

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FORUM

TUESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2017

PRESENT: Councillors David Evans (Chairman), Natasha Airey (Vice-Chairman) and Marion Mills

Officers: Wendy Binmore, Kevin McDaniel and Clive Haines

APOLOGIES

None.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2017 be approved.

UPDATE ON SUMMER CAMP PUPIL PREMIUM

Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children's Services explained to the Forum that Clive Haines, School Leadership Development Manager would be the lead officer for the School Improvement Forum. He stated that two colleagues, Rita Vasa and Bronwyn Hamilton Brown had left the Borough due to an ending contract and retirement and that that meetings reports were based on the work they had carried out. The School Leadership Development Manager was leading on work on schools for 2017-2018 as there was no longer a need for a large contract focusing on pupil premium. Schools were being invited to the next meeting of the Forum with the School Leadership Development Manager taking the lead on the area covered. The Chairman expressed his thanks and appreciation to Rita Vasa and Bronwyn Hamilton Brown for all their hard work, he commented they spoke with passion and dedication in improving the outcomes for children in the Borough.

The School Leadership Development Manager gave the forum an update on the outcomes of the summer camp that came about following work done by Bronwyn Hamilton Brown. The Borough felt it needed to bring children together to enjoy experiences that they might not have been able to do if the summer camp had not run.

The decision was made not to run a residential summer camp and run the trial in Maidenhead only; 30 children attended over three days. The 30 children attended summer camp and Woodlands and they loved it; it was set up like a forest style school. On the second day, St Edwards School carried out sculpting, spray painting and body casts at the summer camp and on the third day, the children enjoyed an outdoor centre where they took part in canoeing and kayaking. Feedback received from a head teacher on the three days was very positive. The School Leadership Development Manager had also received positive feedback from a parent and child.

The outcome was that 30 children made friends from similar backgrounds away from their own schools. The schools selected the pupil premium children that were likely to most benefit from the summer camp and who would not normally be able to access those activities.

The Chairman stated the summer camp was something concrete that came into fruition following the previous meeting of the School Improvement Forum which took place in June 2017. He added the Forum needed to look at rolling out the activity across the Borough. It sounded like the activity was right and that it was good to have at the start of the summer holidays but, it could also work later in the holidays too. The Director of Children's Services stated it worked to have it at the start of the school holidays as it fit well with the youth workers. In 2018, his team wanted to build on this year's successes further and extend the camp to children that were known to Youth Services. Schools were happy for the Borough to lead on the camp but, he wanted to build on the initiative and take it further. The School Leadership Development Manager confirmed that if the camp went wider, smaller groups worked so that would limit the number of children from each school which could take part. The Merry Rixman Charity funded the Maidenhead trial of the summer camp and would be happy to fund again. However, if it was to be opened up in other areas, it would need funding for other areas to be found.

Councillor Mills stated it was very good that the head teacher attended as it was so important for the word to spread. The experience would circulate amongst other head teachers which would then be able to nominate children from their schools too. The Chairman said some of the feedback stated that two of the boys that attended found out they were both moving up to Desborough Boys School so that helped with the transition. The Director of Children's Services stated the team had learnt, when they talked to parents about a holding a three day residential camp, that it would be quite scary for the children to stay away from home. They also recognised that written feedback was not the only form of feedback that should be looked at, verbal feedback was just as important. The next step was to get schools to provide staff, charities to provide grants for transport and equipment and then the Borough could use its resources to get the pupils to attend.

The Director of Children's Services confirmed that there had been no press coverage as he wanted to make sure the summer camp went well, and also there may have been some families that could be sensitive about why their children were attending the camp. The team would be looking at ways to reduce the stigma of being from a pupil premium family. The School Leadership Development Manager stated the summer camp was a big success and some of the children were upset that it only lasted three days.

JULY 2017 REPORT ON PUPIL PREMIUM AT THE END OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children's Services, and Clive Haines, School Leadership Development Manager, provided Members with a brief overview of the Pupil Premium Report for the academic year 2016-17. Members note that the Royal Borough had commissioned a Pupil Premium lead for the academic year from September 2016 to July 2017. Between those dates, all schools across all phases were offered one day support, from their core allocation, which aimed to improve academic outcomes across the curriculum and also improve the life chances for those children from families on a low income or from a disadvantaged background.

In addition, the role encompassed developing cross school working to share good practice, analyse common barriers, develop workable and sustainable strategies to overcome, eradicate or reduce those barriers, develop workable and sustainable strategies to overcome and to eradicate or reduce those barriers using available expertise from within the local authority and the school themselves. Training was held to raise awareness of the Borough's academic situation to help understand the characteristics of pupils who were financially impoverished, and their subsequent life chances, and to provide practical ideas were taken up; and training took place in a number of schools across the Borough. The training was also made available to new teachers and School Direct trainees.

Whilst the outcomes for the Borough's most vulnerable pupils at an Age Related Expectation (ARE) was well below their peers, the fact was that good or favourable outcomes for the more able disadvantaged was exceedingly low. The figures for combined reading, writing and maths

at greater depth in both key stage one and two was below 2%, which was dramatically less than their peers. It appeared that there had been a drive to improve standards to attain ARE; however, that drive had not been extended beyond that to attain at the higher levels. Data analysis for groups of schools in the Windsor and Maidenhead areas showed that was a common issue.

