

SCHOOL STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 8 July 2009

Present: Councillor S Clarke (Chair)

Councillors F Doyle

Apologies

Mrs M Cain

M Clarke

1 QUORUM

The Sub-Committee did not have a quorum. However, the members present felt it would be appropriate to hear the reports of the officers and make recommendations, as necessary, that could be ratified by the Sub-Committee at a later date (subsequently agreed as 17 July at 2.00pm).

2 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Stuart Bellerby, Strategic Service Manager - Secondary and Lifelong Learning (Learning & Achievement) in the Department of Children's Services, who was attending his first meeting of the Sub-Committee.

3 SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

Stuart Bellerby reported that there were currently no secondary schools in Ofsted categories. 12 (55%) out of the authority's 22 secondary schools were graded as 'outstanding', only one other authority in the North West (Trafford) being better placed. The national average for outstanding schools was 13%. 7 of the authority's secondary schools were graded as 'good' and 3 as 'satisfactory'.

Recommended – That the Sub-Committee record its thanks and appreciation to all those concerned for this achievement.

4 SECONDARY SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS APRIL 2009 - JUNE 2009

The members received a summary of the outcomes of recent Ofsted inspections of secondary schools. The two schools had been graded as follows:

Outstanding Schools

Wirral Grammar School for Boys

Pensby High School for Girls

Stuart Bellerby remarked upon the various actions taken in support of the schools, where necessary. Mark Parkinson, Head of Learning & Achievement reported that there was some more work needed around post-16 provision. Letters were now sent to all schools following Ofsted inspections.

Recommended – That the reports be noted and the Sub-Committee record its congratulations to both schools.

5 PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

Marie Lawrence, Strategic Service Manager (Early Years & Primary Education) reported that there had been no further published reports of primary schools in Ofsted categories since the last scrutiny committee.

Recommended – That the report be noted.

6 PRIMARY SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS - MAY 2009 - JUNE 2009

The members received a summary of the outcomes of recent Ofsted inspections of primary schools. The various schools had been graded as follows:

Satisfactory schools

Riverside Primary School

Good schools

Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre

Overchurch Junior School

Mount Primary School

Marie Lawrence described the various actions taken in support of the schools, where necessary and remarked that Riverside Primary School had made rapid progress in coming out of Ofsted categories. She pointed out that both Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre and Overchurch Junior School had been recognised as having some outstanding features.

Recommended – That the reports be noted and the Sub-Committee record its appreciation of these results.

7 NATIONAL CHALLENGE UPDATE

Stuart Bellerby provided further details of Wirral's National Challenge Plans. The Plan was aimed at ensuring that at least 30% of pupils in every secondary school achieved at least 5 A*-C grades, including English and mathematics, at GCSE by 2011. Of the six schools in Wirral's programme, all were on line to reach their target. Mark Parkinson explained the levels of additional support which was being provided.

Recommended – That the update report be noted.

8 1 - 1 TUITION

Marie Lawrence submitted a report upon the 1 - 1 Tuition initiative which was part of an overall intervention strategy for those pupils who were not making the progress they needed. By 2010-11, it was aimed that, nationally, 300,000 pupils a year would

receive 1-1 tuition in English and 300,000 pupils each year would receive 1-1 tuition in mathematics. 1-1 tuition provided funding to enable a child to have 10 x 1 hour sessions of additional tuition from a qualified teacher. Tutors were paid £25 per hour and funding was allocated to a Local Authority based on the projected numbers of pupils who would fulfill the criteria.

She reported that the initiative had been well received in both primary and secondary schools. The first tranche involved 230 places from the Spring Term in primary KS2 and it had now been rolled out into KS3 and 4 of secondary schools. Funding for two places was offered to all schools and most schools wanted to take part. The offer for 1 – 1 tuition had been made to all schools, including special schools. The Authority would complete a full evaluation in the autumn when all of the SATs data was confirmed and there would be some indication as to the success of the first tranche of pupils.

Funding for the scheme was until 2011 and depending on its success the Authority would examine how it could be sustained in the context of its own long term intervention strategy.

Recommended – That the report be noted and a report on the initiative be submitted to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

9 **GAINING GROUND**

Stuart Bellerby submitted a report updating the Sub-Committee on the national Gaining Ground initiative and its implications for Wirral secondary schools. This was part of the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) plans to make every school a good school following on from National Challenge.

Two schools had been identified and these would be offered support through School Improvement Partners of 4 additional days. Each school would also identify a partner school outside of the Local Authority which could then provide additional support. It was suggested that one of the 4 days' training could be set aside for the governors.

Recommended – That the report be noted.

10 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Recommended – That the next meeting be held on Wednesday 25 November, 2009 at 6.00pm and that further meetings be arranged in consultation with the Chair and party spokespersons.

11 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair referred to the recent awarding of the OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List to Mr Rick Austin, Head Teacher of Higher Bebington Junior School, for his services to education.

Recommended – That the congratulations of the Sub-Committee be accorded to Mr Austin.