

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

MEETING, 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2019

Present – Councillors Cunliffe (Chairman), Ayub, Bagnall (as deputy for Councillor Newall), Connor, Dean, Fletcher, Heslop, McGeown, Murray, Sherrington and Walsh

Co-opted Member

Reverend Canon Dr Bracegirdle – Church of England Diocese Representative

Also in attendance

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Councillor C. Wild   | - Executive Cabinet Member – Wellbeing                    |
| Mr P. Rankin         | - Assistant Director, Performance, Planning and Resources |
| Ms G. Whitehead      | - Secondary Improvement                                   |
| Ms D. Butler         | - Primary Improvement                                     |
| Ms H. Shearer        | - Start Well  |
| Ms M. Wallace-Bannon | - Virtual Schools   |
| Mrs. S. Bailey       | - Principal Democratic Services Officer                   |

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gibbon, Khurram and Newall

Councillor Cunliffe in the Chair

## **18. ANNE GORTON**

The Chairman informed the Committee of the recent sad death of Anne Gorton.

The Committee observed a minute silence in her memory.

## **19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved - The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2019 were submitted and signed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Councillors Ayub and Khurram in the list of attendees.

## **20. MONITORING REPORT**

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which monitored the progress of the decisions taken at previous meetings of the Committee.

Information on pupils with special educational needs and disabilities in mainstream schools by Ward was circulated.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

## **21. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Borough Solicitor submitted the Work Programme which had been formulated following the workshop session in June, 2019 and would guide the work of the Committee over the course of the Municipal Year.

It was anticipated that each Scrutiny Meeting would support the key priorities of the Department with progress and effectiveness being monitored throughout the year.

Resolved – (i) That the 2019/20 Work programme, as now submitted, be approved.

(ii) That all reports and presentation for future meetings be included with the agenda.

## **22. DIVERSITY DELIVERY MODELS**

Mr Rankin gave an update on personal health and social education in schools and summarised the deliberations of the Children's PDG at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2019, the minutes of which were attached to the agenda.

Members were advised that the legislation would come into force in September, 2020 and that presentations had been received at the PDG from secondary and primary school heads on how they were working towards its implementation and sharing good practice.

The Headteacher from Essa Academy had given a detailed presentation on the work being undertaken at Essa Academy as an early adopter School in implementing the new guidelines from January, 2020. He had also agreed that members would be welcome to visit the schools to examine the curriculum in this regard.

The primary school representatives had explained how they were working collaboratively to develop best policy and practices.

It had been agreed that a further meeting of the PDG would take place in due course to discuss progress.

Resolved – (i) That the update be noted; and  
(ii) That a list of early adopter schools be provided to members of the Children's PDG as previously agreed (minute 2(ii) of the Children's PDG refers).

## **23. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES**

Mr P. Rankin gave a presentation on educational outcomes and learning together with performance information as at Quarter Two, 2019/20.

The presentation provided detailed statistical information on Bolton's performance against national indicators and statistical neighbours in terms of school performance, pupil performance, schools judged good or better, pupils achieving a good level of development at EYFS, pupils achieving expected standards in reading and writing and mathematics and Key Stage 2, average attainment and progress 8 score per pupil, GCSE performance, NEET and not known status, achievements for vulnerable groups and virtual school performance.

Ms Shearer, Ms Whitehead, Ms Butler and Ms Wallace-Bannon gave presentations to supplement the slides. They provided further information in relation to the following:

EYFS performance:

- Bolton's Good Level of Development (GLD) had decreased by 0.2% to 67.3% - due to a Government pilot to revise the Foundation Stage Early Years Profile for 2021 one of Bolton's highest performing schools did not submit GLD data to this set - this accounted for the 0.2% drop in this year's data which would mean Bolton's static trend was in line with the GM and regional (68.9%) static rates;
- the attainment gap had narrowed for the 1037 children with English as an Additional Language (60.6% GLD);
- the 363 children with SEND 22.9% achieved a GLD;
- the 15% attainment gap between children receiving Free School Meals and all children in Bolton was in line with the national figure;
- Communication and Language development remained a priority area for early years performance;
- specific gap narrowing projects for Literacy, Phonics and Mathematics were being delivered in targeted areas; and
- early interventions service in Start Well Centres were continuing to be delivered to support early communication and language development and to support parents in their understanding of early education.

### Key Stage 2 Performance:

- attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 over the last 3 years was relatively stable but for the first time in 4 years the combined attainment measure was below the national average - this was due to a dip in reading outcomes in 2019;
- 62% of pupils reached the expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths combined, down from 66% in 2018;
- however, pupil progress across KS2 in 2019 continues to be positive in each of reading, writing and mathematics and above the national average of 0.

### Priorities 2019/20:

- continued use of data analysis to identify primary schools that may be vulnerable to an Ofsted category of concern;
- implementation of the School Improvement Framework and the provision of continued support and challenge for primary schools;
- ensure primary schools have access to high quality, regular school improvement support and challenge through the SLA;
- provision of targeted CPD to further support the precision teaching of reading and to foster a love of reading for all children;
- support for the moderation of teacher assessments.
- ensure leadership teams were well prepared for the revised Ofsted Inspection framework from September 2019; and
- foster links with the Maths Hub and English Hub to ensure primary schools benefitted from the funded training and development available.

### GSCE Performance:

- BLP – Bolton Learning Partnership – Collaboration between Secondary Heads & Bolton Council;

- Action Plan Focus – Leadership, Teaching and Learning and Intervention;
- school to school Support;
- Joint Professional Development – at all levels;
- Professional Partners – Stretch & Challenge; and
- sharing and developing best and next practice

In relation to NEET and not known performance:

- reduction in Not Knowns;
- successfully bid for ESF NEET Programme – new provision;
- opportunities for young people from New Town Centre Developers;
- Active member of Bolton WBL Network; and
- Connexions Organise Year 11 Futures 4 me event

Following the presentation, members made the undermentioned comments/observations:

- the nature of inspections under the new Framework and any outcomes – officers advised that feedback from schools that had been inspected was that it was an intense two-day process which was fair and followed the Framework closely with a specific focus on curriculum and delivery;
- the impact on the reduced funding for early years;
- the use of voluntary data to examine individual cohorts and assess where need was;
- praise for special schools who achieved good or better standards;
- the potential budgetary difficulties facing schools who were required to buy in services to make improvements - schools often worked collectively to help each other;
- the significant wholesale changes to the secondary curriculum have had an impact on performance;
- the benefits of praising and acknowledging progress and achievement of Looked after Children throughout their entire school lives;
- the measures in place to ensure a smooth transition from primary to secondary schools;

- the key stage 4 LAC figures – it was explained that previous figures were exceptional and that although recent figures had reduced, they were in line with target levels; and
- a dip in levels, particularly reading, at Key Stage 2 compared to statistical neighbours.

Resolved – That Mr Rankin, Ms Whitehead, Ms Shearer, Ms Butler and Ms Wallace-Bannon be thanked for their informative presentations.

### **23. MEMBERS BUSINESS**

The Committee received the minutes of other meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:

- the Executive Cabinet Member for Children held on 4<sup>th</sup> November and 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2019; and
- the Children's Policy Development Group held on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.

Resolved – That the minutes of the various meetings be noted and that a list of early adopter schools be provided to members of the Children's PDG as previously agreed (minute 2(ii) of the Children's PDG refers).

(The meeting started at 6.00pm and finished at 7.00pm)

F8

**NOTES**