

Education and Training Inspectorate

An Evaluation of the Early Progress of the Achieving Belfast and Achieving Derry/Bright Futures Programmes

May 2010



Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Northern Ireland (NI) Audit Office and Westminster Public Accounts Committee reports on Literacy and Numeracy, published in 2006, urged the Department of Education (DE) to give particular attention to addressing under-achievement in socially deprived communities in Belfast by putting in place evidence-based actions to tackle this issue.

1.2 As a result of this, the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) developed the Achieving Belfast programme in 2007/08 to target under-achievement in the Belfast area. The DE judged that similar challenges existed in the North West and asked the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) to develop a similar programme to target under-achievement in the Derry City Council area. This programme was named Achieving Derry - Bright Futures. The Department then established a Working Group to oversee progress and ensure co-ordination of the programmes. The group comprised representatives from DE, BELB, WELB, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate), the Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department for Social Development (DSD). This report uses the names and abbreviations Achieving Belfast (AB) and Achieving Derry-Bright Futures (AD-BF) throughout.

1.3 In their programmes, the BELB and WELB opted for different models of intervention. The BELB's criteria for the initial selection of schools was based on identifying the lowest achieving schools through a combination of those with (a) educational attainments well below the Belfast average at key stage (KS) 2, KS3 and KS4, particularly in literacy and/or numeracy, and (b) a majority of their pupils coming from areas of disadvantage, noting Noble Indicators¹ and using the percentage of pupils receiving free school meals as indicators of need. The WELB adopted an approach which involved working with all schools within the Derry City Council area (including pre-school and youth provision in the city) and with partners in health and social services, neighbourhood renewal, and the local business and voluntary community sectors, which was targeted on supporting the needs of the individual pupil. Schools were asked through their school improvement process to identify and meet the needs of pupils most at risk of underachievement, and, similar to the approach used by the BELB, a whole-school approach was adopted to meeting the needs of the pupils most at risk.

1.4 Both programmes will be long-term, sustained interventions which will be taken forward in due course by the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) and, within DE, there is a recognition that there may not be major immediate improvements in outcomes for pupils in the schools at KS1, KS2 and KS3 and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). However, from DE's perspective, there is an expectation that there will still be clear evidence of early indications of improvements in individual schools. Not only in the improved outcomes in standards defined for the AB and AD-BF programmes, but also in the other key and associated indicators of success, including a reduction in teacher absenteeism and pupil suspensions/expulsions, and improved pupil attendance. Importantly, therefore, there is a need to ensure that the programmes, in the implementation phase, start from a sound, evidence-based footing, and that the early implementation is planned in a way that delivers the expected longer term improvements. This is a key reason for this baseline evaluation of both programmes by the Inspectorate.

¹ Measure of Deprivation

2. THE CONTEXT OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 The focus of this baseline evaluation falls within the three strategic priorities identified in the most recent report by the Chief Inspector, namely that:

- those with the responsibility for an individual's education need to build more effectively on the skills, knowledge and attributes which the learner has developed in the preceding phase;
- those with the responsibility for an individual's education need to help learners understand better the connections in their individual programmes of learning, and how that learning connects to opportunities for them and for their communities; and
- educational leaders need to be confident that they are including all learners and are working together to help them achieve their full potential.

2.2 The DE, with the support of the Working Group, commissioned the Inspectorate to evaluate the early progress of the AB and AD-BF programmes.

The evaluation focused on the five strands contained in the terms of reference prepared by DE as part of the commissioning process, namely:

- the appropriateness of the approaches and actions taken by the BELB and WELB, particularly in relation to their capacity to lead to improvements in standards of literacy and numeracy among individual pupils in the schools involved;
- the extent to which the various actions link with, and are supported by, other actions taken forward by each Board;
- the commitment of, and impact upon, schools participating in the programmes, including their level of awareness as to what the programme entails and the impact on the school's arrangements for self-evaluation, development planning and target-setting;
- the commitment of the Boards to the aims of the programmes and their capacity to ensure that the programmes are delivered effectively, their engagement with Principals, the community and other relevant statutory and voluntary organisations, in developing the programme; and
- the relevance and robustness of the monitoring arrangements devised for the programme, including the baseline and agreed common performance indicators, and the identification of any potential gaps.

2.3 In the first instance, the findings and recommendations emerging from the Inspectorate's evaluation will inform the Working Group established to oversee progress and ensure co-ordination of the programmes. Subsequently, the findings and recommendations will inform the work of the ESA, when the Authority is in place. The findings will also inform DE policy and strategy in the planning for the future direction of the programmes.

