

**GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON
TARGET SETTING**

Part 1

**LA Targets for Key Stages 2, 3, 4, Looked after Children, Minority
Ethnic Groups, Attendance, Early Years' Outcomes**

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Part 1: GUIDANCE TO LAs ON TARGET SETTING 2006

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Introduction

1. The White Paper - *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* – published in October 2005 set out the Government’s renewed commitment to achieving an education system that has the highest aspirations for every child, whatever their talents and ability. The process of discussing and agreeing targets with schools that reflect the best ambition they have for the progress their pupils can make is key to delivering this commitment. Schools which have set ambitious targets as a focus for their planning and delivery systems can demonstrate that their pupils achieve significantly higher standards than would be expected from prior attainment.

2. This guidance is designed to support LAs in working with their schools to set challenging targets for 2008 which aim for the best possible outcomes for all pupils. It is in two parts:

Part 1 is for those directly involved in setting LA targets – Directors of Children’s Services, Heads of School Improvement, Primary and Secondary Strategy Managers, Early Years’ Lead Officers and other advisers. It covers arrangements for setting statutory targets for 2008 at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4, for looked after children, ethnic minority groups, school attendance and early years’ outcomes.

Part 2 is for those who work directly with schools to set targets. It covers target setting for all pupil groups from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4. LAs may wish to use some or all of the advice in part 2 to inform the guidance they provide to Governing Bodies and Head teachers.

Further information on target-setting, including case studies, is also available on the Department’s website at: <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ts/>

3. There are two changes to the statutory targets regime this year resulting in new requirements for LAs and for schools to set additional targets for 2008. These are set out below.

Early years’ outcomes

4. The Childcare Act 2006 introduced a new duty on LAs, working with their NHS and Jobcentre Plus partners, to improve the well-being of all young children in their area and reduce inequalities between them. Well-being is defined in terms of the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes and to support the duty, early childhood services must be integrated to maximise access and benefits to families. The Act includes a power for the Secretary of State to set targets for LAs but not individual schools or settings. These targets, for both improvement and reducing inequalities, will be based on the Foundation Stage Profile results (to be superseded under the Act by the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile), which already provide the best measure of development across the whole breadth of the 5 ECM outcomes. Targets should aim to:

- *improve young children's development by increasing the percentage who achieve a total of at least 78 points across the Foundation Stage Profile and at least 6 points in each PSED and CLL scale*
- *improve the average FSP score of the lowest achieving group to narrow the gap between that group and the rest*

5. There will be a public consultation on the process for setting early years' targets later this summer; the intention is to base the process on the existing system with discussion at Priorities Meetings and challenge from the National Strategies. It is intended to commence the duty in 2008 and to start the first target setting round this autumn in respect of the FSP results in summer 2008. In the light of data availability, particularly that LAs are not currently required to send their full FSP data to the Department, Ministers have decided that the first year of target setting should not carry full statutory weight. However, the format, content and process will be the same as for future years and targets agreed in this round will form the basis of subsequent negotiations.

6. LAs will need to prepare fully for this year's target setting but, while it will be in everyone's interests for targets to take account of 2006 FSP data, the Department will not be able to publish validated 2006 results until October. Wherever possible you will want to share this year's results with the National Strategies. The duty and targets will consolidate existing support and challenge for LAs' services for young children and reflect work to develop the Foundation Stage curriculum and provide support for disadvantaged young children and families.

7. The purpose of LA early years' targets is not only to improve outcomes for all young children but for the group at risk of the poorest outcomes to improve at a faster rate than their peers so that relative inequality is reduced. In tackling inequalities, LAs will need to identify the barriers to achievement leading to poor outcomes and decide how best to address them with targeted action. Action could be focused on the most economically disadvantaged areas which would be in keeping with the roll out of Sure Start children's centres and LAs contribution to the current national PSA target on reducing inequalities between children in the 30% most disadvantaged Super Output Areas and the rest. According to local circumstances however, action might address other issues such as, for example, cultural or language barriers.

8. To prepare for the autumn target setting process, LAs will need to analyse their 2006 FSP results, considering how outcomes can be improved and identifying common factors among the young children most at risk of achieving poor outcomes. It will also be useful to examine other early years data, including local deprivation indices, take-up of free nursery education and any other relevant evidence, such as the distribution of families with English as an additional language.

