

SCHOOL STANDARDS AND FRAMEWORK ACT 1998

Account, prepared pursuant to Schedule 1, para 7(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, of the North Gillingham Education Action Zone for the period ended 9 January 2005, together with the Comptroller and Auditor General's Certificate and Report thereon. (In continuation of House of Commons Paper No. 1111 of 2003-2004)

Presented pursuant to School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Sch. 1, s 11, para 7(3)

North Gillingham Education Action Zone Account 1 April 2004 to 9 January 2005

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Legal and Administrative Information

Schools representatives

Linda Edwards, Arden Junior School
Alison Pullen, Barnsole Infant School
Sid Land, Barnsole Junior School
Jane Heyes, Brompton Westbrook Primary School
Jim Fernie, Byron School
John Somers, Danecourt Special School
Jenny Honey, Featherby Infant School
Paul Green, Featherby Junior School
Lynn Andrews, Saxon Way Primary School
Zerina Slade, Napier Primary School
Sue Stickings, Richmond Infant School
Susan Gray, Skinner Street School
Sue Fedosiuk, Twydall Infant School
Karen Bigg, Twydall Junior School
Judy Rider, New Brompton College
Nic Fiddaman, Woodlands Primary School

Teacher and staff representatives (x3)

Sue Calder (NUT)
Paul Bell (Joint Union representative)
Stephen Harvey (NASUWT) (reserve)

Medway Council representatives (x5)

Simon Trotter, Medway Council Education
Counsellor Adam Price, Medway Council
Counsellor David Royle, Medway Council
Counsellor Matthew Fearn, Medway Council
Counsellor Karen Griffin, Medway Council

Business Partner representatives

Mark Styles, Learning & Skills Council
Barry Horner, Kingshurst Consulting Group
Rajeev Gupte, BAE Systems Ltd
Vacancy

Parent representatives

Jan Boddy, Parent Governor Representative
Vacancy
Vacancy

Others

Janet Wood, Mid Kent College of H&FE
Aaron Telford, Medway Youth Parliament
TBA, University of Greenwich

Project Director

Martin Garwood

Community representatives (x4)

Patrick Mulcahy (Chair)

Vacancy

Vacancy

Department for Skills and Education

Janet Mokades, Department for Education and Skills

Other Trustees who served during the year

Sandra Abrams, retired Headteacher

Ann Peters, retired Headteacher

Terry Spice, retired Headteacher

Penny Foreman, retired Headteacher

Ginny Wilson, Acting Headteacher

Heidi Taylor, Associate Headteacher Medway Council

Auditors

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Report of the Trustees

The Trustees of the North Gillingham EAZ present their annual report and the accounts and financial statements for the period ended 9 January 2005.

Constitution and principal activities

The Forum is a corporate body and an exempt charity established on 10 January 2000 under the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act. It does not have a share capital. This Act and its associated regulations are the primary governing documents of the Forum. Trustees of the Forum are nominated by the respective school governing bodies, Medway Council and community and business organisations.

The principal aims of the Action Forum are to improve standards and raise aspirations within the schools that are part of its Education Action Zone.

In accordance with the Act, the Forum has adopted an action plan approved by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. The main objectives of the Education Action Zone and the action plan are as follows

- to raise education standards, aspirations and self-esteem amongst the pupils of participating schools;
- to develop new partnerships and working relationships across the local community between schools, businesses, public sector bodies, community organisations and in particular, parents; and
- to devise, test and evaluate approaches to education and learning which can bring significant benefit to pupils within the Partnership area.

Organisation and objectives

The sole activity of the Forum is the operation of Gillingham Partnership (North Gillingham EAZ). The EAZ is managed in its day-to-day work by Project Director, Martin Garwood, who was appointed on the 19 March 2000 and took up his position on the 19 June. The Project Director is a member of the Executive Committee, which reports to the full Forum and acts as its management group. In addition, a number of steering groups oversee particular projects or project areas, reporting to the Forum. Minutes of the meetings of the steering groups and the full Forum are published on the Partnership website. Minutes of the Executive Committee are circulated to Forum members.

Five steering groups currently operate, acting as consultative and planning groups. They are as follows

- ICT – chaired by Terry Spice, Headteacher of Featherby Junior School;
- Counselling – chaired by Sue Stickings, Headteacher of Richmond Infant School;
- Speech & Language Therapy – chaired by Sue Stickings, Headteacher of Richmond Infant School;
- Lifelong Learning – chaired by Sue Kingman, EAZ Learning Development Consultant; and
- Out-of-school-hours Learning – chaired by Sue Kingman, EAZ Learning Development Consultant.

The Action Forum works in partnership with a number of organisations including charities. Its relationship is essentially a co-operative one. Close links are maintained with the Local Education Authority (LEA) through formal liaison with key staff. The Project Director is a member of the Medway Council's Education and Leisure Management Team. These partnerships exist to ensure that the policies and practices of the EAZ achieve their objectives.

The Project Director also chairs meetings of the Aim Higher partnership set up to oversee Excellence Challenge funds awarded by the Department for Education and Skills in September 2001. The steering group includes representatives from

Medway Council
Upbury Arts College
University of Kent at Medway
University of Greenwich at Medway
Bristol University

Mid Kent College
Kent Careers Service Ltd
Kent Institute of Art & Design
Learning & Skills Council
University College, London

Policies – Finance and staffing

The day-to-day operation of the EAZ is governed by a number of policies, notably those for financial management and control, personnel, health and safety and monitoring and evaluation. Wherever possible, EAZ policies follow the structure and content of Medway Council documents. The Action Forum has undertaken a review of risks which is re-considered annually.

The present Trustees of the EAZ are listed in Section 1 of this report, with details of those individuals who served for part of the year.

The Partnership's main source of income is grants received from the Department of Education and Skills. Additional income received during the year includes grants from

- Children's Fund Medway for the counselling service and work with parents;
- New Opportunities Fund for out-of-school-hours activities; and
- Cash donations.

The Partnership's financial affairs are managed under a service level agreement by Medway Council.

The following staff were employed by the Partnership during the period to carry out its activities

Martin Garwood, Project Director
Wendy Friend, Project Assistant
Linda Baker, Administration Assistant
Nicola Barrett, Cleaner
Jim Buckley, ICT Technician
Heather Gallagher, Senior Practitioner, Counselling Service
Jean Kerr, Head of Early Intervention Counselling Service
Sue Kingman, Learning Development Consultant
Ruth Mortis – Excellence in Class Teacher

Operating and financial review

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with current statutory requirements and the Forum's governing documents.

Most of the EAZ's income is obtained from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received during 2004-2005 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

During 2004-2005 the EAZ also received restricted grants from the DfES and other Government Departments and donations from commercial sponsors, the details of which are in notes 3, 4 and 5. These donations have been given to the EAZ to assist it to achieve its Action Plan and have been fully expended.

Expenditure for the period was covered by grants from the DfES, other income and the balances brought forward from 2003-2004. There was a deficit of incoming resources over resources expended for the year of £138,000.

At 9 January 2005 the net book value of fixed assets was £nil. All assets purchased have either been gifted to the schools within the EAZ or in relation to the project office are less than £2,500 in value.

Fund review

The Zone is due to cease operations on 9 January 2005. It holds balances of £nil as at that date.

Connected organisations

The following organisations are business and other partners of Gillingham Partnership and have committed a wide range of in-kind support to assist the Partnership in achieving its objectives

Akzo Nobel Chemicals Ltd
BAE Systems
BT
Connexions Careers Management
Gillingham Football Club
HSBC
Inner Gillingham Fraternal of Churches
Learning & Skills Council
Lloyds of London
Medway Chamber of Commerce
Medway Council
Medway Education Business Partnership
Medway News and Standard
Mid Kent College of Higher and Further Education
Nat West Bank
RHM Frozen Foods Ltd
L Robinson & Co (Gillingham) Ltd
Southern Water/Scottish Power Learning
Swale Housing Association
Tesco
University of Greenwich
West Kent Health Authority
HM Charitable Trust
Key Training Services
Southern Water/Scottish Power
Volunteer Reading Help

Disabled persons

The policy of the Forum is to support the employment of disabled persons both in the recruitment and by retention of employees who become disabled whilst in the employment of the Forum, as well as generally through training and career development.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities for the Financial Statements

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Trustees prepare financial statements for each financial period in the form and on the basis determined by the Secretary of State with approval of the Treasury. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- follow applicable accounting standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the basis that the Forum's activities were ceasing.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Forum and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Accounts Direction given by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Forum and hence, for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Forum has undertaken an analysis of the major risks to which the charity is exposed and has reviewed the systems in place to mitigate those risks. The systems were implemented from the end of July 2001.

