

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR SCHOOL** (addition to the Toolkit -2/5/05)

Additional information to support schools to complete the “Characteristics of Your School” section of the SEF (please refer first to Toolkit – Section 2- first page.)

As reminded at the Toolkit seminars this section appears relatively straightforward but should be completed with caution and possibly after completing the main body of the form.

Some of this section may have been completed when you open up your interactive SEF. Please check the information. It is expected that it is kept brief more detail and evidence being provided (referenced) in appropriate sections.

### **There are 5 sections to this part of the form**

#### **1a. Main characteristics of the learners.**

Remember: You are writing about the characteristics of your learners, not what you do to support them.

In this section the school should identify:

-The make up of the school’s intake-the breakdown of groups of learners and their particular needs, identify any particular aids /barriers to achievement (which you intend to write in more detail in achievement section):

- Change in schools’ population /stable group,
- Identify those who perform better/less well than the school’s main group,
- How the school strives to include all -vulnerable groups –eg. looked after children,
- Include turbulence factors and their impact,
- Area of deprivation / affluence,
- Refer to importance to seek views of stakeholders to ensure that your perception is accurate

#### **1b. Distinctive aims /special features of your school**

- Main vision /purpose –how this is agreed /shared, particularly with stakeholders.
- Mission statement message,
- Stable staff, strong leadership-effective evaluation of activities
- Identify any particular status –specialist school, Early Years units, sixth form provision, EAZ
- Specific projects: healthy school, eco status, integrated curriculum

#### **1c. Context or other issues acting as aids / barriers to raising performance – for each refer to impact on attainment.**

Attainment on entry at each phase- how this impacts on overall.

When completing this section it may be helpful to think of this in terms of:

Resource: Aids/Barriers – buildings, people, equipment

Training: Aids/Barriers – involvement of universities, HLTAs, etc.

Community: Local factors that aid or impinge on learning e.g. parental aspirations; youth culture;

Some examples include:

-Transfer and transition projects

-Inclusion in leadership project, involvement in APPG group, network learning, cluster projects, master-classes, business mentoring, right to read, university support, National Academy for Gifted and talented Youth membership (NAGTY),

-SEN intake, include information about the SEN record and how school % relates to figures nationally /locally,

**1d. Additional characteristics** – about which you want to draw inspectors' attention

-Strengths in curriculum - enrichment focus-

-Innovative practice –remodelling, timetabling

-National/local initiative involvement- pilot projects

**1e. Main priorities that reflect the context in which you work**

-Main features of School Strategic Development Plan (SSDP- in OFSTED terms the single plan which inspectors use to assess whether the school has accurately identified its priorities)

- Bullet point summary of the section. On the few examples on the internet a general evaluative comment is welcomed here to round up section. Eg “the school’s evidence base demonstrates the success of practice to date but we are not complacent and strive to achieve even higher”.