

Aims

To address the NRF Floor Targets within Education by raising the level of 5 A*-C achievement at GCSE, and Level 4 attainment at Key Stage 2 of pupils within the nine NRF ward areas.

Location

Located across the Hartlepool area in primary and secondary schools. Delivery is directed specifically towards NRF pupils.

Hartlepool is a small coastal unitary authority with a population of 88,629 (2001 Census.) It is estimated 64% of the population live in wards which are within the most 10% most disadvantaged nationally (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000.) More than half the population live in the nine wards that are within the most 10% disadvantaged in terms of deprivation and health and employment indices nationally.

At around 6% unemployment is still above the regional average of 5%. There are also higher than average levels of disability and ill health.

The Intervention Strategy

Staffing

The employment of additional teachers, learning mentors and classroom assistants on a full and part-time basis. More than 60 new (not movement of staff across budget streams) posts created. Education Advisors and a seconded Headteacher ensure the allocation of initiative monies.

Funding

Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. 80% of NRF funding was allocated directly to schools for their use with NRF ward resident pupils, the remaining 20% of NRF funding was utilised for centralised elements of the initiative delivered across all schools towards identified NRF resident pupils

Operating method

Extensive consultation was performed prior to the start of the initiative with individual schools and the majority viewpoint was the NRF monies would be directed towards the employment of additional staff to work with NRF ward pupils.

With regard to the 80% direct NRF allocation, in both primary and secondary schools a 'Unit Cost' approach was used to determine the level of NRF allocation.

For those schools with fewer than fifty pupils resident in NRF wards a 'flat allocation' of £5,000 was determined (viewed as the minimum with which it would be possible to deliver direct benefit.)

Twenty three of thirty two primary schools received an NRF allocation as did both secondary schools. Allocation was between £5,000 - £30,000 in primary schools and £24,000 - £80,000 in the secondary schools.

Projected funding for the Year 2003/04 (Year 2) took the value of funding in Year 1 and applied a notional inflation figure to determine future funding which the schools could then use in forward planning. However, pupil numbers decreased but the Local Authority held to the initial funding projection (which ensured continuity of new staff employment and allowed the schools to retain good staff.)

The majority of schools used the funding to employ additional staff to work with NRF pupils (learning mentors, classroom assistants etc). Where there were large numbers of pupils from the NRF area a teacher was employed.

Initial individual assessment was performed for each pupil. Concurrent assessment was used to focus additional help and support to promote the pupils' level of attainment. Following the KS2 and GCSE mark points the pupils attainment was recorded. If the pupil did not achieve the floor target the actual results were compared to predicted pre-intervention results and a 'Value Added' effect determined.

Year 1 Value Added determination was performed only relating to the KS2 and KS4 floor targets but this was subsequently revised as the focus was missing out on a number of pupils who had benefited from the intervention but who did not meet the floor targets.

Employment of Classroom Assistants may have seen parents move beyond an interest in the school to a more central employment role. The Authority has tried to encourage this through their own four day intensive training course for Classroom Assistants which includes training in the ways and means in which they could support the Classroom Teacher.

In terms of the remaining 20% central NRF allocation a wide range of smaller initiatives are supported which include the following:

◆ General Issues Support Staff

Many schools across the NRF wards area and across the Authority generally raised issues with regard to pupil attendance, pupil behaviour and pupil mobility. Support staff were employed to provide support with regard to these issues whenever they occurred with NRF area resident pupils. The support for pupil behaviour is in

line with the LEA's Behaviour Support Plan and takes into account developments in relation to Behaviour Improvement Programmes.

Within the primary school attendance project element of the initiative one hundred and seven visits were made which addressed one hundred and fourteen separate concerns.

The primary school behaviour project element of the initiative has established anger management courses for individuals or groups experiencing difficulties and after-school clubs have been established in several schools with a focus on relationship building and improving social skills.

◆ Pilot Laptop Scheme

Four initial primary schools were identified (later increased to six). Initiative funding was used to purchase IT equipment (laptops and some palmtops.) The schools identified NRF area resident children who would use this provision on a regular basis and these were matched with children who were not NRF area resident to give a comparison.

It was expected this element of the initiative would deliver improved attainment amongst the targeted pupils, result in better organisation and presentation of written (as well as printed) work, improve behaviour, motivation and writing stamina, increase work volume (especially amongst the boys) and facilitate the skills appropriate to independent learning. It was also expected this element of the initiative would result in improved staff member skills through training. The initiative is terminating at the end of financial year 2003/04 and had lasted for two and a half financial years. This element of the initiative is undergoing external evaluation and anecdotally has been a success.

◆ Education Business Links

A co-ordinator for Work Related Learning /Education Business Links was employed and works centrally in relation to this element of the initiative as a part of the wider NRF Enhancing Employability theme. Initially it was thought the focus would be on secondary school pupils however, there is now involvement from primary schools in the creation of employment links and promoting the involvement of future employers.

This element of the initiative supports work related learning initiatives with a focus on improving pupils' key and employability skills by tackling some of the interrelated barriers to employment and skills development of pupils from the NRF ward areas.

Employers come into schools to promote themselves during event days.