Statement on Internal Control

Maintenance of internal controls

As Trustees, we have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the Forum's policies, aims and objectives whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which we are responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to us in our Financial Memorandum and Government Accounting.

The system of internal control is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify the principal risks to the achievement of Forum policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

This process has been in place for the period ended 9 January 2005 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts and accords with Treasury guidance.

Review of controls

As Trustees, we also have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of Internal control. In 2002 the Forum established the following processes

- identification of the Forum's objectives and key risks. The Forum carries out a detailed review of its activities and produces a comprehensive strategic plan setting out the major opportunities available to it and the risks to which it is exposed;
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate the risks identified in the plan. This should include systems to ensure compliance with specific regulations or procedures laid down by central government departments;
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should any of those risks materialise;
- procedures for monitoring progress against the strategic objectives set out in the plan at regular meetings (e.g. quarterly);
- a comprehensive annual review of the plan, including a review of the risks which the Forum may face; and
- the allocation of risk ownership, (including the role of the Forum, sub-committees and Project Director).

Our review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports.

Auditors

The Auditor, the Comptroller and Auditor General, is appointed under the terms of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act.

Approval

The report of the Trustees was approved on 6 December 2004 and signed on its behalf by

Patrick Mulcahy
Chairman

4 March 2005

Review of the years 2000 to 2004

Introduction

Gillingham Partnership was born on the 9 January 2000 as part of the Government's Education Action Zone initiative. The Zone was made up of 17 schools (Forge Lane and Hillyfields Junior were later amalgamated) and was governed as an exempt charity by a board of Trustees, consisting of representatives from the schools themselves, from local community and business organisations and members of Medway Council (see Appendix 1).

The Partnership drew on core funding from the Department for Education and Skills, funds matched to private sector support and some charitable donations. Successful bids brought in additional grants from the New Opportunities Fund, Children's Fund Medway and for an Excellence Challenge/Aim Higher programme.

Day-to-day activities were run by a Project Director reporting to the full board of Trustees. A small core team were employed to carry forward the EAZ's action plan. An executive committee and a number of steering groups were set up to assist in project planning, monitoring and implementation.

Following a successful submission to the DfES in June 2002, the statutory life of the Partnership was extended from three to five years, with closure scheduled for the 9 January 2005. Confirmation of the positive and beneficial early roll-out of EAZ activities was received through a full OfSTED inspection in November 2001 which concluded

"North Gillingham Education Action Zone started out with too many initiatives. It is refining its approach by concentrating on a small, though still large, number of activities with clearer objectives and better organisation. The Zone is now making good progress."

During its five years of operation the Partnership fostered and sustained a wide range of initiatives, forged new relationships between schools and other agencies, promoted actively the status and importance of life-long learning and strove to raise local aspirations and expectations. Its funding allowed new approaches to be kick started, long-standing barriers to be challenged and existing provision to be significantly enhanced

- the EAZ provided a wide range of new opportunities and experiences for the children, from residential adventure weeks to breakfast clubs, and summer schools to projects working alongside professional artists and engineers; experiences that aimed to raise aspirations and encourage new learning;
- it supported many children at risk of failure or of disrupted academic progress through the provision of counsellors, learning mentors, and trained volunteer adults, all helping to prevent exclusion and ensure that vulnerable children could aim to fulfil their potential;
- it brought a significant number of parents and other adults back into learning and into closer relationships with schools;
- it built a strong partnership made up of schools, FE and HE institutions, voluntary groups, businesses and other stakeholders, to work together for the benefit of all 6,000 pupils in the Zone – a partnership in which the schools themselves turned sharing practice from rhetoric into reality;
- it invested heavily in its greatest resource, the Zone's teachers and other staff, through a wide ranging programme of training and development opportunities in key aspects of teaching and learning such as formative assessment, ICT, literacy and numeracy, behaviour management and the development of communication skills; and
- it challenged the schools, the children and others to look again at what they did, to see how it could be different, and use the EAZ to kick start activities that would have a lasting impact on the children in school during the life of the Zone and on those to follow.

It drew upon the active support, encouragement and good will of a large number of individuals and organisations to achieve its many successes and leave an enduring legacy in North Gillingham – the staff in schools, our business and other partners, colleagues in Medway LEA, parents and the children and students themselves. All deserve congratulations, with particular thanks going to the Action Forum's Trustees, to the Zone's staff and to the three chairmen I have been privileged to work with.

This report is an attempt to catch at least a part of what Gillingham Partnership achieved during its five active years.

Martin Garwood
Project Director

6 December 2004

The EAZ's role in overcoming barriers to learning and building capacity

At its outset the attainment of Zone schools was below national and Medway averages at each key stage, although individual schools were achieving good results and in some cases better than national averages. Consequently, one of the Partnership's main aims was to raise standards of achievement in Literacy and Numeracy, and to improve GCSE scores. Two linked strategies formed the basis of the EAZ's approach – one was to challenge directly the many barriers to learning in the community and the second was to build local capacity for sustaining future improvement. These two approaches formed the underpinning rationale for the EAZ's action plan.

Containing wards where deprivation is a recognised feature, social and economic factors in North Gillingham produced a number of barriers to learning and achievement. These included

- low literacy and numeracy levels in the adult population;
- low levels of parental involvement in local schools;
- poor attendance and behaviour patterns for a significant minority of children;
- low levels of motivation and aspiration;
- poor communication skills on entry to school; and
- low levels of entry to higher education.

Collectively these features imposed significant challenges to the Zone schools. In a small number they acted cumulatively, with further challenges such as high pupil mobility, to impose important restraints on the pace of and energy for change. In addition, most schools were affected by difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, and shortages in the availability of supply teachers. OfSTED inspection reports suggested that a significant proportion of teaching in the Zone showed some weaknesses, with low expectations a feature, and also some shortcomings in leadership and management.

Projects and activities aimed at overcoming barriers to learning

Basic skills

As a way of directly targeting under-achievement, every school received an allocation of funds for additional tuition and small group work in literacy and numeracy. In most schools this supported the deployment of additional teacher assistant hours and thus for those children to be supported, who were thought by staff as likely to fall short of expected levels of attainment. Evaluations suggest that when used in a focused way this resource had a significant effect on pupil achievement.

The EAZ also actively encouraged schools to achieve the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, providing both additional training and consultancy alongside LEA provision. This resulted in the majority of Zone schools achieving the Quality Mark; a measure of the successful strategies encouraged.

Breakfast clubs

A small number of schools received funding for this activity from the start of the Zone in January 2000. A variety of structures evolved, although all had in common bringing children early to school, to have a breakfast and benefit from an opportunity for informal learning. The largest club, at Napier Community Primary school, regularly attracted over 100 pupils, and in other schools the clubs also attracted parents and young children. Initially, the EAZ funded all the costs of running the clubs, from staff provision to food. At the end of their second year of operation the Action Forum voted to taper funding away in order to help ensure sustainability at the end of the EAZ. Breakfast clubs are a costly provision and it is unlikely that all six will survive at a time of difficult school budgeting. Nonetheless, there is clear evidence that they had a beneficial effect, particularly in terms of encouraging good attendance, punctuality and better behaviour. Arden School for example, reported a 15% improvement in punctuality and a reduction in problematic behaviours at the start of the day. OfSTED warmed to the clubs – *“they are making a useful contribution to promoting social inclusion”*, but noted the need to measure their impact on standards. Given all the other initiatives and influences this proved hard to do. A report following research by the Institute of Education in July 2002 concluded that the clubs did indeed improve standards through their impact on pupils’ attitudes to and competences in learning. There is no doubt that breakfast clubs also provided low cost child care and a service for children who may not have needed it, therefore limiting their overall effect. For the schools and families involved, breakfast clubs have been flagship EAZ projects. They will be sorely missed by many if alternative sources of funding are not found.

Schools extra

Support from the EAZ here was directed towards encouraging parents to play a greater part in children’s education at school. There were two linked approaches in operation. One approach was to encourage EAZ schools to develop new approaches to widening the participation of parents, supported by an agreed allocation of funds. A variety of activities resulted, ranging from family learning events to sessions about parenting and helping with reading. SHARE was introduced and adopted in several schools, supported by additional funding from Medway Children’s Fund. This project brought parents into school to learn specific activities to run at home with their children.

