

Education Strategy

2022–2027



Lewisham



Introduction

CLlr Chris Barnham Cabinet Member for Children and Young People



I know from personal experience how important education can be in opening doors for young people. In ensuring that any child, whatever their background and starting point, can achieve their ambitions.

Great things are already achieved by Lewisham young people. Almost all our schools are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted. Many more of our children progress to higher education than the national average.

But there is more to be done to ensure that every child has the best chance to succeed. And there is a determination in our community to work with our schools to make that happen.

This document sets out how our schools will work together, and how we as the local authority will work with them, to build an inclusive and high-achieving system of local comprehensive schools, trusted by our community, in which all children can succeed; a network of local schools which promotes a positive culture to foster and celebrate achievement, respect equality, and reflect our diversity.

Recent years have been a challenge for schools and children, and they have not had the support from central government that they deserve, but we will not let that deflect us from doing everything we can locally to support them; to enable them to work within a framework of values and ambitions that is shared with parents, local community, other schools, and the local authority and related agencies.

I strongly believe – and growing evidence supports this – that schools are more likely to succeed if they work within this kind of supportive local ecology. That is what this strategy will build. On behalf of the local authority, and the people we represent, I am happy to pledge our every effort to help our schools and our children to achieve the success they deserve.

An education strategy for our time and place



Our children and young people are ambitious and aspirational and now is a great time for us to reset our priorities for their education and learning to meet this ambition and aspiration. To do this, we need to reflect on their life experiences and the world we are preparing them for.

We need to use the lessons learned during the pandemic in our planning. We cannot underestimate its impact upon children, young people and families. It worsened educational outcomes and widened inequalities¹. Those who had access to fewer resources found it more difficult to learn at home and young people told us how it affected their social lives, physical and mental health and families' economic situations.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

Lewisham schools and settings showed great resilience and dedication in facing the challenges of the pandemic – making sure learning could continue, whilst keeping everyone safe. At the heart of their communities, schools supported children and families – particularly those who are more vulnerable – in partnership with one another, the Council, Public Health and community organisations.

¹ Education Endowment Foundation, (2022) The Impact of Covid-19 on Learning

The current economic crisis means that more young people and their families are experiencing hardship and poverty. School leaders told us about some of the ways they continue to support them and the need for even more support. This strategy will align with wider Council work to work on issues such as food poverty and digital exclusion.

“The evidence is conclusive: equity in education pays off. The highest performing education systems... combine high quality and equity”.

(OECD 2012)

Global events in recent years have shone a light on long-standing inequalities and discrimination in society. There are historic, systemic inequalities in educational outcomes² – not just in Lewisham, but in London and the UK- particularly for Black Caribbean and dual heritage (White/Black Caribbean) pupils.

Children and young people told us about their determination to strive for race, gender, disability and LGBTQ+ equity and equality of opportunity for everyone. We believe that the diversity of our population is one of our greatest strengths. Our strategy will build on the work of Lewisham schools (through the Tackling Race Inequalities in Education (TRIIE) programme), the community and the Council to collaborate in striving for equity.

“The purpose of education should be about learning to thrive in a transforming world.”

Valerie Hannon

Preparing for the future

We are living in times of incredible pace of change in technology, society, employment, leisure; alongside critical financial and environmental sustainability issues. Young people told us that the school curriculum should take account of these issues, particularly how they communicate, connect and access information and prepare them for the world of work. We will support schools to collaborate to build on the new ways of working, teaching and learning which emerged during the pandemic and develop a rich and relevant curriculum which prepares their pupils for the future.

² OECD (2012), Equity and quality in education: Supporting disadvantaged students and schools.

The context for Lewisham schools and settings

Lewisham has great schools (98% judged good or outstanding by Ofsted at time of publication), run by highly skilled and committed leaders and governors, who are managing a range of challenges, notably financial challenges. Primary pupil numbers have fallen by 10% in the last five years impacted by lower birth-rates and high mobility (exacerbated by Brexit and the cost of living in London).

Secondary schools face competition for applications from cross-border schools, although work to promote our secondary schools resulted in a 9.3% increase in first preferences for Lewisham secondaries between 2021 and 2022.

