

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN HACKNEY



*This book is dedicated to
all those who have
contributed to the remarkable
transformation in the depth,
range and quality of learning
opportunities in Hackney
between 2002 and 2012.*



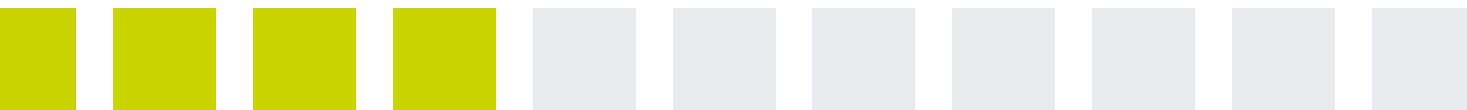
the learning trust
the future for education in Hackney

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INTRODUCTION

10 YEARS TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN HACKNEY

After a decade of responsibility for education in Hackney, The Learning Trust can reflect upon numerous accomplishments reaching across many areas. There has been sustained, across the board, improvement in educational outcomes:

- In 2006, the percentage of children reaching a good level of development at the Foundation Stage in Hackney schools and settings was 12 percentage points below the national level. By 2011, the percentage of children reaching a good level of development in Hackney had increased by 21 percentage points, and the gap to the national level had halved over this period.
- In 2011, Hackney primary schools achieved the biggest Key Stage 2 improvement of any Local Authority in England. The increases in Key Stage 2 English and Maths put Hackney above the London and England averages.
- In 2011, secondary school students in Hackney achieved their best ever GCSE results: 58% of students achieved five A*-C grade GCSEs, including English and Maths.
- In 2011, 75% of secondary school students in Hackney achieved 5+A*-C grades at GCSE, an increase of 44 percentage points over 10 years.
- Hackney's A/AS level results in 2011 were the best so far achieved. With more students achieving better A/AS results than ever before, Hackney has been recognised as the most improved Local Authority in England.

There has been an increase in the number of schools in Hackney, as well as considerable investment in repairing and renovating established schools:

- Five new Academies have been designed, built and opened in Hackney over the last eight years.
- A number of primary, secondary and special schools have been extensively renovated or, in some cases, rebuilt to provide pupils with state of the art facilities in which to learn.
- As a result of improved provision and the steady expansion of secondary school places, 82% of pupils who transfer from Hackney's primary schools in Year 6 choose to stay in the borough for their secondary education.

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- Twenty-one children's centres throughout the borough are providing co-ordinated early years education, development and care, enabling young children to learn through play and providing support to their parents.

In the course of the last decade, The Learning Trust has contributed to the increasing number of opportunities for young people in Hackney to participate in sport and the performing arts:

- Since 2008, the annual Hackney Schools Sports Championship has become an unrivalled, inspiring event promoting inclusion through a range of disabled sports: athletics, archery, boccia, visually impaired (VI) football, goalball, judo, new age kurling, sailing, swimming and wheelchair basketball.
- The significant impact of the Hackney Music Service has been crucial to the remarkable success of the Hackney Youth Orchestra. Hackney has become a partner borough in a music project with the Barbican and the Guildhall.
- The Learning Trust's Performing Arts Strategy has contributed to the development of a drama project in partnership with the Barbican Box.
- An introduction to poetry project is being developed for September 2012, the aim of which will be to support literacy through poetry and drama.



The links between schools and businesses in Hackney have strengthened considerably over the last ten years, providing greater opportunities for high quality careers advice, mentoring programmes and work experience.

- East London Business Alliance's (ELBA) Schools Mentoring Programme in Hackney matches around 300 students a year with business mentors from City companies. Hackney students are helped to broaden their horizons, increase attainment and gain the confidence and skills necessary for employment.
- Through Business in the Community, UBS has focussed on education and regeneration in Hackney for more than twenty years. Since 2003, UBS has also sponsored the Bridge Academy, Hackney, which opened in 2007.

Ten years ago

In 2002, when The Learning Trust took responsibility for education in Hackney, the circumstances were very different to those today, which allows the extent of the accomplishments of the past ten years to be seen in context. In 2002:

- More than half of the 11 years olds leaving Hackney's primary schools went to secondary schools in neighbouring boroughs: Islington, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. In some cases pupils went even further afield, to South London or Essex and Hertfordshire.
- Low standards of pupil attainment and low staff morale in Hackney's schools were frequently identified in Ofsted inspections and other reports. Thirteen primary schools had been placed in special measures by Ofsted.
- The Key Stage 2 results in 2002 were the worst in England, with Hackney ranked as the bottom LEA for English, Maths and Science.
- The GCSE results in 2002 showed that only one third (31%) of Hackney students achieved 5+A*-C grades.
- As a result of underfunding and a lack of capital investment, many school buildings were in a poor condition, their facilities having a detrimental impact on learning.
- Recruiting high-quality teachers, particularly filling vacancies for headteachers, posed a continual challenge.
- Adult learners found the training they were offered of variable quality both in terms of the teaching and the relevance of the courses.

An unprecedented request

The abolition of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) in 1990 shifted responsibility for the provision of education to the London Boroughs, including Hackney.

By the end of the 1990s, Hackney Council's financial and corporate weaknesses were having a detrimental impact on education within the borough. In the first of three inspection reports over four years, Ofsted identified:

"The lack of a clear priority for education in the council's strategic planning and the poor service provided by the council's systems on finance, information and communication technology and in the management of central trading units".¹

Following this critical Ofsted inspection report in March 1999, Hackney became the first Local Education Authority to have a number of its responsibilities contracted out to a private company; Nord Anglia secured a three-year contract to run the School Improvement and Ethnic Minority Achievement Services.

The tipping point was reached twenty months later, in November 2000. In that month the Audit Commission's Corporate Governance inspection of Hackney reported that the borough was facing an estimated deficit at £21million². At the same time, Ofsted's third inspection report since 1997 drew attention to the recent resignation of the director of education, Elizabeth Reid. This was, the inspectors judged, "only the latest in a series of crises resulting from the continued ineptitude of the corporate management of the council"³. The report went on to record the extent of the apprehension and disquiet among schools in Hackney. Headteachers had made "an unprecedented request to be removed from the control of the LEA"³. The Ofsted Inspection report concluded: "the time has come for radical change"³.

1. Ofsted Inspection of Hackney Local Education Authority, February 1999.

2. Hackney LBC Corporate Governance Inspection, Audit Commission, November 2000.

3. Ofsted Inspection of Hackney Local Education Authority, November 2000.

Radical change – The Learning Trust

The Learning Trust was created to provide the radical change Ofsted called for - to secure the "stable context for continuous educational improvement" the November 2000 inspection report had identified as being at risk from Hackney Council's wider corporate and financial difficulties.

The Secretary of State for Education & Skills, therefore, directed Hackney Council to enter into a contract with an independent company. The Learning Trust was a not-for-profit company, established specifically to deliver education and related services within the

London Borough of Hackney for a period of ten years. The responsibilities, duties and authority of the LEA transferred to The Learning Trust on 1 August 2002.

The first chair of The Learning Trust was Sir Mike Tomlinson (2002–2007). Formerly Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools at Ofsted, he had the distinguished track record and experience that commanded respect and gave confidence. As one headteacher commented, Sir Mike Tomlinson's appointment as Chair gave The Learning Trust "street credibility and professional respectability"⁴.

Alan Wood succeeded Elizabeth Reid as Director of Education in Hackney in January 2001. In this role, he managed the transfer of education services from the council and then became Chief Executive of The Learning Trust, a position he was to occupy for the duration of the Trust's 10-year contract, providing stability and the leadership required to build strong collaborative relationships with schools, Hackney Council and partner agencies.

The Learning Trust's Board of Director's: setting the strategy, challenging the outcomes

As a company, The Learning Trust had a board of directors, the range and diversity of whose membership was designed to guarantee that the interests of key partners were represented in the decision-making process. With three headteachers and three chairs of school governing bodies, representation from the schools community formed the largest group on the Board. In addition, the Cabinet Lead Member for Children & Young People and the Chief Executive represented Hackney Council, while the Mayor of Hackney represented Team Hackney. A number of independent Non-Executive directors were appointed, enabling the Trust to draw upon valuable experience from across education and government, business and the law, the police and the voluntary sector. Sir Mike Tomlinson, was later to observe:

"The board was hugely representative of the local community. There was a synergy about it and in the end we got a board that was wide-ranging in its composition in terms of the community at large and also single-minded. The single-mindedness was that we were concerned with one thing and one thing only – education in Hackney from the cradle to the grave."⁴

4. *A Revolution in a Decade. Ten out of Ten*, Alan Boyle and Salli Humphreys, June 2012.

During the ten years of The Learning Trust's contract, the Board evolved into a mature, confident decision-making body, providing strategic leadership, oversight and constructive challenge to the Trust's executives and senior leadership team.

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The Board was collectively responsible for promoting the success of the company by directing and supervising The Learning Trust's affairs. In setting the Trust's strategic aims, the Board took ultimate responsibility for holding to account the Trust's management, ensuring the necessary financial and human resources were in place to enable the organisation to meet its objectives. Throughout the ten years of the contract, the Board set The Learning Trust's values and standards, ensuring the organisation's obligations to parents and pupils, headteachers and staff were clearly understood and successfully met.

