young people. Research has long shown that social disadvantage is the single biggest obstacle in achievement in education. In Wales, we have a range of innovative and effective education policies to address the link between poverty and underachievement - the challenge is to integrate these strategies to maximise their impact. If schools are to deliver effectively for children and young people, they need to work with other schools, parents, the local community, statutory partners and voluntary organisations.

The School Effectiveness Framework is the Welsh Assembly Government's overarching policy based on tri-level reform, that is, collaboration between schools, local government and central government to build capacity and find shared solutions to educational challenges. The School Effectiveness Framework therefore has a significant role to play in achieving the Welsh Assembly Government's objective of eliminating child poverty by 2020.

Funding

The UK's investment in children and young people is substantial, wide ranging and continuing to increase in real terms and as a proportion of GDP. The following is an

overview of some of the main sources of funding on services for children in the UK:

Education funding: Expenditure on education for under 18s has risen from around £33 billion in 2000-01 to over £50 billion in 2005-06, representing an increase from 3.4% of GDP to 4.1%

Health funding: In England there has been record investment in the NHS – rising from £33 billion in 1996-97 to £92.2 billion in 2007-08.

Child benefit: Expenditure on child benefit rose from £8.6 billion in 2000-01 to £9.6 billion in 2004-05.

Children's Services: Expenditure on children's services in England (excluding education) has doubled between 1997 and 2006 - from £3.35 billion to £7.46 billion. This was an average annual increase of 8% in real terms of which £1.64 billion (over the same period) was for new investment in early years.

There is also significant expenditure in other areas, such as the Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, proportions of which are spent on children but which expenditure cannot be disaggregated. In addition to these examples of large scale expenditure, there is significant investment by the UK Government and devolved administrations in other specific policies which benefit children.

Monitoring instruments

The UK Government and the Devolved Administrations are committed to the use of data to inform policy development and have in place a range of systems to collect aggregated data relating to children and their outcomes at both national and local level. For example, these systems include requirements for local authorities in England to provide statutory data returns which can be co-ordinated and assembled nationally, and such reports are the subject of frequent debates in individual administrations. The nature of these data collections, and the subsequent reports and debating processes, closely reflects the statutory basis on which information is gathered.

Within the UK and the devolved administrations there is a variety of arrangements in place for delivering improved outcomes for children. Each administration has its own mechanisms for monitoring progress against outcomes for children. In England there is a Ministerial Cabinet Committee on children's policy. At official level, a Permanent Secretary chaired group oversees new Public Service Agreements (PSAs) (see below) which support each *Every Child Matters* outcome. Regionally, Government operates through nine Government Offices in England. These co-ordinate central government policies and help local authorities to implement these at local level. Each Government Office has a Director of Children and Learners responsible for children's policies and services across their region. Locally, children's services are delivered through partnership arrangements (known as children's trusts) between each of the 150 English local authorities and their partners. Each local authority has a Director of Children's Services who is accountable for children's services and outcomes for children in their local area.

A key element of *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* is the 'improvement cycle' for local children's services. The purpose of this is to bring together national performance review, monitoring and assessment requirements to ensure that local processes support and drive the integration of children's services and deliver against the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes.

Focus on Scotland

Policies in Scotland designed to promote inclusive education

Early Years/Early Intervention

The Scottish Government has:

- **Increased nursery entitlement** up to 475 hours per annum – implemented from the start of school year 07-08;
- Taken forward the development of a new **early years and early intervention framework** jointly with COSLA, and fully involving other key stakeholders to give children in Scotland the best start in life (due to be published by end of 2008).
- Introduced **nutritious free school meals** for all primary one to primary three children in selected **pilot areas**;
- Met with HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs to stress the Scottish Government's desire that the childcare element of the working tax credit and childcare vouchers should be merged to create a straightforward, progressive and more accessible system.