School budgets have reduced in recent years as a result of a combination of falling rolls, increasing staffing, energy, building and supplies costs and funding settlements which have not matched these increases. This financial pressure will continue and the financial advice we give to schools will be crucial.

The 2022 schools white paper also argued for changes in national education policy which will shape how we plan and deliver services to schools. This includes a commitment by the current Government of a fully multi academy trust (MAT) led system for 2030. There are currently 12 academies in Lewisham. Lewisham does not believe that the governance of a school (LA maintained, single Academy, Free School, MAT, Voluntary Aided or Controlled, Foundation Trust), is the key mechanism of ensuring that children have the very best of educational outcomes. What is more important is the leadership within the school, the quality of learning and teaching, the relevance of the curriculum and how the school works within its community.

In a shifting policy landscape, the Local Authority (LA) still has a legal duty, 'to promote high standards and ensure that every child fulfils his or her educational potential'³. We see our role as championing all children and young people, particularly those who are vulnerable and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We remain committed to supporting the 'family of Lewisham schools' with Lewisham Learning and the Council playing a brokering role amongst schools and settings and between schools and key partners. Evidence show us that successful partnerships are can drive up standards, promote inclusion and broaden opportunities for all⁴. These partnerships are also crucial to keeping children and young people safe and well - physically and mentally. The 2022 white paper includes plans to strengthen this role for the LA, to support children with low school attendance.



“There is considerable evidence that school-to-school collaboration can strengthen improvement processes by adding to the range of expertise made available.”

Mel Ainscow

³ Section 13A of the Education Act 1996,

⁴ Armstrong, P. and Ainscow, M. (2018) School-to-school support within a competitive education system: views from the inside. *School Effectiveness, School Improvement*, 29:4, 614-633

Improving schools

Lewisham Learning is the schools/LA partnership which delivers and brokers school improvement to Lewisham schools. It is overseen by a partnership board and has developed successful collaboration, school to school support and strategic curriculum hub models which have supported improved Ofsted outcomes. There is still work to do however, to improve outcomes, particularly for our 16 year olds (Appendix 3) and for those groups of children our system has not supported well enough to achieve their potential. This includes continuing to reduce school exclusions and address disproportionate representation of specific groups of young people. We are working with school leaders and governors to plan the next steps for school improvement in Lewisham.

The partnership working to support our children and young people

Children and young people are at the heart of our Education Strategy as well as that of the Council's Corporate Strategy. The strategy will sit alongside other key strategies that support our broader ambitions for children and young people in Lewisham.

Existing strategies working together



“If we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness.”

Malala Yousafzai

Some of the broader aims for Children and Young People in Lewisham are:

- A single access point for families and children for services so that children can access the right help more quickly, including emotional and mental health support, as well as wider family support.
- Redesigning our local SEND system to provide earlier support and improve outcome for those with SEND.
- The development of a wider adolescent strategy which will incorporate our current exploitation strategy but offer a more joined up response to our young people who are struggling to achieve their potential.
- Development of Family Hubs and area based Family Help/Family Thrive teams.
- Help more children to live within their extended family or friends' network if they cannot remain at home.
- Build trust with our local communities that we are here to make a positive difference with their and our children, despite the context of wider structural inequalities.
- A great Childrens Service for our children and young people.

Co-production of the strategy

Lewisham Education Strategy 2022-2027 has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders: children and young people; parents/carers; community groups; head teachers and governors; members of Lewisham Learning board and the schools' Tackling Race Inequality steering group, the local area SEND partnership board and wider Council services.



Ambitious, aspiring learners in Lewisham

We asked young people in our secondary schools and the Young Advisors what they want from their education. This is what they told us:

'Aspiration, ambition, confidence, resilience.'

'Good physical and mental health.'

'To feel safe at home, school and out and about.'

'To be treated with fairness, honesty and trust.'

'Opportunities for all which build talent and celebrate the successes of every child.'

'Help to overcome things that make learning difficult.'

'To be ready for future opportunities – able to work, give to our community and deal with the pressures of life.'