9. LAs will receive support and challenge from the National Strategies' Foundation Stage Regional Advisers, who will give advice on the level of ambition of targets and the actions which the LA should take to achieve their targets.

Targets at Key Stage 4

10. Last year LAs and schools were asked to set a voluntary target for the proportion of pupils expected to achieve 5 or more A*- C grades at GCSE or equivalent, including GCSE English and mathematics. Subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary amendments to both the School and Local Authority (Performance Targets) Regulations 2005, schools and LAs will be required to set an additional target for 2008 for the proportion of pupils expected to achieve 5 or more A*- C grades at GCSE or equivalent, including GCSE English and mathematics. The only GCSE qualifications that can be counted for this target are English Language (not English Literature) and mathematics (not statistics). Other level 2 qualifications (such as Key Skills) may not be counted. Schools and LAs should continue to set a target for the proportion of pupils expected to achieve 5 A*-C grades at GCSE (or equivalent) and the average points score per pupil for 2008.

The Local Authority's role in setting challenging targets

1. Schools have responsibility for setting their own targets. The LA's role is to support and challenge their schools to set ambitious targets for all their pupils. LAs should review the data, challenging schools where targets indicate low expectations of progress or outcomes and ensuring that additional targeted support is provided to improve teaching and learning.
2. From September 2006 all secondary schools (and primary schools in a small number of pilot and first wave LAs) will have a School Improvement Partner (SIP). The SIP acts for the LA and is the main channel for communication about school improvement with the school. The SIP will discuss and agree the statutory targets with the school and provide challenge where the target is not appropriately ambitious.
3. LAs and SIPs should provide challenge and support to help schools set targets for improved performance at Key Stages 2 and 3 and for GCSE and equivalent examination results. Discussions with schools should also cover targets for looked after children (where appropriate), for narrowing achievement gaps for minority ethnic pupils and for improving school attendance. LAs will also wish to consider the contribution their schools can make to their early years' outcomes targets.
4. There will be an improved range of data analysis available for the 2006 target setting discussions with schools. LAs and SIPs have a critical role to play in guiding schools to understand what the data may reveal and to check against national and similar schools' performance to ensure that they are setting high expectations for pupil outcomes. A national data set which uses conversion rates will be available in September as part of the RAISEonline package of results analysis.

Overall process

Schools determine their targets for 2008	LA support and challenge to schools from link adviser or SIP	Support and challenge to LAs from SRDs and DfES
<i>Covered in Part 2</i>	<i>Covered in Part 2</i>	Covered in Part 1

5. School targets should be submitted to the LA by the end of December at the latest although SIPs and link advisers should aim to report back on the outcome of their target setting discussions with schools by the end of November. The Director of Children's Services and Head of School Improvement have a crucial role in ensuring that their schools are setting sufficiently stretching targets and time should be allowed in the process for school targets to be reviewed within the LA and where necessary challenged further before they are submitted to the Department.
6. LAs should ensure that SIPs and link advisers receive appropriate briefing for their discussions with schools, including any general or specific

issues emerging from the 2006 results, and that they have access to all the relevant data. The RAISEonline data analysis tool will be available for use from September and LAs will be responsible for training SIPs and schools in its use.

Raising expectations for school targets

7. A number of developments will help to raise the expectations of schools in 2006:

Primary level

- the implementation of the National Strategies' renewed Frameworks for Literacy and Numeracy (published this summer) is expected to make a significant difference to the quality of teaching and to pupil progress.
- an increasing number of LAs are implementing core elements of the primary ISP programme as part of their own package of support to schools. The national track record of the ISP in moving more children up to and over the level 4 threshold should be factored into the target setting process.

Secondary level

- provision of the KS3 progression routes and secondary intervention toolkit in September is intended to impact upon Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 performance.

8. LAs will need to guide SIPs/link advisers on helping schools to factor into their target setting the improvements flowing from these changes.

9. Where a school proposes to set targets below the LA's expectations for its pupils, guidance should be given to SIPs/link advisers on how to handle discussion of the targets with the school and the support that might be available (from the LA, National Strategies or others) to help the school to raise attainment further. If after further discussion the school believes it cannot raise standards, there will need to be a review involving the Head of School Improvement and DCS to determine how best to support the school. This could include providing support from other agencies via the LA's ECM strategy.