The Scottish Government is:

- Making excellent progress on publishing jointly with COSLA an early years framework later this year.
- Making substantial progress towards a **50% increase in pre-school entitlement** for 3 and 4 year olds delivering 570 hours a year for each child – by August 2010 around 10 million more hours will be delivered than were delivered in academic year 2006-07;
- The full 50% commitment will be delivered in 2011.
- Continuing to liaise with HMRC regarding the simplification of the tax credits system to make the process easier for parents and improve uptake for those families in need of support.

Class Sizes

The Scottish Government has:

- Provided **£9m last autumn to fund 300 extra teachers** and at least **250 extra in teacher** training in academic year 07-08;
- Signed a historic concordat with local government in which local government will, by maintaining teacher numbers in the face of falling school rolls, allow **significant progress on our class size reduction policy** in the current Spending Review period.

And working with local government it will:

- Deliver **smaller class sizes for better learning** in Scotland's schools, provided that local authorities maintain teacher numbers around 53,000. Under the Concordat, local government will reduce class sizes in P1-P3 as quickly as possible and deliver **year on year progress**.
- Recognise the **scale of the challenge** – only 11 per cent of pupils in classes currently at or below 18 in P1 – P3. However a number of councils across Scotland are making progress on reducing class sizes.

- Train **thousands more teachers** in a time of financial constraint.
- Expect more than **20,000 to have entered training by 2011** to add to the total number of teachers which is currently around 53,000.

Free School Meals

The Scottish Government has:

- Worked with experts to establish **new nutritional guidelines** for school meals, which came into force in primary schools in August 2008 and will come into force in secondary schools in August 2009, which will put **healthy options on a plate for pupils every day**, develop their taste for food that's good for them and stops unhealthy habits from taking hold.

and working with local government it will:

- Extend entitlement to nutritious **free school meals** for all P1-P3 pupils and to children of families on both maximum child tax credit and maximum working tax credit;

Vulnerable Young Children and Families

The Scottish Government is:

- Focused on ensuring that there are the right legislative and other frameworks in place to ensure the **protection of our most vulnerable individuals**.
- **Fundamentally opposed to dawn raids** and the enforced removal or the detention of children. We will continue to pursue these and other issues with Home Office Ministers.
- Bringing forward **reforms to the Children's Hearings system**. We plan to re-structure the system to ensure that decision makers get the support they need to focus on children.
- Introducing a Bill to strengthen and clarify the original policy intention of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. There is no intention to alter its thrust or ethos.

and has:

- Established **support for adult survivors of historic in-care abuse including**: work underway to commission a national service for survivors; improvements to the residential child care system, including better staff training and development, a review of the law to address shortcomings in public records held on children in care.
- Published ***These Are Our Bairns (2008) – guidance for community planning partnerships on how to be a good corporate parent***. Unique in the UK, this guidance covers services across the public and voluntary sectors. It aims to improve outcomes for Looked After children and young people and care leavers by demonstrating how all parts of the system have a role to play, and can **make a genuine difference to children in care**.
- Ensured that **asylum children** who have been here for at least 3 years will have the same access as Scottish children to full time further and higher education;

and working with local government it will:

- Make improvements in nursery entitlement, reduce class sizes, extend free, nutritious school meals entitlement and improve access to teachers in pre-school to **benefit all children, including the most vulnerable**;
- Better support foster and kinship carers, including providing **allowances for kinship carers of looked after children**;

School Experience/Curriculum

The Scottish Government has:

- created a **new framework for learning and teaching** (June 2008) that enables all establishments to plan an inclusive curriculum innovatively, using new experiences and outcomes to help all young people build the skills they need to develop the 4 capacities.

and working with local government it will:

- Deliver a **Curriculum for Excellence**. Through this we will encourage the best possible teaching to help young people become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors, ensuring that they have skills for learning, work and life.
- Build on opportunities for more school pupils to build skills for life and skills for work through **vocational learning**.
- Ensure that we have a **well-trained workforce** in our schools able to work effectively with all pupils including those with additional support needs.
- **Respond positively to young people who need more choices and chances** to enable them to engage with learning and the labour market

Youth Work

The Scottish Government has:

- Continued the **Voluntary Organisation Support Fund - £1.5m** for the period 2008-11. Through this we support national voluntary organisations, local groups and volunteers to work with local authorities to deliver national outcomes.
- Continued the **Youth Opportunities Fund**. **An extra £7.5 million** for youth work local delivery has been included in the local government settlement for 2008-11.

and is:

- Developing a **Youth Framework**, which will aim to ensure that all young people, including vulnerable and at risk young people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential as confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens.