'Meaningful, relevant learning; creativity, enterprise and life skills as well as grades.'

'Schools talking openly about today's issues – racism, misogyny, climate change, poverty.'

'Modern teaching – using up-to-date technology and communication.'

'Information and preparation for successful transitions.'

'More help for parents/carers to understand what school is like for us.'

'To have our say in their education and in helping to shape plans.'

We asked children in our primary schools what they were most proud of about their education:

"I'm proud that my school is full of different amazing people"
Winston, age 7

"I'm just really proud of what I've achieved – handwriting and spelling everything really correctly"
Zara age 10

"I'm proud that when the challenges get harder, the teachers help you. My friends help me and I help them when it's maths"
Reggie age 9

"I'm proud that my school has a silver medal for rights respecting. Everyone has the right to learn."
Almidus age 8

"I'm proud that my teachers help us with problems and if you're upset"
Adele age 8

"I'm proud that you can learn new things about each other – where you come from, about your family and the things you like"
Gabriella age 7

"We need to learn more maths. I want to be a footballer but I'll still need maths for shopping and counting the goals"
Louis age 8

"I want to learn science, computing and coding. It's important for getting a house, getting a new phone and in your job"
Gabriella age 7

Ambitious, aspiring parents, carers and communities in Lewisham

Parents and carers and the community are ambitious for their children. They told us that they want clear information to be able to make the best choices for them. They want good schools and colleges in Lewisham where children from all backgrounds and heritages are included and do well and where this is the expectation of everyone in the school. They welcome the work in schools to tackle inequality, particularly the Tackling Race Inequality in Education (TRIIE) programme, but reminded us that there is still much work to do in addressing inequalities in exclusions, qualifications and opportunities.

They feel that the Council needs to celebrate the incredible achievements of their children. They want to have confidence in Lewisham schools and feel that schools too should celebrate their own achievements and those of their children.

They want more opportunities to work with schools; to have shared expectations of each other, particularly at secondary transfer when rules and expectations change. They want schools to support them to help their children learn and develop and use the lessons from home learning during the pandemic to think about how we do this for all families. Access to technology for learning and on-line safety are key concerns.

Above all, parents, carers and communities want their children to be safe, well and able to thrive and learn so they are ready to embrace their futures.



Ambitious, aspiring school leaders in Lewisham

School leaders told us that we must maintain a focus on learning and teaching and improving outcomes for all children and young people. We need to build on the Lewisham Learning model towards a self-sustaining system by strengthening and increasing collaborative partnerships. School leaders recognise that, whilst schools are responsible for their own high performance and academic achievement, collaboration with other schools and settings is key to their success, alongside high quality support services to schools.

To have expertise in schools and settings, we need to recruit and retain good people and develop their skills, with succession planning fostering tomorrow's leaders. Planning for sustainability is a real concern for school and setting leaders.

We also need to build on centrally co-ordinated support around priorities, such as contextual safeguarding, tackling race inequality, inclusion, SEND, climate change and Public Health issues. They need support from a 'joined-up' local authority and multi-agency partnerships which promote good health and wellbeing, inclusion and positive cultures, with early help for those who need it.

There is a consensus among school leaders that they want clear accountability frameworks - not just through published outcomes, Ofsted etc. but also accountability around inclusion and equality, based upon shared responsibility for all our children and young people. School leaders want to work in a culture where they can be reflective and open in sharing and learning from good practice.



Our shared vision for education in Lewisham 2022–2027

In Lewisham we have high aspirations for all our children and young people, whatever their starting point.

We want all children and young people to have access to excellent education in Lewisham, so they can fulfil their true potential.

We want them to have quality learning pathways from early childhood to adulthood which enable them to thrive and develop the life skills they will need.

We want inclusive education where everyone has a sense of belonging and can be confident they will fit in, feel positive and safe in their identity and in their community.



Six fundamentals – the key principals underpinning and guiding Lewisham Education Strategy

Collective responsibility

Developing collective responsibility for the wellbeing and achievement of all our children and young people, wherever they are educated.