School Funding

Contact:

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NRF Priority:

Education/Employment

NRF Authority:

Hartlepool

NRF Funding Level:

High

PTO for additional information

Lead Agent:

Education Department, Hartlepool Borough Council

Main Partners:

Two secondary schools and twenty-three primary schools in the initiative target area

Location:

Secondary and primary schools, Hartlepool

Main achievements:

over 60 jobs created, 40 of which are local to the NRF area.

Summer 2002 and 2003 examination results show in primary schools an additional 66 NRF pupils reached Level 4 in English and 64 in Mathematics who otherwise would not have done so.

Value added data showed all NRF targeted pupils made some progress as a result of the intervention.

Secondary school data shows an additional 50 NRF pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE who would otherwise not have been expected to do so.

In Summer 2002 NRF enabled an increase twice the national average for this indicator.

Individuals have taken on a mentoring role (paid and unpaid), forty five mentors have been recruited from the Local Authority and local private sector businesses to work with secondary school pupils on a one-to-one basis.

A wide range of activities have occurred including over 2100 primary school pupils and 560 secondary school pupils participating in a recycling scheme with a local firm supported by Hartlepool Borough Council, an outreach programme has been established with a local call centre and a network of work-related learning co-ordinators from secondary schools has been established.

It is difficult to show a direct correlation between this element of the initiative and the pupil's performance but this (anecdotally) does occur.

This element of the initiative has proved to be very successful and is continuing for the next two years.

◆ Attendance and Behaviour

This initiative is in its early stages. The focus is on specific concerns. The two secondary schools within the NRF wards had concerns over attendance and behaviour issues. The secondary schools have established 'Learning Support Units' in the schools which involves both Capital and Revenue funding. Once established, a Learning Support Unit is relatively easy for a school to maintain. The hope is that the intervention will (in this case) establish principles/accepted standards of behaviour that will persist in the long term within the school culture as perceived by the pupils of the school.

Achievements of the Intervention

Main achievements

The initiative is on-going, but more than 60 jobs have been created to date, 40 of which are local to the NRF area. Summer 2002 and 2003 examination results show in primary schools an additional 66 NRF pupils reached Level 4 in English and 64 in Mathematics who otherwise would not have done so. 2002 results represent a 3% contribution to the overall Hartlepool LEA Level 4 and above pupil percentages.

Value added data showed all NRF targeted pupils made some progress as a result of the intervention.

Secondary school data shows an additional 50 NRF pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE who would otherwise not have been expected to do so. (23 pupils in 2002, 27 pupils in 2003.) In

Summer 2002 NRF enabled an increase which was twice the national average.

Value added data showed an additional 40 pupils made better than expected progress.

◆ General Issues Support Staff

Within the primary school attendance project element of the initiative there was an improvement of 16.5% amongst the target group. Punctuality improved from 378 episodes of lateness to 101.

The primary school behaviour project element of the initiative has provided individual pupil support to over sixty pupils since April 2002.

◆ Pilot Laptop Scheme

Within one primary school which was a part of this element of the initiative the most noticeable change in pupils behaviour was in their attitude towards producing written work as a part of the Literacy Hour. The laptops have proved to be a valuable resource and incentive for motivating children towards written work.

One pupil who has transferred to secondary school illustrates the value of this element of the initiative. At the commencement of his involvement in the initiative he had behaviour and attitude problems, using the laptop he became interested in the presentation and drafting possibilities of the word-processor. Consequent upon this his output of work increased (as did the volume of work he produced via handwriting.) The primary school recently had the pleasure of discussing his progress with the 'Gifted and Talented' Co-ordinator of the Secondary school which he now attends.

◆ Education Business Links

An outreach has been established with a local call centre.

In February 2003 work commenced with a catering company utilising groups of six children every two weeks to prepare products which are sold to other businesses. The work involves literacy, numeracy, personal and social skill practice and development.

A successful design challenge sponsored by a local ICT company has been held which involved local primary schools and a local newspaper.

45 mentors have been recruited from the Local Authority and local private sector businesses to work with secondary school pupils on a one-to-one basis.

Mainstreaming Strategy

The initiative has indicated changes in ways of learning and support provision which can be addressed via future changes in mainstream operation and structures (where appropriate.)

The Learning Curve

Early consultation with main stakeholders (in this case the schools affected by the initiative) is essential as they possess an understanding of the issues in the areas in which they are located and the possibilities/potentials of initiative related activities.

The initiative, although focused on education has, via its implementation, had an effect on local employment opportunities with the NRF ward areas.

Education Department School Advisors act as 'information sources' spreading good/innovative practice between schools and thus have played a key role in setting up informal information networks.

It is useful to have appropriate budgetary paperwork and systems in place at an early stage in regards to, for example, staff appointments within the NRF budget stream.

Key Lessons

Consultation with actual and potential stakeholders is essential.

To a certain extent, even if the targeted child does not attain the floor target there is still a 'pay-off' in that the child's attainment level has risen from that which it otherwise would have been. At the primary school level this improvement in attainment will have a beneficial effect for the child in their secondary school career.

The full impact of the initiative will not be capable of assessment until the last child subject to the initiative has completed their school career (to GCSE level.)

Contact Details

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