Key Stage 2 targets

10. The Key Stage 2 targets set by almost half of primary schools and a significant number of LAs for 2007 did not represent significant improvement and in some cases represented no improvement at all over 2005 outcomes. Some schools will clearly already be achieving very high standards, and maintaining a high level of performance will in itself be a significant challenge. However, evidence suggests that many schools have not focussed sufficiently on setting suitably ambitious targets for their pupils given their prior attainment and have relied on Fischer Family Trust (FFT) Model A or B estimates (ie those based upon assumptions of past performance rather than improvement) to arrive at the target.

11. Many LAs agreed with primary schools some years ago that FFT model B estimates represented appropriate challenge. However, as standards have improved nationally over time, the FFT Model B estimates frequently represent little or no improvement in either overall performance or value-added. For 2007, FFT model B estimates at Key Stage 2 were the same as or below 2005 outcomes for two thirds of LAs. It perpetuates low expectations.

12. FFT Model C represents the trajectory needed for the cohort in question if national PSA targets are to be reached and FFT Model D represents top quartile predictions. Where schools have high CVA scores FFT Model D may still not represent the aspiration necessary for real improvement - in these circumstances, Model D estimates can be below Models B and C, or below previous performance.

13. The following expectations should be a key part of the conversations with primary schools during the process of discussing and agreeing targets:

Key Stage 2

- *all children achieving level 2 and 45% of those with level 1, at the end of Key Stage 1 should progress to level 4 or above*
- *pupils with those types of Special Educational Need which mean achievement of level 4 is unlikely should have targets which help them to progress as far as possible*
- *schools should aim to set targets which enable them to match the performance of the top quartile of similar schools. Where FFT estimates are used to inform target setting schools should be using model D (equivalent to the average performance of schools at 25th percentile of value-added performance)*
- *schools where current performance is already above FFT model D, should use RAISEonline to look at the actual performance of high achieving schools in similar circumstances to inform their target setting*

Key Stage 3 targets

14. School and LA targets for Key Stage 3 for 2007 were well below the trajectory needed to meet the national targets. Whilst secondary schools are generally in a better position than primary schools to interpret data, they should nevertheless be challenged where targets are not sufficiently aspirational. In particular, schools should be focusing in their targets for Key Stage 3 on improving the conversion of pupils who were at or above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. The key expectations for discussion with secondary schools around their Key Stage 3 targets should be:

Key Stage 3

- *all pupils achieving level 4, and at least 40% of those with level 3, at the end of Key Stage 2 should progress to level 5 or above*
- *all pupils achieving level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 should progress to level 6 or above*
- *pupils with Special Educational Needs which mean achievement of level 5 is unlikely should have targets which help them to progress as far as possible*
- *schools should aim to set targets which enable them to match the performance of the top quartile of similar schools. Where FFT estimates are used to inform target setting schools should be using model D (equivalent to the average performance of schools at 25th percentile of value-added performance)*
- *schools where current performance is already above model D, should use RAISEonline to look at the actual performance of high achieving schools in similar circumstances to inform their target setting*

Key Stage 4 targets

15. School targets at Key Stage 4 for 2007 show an encouraging trajectory for continued improvement. LAs and SIPs should focus on the following areas in their discussions with secondary schools to ensure we can maintain the recent progress towards reaching the 5 A*-C GCSE and equivalent target:

Key Stage 4

- *all pupils averaging level 6 or above, and 50% of those averaging level 5 or above, at the end of Key Stage 3 should achieve 5 A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent*
- *pupils with Special Educational Needs which mean achievement of 5 A*-C grades is unlikely should have targets which help them to progress as far as possible*
- *schools should aim to set targets which enable them to match the performance of the top quartile of similar schools. Where FFT estimates are used to inform target setting schools should be using model D (equivalent to the average performance of schools at 25th percentile of value-added performance)*
- *schools where current performance is already above model D, should use RAISEonline to look at the actual performance of high achieving schools in similar circumstances to inform their target setting*

16. Following a commitment in the 2005 White Paper “14-19 Education and Skills” the importance of achieving the basics in English and mathematics at age 16 has been reflected in changes to the School and College Achievement and Attainment Tables – the 2006 Tables will include a new performance indicator showing the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics.