Inclusion

The ambition to have an inclusive education system and inclusive schools where every child and young person knows they belong, are celebrated, and can fulfil their potential.

Equity

A wider system and individual schools with strong, positive cultures which promote respect and equality; actively tackle inequality; celebrating diversity. Equity is our road to excellence.

Collaboration

Harness collective capacity, foster innovation and excellent achievement.

Proactivity and prevention

Anticipating issues early and developing the strengths and resources needed to proactively improve wellbeing and outcomes for our children and young people, avoiding reactive and often expensive intervention.

Sustainability

Provide structures that are financially sustainable over the course of the strategy and beyond, increasing resilience and maximising expertise to improve outcomes.

Priorities

In support of the key principles, we worked with stakeholders to identify five priorities with the key actions we need to take to achieve them and the success measures we will use to identify if these have been achieved.

Education Priorities

Priority 1

A place in a good school/setting for all our children and young people

Priority 2

Supporting all our children and young people to reach their potential and be ready for their future

Priority 3

Embedding a culture of inclusion and equity

Priority 4

Collaborative school improvement to raise standards and meet priorities

Priority 5

Supporting the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of all children and young people



Priority 1

A place in a good school/setting for all our children and young people

What we need to do

1. Effective planning of high-quality school places (including for SEND) to meet demand through continuous monitoring and review of population projections.
2. Work proactively with schools to develop clusters and collaborations, particularly where around reorganisation or change to existing provision for sustainability.
3. Lewisham schools for Lewisham children and young people: increase provision locally for our more complex children and young people.
4. Review Lewisham's alternative provision, to ensure it meets need and supports inclusion across the sector.
5. Continue to promote Lewisham schools, with a focus on secondary transfer.
6. Sufficient early years education through strategic planning and support to the local childcare market and quality of provision.
7. Work in partnership with providers to develop a relevant and comprehensive post-16 offer for Lewisham, including apprenticeships.
8. Develop costed, sustainable LA services to schools which support their efficient running, sustainability, health and safety, people management and financial stability.
9. Support schools to develop recruitment and retention plans to ensure there are well qualified, skilled staff in schools and settings to support pupils.

Measuring success

School places reflect demand

Reduced number of vacancies in schools

Increased number of applications to Lewisham secondary schools

Sufficient early years places available and increased percentage settings that are OFSTED good or outstanding

More children and young people with SEND access provision in Lewisham

Increased proportion of young people accessing post 16 provision in the borough

Increased take-up levels of services to schools

Priority 2

Supporting all our children and young people to reach their potential and be ready for their future

What we need to do

1. Ensure high take up of Early Years government funded places for eligible 2, 3 and 4 year olds.
2. Continue to build upon the Early Years partnerships to support home learning; personal, social and emotional, communication and physical development (Healthy Early Years, Making it Real early language programme).
3. Strengthen information sharing to support effective transitions from EY settings in to primary school.
4. Build on work to develop consistent two-way information sharing at secondary transfer.
5. Strategic focus on core skills of English and Maths across the age sectors.
6. Support schools and settings to maximise the use of flexible, multi-faceted teaching and learning opportunities, for example, promoting coding and e-safety.
7. Support the development of comprehensive pathways that will enable school leavers to progress their learning and secure positive labour market outcomes, including children looked after and those with SEND.
8. 2023 review of SEND strategy.
9. Refine use of LA and school level data to identify target areas for improvement (demographic/attainment groups and subjects).
10. Facilitate best practice sharing around strategies to support parents to engage in their children's learning, working in partnership with community and parent groups.
11. Work with young people, community groups, business and enterprise to maximise opportunities for learning life skills; inspirational advice around careers and motivation.
12. Work with Young Mayor's Team to build on development of Lewisham Curriculum for Life, participation and engagement and service planning.