The second approach was to focus the support of external agencies directly on the EAZ through the provision of additional adult learning programmes. Good links were built with providers from Medway’s Adult Education team, Mid Kent College and the Workers’ Educational Association, with Kent Guidance Consortium playing a pro-active role in linking requests from schools to providers of courses. The resulting programme involved every school in some way.

Mid Kent College ran sessions on ICT in a number of schools, using their mobile ICT van and Medway Council’s Adult & Community Learning Service provided additional ICT courses and family learning opportunities including the programme of short courses called Bite Size. The Workers’ Educational Association was highly instrumental in training parents to work in schools through its Practical Parent Helpers and Helping in Schools courses.

The Community Education and Development Council’s SHARE programme proved successful in bringing parents back into learning in the small number of schools that implemented it following a successful bid to Children’s Fund Medway. Schools were able to access free training to enable them to deliver the programme. In order to sustain future development Byron School has agreed to act as a “lead” SHARE school and to act as a source of good practice for others once the Zone has closed.

Over the life of the Zone more than 600 parents took part in courses and workshops and a number moved on to further learning as a result of the work of the EAZ: a key indicator of success.

The lasting impact of these activities upon the involvement of parents in supporting pupils’ learning is less clear cut however. At Skinner Street Primary School there is evidence that its extended school project, part funded by the EAZ, has indeed had a positive effect on the amount and quality of parental involvement. Other schools report little difference as yet. Where a specific member of staff, such as a Family Liaison Worker, Learning Mentor or teacher has specific responsibilities for this work and the school sees it as a priority, then change has been more apparent.

The early intervention counselling service

The service was set up in April 2000 as one of the pioneer projects within the newly formed Education Action Zone. It met a clear need for a way to respond to the difficulties presented by significant numbers of children resulting from the death of family members and from family breakdown. It started with one part time counsellor working with seven schools. After 18 months of successful work the project was expanded to include all schools with the exception of Danecourt Special, which had its own provision. With the additional monies from a successful bid to Medway Children's Fund, the service was able to expand further and the team grew to include a part-time Head of Service, a senior practitioner again part time and six sessional workers. The expertise and experience of the team ranged widely from play and educational therapists and bereavement counsellors to creative arts specialists. Once it became a service for all the EAZ, the level of referral increased and to date 407 clients from the age of five to sixteen years of age have received counselling. The reasons for referral have broadened to encompass bereavement, divorce/separation, family difficulties, low self esteem, health, school issues, anger and behaviour. Approximately 40% resulted from death and family breakdown.

The length of time a client was seen varied according to the severity of the presenting issue, their current life situation and the availability of other support.

Time and time again the service found that the referral issues were often only the tip of the iceberg. Where possible and desirable for the client, the team worked in a collaborative way with parents, staff and outside agencies. An award of additional funding from the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service in the EAZ's final year enabled this inter-agency work to develop further. The service held to an ethos of flexible working and thus was able to meet a small number of school refusers, working with them to enable a staged return to education.

A key element of the project was to build up the capacity of schools themselves to respond to children's emotional and behavioural difficulties through training and advice. A wide ranging programme was run in areas such as

- appropriate listening and responding;
- use of art and clay in enabling children to tell their story;
- stories that heal – the use of story telling as a preventive measure;
- understanding bereavement and how it affects children;
- working with low self-esteem; and
- understanding Anger Management.

In addition "stress buster" days were run for year six children and peer mediation schemes were set up in four schools working with Medway Mediation Services. Currently the service is piloting its first two drop-in listening posts in schools. The service has met a significant need within the EAZ, recognised in plans to take it forward into the Excellence Cluster and enabled many children in difficulties to receive rapid and responsive support.

Mentoring

The EAZ provided support each year for a small number of pupils identified as vulnerable at transfer from primary to secondary school. The scheme, run by Medway Education and Business Partnership, used trained adult volunteers to guide and support targeted children as they moved from year 6 into year 7. Over the life of the EAZ around 100 children benefited. There is no doubt that many of them would have found transfer difficult without this support and their academic progress would have suffered significantly. For the mentors the project provided valued personal development. It acted as the focus for a strong link with public and private sector organisations with BAE Systems, Gillingham Youth for Christ and local churches being major contributors to this voluntary scheme.

As preparation for its transformation to an Excellence Cluster, the EAZ appointed two Learning Mentors in April 2004 to pilot this new role. The two mentors will become part of a bigger team from January 2005. Early indications are that they have had a significant impact on targeted pupils at Brompton Westbrook, Woodlands and Upbury Arts College, the pilot schools, laying the foundation for the creation of further posts in the Excellence Cluster.

Out of school hours provision

Throughout its life the EAZ supported schools in providing out-of-school-hours clubs and activities. Initially this resulted in a variety of approaches, funding arrangements and intended outcomes. A successful application to the National Lottery in September 2001 provided an opportunity to rationalise the provision.

The EAZ was awarded nearly £100,000 by the Fund to run projects for three years. After consultation, three distinct programmes were organised; Key Stage (KS) 1 sports and physical activities, KS 2 Healthy Kids clubs and an Easter Adventure for year 5 pupils.

Sports and physical activities clubs were set up in eight schools with group sizes of 15-30 pupils, depending on the number of supporting adults. As a consequence approximately 1,500 pupils accessed these additional opportunities during the life of the project. The clubs varied from traditional PE/games and sport, to tap dancing with schools reporting many children wanting to take part and high levels of attendance and achievement.

Healthy Kids Clubs were run in nine schools over the three years involving approximately 500 children per year. There was a much more open choice of the type of activity run under this heading and they too were many and varied, from healthy living and eating to cookery, relaxation techniques, chess, fitness and tennis.

New Opportunities Funding supported a residential Easter Adventure. This took place each year at the Arethusa Venture Centre during the Easter holidays. Seven schools took up the opportunity, with four schools taking places over each of the three years. Over 200 children in Year 5 attended in total. The children involved were those identified as likely to fall short of expected levels in KS 2 SATs. The visit focused on self-esteem, confidence and team building. Teachers reported that the aims of the residential were met consistently and children showed a marked improvement in all the areas targeted.

All projects were overseen by a steering group, which made regular reports to the Trustees.

Additional funding from the DfES was used to run a summer school each year at Upbury Arts College. Its special Performing Arts status enabled up to 30 children each year to extend their talents and to work innovatively outside the normal curriculum. Here the target group was children in both KS 2 and 3 showing particular talents in the performing arts. Pupil evaluations show this provision to have been highly valued. The college also used its specialist staff to provide outreach support to other EAZ schools. A number of programmes evolved including those that targeted transition from primary to secondary.

Excellence challenge and aim higher

With a significantly smaller percentage of the school population in Gillingham going on to Higher Education than nationally, the EAZ put in place a variety of activities to boost attainment and to raise aspirations. Following a bid to the DfES for Excellence Challenge funding, a new partnership was formed, including the three local universities and Mid-Kent College, to manage the programme. Its activities included undergraduate mentoring of students, master classes, university fun days and additional tuition in study skills and conferences. Some funding was also used to set up a limited programme in primary schools, and in the summer of 2004, a joint initiative with the Kent Institute of Art & Design at Rochester enable three artist residencies to be run, bringing recent graduates into direct working contact with young pupils.

Annual evaluations to the DfES demonstrate the effectiveness of these approaches, with Mid Kent College showing an increase in application rates to university and degree level programmes. Changing aspirations amongst secondary school students were also evident. However, the project highlighted the need for significantly improved data and student tracking to ensure that its full impact could be gauged. Undergraduate mentoring, although beneficial, proved difficult to sustain because of recruitment problems. With further national funding available until 2006 the EAZ was able to kick start new ideas and activities that can now be built upon and extended.

Speech and language

This early project was set up by a small number of schools concerned about the communication difficulties shown by many children in their care. Initially the need was met through the employment of a full time speech therapist, managed by the headteacher of Richmond Infant School working through a steering group. The therapist provided assessments and therapeutic support for individual children in the core group of schools, liaising with both parents and teachers.

An audit undertaken in 2001 showed that the level of speech and language difficulties in KS 1 was twice the national figure and that in addition, language delay was a significant issue for many children starting school. The audit prompted a full re-alignment of the project, away from one-to-one therapy towards activities ensuring a more sustained impact in the Zone and to include other schools facing similar challenges in the project.