17. The response to last year's exercise to set a voluntary target for the proportion of 15 year olds expected to achieve five or more A*-C grades at GCSE (or equivalent) including English and mathematics was encouraging – two thirds of LAs and a similar proportion of schools set such a target.

18. Now that the target is to be made statutory we hope to build on that momentum and LAs should support their schools in setting ambitious targets that help pupils to focus on achieving an A*- C grade in both GCSE English and mathematics. This target should reflect the school's plans for raising standards in the core subjects, including support from the Secondary National Strategy. The fact that there is currently no national PSA target for this additional performance measure should not be taken as an indication that Ministers regard such a target as less important than the existing 5 A*-C measure.

Schools below the floor targets

19. The Government's target is for all secondary schools to achieve above the Key Stage 3 and 4 floor levels and to have reduced the number of primary schools below 65% by 40% by 2008. Schools that are currently achieving results below the Government's floor targets (65% level 4+ in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2, 50% level 5 in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 3, and 30% 5 A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent) should not be setting targets below these levels, unless their progress in 2006 means that it is still unrealistic to expect them to get there in 2008. Any schools in this category should be planning to achieve challenging targets for current year groups which will put them on a trajectory to move above the floor in 2009.

20. There should be very few (if any) circumstances in which a school that is currently achieving above the floor target would be justified in setting a target to achieve below that level in 2008.

Standards meetings and review and challenge for LA attainment targets

21. The Senior Regional Directors (SRDs) in the National Strategies play a key role for the Department in discussing and challenging LAs on their targets (and those set by their schools). This autumn they plan to hold a standards meeting in September with LAs to review the performance of schools in 2006, including those targeted for particular support or programmes, and to look ahead to LAs' expectations for performance in 2007 and likely targets for 2008. The Department will be providing a slidepack of relevant national data analysis, based on pupil conversion, for LAs to review in advance of the standards meetings with the National Strategies in September.

22. The agenda for these meetings will cover the following issues:

- A review of results in 2006 from FS to Key Stage 4
- Progress towards 2007 school and LA targets

- Discussions with schools about targets for 2008 – likely trajectory for LA targets in 2008, including initial discussion on early years' target
- Schools causing concern –including schools below floor targets
- LAs' support for settings and schools
- National Strategies' planned support to the LA

23. SRDs expect to have a further discussion about 2008 targets at the Priorities Meetings in the overall context of LAs' strategic plans for raising standards. Following the SIPs and link advisers discussions with schools about their targets in the autumn term, LAs should review the information coming back. In some cases, SRDs will hold a further discussion with LAs about the targets information prior to submission to the Department in January 2007.

24. As in previous years the Department will review all LA and aggregated school targets for 2008 with the Government Offices and the SRDs to identify those LAs where the targets submitted do not represent sufficient improvement. All targets are considered against an agreed set of criteria. The Department has regard to FFT estimates and also takes account of prior attainment data for the relevant cohort. It also takes a view based on the aggregate of all LA and school targets and the trajectory needed to reach national targets. Not all LA targets which are highlighted for review against the criteria will be challenged. Professional judgment is exercised by the Government Offices and the National Strategies based on their understanding of the challenges that individual LAs face in raising standards.

25. LA targets at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 will normally be highlighted for challenge when:

- The target shows no progress beyond current results or is at the same level or below that set for the previous year
- The target shows little progression - at KS2 and 3 the target should provide at least 2 percentage points improvement on the most recent results; at KS4 at least 4 percentage points improvement for both the existing 5 A*-C GCSE measure and for the new measure of 5 A*-C including English and mathematics. The KS4 targets should make clear that a trajectory is being set both to improve GCSE A*-C performance, and to narrow the gap between the existing measure and the new measure including English and mathematics.
- The target is equal to the sum of school targets or the sum of school targets shows no progress beyond most recent results
- The target is more than 2 percentage points below the FFT Model C estimate
- The target shows no improvement in conversion rates

Timetable for the target setting process

26. The timeline attached to this guidance sets out the key dates in the process. Below is a more detailed checklist of actions for LAs to consider:

Action for LAs (SIPs, LAI, Strategy Managers, Head of School Improvement and DCS)

August:

- *Analyse 2006 results to evaluate impact of targeted support and finalise plans for 2006/07, particularly for underperforming schools and those below the floor targets.*
- *Analyse FSP results at school and LA level to identify how the LA can best support settings and groups of young children at risk of poor achievement.*