Measuring success

Increased take up of 2, 3 and 4 year olds Early Years entitlements

Increased proportion of pupils achieving at and above expected in English and Maths at KS2 (overall and for underachieving groups)

Increased proportion of pupils achieving standard passes at GCSE in both Maths and English (overall and for underachieving groups) and EBacc

Low percentage and reduced disproportionality for pupils that become NEET

Priority 3

Embedding a culture of inclusion and equity

What we need to do

1. Work with schools to define a Lewisham inclusive, equitable school and education service; developing a framework for self-evaluation and accountability
2. Continue to work with schools and settings to address the attainment gap for identified groups of children and young people.
3. Proactively increase early support for children at risk of permanent exclusion or suspension through developing our offer of early intervention and supportive alternative education.
4. Implement new duties around recording, monitoring and improving attendance.
5. Effectively track and support children in need and those with a child protection plan in education.
6. Continue implementation of TRIIE programme, with a heightened focus on behaviour and inclusion, addressing disproportionality issues for black Caribbean and mixed heritage pupils.
7. Multi-agency approach to supporting schools to build positive cultures for all, including race, gender, disability and LGBTQ+ positivity.
8. Refine use of data from a range of sources so that schools, setting and services have a true picture of the equity of their policies, procedures and curriculum.
9. Ensure schools and settings are at the heart of Lewisham Council's digital inclusion strategy, maximising opportunities for support for children and young people.

Measuring success

Reduced permanent exclusions at secondary

Rate of suspensions at both primary and secondary decrease

Maintained high levels of school attendance, especially for the most vulnerable cohort of pupils

Reduction in the number of suspensions for pupils with SEND

Reduction in the attainment gap of identified groups of pupils in comparison to their peers (see Priority area 3)

Priority 4

Collaborative school improvement to raise standards and meet priorities

What we need to do

1. Continue to focus school/setting improvement activity on teaching and learning; exciting, relevant curricula; inclusion and narrowing the attainment gap between identified groups of pupils and their peers.
2. Continue to develop the Lewisham Learning school improvement framework and model of school improvement so as to develop expertise within the school community to drive up standards.
3. Continued support for school leaders and governors to ensure national and local priorities are addressed, with a focus on closing attainment gaps and supporting a culture of safeguarding.
4. Facilitate schools coming together to develop holistic, creative and innovative curriculum models which prepare our children and young people for the future.
5. Further development of traded services to ensure the continuity of support for schools beyond statutory functions.
6. Continue to build and develop collaborative networks through engaging school leaders and governors to develop a self-sustaining, system led model.
7. Ensure that schools who are at risk of falling into an Ofsted Requires Improvement/ Inadequate category are proactively supported to avoid this outcome.
8. Facilitate the sharing of expertise and evidence building to foster innovation and excellent achievement.

Measuring success

- Percentage of schools are OFSTED rated as good or outstanding
- Percentage of children and young people attending a good or outstanding school
- Reduction in the attainment gap for identified groups of pupils in comparison to their peers
- Improve borough performance in key indicators, benchmarked against London and national performance

Priority 5

Supporting the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of all children and young people

What we need to do

1. Ensure schools and settings are at the heart of Lewisham's Early Help and Prevention Strategic Plan.
2. Maximise opportunities for support for mental health and wellbeing in schools: roll out of a range of initiatives including Mental Health Support Teams in Schools (MHST) and developing offer of support in schools not yet able to access MHST.
3. Review of 'healthy schools activity' in the borough to identify where action is needed.
4. Ensure early identification and proactive intervention for pupils with behaviours resulting from anxieties and post-pandemic issues.
5. Strong partnership approach to safeguarding in schools, incorporating locality safeguarding hubs; multi-agency work to protect those at risk of exploitation and policy, process and a curriculum (including Relationships and Sex Education) which empowers children and young people to stay safe.
6. Improve information to schools and availability/co-ordination of therapeutic services for all children and young people who need them.
7. Support school to maximise opportunities for providing school food and deliver key initiatives such as the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme.
8. Promote opportunities to develop outdoor education and other extra-curricular activities to ensure they are promoted to vulnerable groups of pupils to support emotional health and wellbeing.
9. Maximise opportunities to support parents and families in their role of bringing up their children.