3. THE EVALUATION

3.1 Over the period July to October 2009, the Inspectorate undertook an evaluation of the early progress of the AB and AD-BF programmes.

3.2 The evidence base for this report comes from specific visits to the schools and organisations involved in the programmes, other relevant stakeholders (where appropriate), and also draws upon evidence from recent inspections in the schools involved. The schools and organisations visited during this evaluation are listed in an appendix to the report.

The evidence base used included:

- self- evaluative reports, centred on the five terms of reference listed, completed by the BELB and WELB;
- visits to individual schools and other organisations involved in the programmes, coupled with associated discussions with staff, including Principals/leaders, governors, members of senior leadership/management teams, and middle managers and teachers;
- discussions with officers from the BELB and WELB Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS);
- discussions with members of the AB/BF-AD Working Group;
- discussions with a range of other stakeholders, including CCMS, community groups, and other statutory and non-statutory groups; and
- discussions with officials from DE.

3.3 The interviews with the BELB and WELB officers included discussions structured around the self-evaluative reports produced by both Boards. The self-evaluative reports produced, and the resulting discussion between the inspection team and the Boards, made a valuable contribution to the evaluation process and to its findings. There were some differences in the approaches to the Inspectorate's evaluation in each Board area because of the differences in the respective programmes. For example, in the BELB there was a greater focus on visits to the individual schools identified specifically for inclusion in the AB programme, while in the WELB, although the Inspectorate still visited a sample of schools, there were also visits to the range of stakeholders identified with promoting improvement in the schools in the Derry City Council district.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

4.1 The strengths and areas for improvement are set out below under the common terms of reference set by DE for the evaluation of early progress in the AB and AD-BF programmes.

4.2 The main findings are presented separately for each programme with key common actions required to effect improvement for both programmes listed at the end of the report.

4.3 ACHIEVING BELFAST

4.3.1 In the areas inspected, the overall quality of the leadership and support provided by the BELB in the Achieving Belfast programme is satisfactory: The strengths outweigh the areas for improvement. The evaluation has identified strengths in the approaches taken, which BELB, and subsequently ESA, will need to capitalise on as it supports and, when necessary, challenges schools and other organisations. The evaluation has identified important areas for improvement to take forward the next stage of the process. The Inspectorate will monitor and report at Departmental and Employing Authority levels, the progress in addressing these important areas for improvement.

The strengths and areas for improvement are set out below under the common terms of reference set by DE for the inspection of early progress in the AB and AD-BF programmes.

4.3.2 **Strand 1: The appropriateness of the approaches and actions being taken by the BELB, particularly in relation to their scope to lead to improvements in standards of literacy and numeracy among individual pupils in the schools involved.**

For inclusion in the AB programme, the BELB selected specifically the lowest achieving schools where their analysis showed a school with (a) educational attainments well below the Belfast average at KS2, KS3 and KS4 particularly in literacy and/or numeracy and (b) a majority of pupils coming from areas of greatest disadvantage. The BELB states it used a combination of these factors to identify the schools. The BELB established a Strategic Group and an Implementation group to oversee the programme. The BELB support model involves specific teams of officers supporting individual schools in literacy, numeracy and school improvement.

In year 1 of the programme, the support focused largely on developing school self-evaluation and identifying and addressing appropriate school-level priorities. The BELB self-evaluation (SE) report states that their programme of support has taken cognisance of their learning from, and evaluations of, previous programmes aimed at raising achievement, both in their construction of the AB programme and in the allocation of suitably experienced personnel and support strategies. In the planning stages, advice was taken from leaders in the field of school improvement, and in the provision of best quality education in areas of social deprivation. The BELB SE report also states that the wider integration of AB support with other board services is at an early stage of development.

The main strengths are:

- the strong focus on promoting improvement in literacy and numeracy;
- the focus on building capacity within schools to interpret data and set targets for improvement;
- the emphasis on developing a culture of self-evaluation within the AB schools;
- the contribution made by the SureStart Nurturing Programme in providing valuable opportunities to young children in the year preceding the pre-school year; and
- the focus at Principal and middle management level on developing the skills of monitoring and evaluating progress against the AB targets.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- customise the support strategies to meet the particular needs of individual schools and their pupils;
- improve the awareness and effectiveness of heads of departments in post-primary AB schools in the setting and achieving of targets for their own subjects at GCSE and, where appropriate, post-16 examinations; and
- set out more clearly the roles and responsibilities of the BELB officers involved in the programme in communicating to individual schools, the changes needed in management strategies, or in learning and teaching, to meet the AB targets set.