September:

- *Use RAISEonline to carry out early analysis of progress against aggregate school and LA targets for 2006 and review value-added information for the cohort. Programme early discussions with schools where results are significantly below or have exceeded 2006 targets as part of the self-evaluation process.*
- *Identify ranges for expected progress of cohorts based on maximising pupil conversions from 2004 KS1 data (at KS2) 2005 KS2 data (at KS3) and 2006 KS3 data (at GCSE.)*
- *Attend standards meeting with National Strategies to review performance and progress towards 2007 LA targets and discuss trajectory for 2008 and beyond*

October/November:

- *Use RAISEonline to carry out early analysis of progress against aggregate school and LA targets for 2006 and review value-added information for the cohort. Programme early discussions with schools where results are significantly below or have exceeded 2006 targets.*
- *LAI/SIP school visits to discuss 2008 targets. Review progress towards 2007 targets and encourage schools to look at projected outcomes for 2009. Use prior attainment data for individual pupils in Y5, Yr 8 and Yr 10 classes to project 2008 results based on maximising conversions in each school.*
- *Challenge schools where evidence from performance data suggests proposed targets are not ambitious and where targets will not contribute to narrowing achievement gaps for individual pupils and groups of pupils.*
- *Discuss targets for LAC with schools (including those who are placed out-of-authority) using previous KS results to provide estimates for 2008.*
- *Discuss targets and trajectory at Priorities Meetings*

December

- *Review school targets (including for minority ethnic groups and attendance). Identify schools where proposed targets for 2008 may require further challenge and highlight schools where targets and planning priorities are not aligned.*
- *Looked after Children Education Services gather LAC targets for 2008 and challenge where expectations are too low.*

January onwards:

- *DCS and Head of School Improvement review deployment of LA resources against school targets and taking all this support into account, determine LA targets for 2008.*
- *LA Data contact reports school and LA targets to DfES by 31 January 2007. Where any LA target is subsequently revised following challenge from National Strategies,*

DCSs must inform ensure the SaLTs workbook is correctly resubmitted to the DfES.

- *LAI/SIPs continue to review progress towards the 2007 targets – are schools on track to achieve expected outcomes and if not what further support is needed?*

Targets for Looked after Children

27. For 2008 LAs should set targets for looked after children to improve outcomes at age 11 and age 16. This continues to be important especially bearing in mind the statutory duty now placed on LAs to promote the educational achievement of looked after children and the need significantly to improve outcomes for this particularly vulnerable group of young people.

28. The returns for 2007 showed that, on average, LA targets for looked after children aggregate as follows:

- for achievement at Key Stage 2 (compared to their peers) - 56%
- for participation at Key Stage 4 - 31%
- for achievement at Key Stage 4 - 17%, with just over a third of LAs setting a target below the 15% 2002 PSA floor target.

29. While we understand that many LAs will find it difficult to set targets that meet national expectations (for instance because of the size of the cohort concerned), nevertheless the 2007 return represents a disappointing response. It is less ambitious than previous years' returns in two of the three above indicators and is below the national 2002 PSA target. The 2002 PSA target set baselines for the above looked after children indicators so that by 2006:

- achievement at level 4 in English and maths should be at least 60% as good as their peers
- the proportion who reach school leaving age having sat a GCSE (or equivalent) examination should be at least 90%
- the proportion of those aged 16 who obtain qualifications equivalent to five GCSEs graded A*-C should, on average, be 24%, with at least 15% of looked after children reaching this level in all LAs.

30. The 2008 targets will be based on children who will be in care (either subject to a care order, or who are accommodated by the LA) on 30 September 2008 and will have been looked after continuously for at least a year. The target must include all those looked after children for whom the LA is the originating LA (i.e. regardless of where they may be being educated).

31. Targets for looked after children must be set in discussion with the relevant leads for the education of looked after children within the LA. A list of lead contacts in each LA can be found on the Education Protects website www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects

32. For 2008 LAs and schools will be setting an additional target for the percentage of pupils achieving at least 5 A*-C at GCSE or equivalent, including English and mathematics. It is important that looked after children are not treated any differently when looking at their levels of achievement and we should be especially mindful that they are also encouraged to achieve in these important basic skills. LAs will therefore be required to set an additional Key Stage 4 target for the children they look after. This will be reflected in an amendment to the Local Authority Performance Target Regulations, subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary changes.