From September 2003, Symbol UK Limited was commissioned to deliver the new service to all schools with KS 1 children and to set up a staff training and development programme instead of one to one therapy. The aims of the revised service were to

- train staff to be able to identify and support children with speech, language and communication needs; and
- enable schools to develop the knowledge, skills and resources to benefit children beyond the life of the Zone.

Time was allocated to schools in half termly blocks and each was asked to assign a teacher and a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) to the project for half a day a week. The service provided the following

- a therapist and assistant during school visits;
- two twilight training sessions to the whole school staff team per term;
- a series of set communication groups that staff were trained to run;
- assessment and advice for individual children;
- a symbol software package; and
- a days Introduction to Signalong workshop for two members of staff.

The group work was a particularly beneficial experience for both children and observing staff, with at least 180 children involved and schools demonstrating their confidence to work independently afterwards. The training delivered to the rest of the school helped all staff to increase their awareness of speech, language and communication needs and to use the strategies in class to support and complement the work carried out in the small groups.

The project developed a strong focus on establishing multi-sensory communication environments by increasing the various modes of communication used e.g., speech, text, pictures, manual signs, symbols, objects, etc. Some schools embraced this idea fully and made plans to develop sign and symbol usage as whole school policy and practice: one school is intending to have an LSA trained as a Signalong Tutor by the end of the Zone. By September 2004, 30 staff had received Signalong training.

The project had a significant impact on the capacity of teachers and assistants to enhance children's communications. The training programme represented a significant input of resources with, for example, 135 staff trained in strategies for the modification of adult language in the classroom.

Evidence for the impact of the project came from the successful achievement of IEP targets and the observations of staff. The impact of these more inclusive practices will be harder to gauge and will require a long term perspective.

It is hoped that by the end of the Zone, each school will have new skills embedded, a number of different strategies in use to support children with specific learning and communication needs and plans in place to continue to develop communication skills. Richmond Infant School has been resourced to act as a continuing source of advice and as a focus for sustaining collaboration and the sharing of practice.

The EAZ's role in building capacity in its schools

As a project with a limited term, part of the Action Forum's strategic planning was to balance work that has an immediate impact with that aiming to build enhanced local capacity and therefore able to sustain longer term improvements. In many respects the greatest significance of EAZ provision was in its potential to change the face of education locally in ways that would continue to have a positive impact on pupils' lives well after its five year existence. In this, the EAZ faced the same dilemmas as faced by its schools – being accountable for year on year improvement, yet keeping high profile and in focus activity that would not produce results for years to come. Yet, if the EAZ experience and investment was about anything, it was about enhancing the ways that schools and other stakeholders both viewed and performed teaching and learning. This capacity building was a key feature of the work of Gillingham Partnership, carried out over the five years of its life through

- programmes of teaching training and development;
- programmes to train classroom assistants and other school staff;
- building partnerships with other stakeholders, including business; and
- building links between the schools themselves.

The EAZ made a significant investment in its teachers as a way of impacting directly on standards and the quality of learning, but also to enhance the overall quality of teaching in its schools.

Excellence in class

This was a flagship project for the EAZ and few, if any, teachers would not have benefited from its roll out. Although promotion and recruitment difficulties later reduced the team, at its peak the project was carried forward by three Advisory Teachers, employed by the Zone, each one bringing expertise in ICT, literacy and numeracy. Schools negotiated a development programme based upon their analysis of standards in English and mathematics and the quality of teaching in one of these aspects, which then qualified them for between 15 and 27 days support from one of the team, with some additional supply cover. At Upbury Arts College the project was led by a member of the school's own management team, working directly with individual departments and with a greater emphasis on developing assessment for learning.

This innovative project emphasised working alongside individual teachers in the classroom to model, demonstrate and coach. In many instances the work provided practical support for the development of interactive ICT capability. It was also an important vehicle for helping schools to embed the EAZ training programme in formative assessment strategies. Each project followed an agreed action plan and concluded with an evaluation of progress against its success criteria.

As well as focusing on teacher development, the project promoted the skills of leadership and management in the analysis of performance data, planning and monitoring projects and evaluating evidence. In the final year of its operation, partly in response to a reduced team, schools were given funds for additional supply cover to set up and run their own projects, with only light touch monitoring by the EAZ, but with a more explicit emphasis on management, particularly subject leader development.

Comments from teachers and reports from schools suggest that this project was seen as highly effective and valued. The high quality of the advisory teachers was particularly important in building relationships and providing relevant and carefully structured training. The EAZ's OfSTED inspectors concurred:

"The action plans drawn up by schools are detailed and thorough; they set out very clearly what is to be done and which teachers and pupils are to be targeted... in the short time the project has been implemented the impact on school improvement has been very good... This project offers a very effective and sustainable model of support."

OfSTED inspections of individual schools commented frequently on the impact of the project and with two exceptions, all EAZ schools have seen an improvement in the quality of teaching in their most recent inspection. Where the project was most successful, headteachers and senior managers focused the work of the team carefully, drawing upon their own analysis of performance data and quality of teaching, closely monitoring and following up the inputs, and returning at a later date to embed systematically the lessons learnt. Where less effective the initial action planning lacked vigour and focus, leading to projects where the opportunity to make a sea change in pedagogy was not capitalised upon fully.

Educating for success

Teacher development was a key focus of the EAZ throughout its life. Further impetus was provided via termly meetings for ICT, literacy and numeracy co-ordinators initially to write curriculum materials, but from the second year onwards to share and extend practice. An initial EAZ project, the Gillingham Curriculum, brought together teachers in working groups for both core and foundation subjects. It resulted in a complete set of subject planning materials but few schools took part in the work and the groups were re-focused in 2001.

In addition to the meetings of the ICT, literacy and numeracy consultants, the EAZ set up a variety of training programmes. These included sessions for deputy heads, a programme designed specially by the University of Greenwich for subject leaders called "Changemakers" and workshops run by EAZ and school staff on topics such as autism, listening and responding, and behaviour management. The take up of these training sessions proved very high. However, although the EAZ paid for supply cover, the shortage of good quality supply teachers meant that one or two schools were reluctant to release staff to attend.

In 2003 the EAZ was invited by the Department for Education and Skills to access national materials for training teaching assistants in literacy and numeracy. This training was offered and taken up by most schools. Good evaluations were received from participants. Requests from the teaching assistants themselves led to the offer of further training in the Summer of 2004 on aspects of pupil care and special needs. With hindsight, the key role of teaching assistants in supporting effective learning should have been recognised earlier on in its life through an audit of need and a specific accredited programme, but what was put in place added considerably to the expertise of this group of staff.

In the last term, all schools were offered a chance to become involved in Shakespeare 4 Kidz workshops. An earlier pilot programme had highlighted the value of this programme in promoting literacy based teaching and learning. This innovative project formed the focus for the Zone's last shared development day in November 2004.

ICT

The aim of work in this project area was to raise standards in Literacy and Numeracy through the development of innovative approaches to teaching with ICT. At the start of the EAZ, one interactive whiteboard was purchased for each school and an initial round of training was provided. Most of the schools built on this initial investment using their own funds, with one school installing interactive boards in every classroom in July 2004. The focus of the EAZ's work after this initial investment remained on training rather than further hardware installation. The employment of an EAZ ICT Technical Support Manager was a major factor in ensuring that schools' new ICT hardware ran smoothly and in giving teachers the confidence to focus on curriculum rather than technical issues.

Termly meetings were run for school ICT Co-ordinators. The meetings were a valuable opportunity for the teachers responsible for leading the development of ICT within each school to meet to discuss common issues. Good links were sustained with LEA staff through the group meetings and in the steering group. The meetings were consistently well attended and positively received, acting as a good exemplar of teacher collaboration and networking.

As a way of spreading good practice, expert teachers were invited to build upon the work in individual classrooms through a Leading ICT Teachers project. Teachers with strengths in teaching literacy and numeracy through ICT were recruited to teach demonstration lessons and lead training for others. To disseminate the EAZ's work across the LEA as a whole, a Sharing Good Practice event was held in February 2003 and over 120 teachers from across Medway attended. More recently, Leading ICT Teachers have been visiting other EAZ schools for class-based work with less confident teachers. This model of peer support proved highly effective.

Another strand in the support provided to teachers was the Excellence in Class project which often focussed on developing teaching and learning using ICT. For example, at Woodlands Primary School all the teachers worked with an EAZ Advisory Teacher over several weeks to improve the quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy through the use of interactive whiteboards. The school described this as one of their most successful training projects ever. The model of working alongside staff proved the most effective approach.