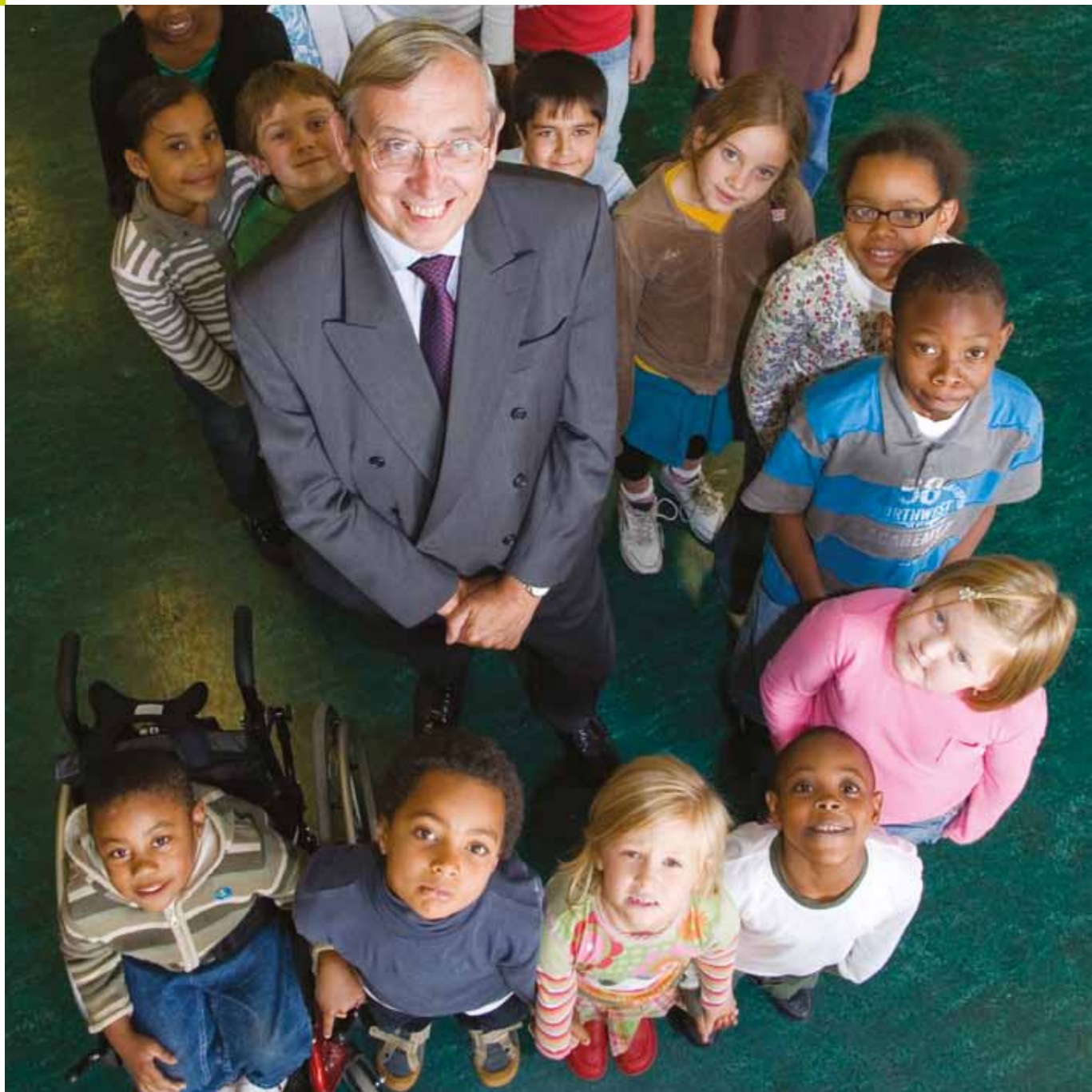
The Learning Trust did not operate in a commercial competitive market and it was not motivated by the need to make a financial profit or pay shareholders a dividend. Financial stability was provided through the contract, which protected the education budget. Any surplus generated through the organisation's efficient financial management was re-invested to meet the education priorities in the borough.

5. Ofsted Inspection of Hackney Local Education Authority, September 2003.

In its September 2003 inspection report - one year after The Learning Trust had taken responsibility for education services in Hackney - Ofsted stated that The Learning Trust had: "...done much to establish itself as a force for good", noting that "Educational decision-making is now achieved in a calm and considered context, far removed from the previous political and corporate turmoil that used to damage the delivery of services to schools."⁵







ASPIRE

A FRESH APPROACH WITH HIGH EXPECTATIONS

At his first meeting with Hackney's headteachers, Sir Mike Tomlinson outlined his vision for education in the borough: schools would be given time and the opportunity to build on good practice, while being supported to strengthen those areas requiring development. Hackney's schools would be protected from the kind of political interference Ofsted had identified in their reports, including the financial uncertainty around the education budget. The work to improve education in Hackney would be achieved in partnership between The Learning Trust and schools and settings and, in ten years time, the result would be parents struggling to get a place for their children in Hackney secondary schools.

From the beginning, The Learning Trust's vision was straightforward and, in the circumstances prevailing in Hackney in 2002, it was also ambitious:

"To provide an excellent education service so that in Hackney every child, young person and adult learner can fulfil their potential".

Sir Mike Tomlinson and Alan Wood established a fresh, positive approach to education in Hackney: traditionally low expectations were replaced with a focus on high-quality education for all learners in every school and setting. "The refusal to accept low standards wasn't just exaltation", Alan Wood said, "it was action"⁶. The Trust's initial secondary strategy, *Entitled to Succeed* committed the organisation to achieving "success and curriculum choice for Hackney students and pride for Hackney parents"⁷.

In order to accomplish this vision for improving the life chances of people living and learning in Hackney, the Trust recognised that it would need to build strong networks of children's centres, schools and other education settings. This required the Trust to be responsive to the communities it served, and to provide leadership and the necessary strategic direction necessary to relate national policy directives to local requirements.

The development of the Every Child Matters agenda in 2004 placed The Learning Trust at the heart of a strong partnership with health, social care and other agencies, dedicated to keeping children and young people safe and healthy.

In a changing, and sometimes turbulent, education environment, The Learning Trust advocated continuous improvement and encouraged innovations in the quality of teaching and learning, focussing on raising standards and improving attainment. As an organisation,

6. *A Revolution in a Decade. Ten out of Ten*, Alan Boyle and Salli Humphreys, June 2012.

7. *Entitled to Succeed: A Strategy for Secondary Education in Hackney*.

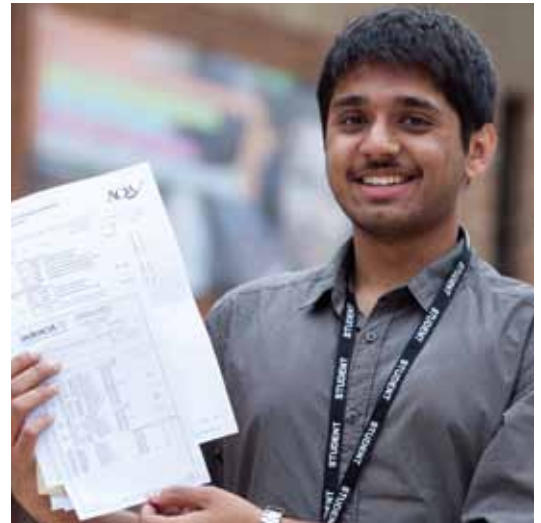
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the Trust showed flexibility and efficiency, valuing its staff and maximising their talents and commitment to improving education in Hackney.

The values The Learning Trust established ten years ago have helped to guide the organisation, giving coherence to its ambition for children, young people and adult learners in Hackney:

- **Aspire** – to become a locally and nationally recognised provider of educational and professional development excellence;
- **Achieve** – to improve standards of education across all schools, nurseries, play and other services; and
- **Innovate** – to deliver a future education agenda that will attract education professionals and learners to Hackney.







Over the last ten years, The Learning Trust has provided support and challenge to schools in Hackney in order to improve outcomes for children and young people at all levels of education. Against the historical background of low educational attainment in an economically deprived inner London borough, the Trust succeeded in raising attainment, improving standards and widening choices for the children and young people in Hackney.

The results have been striking, with the dramatic improvement in primary education and the transformation of secondary education, the strengthening and extension of Early Years provision and the revitalising of Adult Education.

In 2003, Steve Belk, a respected former headteacher of Stoke Newington School and Head of School Improvement in the London Borough of Lewisham, was appointed Executive Director for Learning & Standards. It was an appointment which underlined the seriousness of the Trust's intention to raise standards and improve schools; he was determined that the quality of all teaching should be good or better. Only good teaching would ensure children progressed, fulfilling their potential, regardless of their socio-economic background.

Building the best start in life: Early Years

High quality early years provision is essential if children are to fulfil their potential. In his 2010 report, Frank Field MP concluded that the best period in which to significantly improve children's life chances was the Foundation Stage. Pre-schooling, therefore, must be of the highest possible quality if it was to have a sustainable, long-term impact.⁸

Over ten years, The Learning Trust has worked to ensure every young child in Hackney can develop as a confident, capable learner across the Early Years curriculum. In 2006 the Childcare Act placed a duty on Local Authorities and their partner agencies to improve outcomes for all young children and reduce inequalities between them.