33. In reviewing 2008 targets for looked after children we will want to challenge the level of aspiration where we have concerns. In deciding where it may be appropriate to challenge the degree of an LA's aspiration we shall take account of the following factors:

- *Are there less than 10 children in the relevant cohort? We recognise that where the cohort size is less than 10 the figures may be subject to year on year variation which may not be an accurate reflection of the LA's effectiveness in this area. We shall not therefore challenge targets where this is a factor.*
- *Are the targets set above the SR 2002 National PSA? Where they are, this will be an indication that the LA is demonstrating the level of aspiration needed if we are to make progress towards a significant improvement in outcomes for looked after children at national level.*
- *Are the targets set below the SR 2002 National PSA by more than one third?*
- *Are there particular reasons why targets for this cohort have been set at a low level? Where targets have been set at a low level we shall explore the reasons, such as, for example, whether there is a particularly high number of looked after pupils with a particular type of special needs.*
- *Is the "attaining 5 A*-C" target below the 15% 2002 PSA floor target? In 2005, 25% of LAs had at least 15% of their looked after children achieving this level. All LAs should aspire to this.*

Targets for minority ethnic groups

34. There are no national PSA targets specific to minority ethnic pupils. In setting targets at each key stage, however, we expect LAs to demonstrate that the achievement gap **is narrowing** between lower achieving minority ethnic groups and the average for all pupils in the LA. SIPs will have an increasingly important role to play in working with schools to identify and address underachievement of particular groups of pupils. It will be important to ensure that SIPs are supported in this role by the School Improvement and Ethnic Minority Achievement sections of LAs.

35. LAs are only required to set and report targets for minority ethnic groups, where there are 30 or more pupils from that group in any particular

cohort. We expect minority ethnic targets to be developed through aggregating pupil targets at the school level, which should reflect appropriately ambitious expectations for individual pupils' outcomes.

36. In setting targets at each Key Stage, we want LAs to aim for an upward trajectory for all underachieving groups. We accept that the composition of a LAs minority ethnic population may change year on year and that this may impact on the targets set.

37. The rate of progress in narrowing achievement gaps varies considerably across LAs, with not all demonstrating the upward trend seen at a national level. In reviewing the targets we will want to challenge LAs where targets have been set lower than or at the same level as last year for any ethnic group. We will also challenge where it is clear that the targets for minority ethnic groups are evenly distributed across the cohort, which would suggest they are not built up from targets set for individual pupils or groups of pupils.

38. The performance of minority ethnic pupils achieving 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics shows a considerable widening of the achievement gap for minority ethnic pupils in a large number of LAs. LAs will be required to set targets for minority ethnic pupils in 2008 using both the existing 5+A*-C measure and 5+A*-C, including English and mathematics. This change will be reflected in an amendment to the LA Performance Targets Regulations, subject to Parliamentary approval.

39. Our national data is based on key headline ethnic categories and can obscure the underperformance of some communities. We, therefore, urge LAs to examine the achievement of all pupils groups in their LA. Consider setting targets using the extended ethnicity codes for each group with more than 30 pupils in any one cohort. These do not need to be submitted to the Department but should be factored into the target for the headline category into which that group falls e.g. Somali which would fall under the Black African category.

40. There are increasing levels of support and expertise available to schools and LAs through the National Strategies and the Department. Where LAs are receiving such support, we would expect them to factor this into their target-setting.

Attendance Targets

41. The Government continues to regard regular school attendance as essential, in order for children to reach their learning goals within school and to help achieve outcomes beyond these. Schools and LAs need effective mechanisms for prevention, early intervention and ensuring that parents play their role. During the last academic year (2005/06), the Department's strategy on attendance included absence data collection from all schools every term; and half termly data collection from priority schools for overall and high unauthorised absence. This has allowed the Department to provide

appropriate advice and support to LAs through the National Strategies' Assistant Regional Advisers for Attendance (ARAAs).

42. The PSA target for school attendance is to reduce the 2002/03 level of school absence by 8% by 2007/08. Achieving the new target will result in around 36,000 more pupils back in school each day by 2008. In turn, we expect this improvement to support progress towards other targets, such as the key stage attainment targets.

