

GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND SCHOOLS ON SETTING EDUCATION PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR 2012

This guidance provides support for local authorities and schools in setting education performance targets for summer 2012 designed to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Introduction

The Government wants every child to achieve high standards. That means all of us having high aspirations for every pupil and making real progress in narrowing the wide gaps in attainment between groups that exist at the moment. In order to achieve this, we want to give teachers and schools more freedom and remove unnecessary bureaucracy.

In that context, the Government is reviewing the future of statutory school target setting, including its role in school improvement and place within the school accountability framework. Whilst this happens, schools will be required to set targets for 2012. However, we have made some changes to this year's process.

Important changes for the 2012 statutory target setting round

Local authority targets

In the light of the Government's commitment to increased localism, and the changing role of local authorities, local authorities are no longer required to set education performance targets for summer 2012 onwards. The regulations will be amended in due course.

Although there are no longer statutory targets covering Early Years, looked after children and underperforming groups after 2011, local authorities will want to continue focusing on these priority areas, using their 2011 targets to bring about improvements. This will be particularly important in fulfilling their statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 to promote the educational achievement of looked after children.

Local authorities continue to support and challenge schools on their targets via School Improvement Partners (SIPs). School targets will be collected by local authorities and submitted to the Department as previously.

Attendance

Local authorities and schools should note they are no longer required to set targets for persistent absence and overall attendance respectively and the regulations will be amended accordingly. The Department however remains firmly of the view that unnecessary absence is unacceptable and must be prevented and tackled by schools.

The Department therefore expects all schools and local authorities to continue focusing on reducing overall absence, particularly unauthorised absence and persistent absence. Absence will continue to be monitored closely via the pupil level school census and the Secretary of State's power to require an individual school to set absence targets where a school's absence record is of particular concern is being retained.

Summary

- Schools should begin work on setting education performance targets for summer 2012

- Local authorities are not required to set education performance targets for summer 2012
- Details of timescales and which targets should be set by schools are found on Page 2
- Persistent absence and overall attendance targets are not required for 2012

If you have any queries regarding statutory education targets please email target.setting@education.gsi.gov.uk and we will respond to you as soon as possible.

Timescales and targets

Timescales

The timetable below sets out the key activities for effective target setting so that school targets are both ambitious and realistic. These activities should complement schools' own processes.

September to December 2010

- Schools analyse 2010 results and compare performance against targets to evaluate impact of improvement strategies. Review progress towards 2011 targets.
- Schools look at all assessment data (including pupil tracking) to review progress of individual children, with a particular focus on underachieving and vulnerable groups.
- Schools arrange appropriate intervention/support or development for pupils not making sufficient progress and for pupils on track to achieve above target levels.
- Schools discuss and agree 2012 school targets with their School Improvement Partner (SIP).
- Directors of Children's Services review proposed school targets and ensure targets are both ambitious and realistic.
- Governing Bodies formally discuss and agree statutory school performance targets.
- **By 31 December 2010-** Schools report agreed 2012 targets to local authority.

January 2011 onwards

- **By 31 January 2011 at the latest-** Local authorities report school targets to DfE.
- Schools monitor progress and review use of any additional resources and their impact on pupils' attainment.

Targets

The statutory targets that schools need to set for 2012 are set out in the table below.

Summary of school targets 2012

Key Stage 2: to increase proportion achieving level 4+ in both English and mathematics
Key Stage 1-2: to improve proportion progressing 2 national curriculum levels in English
Key Stage 1-2: to improve proportion progressing 2 national curriculum levels in mathematics
Key Stage 4: to increase proportion achieving 5 A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including GCSE English and mathematics
Key Stage 2-4: to increase proportion making expected progress from the level achieved in English at the end of Key Stage 2
Key Stage 2-4: to increase proportion making expected progress from the level achieved in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2

Local Authorities and target setting

Schools have responsibility for setting their own targets, with high aspirations for all pupils, and for implementing teaching strategies and interventions that will help them achieve their targets. As described in the schools and target setting section below, schools are supported in this by SIPs, acting on behalf of the local authority, discussing and agreeing

targets including challenging where necessary.

Although statutory targets will not be set for Early Years, looked after children and underperforming groups, local authorities will want to continue to focus on the quality of early years provision – particularly for disadvantaged children - as central to improving achievement and reducing inequalities at age 5 and throughout the primary years. 94% of children who achieve a good level of development at age 5 go on to achieve the expected levels at Key Stage 1. Conversely, pupils who are in the bottom 20% of attainment at age 5 are six times more likely to be in the bottom 20% at Key Stage 1 compared to their peers. The impact of good quality early years experiences can be seen in children's cognitive and behavioural outcomes as late as age 10 for reading and maths in particular.

