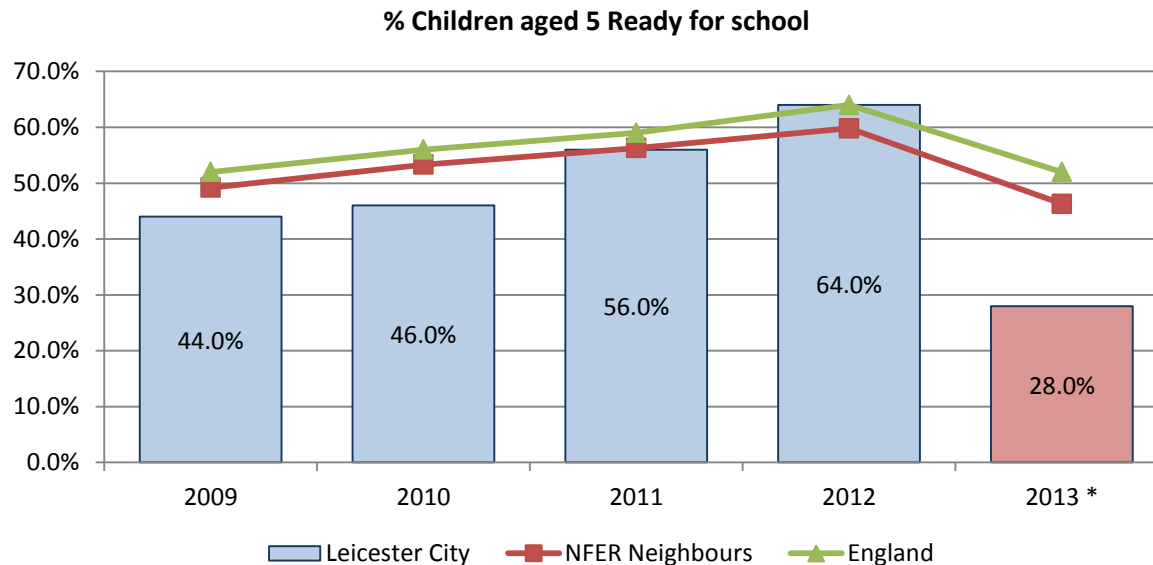


Early Years Strategy – Readiness for School

- Support for Early Years development is provided across a range of services and providers, including the private and voluntary sector. One of the key tasks is to map this range of services to ensure we engage well with all providers to achieve consistency of message and quality. A strategic group is being formed to pull this work together to ensure that a multi-agency approach is taken.



* N.B. trend graph shows historical trend for the old measure of “Achieving a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage for 2009-2012, 2013 was the first year of results for the new Foundation Stage Profile.

Improving the quality of early years provision

- Nearly all primary schools received good Ofsted comments on quality of early years provision. Recent Ofsted inspection of Northfields - West Humberstone cluster highlighted good practice being made in evidencing positive progress made with children accessing Children's Centre teachers compared with those not. Two additional recent (past 3 weeks) Ofsted inspections of 2 local authority pre-school settings have been graded good
- A report is in progress mapping and analysing the role of the Children's Centre teacher role and the impact the role is having. Recommendations will refocus the role on working with pre-school
- There is dedicated funding for training and development of pre-school settings to enable them to deliver good quality provision with highly skilled and qualified staff. There is a need for more joint training across schools and different settings/providers

- **Support for improving teaching and learning particularly in the areas of Literacy and Maths**
These are two areas where our children do less well and this has an adverse effect the city's overall scores for Good Level of Development. These are two key workstreams in the Leicester Education Strategic Partnership improvement plan. Knowledge Transfer Centres focussed on the teaching of reading (with particular emphasis on foundation stage) have been established in four schools and approximately a quarter of schools will participate in this programme over the next year. A recent Reading Summit gained endorsement for a roll-out of the teaching methodology to all city schools and this will be supported through funding from Schools Forum.
- **Increasing the participation of 3 and 4 year olds in education provision** - Although attendance at an education setting is not statutory our services have identified 3 and 4 year olds not attending any setting. Early Help services will work with families to target these children, develop families' awareness of the entitlement to free early education and support them in finding and taking up a place and knowing the importance of regular attendance. A key focus is currently on encouraging parents to take up their entitlement for early years placements to support school readiness. The percentage of 2yr old take up has doubled from 30 - 60% in the last quarter.
- **Support for parenting** (and practitioners working in partnership with parents) is a priority in relation to building attachments, developing communication and language and creating a home learning environment. The Healthy Tots programme is being developed within public health and will be delivered through Children's Centres and the Quality Improvement Team, which will focus on physical activity and development, as well as social and emotional development of young children.

- **Improving attendance in the foundation stage** - the attendance of Leicester reception children is the lowest nationally so we are developing a communication strategy to disseminate to parents through the children's workforce (e.g. in Children's Centres, early years settings) the importance of regular attendance right from the beginning of school.
- **Support for the early identification of, and input for, children with additional needs/SEND** - linking with health to support early identification, and effective commissioning of services to address developmental delays, e.g. Speech and Language support. This is in within the remit of the Integrated Commissioning Board.
- **Other activity includes:** providing Family Learning in every Children's Centre cluster, through our Adult Skills and Learning service; developing guidance on the effective use of Early Years Pupil Premium (this funding will be available from April 2015).
- **Emerging issue:** An issue being identified by both early years settings and schools is the growing number of children with English as an additional language, and particularly the range of languages spoken. We are reviewing our EAL advice and support for schools and will need to extend this to early years settings.