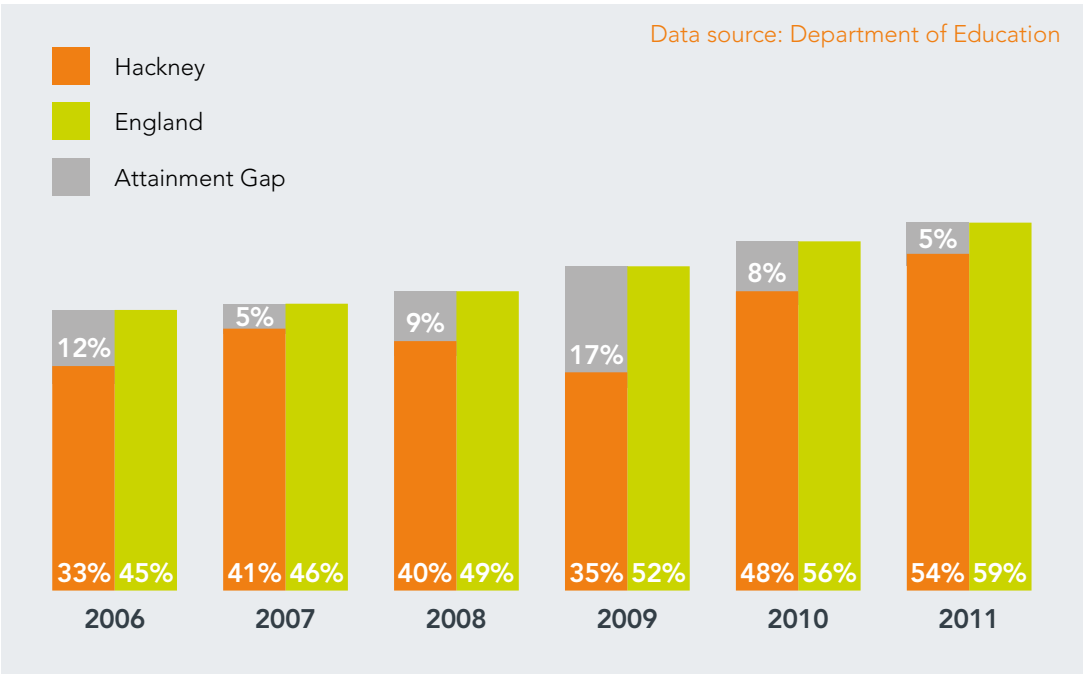
The Learning Trust took the lead in developing a strategy for improving services for young children that sought to develop the active participation of parents, whilst reducing inequalities. Parental involvement was a key factor in improving childcare and early years education. Strategies such as Every Child a Talker, and a focus on the social and emotional aspects of development supported those young children most at risk of low outcomes.

8. *The Foundation Years: Preventing Poor Children Becoming Poor Adults*, Rt. Hon Frank Field MP, December 2010.



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- The percentage of children reaching a good level of development at the Foundation Stage⁹ in Hackney schools and settings increased by six percentage points from the 2010 level, from 48% in 2010 to 54% in 2011.
- In 2006, the percentage of children reaching a good level of development at the Foundation Stage, in Hackney schools and settings was 12 percentage points below the national level. By 2011, the percentage of children reaching a good level of development in Hackney had increased by 21 percentage points and the gap to the national level had halved over this period.



9. To attain "A Good Level of Development" a child must achieve 6 or more points in both the Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and Communication Language & Literacy (CLL) scales, with a total of 78 points or more across the whole Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Table One
Percentage of Foundation Stage pupils reaching a good level of development, 2006-2011

By 2011, as measured by the Foundation Stage Profile, the outcomes for 5 year olds in Hackney had dramatically improved. The attainment gap between high and low achievers had narrowed significantly, while Hackney's young children were within five percentage points of the National Average.

There have been far-reaching changes to Early Years provision during the Trust's ten years. Increasingly, the emphasis has been on integrating service delivery, in order to meet the varied and multiple needs of children and families, in particular those who are most vulnerable. Hackney now has 21 children's centres, which evolved from the seven Sure Start Local Programmes. These were developed to ensure:

*"All children in Hackney...have opportunities to grow up in a stable environment that supports them achieving their potential and enables them to make positive contributions to our diverse society."*¹⁰

Improving teaching and learning: Primary Education

Before a long-term strategy could be put in place to deliver sustainable improvement in all schools in Hackney, The Learning Trust's immediate priority in 2002 was to assist the poorest performing schools, particularly those that were in special measures.

The Learning Trust has supported schools to make long-term improvements, to help them reach the best possible position from which they can continue to succeed. In 2012, Hackney has more good primary schools than ever before, with almost a third of primary schools (30%) judged to be outstanding.

In terms of the management and structure of primary schools, The Learning Trust met the challenges posed by a nationwide shortage of talented headteachers by encouraging federations – where a small number of underperforming primary schools were placed under the leadership of an executive headteacher, with a proven track record of success, and a single governing body.

Federations have been the subject of some controversy, the quality of teaching and learning in those schools that comprise the 'Best Start' and 'Primary Advantage' federations, however, has been significantly improved in a short space of time.

10. Children's Centre
Mission Statement,
2006.

Key Stage One

Over the past five years the Key Stage 1 attainment gap between Hackney and the National Average has been more than halved as a result of The Learning Trust's emphasis on reading, writing and numeracy.

- The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2+ in KS1 reading has increased from 72% in 2003 to 83% in 2011. Hackney is now within 2 percentage points of the national average.
- The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2+ in KS1 writing has increased from 69% in 2003 to 79% in 2011. Hackney is now within 2 percentage points of the national average.
- The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2+ in KS1 maths has increased from 78% in 2003 to 87% in 2011. Hackney is now within 3 percentage points of the national average.

Key Stage Two

Raising attainment at Key Stage 2 has been a priority for The Learning Trust since 2002. The recent increases are largely due to the investment and resulting progress made in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the improvements in reading, writing and numeracy at Key Stage 1. School improvement and raising attainment has been a sustained process across all three stages of primary education.

- In 2011, 76% of 11 year olds in Hackney achieved Level 4+ in both English and mathematics, which put the borough 2 percentage points above the national average.
- Hackney's rate of improvement has been significantly faster than the national average, from 57% in 2006 to 76% in 2011. The England average, by comparison, has risen from 70% to 74% over the same period.
- Hackney is the most improved borough in England over the 5-year period from 2007 – 2011.

Furthermore, a higher proportion of primary schools in the borough are performing above the government's floor target for Year 6 pupils achieving Level 4+ in English and maths. In 2006 only six out of ten Hackney primary schools were above the floor target; in 2011 that figure had increased to nine out of ten primary schools.

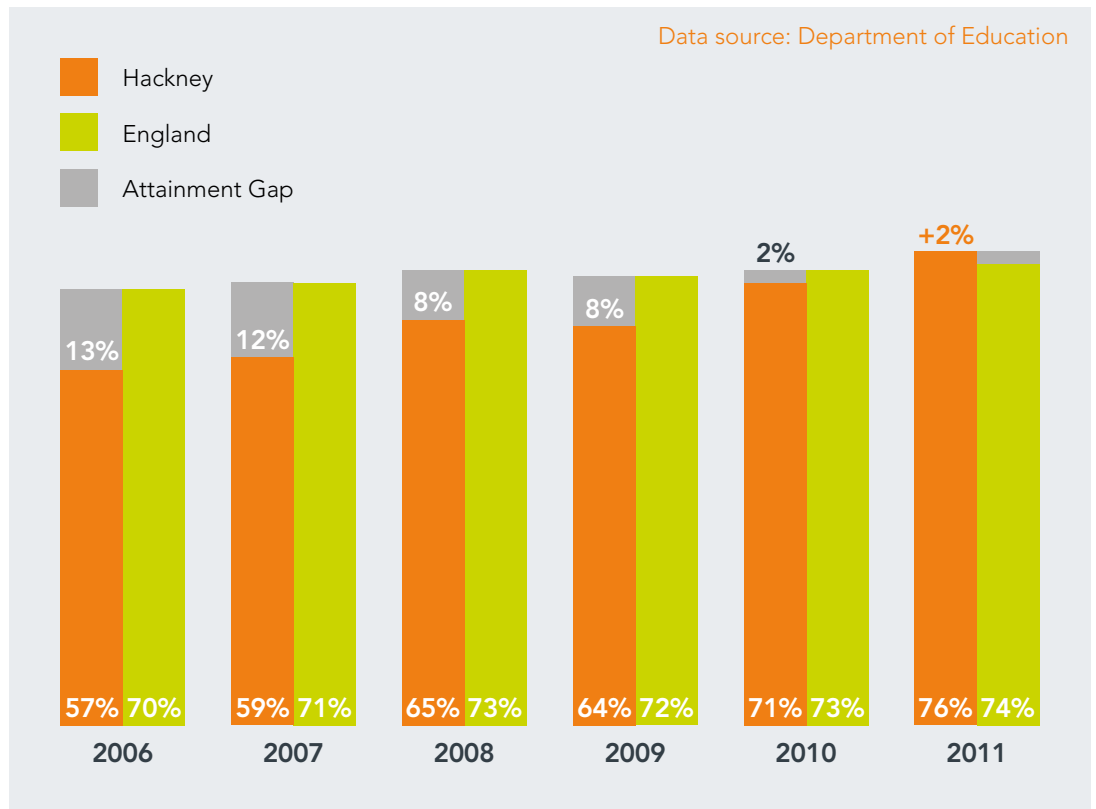


Table Two
Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 and above in Key Stage 2 English and maths, 2006-2011



A sustained upwards trajectory: Secondary Education

In August 2002, 31% of Hackney's Year 11 pupils gained 5+A*-C grades at GCSE. The attainment gap between Hackney and the national average was more than 20 percentage points. There were only three other Local Education Authorities in England with lower results.

By 2006 – the year in which the Government adjusted the national benchmark to 5+A*-C grades including English and maths – Hackney had narrowed the attainment gap to below 10 percentage points.

The progress in Hackney secondary schools has been excellent:

- The percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-C grades (including English and maths) has risen consistently from 2006, reflecting a significant rate of improvement of 20 percentage points (from 37% in 2006 to 57% in 2011).
- The percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-C grades has risen from 31% in 2002 to 75% in 2011, an improvement of 44 percentage points over ten years.

In addition, the proportion of students in Hackney who gain two good GCSEs in science subjects is now close to the national average, the proportion of students gaining a GCSE in a modern language is above the national average and, Hackney is at the national average for the new English Baccalaureate.

In 2011, no Hackney secondary school is below the Government's floor target (35%) and the majority of the borough's schools and academies are currently rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding.



