The Government have studied underachievement in disadvantaged children in primary schools, secondary schools and further education over a period of twenty years, with reports published in 1993, 2003 and 2013.

Although the attainment of children has risen over this period of time in all three sectors, there are still significant differences between those who are not disadvantaged and those who are. There are also real differences in different parts of the country.

The report is very detailed with a wealth of data and discussion; it examines the reasons for disadvantage:

- poor housing
- violence and drug abuse
- poor-quality shopping areas, often boarded up
- graffiti, litter and vandalism
- dental and health problems in very young children
- high levels of crime including racially-motivated attacks in some areas
- poverty and high unemployment

It looks particularly at what schools and teachers can do to improve the attainment of disadvantaged children:

- rigorous monitoring of data for feedback, planning, intervention and support
- ensuring access to outstanding teaching which is inspirational and motivates children to succeed
- strong, visionary leadership in schools
- working with parents to increase engagement and expectations

In addition it looks at what schools can do to support specific groups, eg teach boys organisational skills and perseverance.

These findings clearly have strong implications for all teachers.