As an additional impetus six EAZ schools were involved in a year long DfES Interactive Whiteboard Pilot Project, piloting new materials for teaching Literacy and Numeracy in Years 5 and 6. The learning gained was disseminated widely. In January 2003, all EAZ schools were invited to bid into a fund to set up their own innovative projects. The successful bid involved four schools working collaboratively on piloting use of wireless meeting pads.

The Gillingham Partnership website was set up at the start of the Zone and encouraged very many teachers to share their practice and to communicate with each other about their work. It was also used widely for sharing curriculum resources for literacy, numeracy and other subjects. The site also featured information about the EAZ, news of activities and projects, and links to other sites. The number of visitors rose steadily over the life of the Zone, with an average of 1,600 uses per month in 2003 and 2004, peaking at 5,000 in December 2003. This level of access was a clear indicator of the quality of the materials made available there.

The impact of this investment as a whole is reflected in the number of teachers who became confident and competent in using interactive technology in their teaching. A questionnaire completed by the schools themselves indicated that this figure increased from near zero in year 2000 to 62% in July 2004, showing a significant positive influence on children's learning in the majority of EAZ classrooms. It is likely that this growing confidence was a key contributor to standards, particularly in numeracy, as well as to better learning and teaching.

Building links in the early years

An early initiative brought together teachers in nursery and reception classes and staff from pre-school and other settings to build closer links and better progression for children moving into school. The group took an early lead in producing a shared record of progress to go with the child on transfer and contributed to the work of the LEA in this aspect. A shared concern to extend children's communication skills led to an innovative joint project involving the production of play bags, full of role-play resources and books to act as stimuli with small groups of young children. Each bag was available on loan to the members of the group and was sponsored in part by local businesses. A further development of the project focussed more specifically on the promotion of speaking and listening and a total of 45 'language boxes' were produced and made available with training provided by the EAZ's speech therapist to maximise their developmental potential. This project was successful in building much closer links between pre-school and school situations, in demonstrating linked working by the EAZ and the LEA and in showing how effective collaboration can be built, given shared issues and resources.

The model of a key worker linked to a patch based working group has been adopted across Medway, with Language Boxes taken up as an LEA strategy.

A sharing practice event was held on the 12 November attended by 50 delegates, to both celebrate and help to further embed the project.

Working with businesses

There were two imperatives for the Zone to work closely with local businesses. The first was purely financial, with £1.25 million available from the Government over five years in return for evidence of joint working. The second came from a desire to involve businesses as well as other stakeholders more closely in the local planning and delivery of education.

Starting slowly, the Zone successfully achieved its financial targets for in-kind support by June 2004, largely through the efforts of its part-time business adviser. With few large companies, and therefore, few large contributions, business support can perhaps best be characterised as small gifts from many. Work experience opportunities for students from Upbury Arts College became the largest vehicle for collaboration and therefore finance, with the input of private individuals as readers, mentors and classroom helpers in second place. The close involvement of Medway Education & Business Partnership in organising a range of business/school projects was important. Key projects, such as transitional mentoring, number partners and lunchtime readers, provided further practical opportunities to bring schools and businesses together.

On the whole, businesses found it easiest to link with specific projects and activities where both input and outcome were clear and highly visible. The Eco Cars project exemplified this well, bringing highly experienced engineers into classrooms to work alongside pupils, teachers and parents; the project exemplified the high level of collaboration achieved by the EAZ. Longer term links were encouraged by the Zone in its Business Friends Scheme, which sought to link each school to a named business. The close working that resulted was achieved through the energy and commitment of particular individuals – the joint Hochiki/Twydall Junior, CDEC/Danecourt and Brompton/Lloyds of London projects being good examples. The majority of EAZ schools were provided with a specific business link in this way. Many businesses became closely involved in contributing to the EAZ from the provision of equipment (CTS Direct, BOSE Hi-Fi), to training and conference facilities (RHM Frozen Foods), curriculum links (BAE Systems, HSBC Bank), and publicity (Medway News & Standard). These and many others played a significant part in creating the partnership and thus in helping to prepare youngsters for life outside school. Where these opportunities and links were built into the curriculum, as with the Eco Cars project, they proved to be more enduring and effective in changing children's aspirations

"due to enjoying this project so much I am actually re-thinking my choice of career. At first I wanted to be a vet and now I am seriously considering becoming an engineer."

Formative assessment

Another major project for the EAZ involved training all the Zone's teachers in the use of formative assessment strategies as a way of enhancing both teaching and learning. The training took place over three half days and was led by Shirley Clarke and a team from the Institute of Education. It covered

- developing and sharing learning intentions;
- establishing success criteria;
- providing feedback on progress and marking; and
- self evaluation and target setting.

Evaluation using interviews with and observations of teachers and pupils after each half day resulted in a set of comprehensive progress reports and a growing body of evidence testifying to the positive impact of the project. As seen with other projects, the commitment of schools to following up and implementing the strategies after the initial training was the most critical factor. There is no doubt however, that the majority of teachers found the strategies of value and that the quality of teaching in the Zone was improved significantly as a result. The project helped teachers to focus their short and medium term planning on specific outcomes and gave them the encouragement to involve children more effectively in their own learning, through discussion of success criteria for their work and improved assessment practices. As a whole EAZ development programme it built a strong sense of community, expressed in talk of WALTs and WILFs and set shared expectations about what constituted good practice in all its classrooms.

In a further evaluation in June 2003 two researchers commissioned by the EAZ from the Institute of Education looked at the project's impact on pupils' learning and attitudes. Using interviews and observations they reported an equally positive impact

“Generally, the children perceived formative assessment practices as being very helpful for their learning. We asked if they could prioritise one thing which really helped them learn, and many answered that knowing the learning intention was the most helpful. Others said that the teachers’ comments helped them the most. Interviews with children suggest that formative assessment practices in some schools are very well developed, and could very usefully act as a model of good practice for other schools. Teachers in the EAZ are to be congratulated on the way they have implemented and supported the strategies.”

Sue Askew, Bet MacCullum (June 2003)

After the initial phase, schools were invited to form part of a research and development group – the Learning Team, so that the strategies could be developed further. This represented a shift of emphasis away from mass training towards in-school action research with support being given to a small group of keen teachers. The project was further supported by the Zone’s Excellence in Class Advisors, who helped to embed strategies through their work in classrooms. A national conference in July 2003, run jointly with the LEA, and the publication of the results of the project in *“Enriching Feedback in the Primary Classroom”* by Shirley Clarke (Hodder and Stoughton 2003) ensured that the EAZ’s work received the recognition it deserved.

This project was a key one for the EAZ in terms of building the capacity of both teachers and learners. Although the link to improved standards is not readily traceable, the evidence from all the external evaluations underline the effectiveness of the strategies when used consistently and creatively as whole school policy and practice. When linked to Upbury Arts College’s own research based approaches in association with Kings College, it offered a seamless progression in key aspects of the learning environment for children aged from five to 16. The project came at an important time nationally too, with a renewed emphasis on assessment for learning in the Government’s National Strategy, with EAZ schools able to provide advice and guidance within the LEA and beyond.

The impact of the EAZ on standards of attainment

In its initial action plan the EAZ set itself challenging targets for improving children’s results in SATs at 11 and 14 and in GCSE exams. Following a review by the DfES in 2000, targets for KS 1 were included in all its subsequent plans. Targets were agreed annually in joint visits by the Project Director and the LEA’s link advisers, and were reported on annually to the Zone’s Action Forum. Initially, when the bid for EAZ funding was drawn up, it was predicted that standards in Zone schools would improve steadily year by year, gradually closing the gap between them and the LEA as a whole. The reality has proved very different and far harder to analyse, showing variations over time, the influence of changes in the tests, in the cohorts taking them and in the schools themselves.

Looking at KS 1 and taking 1999 as the base year, EAZ scores in writing and mathematics improved at a faster rate than the LEA’s for the five years to 2004. In writing the EAZ score improved from 72% to 74% and in mathematics from 79% to 87%, compared to a fall of 3% in the LEA’s writing score and an increase of 6% in mathematics. In reading, again at Level 2+, the LEA score increased by 2% compared to 1% in the EAZ. A more dramatic impact is apparent in boys’ writing where the EAZ results improved by 3%, compared to a fall in the LEA of 5%. Looked at overall, it is clear that in KS 1, Zone schools have successfully narrowed the gap with their LEA neighbours over the life of Gillingham Partnership.