4.3.3 Strand 2: The extent to which the various actions link with, and are supported by, other actions being taken forward by the BELB.

The BELB opted for, a ‘stepped’ sequence of engagement with schools in issues relating to low and under-achievement within the AB programme. A key part of the BELB, AB strategy is the employment of additional teachers using funding from the AB programme across a number of schools, to support literacy and numeracy at individual pupil and small group level. One of the key objectives of these support teachers, nearly all of whom are newly qualified, is to promote the dissemination of good practice within the school they are supporting. Initially the Board committed resources to supporting work with their personnel working within schools, as distinct from focusing AB work also on external agencies who would influence improvement. The Board states that future steps will see them engaging more widely with other agencies and groups, including developing links with parents and communities to realise the potential of such partnerships in raising achievement. The Inspectorate evaluation findings strongly endorse this as a necessary and appropriate development. The BELB states that this decision was taken partly in recognition of the scale of complexity confronting them, but also the human and financial resources available to them. A baseline position was established for each school, using a quantitative audit focusing on resourcing and structures, and a qualitative self-evaluation of current provision against four aspects borrowed from a model provided by the DfES² “Intensifying Support” Programme.

The main strengths are:

- the written guidelines provided by the BELB to support schools with the school development planning process;
- the sound advice given by the BELB teams of officers working in individual schools on what is regarded as good practice in literacy and numeracy; and
- the useful consultation with external partners for advice and a critical examination of the AB approaches.

² Department of Education and Science

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- make better links between current educational initiatives and the work of the AB programme within the individual schools;
- put in place more robust processes to monitor and evaluate the impact the support teachers employed using AB funding are having in schools to raise standards, with a view to reviewing whether this work should continue; and
- develop a more consistent and strategic approach to improving the quality of the school development planning process across the participating schools, including ensuring that due account is taken of the DE statutory regulations in relation to school development plans.

4.3.4 Strand 3: The commitment of, and impact upon, schools participating in the BELB programme including their level of awareness as to what the programme entails and the impact on the school's arrangement for self-evaluation, development planning and target-setting.

The BELB set up initial meetings with school Principals and there was a "launch event" for school Principals facilitated by educational experts from England. There were also awareness raising meetings with each school's staff and with each school's governing body. A Development Programme for Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinators was drawn up by members of the BELB Literacy and Numeracy teams. The programme focused on the use of data to draw up school performance targets and on the identification of intervention strategies for leading and managing change in targeted curriculum areas. School-based progress review meetings were held regularly in each school. Literacy, Numeracy and Improvement Officers facilitated the initial audit process with schools, and from that point worked with schools at co-ordinator and management team level to prioritise the outcomes of the audit, and establish targets for action.

The main strengths are:

- the increased awareness of the staff in the participating schools, of the rationale and aims of the AB programme and their role within the programme;
- the effective advice provided by AB officers working in the schools, particularly where they supplemented this advice by challenging the schools to make any necessary adjustments; and
- the baseline audit carried out for each school involved in the AB programme which gave the schools a clear evaluation of their starting point in the programme.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- ensure that the targets set by individual schools can be seen to contribute to meeting the overall AB targets;
- ensure that all the targets that individual schools set for themselves in the AB programme are included in the individual school's school development plans (SDPs); and

- develop the use of the AB Management Information System (MIS) to provide a better analysis of, and a better feedback to, participating schools on quantitative and benchmarked data relevant to the AB programme.

4.3.5 Strand 4: The commitment of the BELB to the aims of the programme and its capacity to ensure that the programme is delivered effectively, its engagement with Principals, the community and other relevant statutory and voluntary organisations, in developing the programme.

The BELB states it has been a difficult process in reconciling the Board's clear commitment to AB, with its capacity to resource a wide ranging, sustained programme for supporting change. Prior to the AB programme, all officers had useful experience of acting as link officers, each to a designated number of schools. Role descriptions for numeracy, literacy and "improvement officers" were drawn up during the design stage of the AB programme. Numeracy and literacy officers' roles are the most clearly defined, as their previous roles in literacy and numeracy in their respective teams were a good preparation for the AB role. Other roles have become more defined in practice over the course of the first year. For example, the BELB recognises that a review and development of the adviser and school improvement officer roles is needed to ensure further clarity. As noted before, a key part of the AB strategy is the employment of additional teachers using funding from the AB programme, across a number of schools to support literacy and numeracy at individual pupil and small group levels. Their role includes the dissemination of good practice in intervention techniques.

