

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
TUESDAY 18 MAY 2004 at 10.30am

REPORT OF THE CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
17 MARCH 2004

NOTE: A copy of the report mentioned below has been sent to all members of the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee and other members who have requested it. Further copies are available from Julia Harries, Room 222, County Secretary's Department, County Hall, Hertford. (Telephone: 01992 555563)

A REVIEW OF SCHOOLS' PERFORMANCE FROM 2001 TO 2003

The Committee considered a report setting out the educational achievements of children and young people in Hertfordshire schools from 2001 to 2003 for each Key Stage, set within the context of developments school improvement and identification of areas of weakness.

The following actions are being taken to improve the performance of schools and will be completed by 1 September 2004:

- revision of the strategy for school improvement;
- revision of the Code of Practice for CSF- School relations;
- revision of the strategy for monitoring, challenge, support and intervention for schools, including the strategy for school improvement;
- review of the School Standards and Curriculum division.

Specific priorities are identified in the CSF plan to address the main areas of concern at each Key Stage, and together with the actions listed above, the stronger partnership with schools and better co-ordination of support should result in a positive impact on schools' performance. This should help to reduce the number of underperforming schools as well as improving the attainment of vulnerable children and groups.

The Committee's comments:

The Committee welcomed the report and celebrated the high level of achievement of Hertfordshire schools, but noted some areas of significant concern, in particular the gender gap in achievement; they requested more information on this at future meetings.

They also agreed that it would be helpful to receive an annual report on school performance and progress, to include more detail on value added and floor targets. The timing of this report would allow them to comment in order to inform budget considerations.

The Committee also agreed that a report should be brought to their June meeting on the performance of vulnerable children at all key stages, to allow them to decide if a Topic Group was needed to scrutinise this issue.

They have also agreed to set up a short term Topic Group to scrutinise Key Stage 2 Achievement.

SEAMUS QUILTY
VICE-CHAIRMAN
County Hall
Hertford

17 March 2004