In KS 2, at Level 4+ over the same period, both EAZ and LEA English scores improved by 5%, maintaining the gap between them, although the EAZ produced a 2% stronger improvement in boys’ writing scores. In mathematics, LEA scores improved by 3% at Level 4+ from 65% to 68%. Once again, the EAZ demonstrated a faster improvement in mathematics where scores increased from 57% to 64%, a gap closing of 4% overall.

The Zone’s one secondary school experienced a number of significant challenges during its membership of the EAZ. These were wide-ranging and included the effects of the closure of Gillingham College, staff shortages in key areas, budgetary difficulties and a major re-organisation during 2004. Looked at across the years between 1999 and 2004, standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of KS 3 (at Level 5+) have shown no real improvement. Although reaching a peak in 2003 the percentage of pupils achieving at least 5 A*-C grades fell to its lowest level in 2004, although A* to G grades remained strong.

On balance, this data analysis shows that in significant respects the EAZ did indeed meet its key objective of raising standards of achievement in the majority of its schools and at a faster rate than in non-EAZ schools. It also demonstrates that in spite of considerable additional resources, English scores in KS 2 have remained stubbornly slow to change whether in response to EAZ or LEA or combined initiatives. It is to be noted that this same period of time saw a plateauing of scores at National level too.

At the level of individual schools there is considerable variation in results. Some showed steady improvement over the life of the EAZ, others a steady decline in spite of considerable support. The picture is complex, reflecting a number of factors, including high pupil mobility, shortcomings in leadership and management, weaker teachers in key areas, and teacher shortages.

It may also be the case that the real impact of the EAZ is yet to be seen. With many of its key projects focusing upon building sustained improvements in teaching and learning, it is likely that their effect upon standards overall will take longer than this report allows and will show themselves in 2005 and beyond. Even though as yet not fully supported by hard data, what is clear is that the improvements in literacy and numeracy made by the majority of children from sometimes very low starting points, has often been dramatic and that the EAZ has had a significant and lasting influence on their ability to learn and to continue learning.

Appendix 1

Schools and business partners

Arden Junior School
Barnsole Infant School
Barnsole Junior School
Brompton Westbrook Primary School
Byron School
Danecourt Community School
Featherby Infant School
Featherby Junior School
Napier Community Primary School
Richmond Infant School
Saxon Way Primary School
Skinner Street Primary School
Twydall Infant School
Twydall Junior School
Woodlands Primary School
New Brompton College (formerly Upbury Arts College)

Akzo Nobel Chemicals Ltd
Amicus Group
Arriva
BAE Systems
CDEC
CTS Direct
Football in the Community
Gillingham Football Club
HSBC
Inner Gillingham Fraternal of Churches
Connexions Careers Management (Kent & Medway)
Kent Institute of Art & Design
Lloyds of London
L Robinson & Co (Gillingham) Ltd
Medway Chamber of Commerce
Medway Council
Medway Education & Business Partnership
Medway News and Standard
Mid Kent College
Learning & Skills Council
Nat West plc
RHM Frozen Foods Ltd
Sainsbury's (Savacentre)
Southern Water/Scottish Power
The Printers
University College, London
University of Greenwich
University of Kent
Workers' Educational Association

Appendix 2

Key Stage results 2000-2004

Key Stage 1 results (level 2+)

	1999		2004	
	LEA	EAZ	LEA	EAZ
Reading				
All	80	75	82	76
Boys	75	71	77	73
Girls	86	81	87	80
Writing				
All	80	72	77	74
Boys	75	65	70	68
Girls	86	79	84	80
Maths				
All	84	79	90	87
Boys	83	78	88	86
Girls	86	81	92	88

Key Stage 2 results (level 4+)

	1999		2004	
	LEA	EAZ	LEA	EAZ
English				
All	67	59	72	64
Boys	62	54	65	57
Girls	72	67	78	72
Maths				
All	65	57	68	64
Boys	67	57	67	63
Girls	63	59	69	69

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

I certify that I have audited the financial statements on pages 25 to 38 under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain fixed assets and the accounting policies set out on pages 29 and 30.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Auditor

As described on page 7 the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. The Trustees are also responsible for the preparation of the Trustees' Annual Report. My responsibilities, as independent auditor, are established by statute and I have regard to the standards and guidance issued by the Auditing Practices Board and the ethical guidance applicable to the auditing profession.

I report my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and directions made thereunder by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and whether the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. I also report if, in my opinion, the Trustees' Annual Report is not consistent with the financial statements, if the Forum has not kept proper accounting records, or if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit

I review whether the statement on page 8 reflects the Forum's compliance with HM Treasury's guidance 'Corporate governance: statement on the system of internal control'. I report if it does not meet the requirements specified by the Treasury, or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information I am aware of from my audit of the financial statements. I am not required to consider, nor have I considered whether the Trustees' Statement on Internal Control covers all risks and controls. I am also not required to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Zone's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

Basis of audit opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with United Kingdom Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Trustees in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Zone's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by error, or by fraud or other irregularity and that, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I have also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Following the passing of the North Gillingham Education Action Zone (Dissolution) Order 2005, the Zone ceased to exist with effect from 9 January 2005. Accordingly as explained in the Trustees' report and Note 1 to the accounts, the financial statements have been prepared on the basis that the Zone is no longer a going concern. My opinion is not qualified in this respect.

Opinion

In my opinion

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Gillingham Partnership EAZ at 9 January 2005 and of its incoming resources, application of resources and cash flows for the period then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and directions made thereunder by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills; and
- in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

John Bourn
Comptroller and Auditor General

22 March 2005

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London SW1W 9SP

Statement of Financial Activities for the period ended 9 January 2005

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds		Fixed assets	Total	Total
		£000	DfES £000	Other £000		2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Incoming resources							
DfES grants receivable	2,3	0	628	48	0	676	947
Other government grants receivable	4	0	0	27	0	27	67
Private sector contributions	5	27	0	0	0	27	376
Public sector contributions	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other income	6	20	0	0	0	20	4
Amortisation transfer		0	0	0	0	0	0
Total incoming resources		47	628	75	0	750	1,394
Resources expended							
Costs of generating funds	7	0	5	0	0	5	11
Net incoming resources for charitable application		47	623	75	0	745	1,383
Charitable expenditure							
<i>Costs in furtherance of charitable objectives</i>							
Provision of education	7	27	79	26	0	132	837
Education support costs	7	0	262	154	0	416	99
Grants payable	7	0	149	0	0	149	241
Management and administration	7	0	123	0	0	123	147
Total charitable expenditure		27	613	180	0	820	1,324
Costs of termination of operations	9	0	63	0	0	63	0
Total resources expended		27	681	180	0	888	1,335
Net incoming resources before transfers		20	(53)	(105)	0	(138)	59
Transfers between funds		(28)	(34)	62	0	0	0
Net movement in funds		(8)	(87)	(43)	0	(138)	59
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April 2004		8	87	43	0	138	79
Fund balances carried forward at 9 January 2005	18,19	0	0	0	0	0	138

The Statement of Financial Activities analyses all the capital and income resources and expenditures of the EAZ during the period and reconciles the movement in funds. There is no difference in the net movement of funds stated above and its historical equivalent.

All items dealt with at the Net Movement in Funds for 2004-2005 relate to discontinued operations.

Further analysis of the income and expenditure for the period is shown on page 26 and the overall financial position at the period end is summarised in the balance sheet on page 27.

The notes on pages 29 to 38 form part of these accounts.

Income and Expenditure Account for the period ended 9 January 2005

	Notes	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Income			
DfES EAZ recurrent grant	2	628	873
DfES EAZ fixed asset grant	2	0	0
Other DfES grants	3	48	74
Other government grants	4	27	67
Private sector contributions	5	27	376
Public sector contributions	5	0	0
Other income	6	20	4
Amortisation/deferred income		0	0
Total income		750	1,394
Charitable expenditure			
DfES EAZ grant expenditure	7	613	854
Other DfES grant expenditure	7	55	41
Other government grant expenditure	7	125	57
Depreciation	7	0	0
Other expenditure	7	27	372
Total charitable expenditure		820	1,324
Costs of generating funds	7	5	11
Costs of termination of operations	9	63	0
Total resources expended		888	1,335
(Deficit)/excess of income over expenditure		(138)	59
Net transfers to/from funds			
DfES EAZ fund	18	(87)	(73)
Other restricted funds	18	(43)	124
Unrestricted funds	19	(8)	8
Net movement in funds		(138)	59

The Income and Expenditure Account is derived from the Statement of Financial Activities on page 25 which, together with the notes to the accounts on pages 29 to 38 provide full information on the movements during the period on all the funds of the Forum.