43. Attendance target setting continues to be a central part of improving performance within schools and LAs. Although LAs have already provided indicative attendance targets up to 2007/08, we anticipate some LAs may wish to amend or revise their targets in light of what the attendance data for 2005/06 may show. Revised targets should take account of schools that have not yet reached their FSM median – for example, an LA may have reached its 2008 target this year, but still has schools above their median so the revised target will need to include an element covering these schools moving to the median.

44. Also, LAs who exceed the attendance target set for 2006/07 may wish to set a more ambitious target for 2007/08 and so on. This is particularly important as some LAs who may have not met their 2005/06 attendance target, need to adjust their targets from 2006/07 to 2007/08 in order to help meet the national PSA target.

45. Further advice on setting attendance targets can be obtained by contacting your National Strategies Assistant Regional Attendance Advisor.

Summary of LA targets for 2008

Annex A

		LA PERFORMANCE TARGETS
Early Years' outcomes		Improve young children's development by increasing the percentage that achieve a total of at least 78 points across the Foundation Stage Profile and at least 6 points in each PSED and CLL scale; and improve the average FSP score of the lowest achieving group to narrow the gap between that group and the rest.
KS2	English test	% pupils at level 4 or above
	Maths test	% pupils at level 4 or above
	Looked after Children	% of children aged 11, looked after for at least 12 months, who obtain level 4 in English and maths.
	Minority Ethnic Groups	% pupils at level 4 or above in English and maths where there are 30 or more pupils from that group in any particular cohort
KS3	English test	% pupils at level 5 or above
	Maths test	% pupils at level 5 or above
	Science test	% pupils at level 5 or above
	ICT	% pupils at level 5 or above
	Minority Ethnic Groups	% pupils at level 5 or above in English, maths, science & ICT where there are 30 or more pupils from that group in any particular cohort
KS4	GCSE	% of pupils with 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C (or equivalent) % of pupils with 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C (or equivalent) including English and mathematics Average Point Score attained in approved qualifications
	Minority Ethnic Groups	where there are 30 or more pupils from that group in any particular cohort: % pupils with 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C (or equivalent) % of pupils with 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C (or equivalent) including English and maths
	Looked after Children	% of young people looked after for at least 12 months: who reach school leaving age without having sat a GCSE or equivalent examination. who achieve five or more GCSEs graded A*-C (or equivalent) who achieve five or more GCSEs graded A*-C (or equivalent) including English and maths
Absence		To reduce the level of school absence

National Performance Targets

Early Years

- Improve children's communication, social and emotional development so that by 2008 53% of children reach a good level of development at the end of the Foundation Stage and reduce inequalities between the development achieved by children in the 20% most disadvantaged areas and the rest, from 16% to 12%

Key Stage 2

Raise standards in English and mathematics so that:

- By 2006 85% of 11 year olds achieve level 4 or above, with this level of performance being sustained to 2008; and
- By 2008, the proportion of schools in which fewer than 65% of pupils achieve level 4 or above is reduced by 40%.

Key Stage 3

Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT in secondary education so that:

- by 2007, 85% of 14 year olds achieve level 5 or above in English, Maths an ICT and 80% in Science nationally with this level of performance being sustained to 2008; and
- by 2008, in all schools at least 50% of pupils achieve level 5 or above in each of English maths and science.

Key Stage 4

- 60% of pupils to achieve 5 or more A*-C GCSE's or equivalent BY 2008
- In all schools at least 30% of pupils will achieve five or more A*-C GCSEs or equivalent by 2008.