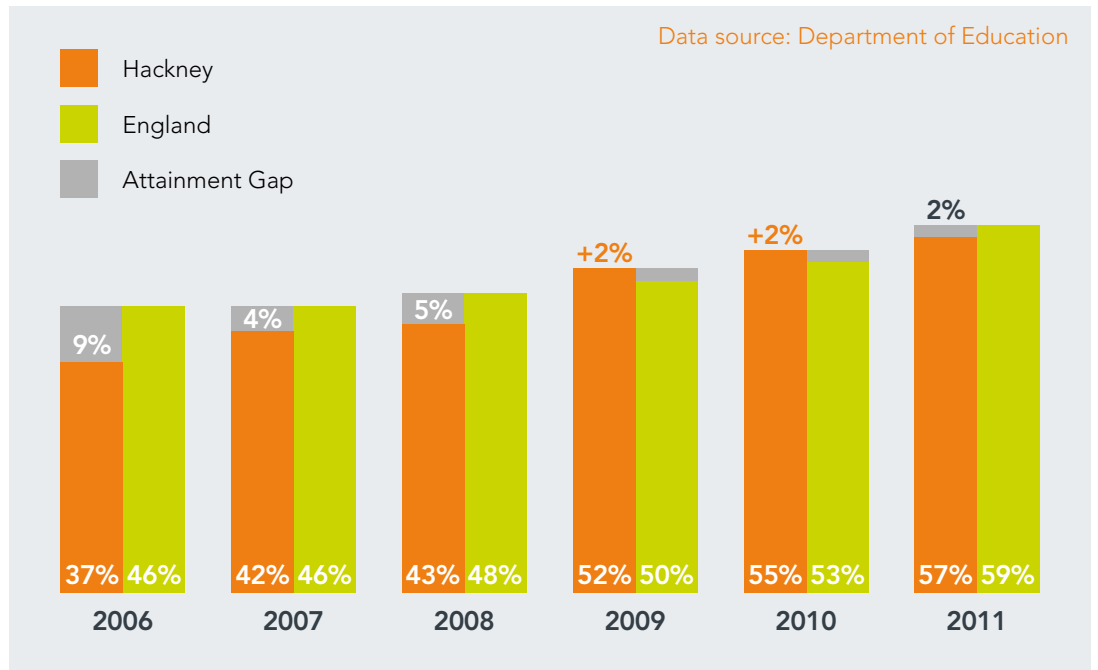


Table Three
Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs including English and maths, 2006-2011



Addressing underachievement

- In 2006, 41% of Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot pupils achieved Level 4+ in Key Stage 2 English and maths; by 2011, 66% were achieving Level 4+ in both KS2 English and maths - an improvement of 25 percentage points. Over the years 2006 to 2011, Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot boys' attainment has increased by 22 percentage points (40% in 2006; 62% in 2011).
- In 2006, 50% of Caribbean-heritage pupils achieved Level 4+ in Key Stage 2 English and maths; by 2011, 72% were achieving Level 4+ in both KS2 English and maths - an improvement of 22 percentage points. Over the years 2006-2011, Caribbean-heritage boys' attainment has increased by 24 percentage points (43% in 2006; 67% in 2011).
- Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot pupils achieving 5+A*-C grades, including English and maths, has increased from 19% in 2006 to 44% in 2011 – an improvement of 25 percentage points over six years. Over the years 2006 to 2011, Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot boys' attainment has increased by 30 percentage points (7% in 2006; 37% in 2011).
- Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of Caribbean-heritage pupils achieving 5+A*-C grades, including English and maths, has increased from 28% in 2006 to 45% in 2011 – an improvement of 17 percentage points over six years. Over the years 2006 to 2011, Caribbean-heritage boys' attainment has increased by 24 percentage points (16% in 2006; 40% in 2011).
- From 2006 to 2011, the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals achieving Level 4+ in Key Stage 2 English and maths increased by 20 percentage points, from 50% in 2006 to 70% in 2011.
- From 2006 to 2011, the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals achieving 5+A*-C GCSEs, including English and maths improved by 19 percentage points, from 28% in 2006 to 47% in 2011.





Beyond the mainstream: Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)

Supporting inclusion, ensuring schools and settings are places where every child is welcome, valued and able to enjoy their learning experience has been part of The Learning Trust's ambition for school improvement in Hackney since 2002.

The special schools and PRUs in Hackney have worked with considerable success to remove the barriers to participation and enable children and young people with Special Educational Needs or those vulnerable and disabled to fulfil their potential outside mainstream education settings.

New Regent's College combines onsite vocational courses for 14-16 year olds who have been excluded, or are at the risk of exclusion, with offsite courses tailored to individual pupil needs. In 2011, Ofsted reported that New Regent's College was good, with several outstanding features.

Clissold Park School was created in 2010 through the merging of the PRUs Daniel House and St John's. Ofsted has commended Clissold Park's work with Key Stage 3 pupils.

Hackney's special schools, Downsview, Horizon, Ickburgh, and Stormont House have played a crucial role in supporting those children with Special Educational Needs who are not able



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to attend mainstream schools. Each of these schools has a record of significant achievement, and each has been recognised for the important work they do. Stormont House was rated by Ofsted to be outstanding in 2005, a judgement that was reconfirmed in a further inspection in 2008.

In addition to working with special schools and PRUs, The Learning Trust has also pursued a policy of supporting the education of pupils with Special Educational Needs in mainstream primary and secondary schools.

- Since 2007, non-statemented SEN pupils in Hackney have performed better than those nationally. In 2011, 55% of non-statemented SEN pupils in the borough achieved Level 4+ in English and maths at Key Stage 2, significantly above the national achievement rate of 38%.
- The percentage of non-statemented SEN pupils achieving Level 4+ in Key Stage 2 English and maths in the years 2007 to 2011 has increased by 27 percentage points. Nationally, the improvement rate has been nine percentage points over these years.
- The percentage of non-statemented SEN pupils in Hackney achieving 5+A*-C GCSE grades, including English and maths, has been consistently higher than the national average since 2007.





Aiming higher, going further: Post-16 Education

The Learning Trust has worked successfully to develop Post-16 education provision in Hackney, decisively addressing the previous position of single-sex 11-16 schools and limited opportunities for pursuing further education, which resulted in the majority of students taking sixth form places outside the borough.

Significantly, most secondary schools and academies now provide 11-19 education; BSix, the sixth form college is over-subscribed. From September 2012, Hackney will host one of the first University Technical Colleges (UTC) which will provide an alternative environment for 14-19 education, with a curriculum that balances specialist technical and professional study with GCSE-level English, maths, science and IT qualifications.

All Hackney further education providers regularly participate in the *Post-16 Sharing Good Practice Network*, placing increasing emphasis on Post-16 improvement.

The substantial increase in numbers and places has been matched by the improvement in outcomes; Hackney is now the most improved borough over a three-year period (2008-2011).

- In 2011, Hackney was above the National Average for Post-16 Average Points Score (APS) per entry (Hackney: 217 points; England 216.2 points).
- Since 2008, Hackney has been the most improved Local Authority in England in terms of Average Point Score per student, increasing from 552.3 APS per student in 2008 to 677.5 APS per student in 2011.



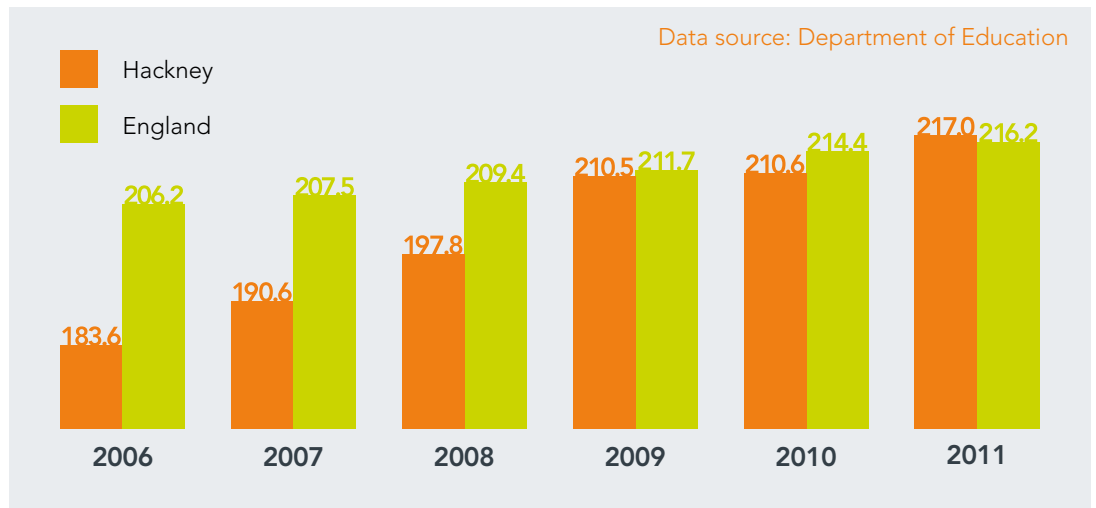


Table Four
Average point score per entry, 2006-2011

Table Five
Average point score per student, 2006-2011



Lifelong Learning: Adult Education

In 2003 the Adult Education service was judged to be inadequate, with no contract management or quality assurance.

In 2004, a new Adult Learning Service was set up with responsibility for commissioning and quality-assuring courses delivered to Hackney residents. One of the new service's principal objectives was to engage those people with low level or no qualifications – those who were farthest from the labour market and whose opportunities were most limited – and support and encourage them into further learning, training or employment.

- In 2012, more than 50 community organisations are delivering a diverse range of courses. Achievement rates have been consistently high, with more than nine out of ten adult learners qualifying in each of the last four years.
- The Adult Learning Service has been graded as being good in its most recent inspection.
- More than 5,000 learners enrol each year and over 70% of lessons have been evaluated as being good or outstanding.
- Over 95% of adult learners have rated their experience of the courses they have taken as being good or outstanding.