The main strengths are:

- the strong commitment of the officers working in the schools to the general success and specific aims of the AB programme;
- the well-tailored support given by the BELB to, and the already positive impact of, the recently established Full Service Community Network in strengthening the working relationships and effectiveness of the connections between the various stakeholders;
- the benefits and experience that working in a multi-disciplinary way has brought to the AB CASS officers and to the programme; and
- the strong commitment of the various local community networks to support the work of the BELB and schools/organisations in the AB programme.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- focus more sharply on providing challenge to Principals of schools, to ensure the AB targets set are sufficiently challenging, are known to all the teachers, and are clearly set out in the SDPs and in the BELB, AB action plan ;
- ensure that all AB targets and associated success criteria are sufficiently challenging and agreed through effective consultation between BELB officers and the individual schools; and
- develop as a priority, the wider integration of work within the AB programme with other relevant Board services and ongoing education initiatives.

4.3.6 **Strand 5: The relevance and robustness of the monitoring arrangements devised by the BELB for the programme including the baseline and agreed common performance indicators.**

Cluster Support Teams, set up by the BELB within the AB programme, meet regularly to provide feedback for the monitoring of individual schools and to maintain an overview of each cluster. Several schools have developed the use of Literacy and Numeracy teams to monitor and evaluate their performance and planned actions/innovations. Curriculum Advisory and Support Service Literacy and Numeracy teams have worked to develop data sets and analytic models for the monitoring of performance in target groups of children. There are evaluation forms and updates by officers in their team meetings. The ELB reports that the production of school development plans for the BELB has been slow, and the plans are not yet fully reflective of the underlying evaluation exercise.

The main strengths are:

- the procedures used by teams of AB officers operating in individual schools for monitoring performance of small target groups of children in literacy and numeracy;
- the baseline audit done for each AB school which is focused appropriately on the agreed common performance indicators for AB and AD-BF; and
- the developing good practice, whereby the teams of literacy and numeracy officers gather evidence of improvement in individual schools.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- ensure all stakeholders/organisations/schools take ownership for the targets; and
- ensure the BELB and schools develop more effective monitoring and evaluation arrangements to judge the success of the AB programme, in particular focusing more sharply on reporting improvements in the standards reached by the pupils.

4.4 THE ACHIEVING DERRY-BRIGHT FUTURES PROGRAMME

4.4.1 In the areas inspected, the overall quality of the leadership of and support provided by the WELB in the AD-BF programme is good. The evaluation has identified strengths in the approaches taken, which the Board, and subsequently ESA, needs to capitalise on as it supports and, when necessary, challenges schools and other organisations. The evaluation has also identified areas for improvement to take the programme forward over the next number of years. The Inspectorate will monitor and report at Departmental and Employing Authority levels, the progress made in addressing these areas for improvement.

The strengths and areas for improvement are set out below under the five strands contained in the terms of reference developed by DE as part of the commissioning process to evaluate early progress in the AB and AD-BF programmes.

4.4.2 Strand 1: The appropriateness of the approaches taken by the WELB, particularly in relation to their capacity to lead to improvements in standards of literacy and numeracy among individual pupils in the schools involved.

The WELB adopted an approach which involved working with all schools within the Derry City Council area (including pre-school and youth provision in the city), and with partners in health and social services, neighbourhood renewal, and the local business and voluntary community sectors, which was targeted on supporting the needs of the individual child. The groups of those most likely to fail or under-achieve were identified by the school and subsequent work is focused on a whole-school approach to meeting the needs of the children most at risk. The WELB established a group known as the Programme Management Board (PMB) which included representatives from all sections of the WELB, and an implementation team mainly consisting of CASS and staff from the Children and Young People (C&YP) Services, along with representatives from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the youth sector, libraries, and administration and management services. Half of the schools received their training in the teaching of phonics in the first year of the AD-BF programme, with the remainder to be trained in the second year. In post-primary schools, all schools received training in the Reading Partnership Programme. Two post-primary schools received a more intensive approach in relation to improving their literacy and numeracy outcomes.

