

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

COUNCILLOR DAVE HARLING

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTOR: LINDA CLEGG
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GCSE RESULTS SUCCESS

Provisional results for the borough show around 4 per cent up on last year, with 58% of students achieving 5 A*-C including English and Maths. The performance at two schools rose by over 10% compared with last year and one school rose by over 30% using the same measure.

Early indications across the region are that performance in 2015 is similar to performance in 2014, therefore it is likely that Blackburn with Darwen will be above the regional average. As it is normally the case that the North West average reflects the national average, it is possible that the proportion of Blackburn with Darwen students achieving 5 or more A*-C GCSEs, including English and Maths will be higher than the national average.

FAIR ACCESS PANEL

Each local authority is required to have a Fair Access Protocol to ensure that outside the normal admissions round, unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This is the first year that fair access decisions have been made by schools and this change in practice has sped up the process and proved effective in placing pupils in schools which meets their needs. The Primary Schools Fair Access protocol has been approved by schools and will be implemented in the new academic year.

188 children and young people, who met the secondary school fair access criteria in the 2014/15 academic year, have been offered places in local schools by a panel of Headteacher representatives. Thanks are due to all our schools for their help and support.

SCHOOL INSPECTIONS

Since the previous Council Forum 3 inspection reports have been published for schools within the Authority. One school, The Olive School, was judged to be outstanding, with pupils making rapid progress; while another, Shadsworth Infant school, was judged to be a good and improving school. Finally, Our Lady and St John Catholic College was inspected and brought out of special measures after 16 months. The report particularly praised the work of the Headteacher and the quality of pastoral care for students. These three inspections were the last ones to take place during the 2014-15 academic year.

During the year, 20 inspection reports have been published for schools within the authority. Of the 20 inspections, 15 schools have been judged to be good or better with the remaining 5 schools all judged to require improvement and no schools being judged as inadequate. 11 schools have maintained their good or better judgement, with a further 5 schools either receiving a better judgement of good or being judged good or better in their first inspection.

PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS CONFERENCE

In June, 47 delegates from schools in Blackburn and Darwen attended a conference focusing on promoting positive mental health in schools. The conference was organised by the Services for Schools Team in partnership with PHSE Solutions consultancy and funded by public health.

The day provided school staff with the opportunity to reflect and discuss the patterns and challenges of managing emotional and mental health across the school community, explore perspectives on emotional mental health from staff, parents and students, and develop skills to support individual and groups in developing resilience.

TRADED SERVICES

The total income from School and Education Traded Services with schools was in line with last year. The website and management information system used to manage the sales and procurement of services to schools has now been in use for two years and is proving very popular with schools and council service providers. There are currently 208 schools purchasing services through the system, 117 of which are schools from outside the borough.

There are currently 38 services being offered through the system: 20 from Schools and Education, 14 from other Council departments and 4 from other service providers who are paying to use the system.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES INFORMATION, ADVICE, SUPPORT SERVICE (SENDIASS)

Blackburn with Darwen Community and Voluntary Service (BwDCVS) is the preferred bidder for the Special Education Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice, Support Service (SENDIASS) contract. The three year contract requires the Service to provide confidential, independent, impartial and free information, advice and support to children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities and their families.