

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 13TH NOVEMBER, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors J Elliott, C Gruen, P Latty,
K Mitchell, M Rafique, K Renshaw,
A Sobel, B Urry and F Venner

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr A Graham, Church Representative (Church of England)
Mrs J Ward, Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)
Mrs J Hazelgrave, Parent Governor Representative (SEN)
Mrs A Craven, Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote, Teacher Representative
Ms K Jan, Teacher Representative
Ms S Hutchinson, Early Years Representative
Ms T Kayani, Young Lives Leeds

39 Late Items

In accordance with her powers under Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair agreed to accept the following late information:

- Agenda item 7, Raising Educational Standards in Leeds – Updated versions of the Ofsted handbook and Ofsted framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement. (Published by Ofsted on 11 November 2014) (Minute No. 43 refers)

Revised versions were not available at the time of agenda despatch.

40 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

41 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor A Lamb and Co-opted Member Mr E Britten.

42 Minutes - 16 October 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2014 be approved as a correct record.

43 Raising Educational Standards in Leeds- Learning Improvement

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development and the Director of Children's Services submitted reports providing written evidence to inform the first session of the scrutiny inquiry into learning improvement services in Leeds.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Leeds for Learning, A strategy for learning improvement, June 2013
- Draft self -evaluation report of school improvement services (September 2014)
- Handbook for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement, May 2013 and November 2014
- The framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement, May 2013 and November 2014

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:

- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Councillor Jane Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Gail Webb, Head of Learning Improvement
- Kevin Paynes, 11-19 Leadership and Management Lead
- Anne Fell, Senior School Improvement Adviser
- Kim Porter, Senior School Improvement Adviser
- Sara Harris, Senior School Improvement Adviser
- Marcia Harding, Inclusion Lead
- Jancis Andrew, Head of the Virtual School for Looked After Children
- Joan Tattersall, Behaviour & SEN Inclusion Lead
- Gemma Whawell, Acting head teacher at Thorner Primary School
- Simon Flowers, Principal at Carr Manor.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The three accountability frameworks.
- Understanding learning environments through relationships, local intelligence and data.
- Traded Services, including the provision of support, advice and guidance, bespoke packages of support. The Board were advised about the different types of support provided, how available services are communicated and the level of 'buy in' from secondary and primary schools. The Board sought clarity regarding the quality of support for newly qualified teachers and were advised that this has been reviewed and improved.
- Leeds Learning Partnership and the training and development packages available. Advance membership packages which focus on closing the gap, using pupil premium on English and maths subjects.

- Teaching School Alliances and the support provided to schools by specialist leaders in education. The need to provide a co-ordinated approach to improvement through alliances and the Learning Improvement team.
- The establishment of Maths Hubs in neighbouring authorities. Some Leeds schools are already receiving support.
- School to school support and the example of support provided to Wetherby High School by Carr Manor. The Board were appraised of the action taken and the benefits achieved and planned through this partnership.
- Advice and guidance for Academies and Free Schools, lack of powers of intervention, the importance of maintaining effective relationships and the new regional schools commissioner.
- Statutory intervention and the Local Authority school categorisation and monitoring cycle. The difficulties of intervention with vulnerable schools due to Ofsted categorisation. The acting head teacher of Thorner primary school provided a summary of her experience of Local Authority support through intervention and the beneficial impact that provided.
- The evidential importance of strong leadership within schools and the need for this to be clearly understood by School Governors in the recruitment process. The Board decided that this merits further debate.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- a) Noted the documented information provided and presented verbally and agreed to adjust terms of reference to incorporate additional areas for debate.
- b) Acknowledged the role of partnership working and sector led school to school support in the provision of support, challenge and intervention in Leeds.

44 Work Schedule

A report was submitted by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which detailed the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the current municipal year.

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) work schedule for 2014/2015 and the Executive Board minutes for 15 October 2014 were appended to the report.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) noted the content of the report and agreed the revised work schedule.

45 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 18 December 2014 at 9.45am in the Civic Hall, Leeds (Pre meeting for Board Members at 9.15am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.20pm)