The main strengths are:

- the offer to, and implementation of, a 'Reading Partnership' programme in all post-primary schools, and in a small number of primary schools; the teachers visited reported their appreciation for this work, and some are already adapting and adopting this approach to meet other needs within their schools;
- the intensive support in literacy and numeracy offered to two post-primary schools identified by the WELB, which included specific target setting relating to pupils' learning, progress and achievement; developing teaching and learning strategies; and helping teachers judge success in achieving these targets;
- that all primary schools, by the end of this academic year, will have participated in a three day training programme on implementing a Linguistics Phonics approach in the teaching of literacy;
- that teachers, in the schools visited, have reported early benefits of the Musical Pathways programme, particularly in their observed development of the pupils' communication skills, their self-esteem, and their oral language development;
- the strategic links established between other critical partners, for example, the Library Service and the CASS, with regard to the implementation of Musical Pathways and the SureStart programme;
- the contribution made by the SureStart Nurturing Programme in providing valuable opportunities to young children in the year preceding their pre-school year; and
- the effective arrangements established to raise the profile of the importance of early language development among the Health Agency, the Western Childcare Partnership, the SureStart Projects and the Library Service in providing book packs for young infants in the home, prior to attending any pre-school setting.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- develop further the outworking of the strategy which exists between the critical³ partners in health and education, and ensure a joined up service built on a shared understanding between the SureStart Nurturing Programme and the Musical Pathways partners at operational level;
- provide additional support for teachers, following the initial training to enable them to benefit further from the Linguistics Phonics training, and to begin to establish this approach within a whole-school programme; and
- implement further the programme of support for the development of numeracy.

4.4.3 **Strand 2: The extent to which the various actions link with, and are supported by, other actions being taken forward by the WELB.**

The WELB decided to maintain and further develop their current initiatives for improving literacy identified within their strategic plan. As the WELB developed initiatives within educational communities in the Derry City Council area, the decision was taken to include all schools in the AD-BF programme and to build on the existing educational agenda in NI. For example, the establishment of Learning Communities, the Extended Schools Programme, the Special Education Needs and Inclusion Review, and the Literacy and Numeracy strategies which already existed.

The main strengths are:

- the building of the AD-BF programmes on existing programmes, and specific working to make the connections more explicit and effective, both strategically and operationally;
- the good start made in bringing together the statutory and community partners with regard to AD-BF; and
- the quick response of the WELB to lessons learned from the first year of the programme as a result of monitoring and evaluating at strategic and school levels.

The area for improvement is the need to:

- adjust the WELB CASS support in order to help improve the coherence of the contributions from all stakeholders.

³ The WELB (Western Education and Library Board) CASS lists its **Critical Partners** as: DSD (Department of Social Development); Ilex (Body established to promote physical, economic and social re-generation of Derry); Libraries NI; WHSSB; WELB; Derry City Council; Western Area Childcare Partnership; Shantallow Family Centre; Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy Managers (Outer North, Outer West, Triax, Waterside)

4.4.4 Strand 3: The commitment of, and impact upon, schools participating in the WELB programme including their level of awareness as to what the programme entails and the impact on the school's arrangement for self-evaluation, development planning and target setting.

All schools in the Derry City Council area received letters explaining the rationale for AD-BF. In addition, conferences were held for primary and post-primary principals; school governors were informed by link officers from the WELB; and information about the AD-BF programme was made available for all on a dedicated website.

The main strengths are:

- the schools' increased awareness of the rationale and aims of AD-BF and their role within the programme;
- the growing realisation among schools visited that AD-BF is a process which will help promote improvements particularly in literacy;
- the data included in the school profiles sent to all schools to assist them in the process of target-setting for literacy and numeracy; and
- the initial approach used in the schools visited in setting targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- continue to promote and embed the rationale and aims of AD-BF within the school context; and
- include other agreed indicators of performance in the school profile, and, for the purpose of target-setting specifically, to set targets for improving pupil attendance rates and reducing teacher absenteeism, and pupil suspensions and expulsions.

4.4.5 Strand 4: The commitment of the WELB to the aims of the programme and its capacity to ensure that the programme is delivered effectively, its engagement with Principals, the community and other relevant statutory and voluntary organisations, in developing the programme.

The WELB decided that there was a need to give recognition to the role and contribution of other stakeholders in a "Critical Partners Group." This would provide a coherent, strategic way of working to improve outcomes for pupils within the city. Other stakeholders contributing to the programme included the representation on the Critical Partners Group from the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Boards, Western Health and Social Service Board (WHSSB), DSD, Derry City Council, Ilex, SureStart (Western Area Childcare Partnership). Representation on the Implementation team included personnel from the Youth, C&YPS, CASS, and NI Library Services.