The positive benefits, in terms of increased confidence and the ability to positively contribute, are highlighted in progression surveys, which indicate that as many as eight out of ten adult learners move from courses into employment or further learning, participate in community groups or volunteer in their children's schools.







The moral purpose

The Learning Trust has supported school improvement through the Schools Requiring Additional Support process (SRAS). The focus on English and maths, increasing the quality of teaching and learning and monitoring pupils' progress have all been of paramount importance in raising standards. The intelligent application of support from National Strategies, London Challenge and the 14-19 Partnership has enabled The Learning Trust to build upon and expand local good practice.

The approach that Steve Belk, Tricia Okoruwa, Deputy Director for School Improvement & Performance and the Learning & Standards team refined over the years was based on developing the talent of teaching staff in Hackney schools, with a focus on pedagogic skill, sound subject knowledge, managerial competence and critical self-review.

The Trust's 2008 *Improving Standards Strategy* encouraged increased school autonomy, whilst supporting school-led improvement through strategic networks for headteachers. School leadership, and improved teaching and learning, has been central to the improvements in primary and secondary schools over the last four years of the Trust's contract.

Corporate services provided by the Trust, for example HR, Payroll, Legal and Schools Finance have been co-ordinated, with increasing effectiveness, within the broader school improvement framework. Schools' financial management has improved through the Trust's Finance Improvement Plan, which has promoted good practice, significantly reducing the number of high priority recommendations arising from School audit inspections. Schools have received significant support from the HR team on a range of issues including, most recently, the Single Status process.

Over the last ten years The Learning Trust has supported and challenged schools and settings to improve the quality and range of education provided to Hackney's children and young people. In doing so, the Trust has been determined to ensure that Hackney's diversity is a strength, not a weakness. The high proportion of children on free school meals, the large numbers of pupils with English as an additional language and the attainment gaps between different groups have presented challenges, but they are not disadvantages. Over the period 2002-2012 increasing numbers of children and young people in Hackney have achieved as well as – and in some cases better than – the best elsewhere in England.

Much accomplished, still more to do

Much has been achieved in partnership with the schools, pupils, parents and teaching staff over the last ten years, but more remains to be done in the future. The Trust has set out an ambitious agenda for continued school improvement beyond 2012, building upon the achievements of the last 10 years:¹¹

- an even greater number of schools and settings (including PRUs) judged good or outstanding by Ofsted;
- all Schools in Hackney should be achieving results above the national average by 2015;
- continuing the improvement in the quality of teaching in Hackney's schools, so that an even greater proportion of teaching is judged good or outstanding by Ofsted;
- a consistent reduction in the number of primary schools where fewer than 60% of pupils achieve Level 4+ in both English and maths at Key Stage 2;
- a consistent reduction in the number of secondary schools where fewer than 35% of pupils achieve 5+A*-C grades at GCSE, including English and maths;
- a reduction in the achievement gap at Key Stage 2 and GCSE between those pupils who are eligible for free school meals and their peers;
- continuing, sustained improvement in the achievement of black and ethnic minority pupils at Key Stage 2 and GCSE; and
- provision of adult education to be continually judged good or better by Ofsted and in self assessments.

Achieving this will require a credible school improvement service, which uses national and international research and best practice to provide excellent advice, support and guidance, cultivate collaboration between schools and provide innovative solutions. The successful federations and school partnerships will be built upon and extended to strengthen leadership and governance in schools. Ensuring every pupil is taught by good or outstanding teachers, within a curriculum that enables all pupils to make excellent progress remains the focus of education in Hackney for the years ahead.

11. *Education Excellence: The Vision for the Future in Hackney*, The Learning Trust, May 2011.



INNOVATE

DEVELOPING SERVICES, RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES

The Learning Trust was itself an innovation. Previously the government had intervened to direct underperforming Local Education Authorities to tender specific services to private companies. As a not-for-profit company running a borough's entire education service, The Learning Trust was unique.

From the beginning, the Trust set out to do things differently, taking decisive action (around school closures, for example) acting swiftly to intervene and support schools improve standards and increase the quality of teaching, taking responsibility for these decisions and innovating to meet the specific circumstance prevailing in Hackney.

The Trust's success in improving education is, in large part, attributable to the commitment, creativity and common purpose of its staff. The vision – that every child, young person and adult learner in Hackney should achieve his or her potential – was shared throughout the organisation. It was an empowering, inspiring vision and helped to inform the integrated work of teams and services.

The Trust invested in staff, building skills and developing leadership within the organisation. Efforts were made to ensure every single member of staff understood how their individual aims and objectives fitted with those of the organisation as a whole. The 'behaviour framework' defined five key areas for individual development and was used in performance management: customer service, building relationships, making things happen, positive communication and leadership.

Communications across the organisation encouraged staff feedback and genuine engagement. A range of communication channels were developed to make sure that information was shared across the organisation: an annual staff conference, intranet, weekly email bulletin and face to face briefings. The staff forum 'Can Do' was introduced in 2003 to promote change and engagement. This led to the introduction of staff surveys in 2006, the results of which revealed a higher level of positive satisfaction amongst staff working at the Trust than in many other public and private sector organisations. The most recent development to the Trust's internal communications have been video and director's blogs, which have helped to inform staff about the transition programme.

The annual *Fun Day*, Christmas party, beginning of term breakfasts and quizzes have all brought colleagues together informally, encouraging friendships across teams and directorates. Staff members have also started a number of groups, the Trust has a staff choir, a football team and a reading group. Staff well-being was prioritised with the introduction of flexible working, an employee assistance service, benefits package and a new occupational health service.

Every child matters

The work of The Learning Trust was significantly altered by the children's services agenda. The Children Act, 2004 established a new statutory duty for local authorities to take the lead on putting in place a single, strategic, overarching plan for all those services affecting the health, safety and success of children and young people. This work was undertaken by a range of partner agencies, subject to the new 'duty to co-operate' on improving the well-being of children and young people.

The *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme, which led to the implementation of the Children Act, contains five outcomes for children and young people, around which services were to be reconfigured. The national outcomes were that children and young people should:

- be healthy;
- stay safe;
- enjoy and achieve;
- make a positive contribution; and,
- achieve economic well-being.

With the Trust's Chief Executive, Alan Wood, fulfilling the role of Director of Children's Services (and supported by other officers), The Learning Trust took the lead on the joint development of Children's Services. This leadership role in the local partnership included the production of the Children and Young People's Plan, which established the manner in which local partner agencies focussed on meeting the needs of local children, young people, their parents, carers and families through the integration and improvement of services.

The Trust also successfully co-ordinated the Ofsted Joint Area Review of Hackney's Children's Services in August 2006. The report reflected the strong working relationship which characterises the children's partnership arrangements: "The council and its partners have put firm foundation[s] in place for improving children's services further but recognise that improving outcomes from a low base in an area with significant deprivation is a long term task".¹²

Assessing the impact of local services on the 'Enjoying and Achieving' strand, the JAR report noted that: "The Learning Trust has improved the leadership and management of education services resulting in almost all services being good with effective performance management arrangements". This is in stark contrast to the previous Ofsted LEA inspection in September 2003, in which only one service was judged to be good and almost half less than satisfactory. This rate of improvement is unparalleled in local government and, possibly, throughout the public services.

The report also acknowledged the Trust's role in the 'Making a Positive Contribution' strand: "The Learning Trust has played an important role in raising the aspirations of the young people of Hackney..." with the council and The Learning Trust "working well with a wide range of partners to develop a clear and ambitious 14-19 strategy and to improve 16-19 education and training."¹²

Under Service Management, the report also acknowledged The Learning Trust's contribution to the wider partnership: "The capacity to improve is good based on The Learning Trust's clarity about what needs to be done, the strengthened leadership and management in place and improvements achieved from a low base in many areas".¹²

Building schools for Hackney's future

When The Learning Trust took responsibility for education in Hackney in August 2002, the reputation of many schools was low, whilst there were an insufficient number of secondary school places – particularly for boys. In these circumstances, more than half of Hackney's pupils went to secondary schools outside the borough.

From the beginning, the Trust recognised that how it met the challenge of transforming the quality of secondary schools, building new, positive reputations and investing in the facilities available to pupils and teachers would be a crucial measure of its success.

12. *Ofsted Joint Area Review Hackney Children's Services Authority Area, August 2006.*

The Academies programme

The realistic, pragmatic approach by which substantial numbers of new secondary school places were created was through the government's Academies Programme.

Taking note of the opposition the Academies Programme aroused in neighbouring boroughs, The Learning Trust, working in partnership with Hackney Council, developed a set of conditions that prospective academy sponsors would have to meet, which would help root each academy firmly within the community it would serve:

- Each academy would have to be non-selective, non-denominational and mixed.
- In order to ensure a smooth assimilation into the existing network of schools, every academy would begin with a Year 7 cohort and take in a new cohort each year, building schools' numbers over time.
- The academy sponsor would have a clear, existing connection with the borough.
- Every academy would be independent and autonomous. In return, the academy would play an active role in the borough's education, building partnerships with primary and secondary schools.





Four academies were created in Hackney under the government's programme:

- Mossbourne Community Academy, specialising in music, which was built on the site of the old Hackney Downs School,
- Petchey Academy, specialising in health, care and medical science, which was built on the site of Kingsland Secondary School,
- The City Academy, Hackney, specialising in business and finance, which was built on the site of Homerton College of Technology, and
- The Bridge Academy, specialising in music and mathematics, which was built on the site of Laburnum Primary school.

A fifth, Skinners' Academy, was created when the Skinners' Company's School for Girls closed. A new, mixed academy, sponsored by The Skinners' Company opened in 2010. Clapton Girls Technology College became the borough's sixth academy in 2011 – Clapton Girls' Academy – under the Coalition Government's "convertor academy" programme. Hackney's seventh academy is scheduled to open in September 2014. It is being built on the site of what was once Cardinal Pole's lower school site, near Victoria Park and will be run by Mossbourne Community Academy.