All items dealt with in arriving at the excess of income over expenditure for 2004-2005 relate to continuing operations.

The Forum has no recognised gains and losses other than those included in the above results and therefore no separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has been presented.

The notes on pages 29 to 38 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet as at 9 January 2005

	Notes	9 January 2005 £000	31 March 2004 £000
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	0	0
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Current assets			
Stock	14	0	0
Debtors	15	0	13
Cash at bank and in hand		0	200
		<u>0</u>	<u>213</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	0	75
Net current assets		<u>0</u>	<u>138</u>
Net assets		<u>0</u>	<u>138</u>
Funds			
Restricted funds	18	0	130
Unrestricted funds	19	0	8
		<u>0</u>	<u>138</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Forum on 6 December 2004 and signed on its behalf by

Patrick Mulcahy
Chairman

4 March 2005

Cash Flow Statement for the period ended 9 January 2005

	2004-2005	2003-2004
	Note	£000
Operating activities		
<i>Receipts</i>		
Recurrent EAZ grant received from DfES	628	873
Capital grant from DfES	0	0
Other government grants	75	141
Private sector sponsorship	0	4
Public sector sponsorship	0	0
Other receipts	32	(10)
	735	1,008
<i>Payments</i>		
Staff costs	254	731
Other cash payments	682	175
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	24 (201)	102
Returns on investments and servicing of finance		
Interest received	1	1
Interest paid	0	0
	1	1
Capital expenditure		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	0	0
Receipts from sale of tangible fixed assets	0	0
Transfer of tangible fixed assets to schools	0	0
	0	0
Financing		
Deferred grant received	0	0
	0	0
(Decrease)/increase in cash in the period	(200)	103

Notes to the Financial Statements

1 Accounting policies

Format of accounts

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards in the United Kingdom, the Statement of Recommended Practice ('SORP 2000'), 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' published in October 2000 and the Charities Act 1993. A summary of the principal accounting policies, which have been applied consistently, is set out below.

Basis of accounting

The Gillingham Partnership Forum came to the end of its statutory five-year life on 9 January 2005. The Trustees therefore consider it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on the basis that the Forum's activities were ceasing.

Recognition of income

The annual EAZ grant from the DfES, which is intended to meet recurrent costs and, where specified, to purchase fixed assets, is credited direct to the income and expenditure account as restricted income. Sponsorship monies are credited direct to the income and expenditure account as unrestricted income, as the Forum has discretion in how to apply such contributions to meet its objectives.

Contributions in Kind

In accordance with the Accounts Direction provided by the Department for Education and Skills an income value is attributed to Contributions in Kind from business. These contributions are brought into the accounts at a reasonable estimate of their value to the Forum in the period in which they are receivable. As all gifts in Kind represent expenditure which the Forum would have had to incur; a notional expenditure charge is recorded equal to the value of the Contribution in Kind to the Forum.

Grants receivable

Where other grants have been received, these are credited to the income and expenditure account as restricted income.

Investment income and interest receivable

Investment income and interest receivable are included in the financial statements on an accruals basis, and are stated inclusive of related tax credits.

Management and administration

Management and administration costs include expenditure on the administration of the charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, and an appropriate apportionment of indirect costs.

Allocation of cost between direct provision of education and other expenditure

In accordance with the charities SORP expenditure has been analysed between charitable and other expenditure. The only activity undertaken by the EAZ is the operation of The Gillingham Partnership EAZ. Items of expenditure which involve more than one cost category have been apportioned on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis for the cost category concerned, these include

Cost category

Staff costs

Basis of apportionment

Time spent

Tangible fixed assets

There are no tangible fixed assets (items costing more than £2,500) that have been acquired since the Forum was established.

Leased assets

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the income and expenditure account as incurred.

Resources expended

Items are included as direct charitable expenditure where, in the view of the Forum, the activities relate to staff costs incurred when in direct contact with pupils.

Funds structure

Funds have been designated for restricted and unrestricted purposes. Fund balances existing immediately prior to the Zone's closure were transferred to Medway LEA to meet outstanding liabilities.

Taxation

The Forum is an exempt charity and as such is exempt from Income and Corporation taxes under the provisions of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. The cost of Value Added Tax incurred by the Forum has been included in the Income and Expenditure Account.

Pensions

The full cost of the Forum's pension contributions on behalf of its employees is recognised in the year those contributions are made. The Forum made contributions to the following schemes on behalf of its employees

Teachers' Pension Scheme	£5,869
Local Government Pension Scheme	£8,720

2 DfES EAZ grant

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
DfES grant received in period	628	873
Carry over from previous period	(44)	(63)
<i>Less</i>		
Amounts due from DfES	0	0
Amount used to purchase fixed assets	0	0
Total grant available to spend	584	810
Spent in the period	681	854
Funded from General Fund	(97)	(44)
Maximum permitted carry over		
The Trustees have not calculated a maximum permitted carry over in 2004-2005 as the Zone is no longer a going concern.		76
Excess grant to surrender	0	0

3 Other DfES grants

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Excellence challenge	42	46
Gifted and talented summer schools	4	9
Teachers' threshold	2	17
Easter school	0	2
	48	74

4 Other government grants

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Children's fund	16	30
New opportunities fund	11	37
	27	67

5 Business contributions

	Cash 2004-2005 £000	In Kind 2004-2005 £000	Total 2004-2005 £000	Total 2003-2004 £000
Private sector contributions				
Medway Education and Business Partnership			0	24
Medway News & Standard			0	19
CDEC Limited			0	13
BAE Systems			0	3
Provident Finance			0	1
Dockside Outlet Centre		0	0	1
Chapel Press			0	1
Medway Chamber of Commerce			0	1
Other private sector bodies			0	203
Other individuals		27	27	110
	<u>0</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>376</u>
Public sector contributions				
Public sector bodies			0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>376</u>

The figures for 'Other Individuals' above are for individual volunteers' time and do not include any contributions from individual businesses.

6 Other income

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Interest receivable	1	1
Sundry income	19	3
	<u>20</u>	<u>4</u>

7 Total resources expended

	Staff costs £000	Depreciation £000	Other costs £000	Total 2004-2005 £000	Total 2003-2004 £000
Direct provision of education	132	0	0	132	837
Education support costs	0	0	416	416	99
Grants payable*	32	0	117	149	241
Management and administration	73	0	50	123	147
Costs of generating funds	0	0	5	5	11
Costs of termination of operations	44	0	19	63	0
	<u>281</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>607</u>	<u>888</u>	<u>1,335</u>
Of which					
DfES grant expenditure	167	0	446	613	854
Other DfES grant expenditure	9	0	46	55	41
Other government grant expenditure	34	0	91	125	57
Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0
Other expenditure	27	0	0	27	372
Costs of generating funds	0	0	5	5	11
Costs of termination of operations	44	0	19	63	0
	<u>281</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>607</u>	<u>888</u>	<u>1,335</u>

* In 2004-2005 the Forum did not pay any grant to schools that exceeded 5% of total charitable expenditure.

8 General expenditure

Included in expenditure in the income and expenditure accounts and in other costs above are

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Educational supplies and services	544	174
Occupancy costs	4	9
Supplies and services	48	41
Operating lease rentals	3	4
Auditor's remuneration	6	4
Trustees' expenses	0	0
Ex-gratia payments	0	0
Miscellaneous	2	0
	<u>607</u>	<u>232</u>

9 Costs of termination of operations

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Staff costs arising from Zone closure	40	0
Cost of post-Zone services provided by nominated successor body	2	0
Amounts transferred to nominated successor body to meet residual Zone liabilities	20	0
Transformation consultancy	0	0
Schedule of dilapidations	1	0
	63	0

10 Staff costs

The average number of persons (including senior postholders) employed by the EAZ during the period expressed as full time equivalents was

	2004-2005	2003-2004
Management	1	1
Administration	2	2
Teachers	2	4
Total employees	5	7

Staff costs for the above persons

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Wages and salaries	143	268
Social security costs	13	24
Other pension costs (see note 17)	14	30
Costs of termination of operations	44	0
Total staff costs	214	322

The Staff Costs above include the costs of staff directly employed by the EAZ only and exclude any costs in note 7 for staff costs paid by grants to schools.