The main strengths are:

- the commitment of the WELB to working with all other stakeholders with an interest in, and responsibility for, children and young people;

- the GLAD (Growing, Learning and Development) programmes developed by the WELB Youth Service, which to date have exceeded their targets, to engage young people in accredited programmes within youth centres;
- the recognition, clearly articulated in the self-evaluation report from the WELB, of the benefits and experience that external partners can bring to this process; and
- that other statutory partners operating outside the school context are taking a positive approach, and can identify the potential for AD-BF to facilitate good links and promote improvement.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- ensure all members of the Critical Partners Group have clearly defined roles and responsibilities within the AD-BF programme, and understand and articulate more clearly the specific contribution they can make to improvement against the agreed AD-BF indicators; and
- share and disseminate the effective methods developed by SureStart in working with parents in an active and respectful approach as they engage in pre-school and primary education and, in particular, the literacy and numeracy home-school support programmes; and
- put in place a clear communication strategy among the Critical Partners.

4.4.6 Strand 5: The relevance and robustness of the monitoring arrangements devised by the WELB for the programme including the baseline and agreed common performance indicators.

The WELB identified an effective way of working to facilitate monitoring arrangements for the programme. This included, in addition to support from Link Officers, the use of evaluation templates, termly programme reports and meetings of the Critical Partners Group.

The main strengths are:

- the clear procedures identified for monitoring and evaluating purposes; and
- the good working arrangements established for target setting for the nursery, primary and post-primary schools, and the Youth Service.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- make more effective use within the WELB organisation of all of the available health and education data it has available, in order to identify early the most vulnerable children and their families, and to set a baseline to track progress over the ten year programme period; and
- develop the WELB CASS support, so all the schools and stakeholders make better use of the data, set effective targets, take ownership and contribute more effectively to help improve the achievements and standards of the pupils.

5. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ON ACTIONS REQUIRED TO BRING ABOUT IMPROVEMENT ACROSS/WITHIN BOTH PROGRAMMES

This evaluation has highlighted the importance of all stakeholders having a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities, taking ownership of the targets they have set and being accountable for the outcomes. It is important that both education and library boards (ELBs) continue to work with other stakeholders in achieving this central aim of both programmes. In addition, the ELBs in conjunction with the schools need to:

- extend and implement further the programmes in literacy and numeracy, which are at different stages in each ELB, including supporting schools in making better use of qualitative and quantitative data to target and track performance, to focus sharply on improving standards;
- support schools in developing more effective school development planning processes, challenging them where necessary, to identify clear measurable AB and AD-BF targets which reflect the ELB strategic targets;
- develop the ELBs' overall analysis of quantitative data on school performance within their geographical area, coupled with a sharp focus on making adjustments if needed, both to their overall strategic planning and in support to individual schools;
- make better connections between the range of current work already underway in schools and associated CASS support, with the work within the AB and AD-BF programmes and associated CASS support;
- develop the processes for monitoring and evaluating the specific contribution the AB and AD-BF programmes make to improvements in standards in all the participating schools; and
- identify and disseminate more effectively the strengths of both programmes within and across participating schools, and more widely in the education system.

CONCLUSION

Individual areas for improvement have been identified within each programme. However, the recommendations above indicate key priorities which are common to both programmes, and in some instances the ELBs may benefit from a joined-up approach to planning for improvement. At individual ELB level, their effective use of self-evaluation leading to improvement and the production of robust evidence of improvement in meeting these recommendations will be a critical factor as the programmes move forward. The Inspectorate will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the programmes.

THE SCHOOLS/ORGANISATIONS INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

Achieving Belfast

Belfast Boys' Model School
Beechfield Primary School
Blackmountain Primary School
Cliftonville Primary School
Harmony Primary School
Malvern Primary School
Nettlefield Primary School
St Aidan's Primary School
St Joseph's Primary School, Slate Street
St Kevin's Primary School
St Vincent De Paul Primary School
Taughmonagh Primary School
Vere Foster Primary School

Christian Brothers Secondary School, Belfast
Corpus Christi College
Orangefield High School

Belfast Education and Library Board Curriculum Advisory and Support Service
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools

Achieving Derry-Bright Futures

Ashlea Primary School
Glendermott Primary School
Hollybush Primary School
Holy Family Primary School
St Brigid's Primary School

Foyleview Special School
Immaculate Conception College
Lisneal College
Oakgrove College
St Brigid's College

Western Education and Library Board Curriculum Advisory and Support Service
Western Education and Library Board Youth Service
Western Education and Library Board Library Service
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
Ilex
SureStart
Western Health and Social Services Board (Board officers)

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