The academies programme has played a substantial role in raising expectations and increasing the aspirations of Hackney's young people.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

The Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme was introduced by the government in 2005. The Learning Trust successfully secured more than £175 million from the Department for Education & Skills to rebuild or renovate the existing secondary schools in the borough.

The Hackney BSF programme exemplifies the benefits created for Hackney's children and young people through the constructive working partnership between The Learning Trust and Hackney Council. The BSF Programme actively involved teachers, pupils and parents in shaping a vision for their new school, personalising the aims of BSF which were to:

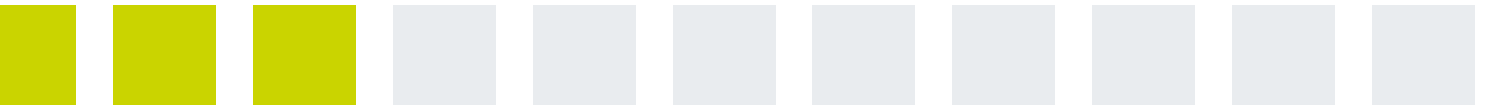
- raise education standards through well-designed, multipurpose buildings, with up-to-date facilities,
- provide easy-to-use information and communication technology to transform teaching and learning,
- create schools that offer facilities to the wider Hackney community.

The third phase of the BSF project, which is expected to be completed by 2014, will see the re-building or modernisation of Hackney's special schools and pupil referral units. The BSF programme complements the wider re-organisation of special school education, to ensure the facilities are available to young people with challenging educational needs to enable them to get the best possible education.

Primary capital programme

The *Primary Capital Programme* was introduced by the previous government, with the intention of investing in the rebuilding or upgrading of primary school buildings or facilities. The programme provided Hackney with the funding to refurbish, renovate and expand primary schools. As a result, Hackney is now home to some of the most interesting, cutting-edge schools and children's centres in England.

In July 2011, Lauriston Primary School, and the architects, Meadowcroft Griffin won the British Council for School Environment Award for Excellence in Design for Teaching and Learning.





Improving provision, increasing places

By 2015 all of Hackney's secondary and special schools will have been rebuilt, or substantially renovated through Building Schools for the Future or the Academies programme.

From the beginning of The Learning Trust's contract, secondary schools were identified as the catalysts for change, meeting the high expectations parents had for their children's education.

The strategy for improving secondary schools had two priorities:

- addressing the educational underachievement in a number of secondary schools,
- reversing the trend of 11-year-olds opting to go to secondary schools outside Hackney.

The strategy of improving provision and increasing the number of available places resulted in a number of schools being closed, notably the secondary schools, Kingsland and Homerton.

There has been a significant increase in the number of Hackney families putting a Hackney school as their first preference at secondary school transfer; correspondingly, the number of families giving schools outside Hackney their first preference has declined. In 2012 almost 83% of Hackney parents expressed a preference for schools in the borough, compared with 70% in 2005.

The result of the opening of new schools, the expansion of existing schools and the extension of Post-16 provision, and the closure of failing schools has been the fulfilment of Sir Mike Tomlinson's ambition: Hackney is now a place where parents want to get their children into the borough's schools.



■ Hackney resident first preferences to Hackney schools
■ Hackney resident first preferences to out of borough schools

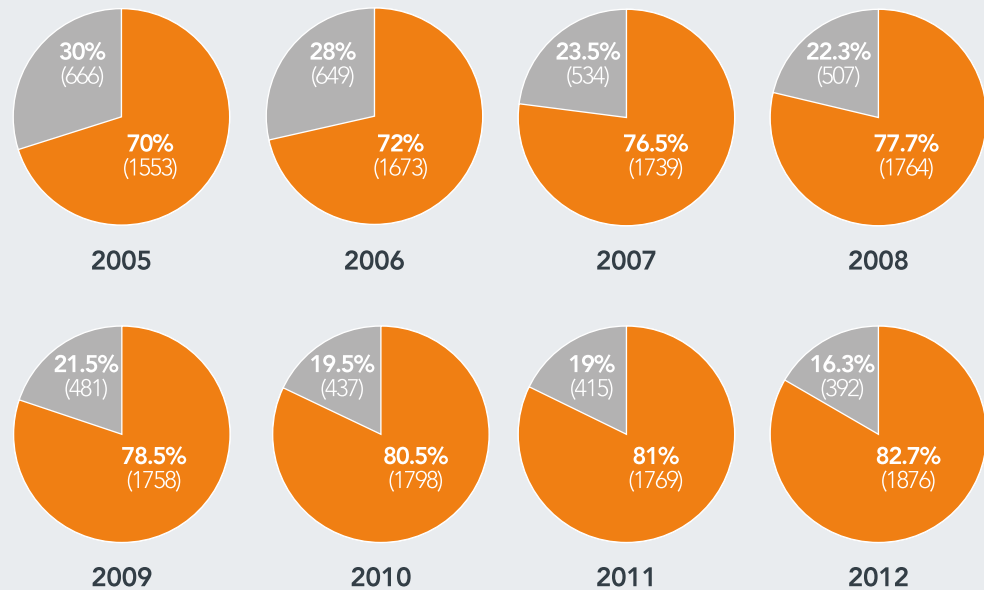


Table Six

Number and percentage of Hackney parents putting a Hackney school as their first preference at secondary transfer, 2005-2012

The professional development centre

One of the first things Sir Mike Tomlinson identified at the beginning of the Trust's contract was the need for a high quality, state of the art, professional development centre in Hackney. This would send a clear signal to teaching staff that their continuing professional development was a Trust priority.

The building of The Tomlinson Centre provides a striking example of how the Trust's responsibility for its own budget enabled innovation. This project was affordable because of the Trust's prudent, effective financial management – strict adherence to value for money efficiency savings has consistently freed up resources that have been invested in educational priorities. As a result the Trust was able to invest £4.5million in developing The Tomlinson Centre, which was built at no cost to Hackney Council and which will become a council asset when the Trust's contract expires.

As part of The Learning Trust, The Tomlinson Centre delivers a continuous professional development programme for local school teachers and Learning Trust staff designed to secure the best results for Hackney's children and young people.





Words Unite – Getting Hackney Reading

The Trust's independence from Hackney Council proved to be a significant factor in the organisation's ability to innovate. What guided that innovation was the principle of improving outcomes for children and young people.

Encouraging and building on creativity has been due to an empowered workforce and adopting fresh ways of thinking. New ideas and innovation, together with autonomy and the opportunity to take calculated risks, have resulted in a number of borough-wide initiatives.

In 2008, the campaign *Words Unite – Get Hackney Reading* was launched. It engaged the whole Hackney community through workshops, homework clubs, reading groups, and utilising local library services for storytelling and reading challenges.

The positive benefits of the campaign have contributed to raising the attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1 reading and Key Stage 2 English and are reflected in the borough's rate of improvement.

- In Hackney, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2+ in Reading at Key Stage 1 increased by six percentage points between 2008 (the year of the Words Unite campaign) and 2011. Over the same period, the national average increased by just one percentage point.

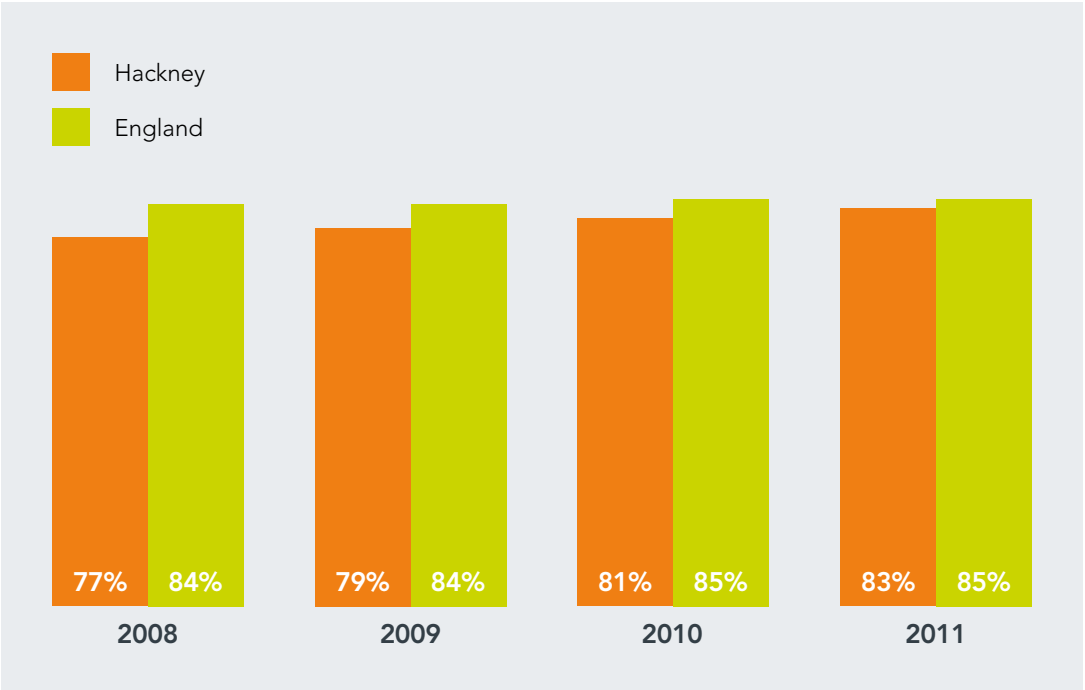
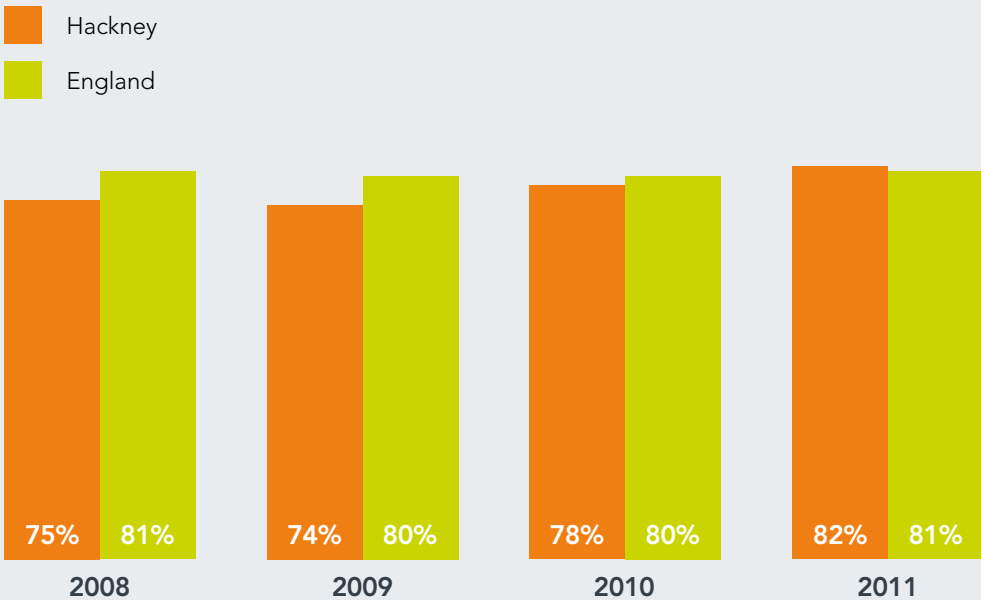


Table Seven
Percentage of pupils achieving level 2+ in Key Stage 1 reading, 2008-2011

-
- | Response | Percentage |
|--|------------|
| Yes, the government is doing a good job | 33% |
| No, the government is not doing a good job | 67% |



Performing arts, raising attainment

The performing arts - dance, drama and music – offer a great deal in terms of creative and personal development; they can also contribute substantially to school improvement and social cohesion. The aims of The Learning Trust's Performing Arts Strategy reflect this:

- to improve educational outcomes for all young people in Hackney,
- to create a coherent performing arts offer in dance, drama and music, to all Hackney children and students in schools, colleges and settings,
- to encourage more positive opportunities for young people to create, perform, watch and listen to dance, drama and music,
- to provide richness to the performing arts curriculum and to ensure that this is an entitlement for all,
- to inspire and to motivate young people to achieve and gain satisfaction from their performing arts education.

The performing arts have flourished over the last 10 years. Increasing numbers of school pupils take the opportunity to participate in dance, drama and music. Twelve schools in Hackney have been awarded Artsmark status; six of them have achieved the prestigious Artsmark Gold, recognising the quality of their arts provision.

The Hackney Schools Music Festival provides one of the most impressive and inspiring examples of the success of extended school participation across the borough. In 2010 the vocal, instrumental and dance shows featured over 4,500 young performers in a series of 15 live events at the end of the summer term. In 2011, 4,500 pupils of all ages from a large number of Hackney schools took part in two weeks of dancing, singing and instrumental performances.

The Learning Trust Music Service, which organises the Schools Music Festival has been rated "outstanding" by the Department for Education, and is recognised and celebrated as a model of best practice. The Service has worked in partnership with organisations such as Future Talent, VOCES 8, Barbican Creative Learning and the London Symphony Orchestra.

A recent development – the product of collaborative working between The Learning Trust and the Barbican Centre – has been Barbican Box, a new drama scheme for secondary schools and colleges in Hackney. Drama departments in Hackney schools have the opportunity to create new work inspired by world class theatre practitioners. The work will culminate in a summer performance at the Barbican.





Hackney Schools' Sports Championship

From 2008 onwards, the annual *Hackney Schools' Sports Championship* has raised disability awareness in schools, showing the ease with which Paralympic Sports can be integrated into mainstream physical education lessons.

The Championships have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the participating pupils and teachers. A rolling programme of support has enabled an increasing number of schools to incorporate disability sport within their physical education curriculum.

The inaugural Schools' Sports Championships took place on 15 -17 September 2008, at Clissold Leisure Centre and was timed to coincide with the handover of the Paralympic flag from Beijing to London. In the years that followed, participation has increased from 750 pupils from 37 Hackney schools to 2,500 pupils from almost every school in Hackney and those from the other Paralympic boroughs. In 2011 a children's centre event was incorporated into the Championships, with 130 three and four-year-olds taking part.

In each year of the championships, participation has been widened and the range of sports available has been increased. By 2011, the sports included: athletics, archery, boccia, visually impaired football, goalball, judo, new age kurling, sailing, swimming and wheelchair basketball.

Hackney's Schools' Sports Championship has become the largest schools' sporting event in the country. Each year the event has attracted widespread media coverage with footage and interviews broadcast on the BBC news. The success of the Sports Championship has been due to the enthusiasm of a large number of committed volunteers from The Learning Trust, schools and the pupils and young people participating. Valuable support has been provided by key partners, in particular Hackney Council, staff at Clissold Leisure Centre, the Royal Yachting Association (RYA), and the headteacher and physical education coordinator at Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form for the use of the school sports hall.





Business links

The links between schools and businesses in Hackney have strengthened considerably over the last ten years, providing greater opportunities for high quality careers advice, mentoring programmes and work experience.

- East London Business Alliance's (ELBA) Schools Mentoring Programme in Hackney matches around 300 students a year with business mentors from City companies. Hackney students are helped to broaden their horizons, increase attainment and gain the confidence and skills necessary for employment.
- Through Business in the Community, UBS has focussed on education and regeneration in Hackney for more than twenty years. Since 2003, UBS has also sponsored the Bridge Academy, Hackney, which opened in 2007.
- The Hackney Business Class, comprising a cluster of schools in the south of the Borough and business supporters, has successfully developed a major careers fair.
- The Hackney Business Class is also exploring initiatives by which co-ordinated careers advice can be established when the responsibility for careers guidance passes from the Local Authority to individual schools.
- Project Central in Hackney is a new partnership programme, which was launched in October 2010. It focuses support from KPMG, Société Générale and UBS in the Dalston and Hackney Central area, with the aim of facilitating social regeneration to accompany the large-scale physical regeneration happening in that area. Encouraging senior level support to join boards and executive mentors, it also plays a part in supporting the City Academy engage with the local community and look at ways to raise the skills of the parents.

Businesses will continue to make a contribution to raising standards in Hackney schools, promoting innovative projects and contributing to sound governance, providing students with the opportunities to develop as individuals and collaborating with schools.

The Hackney Oxbridge partnership

In recent years, students in Hackney schools, academies and colleges have had increasing success in securing entrance to Oxford and Cambridge. The establishment of Hackney Oxbridge Partnership builds on the arrangements already existing between the two universities and individual schools and colleges in the borough to encourage a further increase in successful applications.

On 20 February 2012, the first Hackney/Oxbridge Fair was held, hosted by The City Academy, Hackney. The Fair combined talks on admissions guidance for teachers, subject choices for Year 11s and their parents, and admissions guidance for Year 12s and their parents. Simultaneously there were videos and podcasts and a number of stalls providing information on student finance and on the arts and sciences at each university. At all the stalls there were undergraduates from both universities, in some cases former students in Hackney schools.

Another aspect of this initiative is the establishment of a working party – chaired by Annie Gammon, Headteacher of Stoke Newington School & Sixth Form – to explore ways in which schools and colleges, supported by the Trust, can work together to develop a programme of academic work and activity to support aspiring applicants to Oxford and Cambridge this year and in the years to come.





Recognising success, celebrating achievement

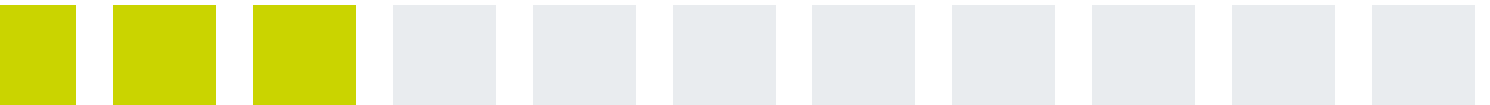
Recognising and rewarding success has been crucial to changing people's attitudes about education in Hackney. Below is a snap shot of the many outstanding achievements and significant contributions to education in the borough.

Since 2004, Hackney has celebrated the achievements of its Trailblazers – students who have either excelled in their exams, or who have demonstrated their ability and determination to achieve excellence and break barriers. Successful schools aren't just about great exam results. Offering young people the opportunity to shine in a wide range of disciplines, both inside and outside the classroom, is equally important. As well as recognising academic success, Trailblazers are nominated by their peers and teachers for achievements in sport, music, creative arts, teamwork, achieving against the odds and turning lives around.

The Learning Trust Educators' Awards, meanwhile, recognizes those who have made a significant contribution towards transforming education in Hackney. The awards, held bi-annually since 2004 and backed by a number of corporate sponsors, including UBS, Linklaters and Carlisle Managed Solutions, pay tribute to those individuals, teams and organisations who have made a difference in the borough.

Hackney has also played a significant role in the development of Jack Petchey's "Speak Out" Challenge, the biggest public speaking event of its kind in the world. The competition is funded by the Jack Petchey Foundation, the sponsor of The Petchey Academy, which in 2007 became the second academy to open in Hackney. In 2011, 345 year 10 students from eight Hackney schools took part in the competition, now in its fifth year, which attracted entries from around 20,000 young people across the country.

In 2010, The Learning Trust launched Success in the Making, an honest, celebratory, aspirational and distinct campaign brand to be used to help recruit teachers and promote the successes of Hackney's schools and children's centres. The idea behind the brand was to present an educational system that is proud and excited about its achievements to date and the direction in which it's headed.





National recognition

In a visit to Hackney, prior to the May 2010 General Election, the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown paid tribute to the improvements in education in Hackney, pointing out the borough had seen: "the largest improvement in secondary school standards of any local authority in the country since 1998".

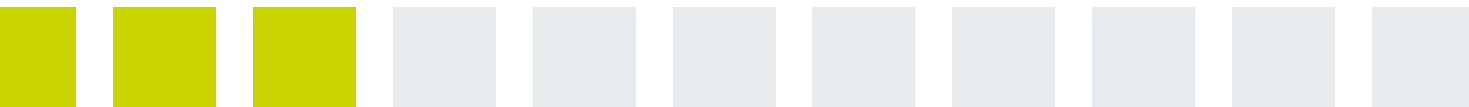
The transformation of education in Hackney has not only been celebrated within the borough; a range of schools and teachers have received national recognition.

- **Cheryl Day**, the Headteacher of Clapton Academy, won the National Teaching Awards Headteacher of the Year for the London region, 2006;
- **Heather Rockhold**, the former Headteacher of Lauriston Primary school won the National Teaching Awards for the London region for Lifetime Achievement, 2007.
- **Kevin McDonnell**, Headteacher of Stormont House received a Distinction in the London regional final of the Teaching Awards for 'Royal Air Force Award for Headteacher of the Year in a Secondary School' in June 2009
- **Hilary Cooke**, from Lauriston Primary school won the National Teaching Awards SEN teacher of the year in 2006;
- **Sarah Mansfield**, from Berger Primary School was commended at the London & South East Teaching Awards Ceremony for her work as a Teaching Assistant;

National honours

A number of people closely associated with the improvements in Hackney have received honours in either the New Year's or Queen's Birthday honours lists.

- **Anna Hassan** former Headteacher Millfields Primary school, was made a Dame of the British Empire (DBE);
- **John Larter**, sports development officer, was awarded an MBE for his contribution to developing sport in the borough.





Those honoured include three of The Learning Trust's Board members:

- **Peter Passam**, Chair of Governors of the Best Start Federation, and Non-Executive Director of The Learning Trust, was awarded an MBE in 2008,
- **Jules Pipe**, Mayor of Hackney, was awarded a CBE for Services to Local Government in 2008,
- **Alan Wood** was awarded a CBE in 2012 for services to Education and to Local Government.

National awards

Trust teams have also shone at the national level, against competition from high profile private sector companies.

- **Communications and Marketing** won two national Chartered Institute of Public Relations awards in 2007 and were finalists in 2008 and 2009,
- **Human Resources** won the Personnel Today award for Best Strategy In Line with Business and The Recruiter Award for Innovation in Recruitment 2009,
- **The Finance Team** were finalists in the Accountancy Age, Finance Team of the Year award in 2009,
- **The Hackney Music Development Trust** won the Royal Philharmonic Society Award for Education, recognising their outstanding *Confucius Says Project*.

Most recently, The Learning Trust won the *Outsourced Provider of the Year* award at the 2011 Education Investor Awards.



The changing face of education: looking to the future – trading services, maintaining improvement

There have been significant changes to education in the last few years, particularly in the role of Local Authorities, with the reduction in public spending and greater autonomy for schools in terms of budgetary responsibility and school improvement. The end of The Learning Trust's contract in July 2012 has provided the opportunity to define the future shape and vision for education in Hackney.

Education Excellence has established the role a high-quality education service, working in close and constructive partnership with other council services, can play to improve the outcomes and broaden the life chances of children, young people and adult learners in Hackney:

- ensuring children get the best possible start through the commissioning and provision of high quality Early Years education and services;
- championing the borough's vulnerable children; those excluded, or at risk of exclusion, from school, looked after children and those from deprived backgrounds;
- advocating on behalf of children and young people with SEN and disabilities to secure high quality services that ensures they and their parents receive the advice and support necessary for a positive education experience;
- leading an admissions service that ensures all families in Hackney have an equal opportunity to get a place at a successful school; and
- championing excellent education provision and support school improvement throughout the borough.

On 31 July 2012 The Learning Trust's contract with Hackney Council ends and responsibility for education services will transfer to the borough.

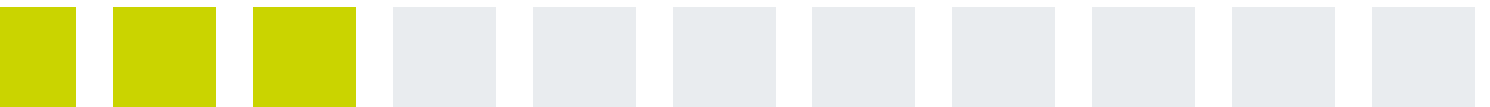
In October 2010 a joint statement was issued by Jules Pipe and Richard Hardie, acknowledging the considerable improvements since August 2002, both in education and in the London Borough of Hackney. The statement envisaged "A carefully considered plan," that would "facilitate a period of transition which will span the financial years up to 2013-14, ensuring a seamless continuation of education service within a broader, holistic structure of local authority service". The statement also acknowledged the Coalition Government's programme for devolved responsibility and accountability to schools represents a significant change in the role and statutory duties of the Local Authority where schools are concerned.

The education service is transferring to London Borough of Hackney at a time of immense change in education funding and national education policy. In recognition of this, and in order to be best placed to meet the challenges and opportunities, a new model for children's services has been developed, which retains the features that enabled The Learning Trust to improve education so successfully, whilst also taking account of the Council's sustained programme of improvement:

- a focus on building education as a community service in which parents can have confidence in the quality of teaching their children receive;
- building strong, enduring partnerships with schools, governors and stakeholders around the collective vision of every school being good or better;
- a delivery model (The Hackney Learning Trust) which allows for focused decision making, flexibility of approach in resourcing and staffing and high levels of responsibility and accountability; and
- a willingness to use innovative structural change to make radical improvements a reality.

The Hackney Learning Trust will be required to act flexibly to develop ways of working that will enable it to trade services competitively in a commercial environment. Trading services will help to retain education capacity and expertise in Hackney, which is essential in ensuring further improvement in the Borough's educational outcomes. The Hackney Learning Trust will trade services with Hackney schools, as well as developing an out of borough offer. These traded services will be organised on a commercial basis, which emphasises value for money and sustainability.

Income generated through traded services will be invested back into the school improvement offer for Hackney schools. To enhance the traded service offer, Hackney Learning Trust will retain Education Finance, Human Resources, and ICT teams, in order to provide services directly to schools. This will enable the majority of traded services to be provided holistically from within a single service area. These teams also fulfil an important role in the school improvement process, and provide economies of scale for other services. This model of working reflects one of the essential ingredients that have contributed to success over the last 10 years.





CONCLUSION

10 YEARS TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN HACKNEY

The Learning Trust's success in improving outcomes for children and young people in Hackney provides strong evidence that pupils living in communities with high levels of unemployment and deprivation can achieve as well as those from more affluent areas. Likewise, the Trust's success in school improvement, raising standards and the quality of teaching and learning, underlines the importance of good schools in raising aspirations in disadvantaged areas.

At the beginning of its contract, The Learning Trust established a clear vision for education services in Hackney; this was shaped by a compelling moral purpose. It could only fulfil what was an ambitious aspiration through robust partnerships based on confidence, trust and consistency with schools and partner agencies.

Clarity is the key to effective communications. The Trust's willingness to listen and engage in a dialogue with schools, particularly headteachers, helped to establish a collective sense of purpose over time. A clear sense of direction, knowing where you are going, builds confidence. This is what The Learning Trust achieved with headteachers and governors, parents and students, and with its own staff and partners.

Developing intellectual capacity and openness to fresh ideas have been actively encouraged by the Trust. Headteachers were offered the opportunity to visit Ontario, Helsinki and Arizona to learn from the experiences of other education systems. In addition, educators and researchers – from the United Kingdom, Europe, China, the United States, Australia and Vietnam – have been invited to Hackney, to visit schools and discuss innovations in education.

Across the borough over the ten years of its contract, The Learning Trust consistently challenged schools to improve, and supported them to do so. Low standards and expectations were unacceptable; "satisfactory" teaching and outcomes were not good enough. In partnership with schools and partner agencies, the Trust helped to develop innovative solutions to what had previously been regarded as intractable problems.

10 YEARS TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN HACKNEY

THE LEARNING TRUST

The ten-year contract provided the time The Learning Trust needed to put into effect the necessary changes to education services in Hackney. Sufficient time, free from political pressure, ensured consistency, built capacity and established stability.

In 2002, it was said that the schools that did well in Hackney did so in spite of the LEA. Ten years later, that charge could not be made against The Learning Trust. In 2012, The Learning Trust has created an education service in Hackney that people are proud to be associated with. By consistently asserting the importance of education to young people's life chances, with passion and intelligence it has restored public confidence in education in the borough.





We have proved beyond doubt that children from backgrounds such as Hackney can succeed given the opportunities and can have a whole series of options for their future. That must never, ever be diluted or downgraded. Our children come from a wide range of backgrounds. They enter school every day with baggage on their backs which has nothing to do with them at all, just the circumstances in which they happen to be, whether its health, housing or jobs. Education, like it was for me, is the path out.

Sir Mike Tomlinson CBE, Chair of The Learning Trust, 2002-2007

We will know that we have been successful when Hackney parents, instead of fighting to get their children out of our schools, will be fighting to get them in.

Alan Wood CBE, Chief Executive of The Learning Trust, 2002-2012

The leadership of headteachers in Hackney has shone through. Together with their staff, they have shared our commitment to raising standards even further.

Steve Belk, Executive Director for Learning & Standards, 2003-2012

The Learning Trust Board has seen its role as removing obstacles from the path of Trust staff, headteachers and governors, trusting in their expertise and allowing them to focus on improving standards. It is this approach which has allowed education in Hackney to flourish.

Richard Hardie, Chair of The Learning Trust, 2007-2012