Schools and target setting

What do schools have to do?

Schools are required to set statutory targets annually, working with Governors, their SIP and using relevant data, which are then reported to the local authority and DfE who may publish this information as part of data transparency. Schools often set additional targets as part of effective pupil tracking to keep pupils on trajectory and maintain progress. Targets should be challenging but also realistic and enable every child to fulfil their potential. For pupils with SEN who are performing below National Curriculum levels, they should be set using P Scales.

As part of effective target setting, schools will identify and implement appropriate interventions to support pupil progress and achievement, tailored to their particular cohort.

Key Questions

- What does the data and information on pupil targets, attainment, gap-narrowing and progress show?
- How well are different groups doing? Are targets sufficiently ambitious for under-performing groups?
- Are proposed targets stretching and realistic? Do they build on improvements and prior attainment?
- What strategies and interventions are in place to help achieve the targets?

Who is involved?

Effective target setting involves the head teacher and leadership team, working with all teachers, support staff, their SIP, Governors, parents and carers.

School Improvement Partners (SIPs)

SIPs support schools to set targets by guiding them in reviewing and interpreting their data, challenging expectations where targets indicate low aspirations for rates of progress or outcomes to be achieved, and helping schools achieve targets through appropriate strategies and interventions.

As part of their Autumn term visit, the SIP will look at available data on attainment and progression (including that of different groups), the school development plan and pupil tracking information to reach a judgement about the targets and improvement priorities necessary to meet them, and challenge the head teacher and Governing Body as needed.

Governors

The Governing Body is legally responsible for ensuring the statutory targets are set and reported to the local authority, supporting the Head Teacher, SIP and staff. During December the Governing Body must agree statutory school targets and submit to the local authority by 31 December 2010 at the latest.

Involvement of parents and carers

Parents' aspirations and involvement in helping their children to learn has a significant impact on their achievement. A consistent flow of information between home and school is important to help the child to develop and progress.

How do schools use data in target setting?

Effective schools make use of a wide range of performance data, including prior attainment, teacher assessment, pupil tracking information and RAISEonline forward estimates, when setting targets for their particular cohort of pupils. Such schools look to their own data first, what they know about their pupils' abilities, what the best possible ambition is and challenging themselves to aim for more. As part of this, schools should consider pupil characteristics to ensure expectations for traditionally underperforming groups (e.g. FSM, Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils) are sufficiently stretching. Forward estimate tools, e.g. RAISEonline, that show what the school would need to achieve to match the performance of the top 10%, 25%, 50% and 75% of similar schools given their pupils' prior attainment can also be used.

Threshold and progression attainment targets

Schools should ensure threshold and progression targets are based on high expectations and seek to maximise all children's progress and attainment by looking at national and local authority data, including rates for similar types of schools.

When setting progression targets, the following should be considered:

- Schools should set targets which involve a significant element of challenge beyond the current school progression rates using the RAISEonline indicative targets report.
- Wherever possible, pupils should have targets to make at least two levels of progress from KS1-2 and the expected level of progress from KS2-4.
- Targets set for higher attaining pupils should be sufficiently stretching and reflect their capacity to achieve at the highest levels.
- Improved pupil tracking at school level will enable teachers to identify children at risk of not making expected progress and plan appropriate interventions.
- Additional personalised support, including one-to-one tuition where appropriate for pupils who enter the Key Stage behind expectations and are not on track to make expected progress.

Progression targets- conversion levels

For the purpose of the progression targets the following conversion tables show expected progress rates:

Measuring progression from KS 1-2

KS1 level	Required KS2 level to meet progress
Level 3	Level 5
Levels 2A, 2B, 2C	Level 4+
Level 1	Level 3+
W	Level 2+
A,D	-

Measuring progression from KS 2-4

KS2 level	Equivalent grade at GCSE
5	B
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
Below level 1	G

Targets for pupils with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

Although there are no statutory targets for pupils identified as having SEN/LDD, there should always be high expectations for these pupils. As for all pupils, those identified as having SEN/LDD are expected to make at least two levels of progress in each Key Stage.

Where pupils are assessed as unlikely to reach Level 1, schools should use P Scales to measure progress and set appropriately challenging targets. Schools setting zero rated targets within the statutory framework should set measurable targets using National Curriculum levels, including P Scales, and other performance criteria where appropriate.

Looked after children

Many schools will not have looked after children on roll and where they do numbers will usually be tiny. On average a primary school will have one looked after child on roll and a secondary school will have an average of eight looked after children. However, although there are no statutory targets for looked after children it is important (as for pupils with SEN) that there are high expectations for these pupils. As with all pupils, looked after children are expected to make at least two levels of progress in each Key Stage.