Costs of termination of operations comprised retention payments of £10,056, redundancy costs of £29,637 and residual liabilities of £4,251 to be met by the successor body.

One employee earned more than £50,000 during 2004-2005. The total emoluments of this employee were in the following range

	2004-2005	2003-2004
£50,001 - £60,000	1	0
£70,001 - £80,000	0	1

11 Emoluments of Trustees

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Emoluments of Trustees	0	0

The Trustees of the Forum did not receive any payment from the Forum other than the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses incurred in the course of their duties.

Travel and subsistence expenses reimbursed in the period to 9 January 2005 totalled £191.

Travel and subsistence expenses were paid to two Trustees during the period.

Interests in transactions

There were no payments during the period in which a Trustee had an interest.

12 Trustees' and officers' insurance

The Forum has arranged insurance cover through Medway Council to protect Trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Forum business. The insurance provides cover up to £1,000,000 on any one claim.

The Forum also insures against any losses of money or goods resulting from fraud or dishonesty by Forum employees through cover provided by Medway Council. The insurance provides cover up to £250,000.

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £000	Computer equipment and software £000	Total 2004-2005 £000	Total 2003-2004 £000
Cost				
<i>Acquired since incorporation</i>				
At 1 April 2004	0	0	0	0
Capital expenditure	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0	0
At 9 January 2005	0	0	0	0
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2004	0	0	0	0
Charged in period	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0	0
At 9 January 2005	0	0	0	0
Net book value				
At 9 January 2005	0	0	0	0

The net book value at 9 January 2005 represents fixed assets used for

	Furniture and equipment £000	Computer equipment and software £000	Total 2004-2005 £000	Total 2003-2004 £000
Charitable purposes				
Educational provision	0	0	0	0
Support services	0	0	0	0
Management and administration	0	0	0	0
Other purposes				
Fundraising	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0

Source of funding for assets acquired

	Total 2004-2005 £000	Total 2003-2004 £000
DfES EAZ grant	0	0
Other DfES grants	0	0
Other government grants	0	0
Private sector capital sponsorship	0	0
	0	0

14 Stocks

	9 January 2005 £000	31 March 2004 £000
Stationery	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	0	0

15 Debtors

	9 January 2005 £000	31 March 2004 £000
Prepayments	0	0
Sundry debtors	0	13
Amounts due from DfES	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	0	13

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	9 January 2005 £000	31 March 2004 £000
<i>Amounts falling due within one year</i>		
Taxation and social security	0	0
Sundry creditors	0	69
Amounts due to DfES	0	0
Accruals	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>
	0	75

17 Pensions and similar obligations

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Other pension costs comprise		
Defined benefit scheme - regular cost	15	30
Defined contribution scheme	0	0

The Zone's employees belong to the following pension schemes

Teachers' Pension Scheme (England and Wales)

Nature of scheme	Defined benefit
Zone's contribution rate in 2004-2005	13.50%
Zone's contribution in 2004-2005	£5,869

Contributions are actuarially valued. The Government Actuary's last report was March 2003 and was based on the period 1 April 1996 to 31 March 2001.

The Teachers' Pension Scheme is an unfunded multi-employer scheme. As such the Zone is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets or liabilities of the scheme on a consistent and reasonable basis.

Kent County Council Pension Scheme

Nature of scheme	Defined benefit
Zone's contribution rate in 2004-2005	11.10%
Zone's contribution in 2004-2005	£8,720

Contributions are actuarially valued. The date of the last full actuarial valuation was 31 March 2004 at which date the scheme was 90% funded.

The Kent County Council Pension Scheme is a multi-employer scheme. As such the Zone is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme on a consistent and reasonable basis.

18 Restricted funds

The incoming funds of the EAZ comprise the following balances of grants to be applied for specific purposes

	Balance at 1 April 2004 £000	Incoming resources £000	Expenditure gains, and transfers £000	Balance at 9 January 2005 £000	Balance at 31 March 2004 £000
DfES recurrent grant	87	628	(715)	0	87
DfES fixed asset grant	0	0	0	0	0
Amortisation transfer	0	0	0	0	0
Other	43	75	(118)	0	43
	<u>130</u>	<u>703</u>	<u>(833)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>130</u>

DfES EAZ recurrent grant must be used for the normal running costs of the EAZ including salaries and related costs, overheads, repairs and maintenance and insurance. The EAZ is allowed to carry forward up to 10% of the grant for programme expenditure and 2% of grant for administrative expenditure.

19 Unrestricted funds

	2004-2005 £000	2003-2004 £000
Brought forward at 1 April 2004	8	8
Excess of income over expenditure	(8)	0
Carried forward at 9 January 2005	<u>0</u>	<u>8</u>

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 9 January 2005 are represented by

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2004-2005 £000	Total 2003-2004 £000
Tangible fixed assets	0	0	0	0
Current assets	0	0	0	227
Current liabilities	0	0	0	(89)
Deferred income	0	0	0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>138</u>

21 Capital commitments

	9 January 2005 £000	31 March 2004 £000
Contracted for, but not provided in the accounts	0	0
Authorised by Trustees, but not yet contracted	0	0

22 Lease commitments

	9 January 2005 £000	31 March 2004 £000
<i>The payments which the Forum is committed to make in the next period for operating leases</i>		
Within one period	0	3
One to five periods	0	0

23 Contingent liabilities

In the event, during the period of the Funding Agreement, of the sale or disposal by other means of any asset for which a DfES grant was received, the Forum shall, if it does not re-invest the proceeds, repay to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills the same proportion of the proceeds of the sale or disposal as equates with the proportion of the original cost met by the Secretary of State.

Upon termination of the Funding Agreement, whether as a result of the Secretary of State or the Forum serving notice, the Forum may repay to the Secretary of State sums determined by reference to

- The value at that time of the EAZ's assets held for the purpose of the Forum; and
- the extent to which expenditure incurred in providing those assets was met by payments by the Secretary of State under the Funding Agreement.

As at 9 January 2005 there were the following contingent liabilities (£nil at 31 March 2004)

- Costs of termination of operations

The Zone closed on 9 January 2005 at which point retention payments of £10,056, redundancy costs of £29,637 and residual liabilities of £4,251 arose. Service level agreement with LEA for services to be provided as successor body £1,992. Other costs include £660 for dilapidations to meet landlord's requirements.

24 Reconciliation of net (outgoing)/incoming resources to net cash (out)/inflow from operating activities

	9 January 2005 £000	31 March 2004 £000
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources	(138)	59
Interest received	(1)	(1)
Depreciation	0	0
Deferred grant released to income	0	0
Profit/(loss) on disposal of fixed assets	0	0
(Increase)/decrease in stocks	0	0
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	13	36
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(75)	8
Net cash (out)/inflow from operating activities	(201)	102

Accounts Direction given by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, with the approval of the Treasury, in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act

- 1 The Education Action Zone shall prepare accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2000 and subsequent financial years comprising
 - a a Trustees' Report;
 - b a statement of financial activity and an income and expenditure account;
 - c a balance sheet;
 - d a cash flow statement; and
 - e a statement of total recognised gains and losses,including such notes as may be necessary for the purposes referred to in the following paragraphs.
- 2 The accounts shall give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year, and the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.
- 3 Subject to this requirement, the accounts shall be prepared in accordance with
 - a generally accepted accounting practice in the United Kingdom (UK GAAP), including the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting by Charities. Forums shall not adopt Financial Reporting Standard, Small Entities;
 - b the disclosure and accounting requirements contained in 'The Fees and Charges Guide' (in particular those relating to the need for appropriate segmental information for services or forms of service provided) and in other guidance which the Treasury may issue from time to time in respect of accounts which are required to give a true and fair view;insofar as these are appropriate to North Gillingham Education Action Zone and are in force for the financial year for which the statement of accounts is to be prepared.
- 4 The statement of financial activity, income and expenditure account and balance sheet shall be prepared under the historical cost convention. Assets and liabilities shall be included in the balance sheet at the following amounts
 - a fixed assets at cost (or valuation) less an appropriate provision for depreciation;
 - b fixed asset investments at market value;
 - c current assets (other than investments) at the lower of cost and net realisable value; and
 - d liabilities at their settlement value.
- 5 The value of contributions from business, both assets and services, should be brought into account at a reasonable estimate of their value to the Forum, i.e. they should be valued at what it would have cost the Forum to have purchased the required asset or service itself.
- 6 This direction shall be reproduced as an appendix to the accounts.

Signed by the authority of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

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