Measuring success

More children and young people accessing, engaging and participating in education

Improved health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people, as measured by evidence-based programmes

Decrease in acute presentations at paediatric services due to earlier recognition and referrals of children and young people in crisis

Increase in the take up of eligible children of places provided through the Holiday Activity and Food programme during school holidays

Delivery and monitoring of the Education Strategy

We will produce an annual delivery plan identifying key actions outcomes and timeframes for working on the priorities in the strategy.

Strong leadership and collaboration across the partnership will drive the work of the Education Strategy forward providing quality and assurance, reporting to Lewisham Learning Board and the Children and Young People's Select Committee.

We will ensure that stakeholders are fully engaged and involved, and their interests taken into consideration by continuing to talk to children and young people, parents and carers, community groups and our schools and settings.

We will be developing policies, practices and processes that reflect the changing needs of our schools and communities, guided by data, evidence and the experiences of children, young people and their families.



Appendix 1 Glossary

Term	Explanation
Academy	A state-funded school which is run by an academy trust (not-for-profit companies) and directly funded by the Department for Education
A Level	Advanced Level qualifications for students aged 16 and above.
AP	Alternative provision: places that provide education for children who are unable to go to a mainstream school.
ARP	Additionally resourced provision for children with special educational needs which is part of a mainstream school
Attainment 8	Accountability measure introduced in 2016. This calculates how well each pupil did across 4 elements (or 'buckets'):
	· English – double weighted and best result of English Language or English Literature;
	· Mathematics – double-weighted;
	· English Baccalaureate (EBacc) – three EBacc GCSEs (best results in science, humanities (history / geography) and languages);
	· Other best results in 3 other subjects
Brexit	British exit from the European Union: the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services that support young people with their mental health.
DfE	Department for Education: a department of the UK Government responsible for child protection, education (compulsory, further and higher education), apprenticeships and wider skills in England
Digital learning	Learning facilitated by technology
DSG	Dedicated Schools Grant: is a ring-fenced grant of which the majority is used to fund individual school budgets in maintained schools, academies and free schools
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions: government department responsible for employment and benefits



EBacc	English Baccalaureate: a set of subjects designated by central government as giving a collection of qualifications at GCSE which gives young people wide and flexible career choices. In 2022 this is English language and literature, maths, the sciences, geography or history, a language
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan: a document setting out the education, health and social care needs of a child or young person for whom extra support is needed in school
EAL	English as an additional language
ESOL	English as a second or other language
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage – learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years
EU	European Union: an economic and political partnership between 27 countries
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education: main qualification at year 11 (age 16)
GLD	Good level of development: as assessed at the end of early years foundation stage
IAG	Information, advice and guidance: to assist in career, training and academic choices and pathways
IT	Information technology
KS1	Key Stage 1: school years 1 and 2 (infants) (ages 5 to 7)
KS2	Key Stage 2: school years 3 to 6 (juniors) (ages 8 to 11)
KS3	Key Stage 3: school years 7 to 9 (ages 12 to 14)
KS4	Key Stage 4: school years 10 and 11 (ages 15 to 16)
KS5	Key Stage 5: school years 12 and 13 (sixth form)
Lewisham Learning	Partnership established by school leaders and the local authority to deliver high quality school improvement to all Lewisham schools.



LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning
MAT	Multi Academy Trust a not-for profit company which runs more than one state-funded school which is directly funded by the Department for Education
NEET	Not in employment, education or training post 16
NHS	National Health Service: Government-funded medical and health care services that everyone living in the UK can use without being asked to pay the full cost of the service
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development: intergovernmental economic organisation with 38 member countries founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills: Inspects services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. It also inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people
ONS	Office for National Statistics: the UK’s largest independent producer of official statistics, and the recognised national statistical institute of the UK. It is responsible for collecting and publishing statistics related to the economy, population and society at national, regional, and local levels
PAN	Published Admission Numbers the maximum number of pupils that the school/ admission authority will admit to each year group
Phonics Screening	Assesses how well children can use phonic decoding at the end of Year 1. Phonic decoding is using the sounds that letters and groups of letters make when spoken to learn to read
PRU	Pupil referral unit: provision for children excluded from mainstream school or in need of specialist provision because unable to attend school
PVI	Private, voluntary or independent early years setting
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability