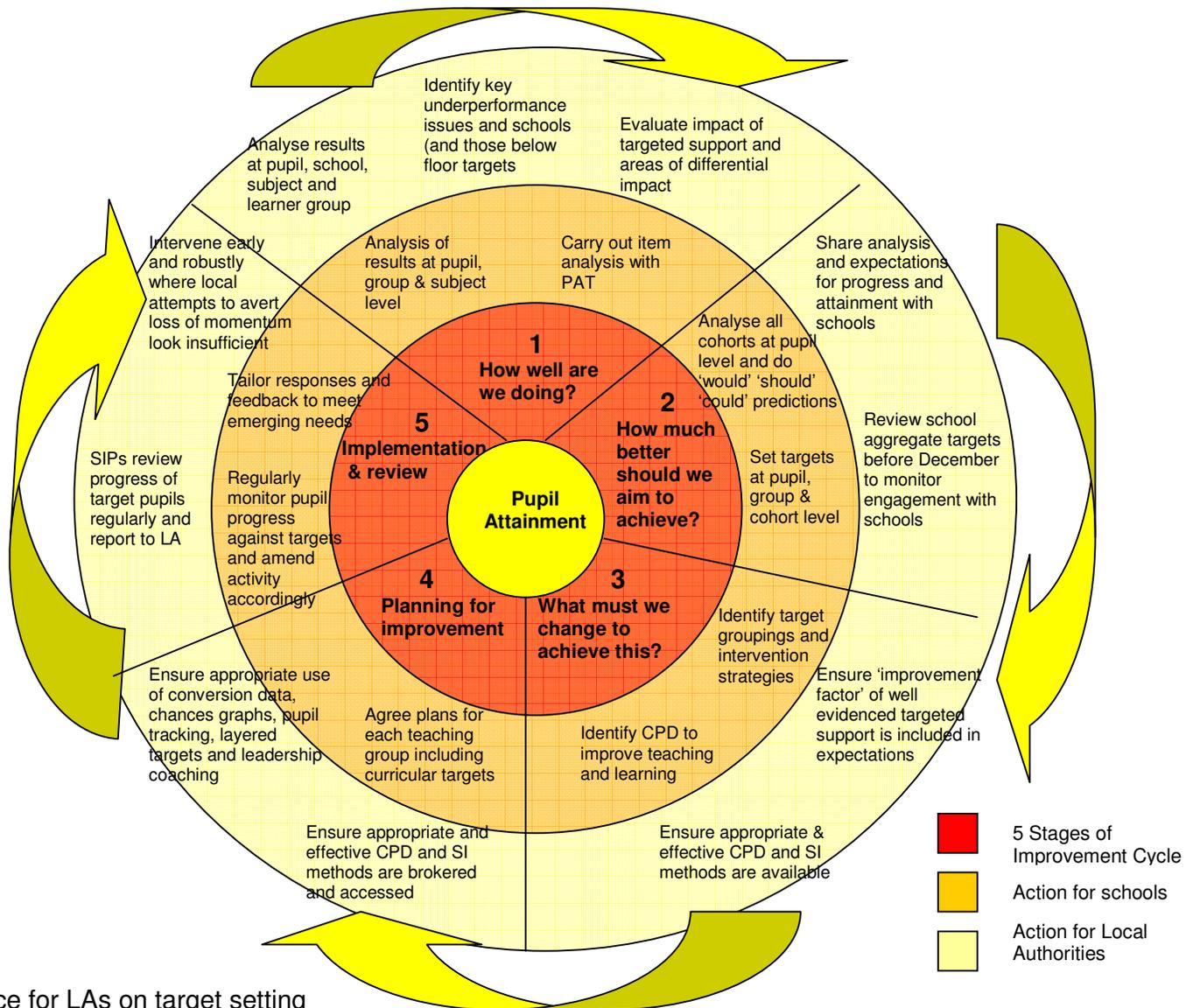
Looked After Children Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets

- Narrow the gap in educational achievement between looked after children and their peers, and improve their educational support and the stability of their lives so that by 2008, 80% of children under 16 who have been looked after for 2.5 or more years will have been living in the same placement for at least two years, or are placed for adoption.

Attendance

- Improve levels of school attendance so that by 2008, school absence is reduced by 8% compared to 2003.

5 Stage Cycle of Improvement for Local Authorities



Contacts

Target-setting:

Early years' outcomes	Beverley Grant	020 7273 5875
Key Stage 2	Nina Curley	020 7925 5691
	Lorna Serieux	020 7925 6703
	Rupsana Khanom	020 7925 5370
Key Stages 3 & 4	Max Galla	020 7925 6977
	Paula Morgan	020 7925 5411
	Eric McEwen	020 7925 5464
Looked after children	Ian Payne	020 7273 5185
Minority Ethnic Groups	Sharon Smith	020 7925 6514
School Attendance	Saleem Quazi	020 7925 5269
PAT/RAISEonline	Stephen Jardine	020 7925 6463
Priorities Meetings	David Aickin	020 725 5544