Key Facts: Equity and Inclusion in Scotland

Attainment

- In 5-14, based on the 2006 Scottish Survey of Achievement (SSA), over 75% of P3 and P5 pupils are well established, or better, at expected levels in reading, writing and numeracy. At P7 and S2 around 45% of pupils are well established, or better, at expected levels. Numeracy is the one exception to this, where nearly 70% of P7 pupils are well established, or better, at the expected level. In science (based on the 2007 SSA) attainment is not as good. At P3 and P5 around 50% of pupils are at expected levels or better but at P7 only 6% achieved the expected level or better. This increases slightly to 17% at S2.
- 47% of pupils from the S4 cohort gained 5 or more Standard Grades at Credit level (or equivalent) by the end of S6 in 2006/07. Attainment has remained consistent in recent years, following an increase from 38% between 1999 and 2002.
- 19% of pupils from the S4 cohort gained 5 or more Highers by the end of S6 in 2006/07, showing little change over the last five years.

Low attainment

- Percentage of school leavers with no qualifications at SCQF Level 3 (Standard Grade foundation level or equivalent) was stable at around 5% until 2002/03, but has subsequently dropped slightly to just over 4%.
- There is a close relationship between deprivation and attainment, as the 2007 OECD review highlighted. There are twice the expected number of low performing pupils in the most deprived areas of Scotland. Deprivation in Scotland is geographically concentrated - over half of Scotland's 5% most deprived areas are in Glasgow.

Childcare/Pre-school

- As at January 2008, 96% of children eligible, or 96,130 in total, were registered for free ante-pre-school or pre-school year of pre-school education. (This figure may include some double counting.)
- As at January 2008, 66% of pre-school children had access to a GTCS registered teacher during census week. This includes children whose access was to a teacher providing ad hoc or occasional support to the centre.
- As at January 2008, there were 1,672 whole time equivalent (WTE) GTCS registered teachers, of which 1,447 worked in local authority centres. These figures include 204 WTE teachers shared between centres.
- As of April 2008, HMRC estimates that 42,400 families in Scotland were benefiting from the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. On average these families were receiving £62.86 help with childcare costs per week.

Looked After Children

- 52% of young people leaving care beyond minimum school leaving age in 2006/07 had at least one qualification at SCQF level 3 or above (an increase of 1 percentage point). 34% had both English and Maths at this level (no increase).
- 38% of young people reported to be eligible for aftercare services with a known economic activity were in education, training or employment (no real trend).

Youth work

- A 2007 survey showed that about 90,000 young people took part in local authority-run youth work provision in a typical week. Many more take part in a wide range of youth work activities run by voluntary organisations across the country. Young people involved in the four uniformed organisations alone number over 118,000 in Scotland today.

Young People that need more choices and more chances (MCMC)

- In 2007 it was estimated that **32,000** 16-19 year olds were not in employment, education or training. This represents **12.2%** of the relevant population.
- **30%** of this group have no qualifications compared to **11%** of 16-19 year olds overall.
- For some, the experience is benign, but for some additional support is needed to move into education, employment or training.
- Since the introduction of the More Choices, More Chances (MCMC) strategy, the proportion of school leavers achieving a positive destination has continued to improve.
- In 2006/07, just under **87%** of school leavers entered a positive initial destination. This was an increase of **1.2** percentage points on the previous year and **6.5** percentage points since the MCMC baseline year of 2003/04.

Additional support needs

- 5% of pupils are identified with additional support needs. 82% of them are educated in mainstream schools.
- Around 2% of pupils in Scotland have English as an additional language.