Many of the children who were eligible for Pupil Premium funding were from homes with less than £17k per year income. Often, because of that, they were less likely to experience opportunities that enrich their lives, which limited the experiences they could draw from which, in turn, limited the knowledge and understanding they could bring to some aspects of the curriculum notably, writing. Activities such as the summer camp event and an Aspiration event were organised in the summer term for those judged to be the most in need of enrichment by their schools.

The School Leadership Development Manager stated that the team had been analysing school websites for data and with the school leadership teams. A lot of schools were working on their pupil premium strategy and were looking at gap analysis; moving forward schools needed to recognise the need to keep their focus on pupil premium. The School Leadership Development Manager added it had been decided it was best to apply for funding through the School Improvement Fund which targeted pupil premium children and looked at how the borough assessed them within the curriculum.

Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children's Services stated in the past. Local authorities had been responsible for school improvement. However, with academies, they were responsible for their own school improvement. In 2017, central government had removed funding for school improvement so the Borough had kept a small fund to continue the ongoing work and a bid could be submitted to the School Improvement Fund.

A bid could only be submitted to the School improvement Fund for schools that were in need of improvement. Local Authorities were not able to apply for the funding, schools had to submit the bids themselves. Therefore, the School Leadership Development Manager was working with teaching schools to produce a bid which was additional to resources they already had to help continue the work with pupil premium children. The School Leadership Development Manager was expecting a decision on the submitted bid to be made between November and December 2017.

The School Leadership Development Manager stated that Link Advisors were carrying out head teacher reviews and pupil premium was an objective they would have to complete as part of that. He stated he had to go out to other Boroughs to help strengthen the submitted bid as that grouped three local authorities together. That would give the bid its best chance of receiving funding and that money would then be distributed between teaching schools who would then feed it into other schools to help pupil premium children.

The Director of Children's Services stated at the end of 2017, 81% of schools had appointed a Pupil Premium Champion which equated to almost all schools connected with the pupil premium agenda. Mishmash and Connections were carrying out work and had set objectives for 2018 where the targets would move from awareness to embedding initiatives. Data analysis was expected to show the areas that needed to be focused on such as maths.

The School Leadership Development Manager confirmed that transition workers had the relationship with schools to start work on transitioning children and to monitor those transitions more closely. Transition Workers were also Link Advisors so they had a close relationship with the Borough and cluster schools. The Director of Children's Services stated the primary curriculum had changed three years ago and schools were now getting more consistent with their results.

The Chairman stated the table of schools changing showed that most school that had not engaged were in Ascot and had their own programme but, there were 13 other academies that

were doing their own imitative. When he subtracted those 13 in Ascot from those that had their own programme in place, it left eight schools that had no plan, support or programme in place for pupil premium. The Director of Children's Services stated there were three or four that did not respond to the questionnaire and the team knew which schools they were and they were in contact with them to find out why.

The Chairman said he liked to have targets to aim for and one of those was to run the summer camp again in 2018. The Director of Children's Services responded the obvious measure was academic performance; a summer camp showed there was something in it. Googler were staging events and the Borough had offered to pay for tickets for pupil premium children. He added the team were making sure Pupil Premium Champions kept networking and that had shown how they were working to drive momentum on the ground. The Chairman said networking was critical as they were dispersed within schools so they should have had targets around how well their networking was going. The Director of Children's confirmed there was some really good practice out there so it would be an idea to invite those Champions to the Forum to discuss their best practice and what worked for them.

The Chairman enquired as to whether or not the Aspiration Day could take place more often. The Director of Children's Services stated it was not something that was actively being planned as yet but, individual schools could still be running them. He added the pupil premium programme was in the very early stages. At Cabinet in March 2017, the Borough measured how well pupil premium children were doing compared to all children in the Borough. RBWM was the top 20% Borough overall but, came out very low for pupil premium children so, the Borough set a three year target to improve. New data had since been received and the national good level of development had raised by 2%. The Borough had raised their level by 8% in disadvantaged children. However, until the national statistics were published, the Borough did not know how it fared compared to the national figures.

The Director of Children's Services explained that gaps had been narrowed in key stage one and two for disadvantaged children. Windsor and Maidenhead were in the first year of measures so figures would not be confirmed until January 2018. Indications showed the Borough's disadvantaged children were doing better than the national average.

Members noted the progress made and looked forward to an update at a future meeting.

EYFS PUPIL PREMIUM

The School Leadership Development Manager stated Rita Vasa worked with a group of professionals to develop children in an Early Years setting. Books were distributed to all pupil premium children. The School Leadership Development Manager had reached out to teaching nurseries and schools and they were looking at barriers and how to overcome them. He met with teaching schools the previous week and located pupil premium children. Officers were then allocated to their settings and they would be attending future meeting after forming an action plan which would then update the Forum.

The School Leadership Development Manager confirmed he was working with private and state maintained nurseries and child minders. Speech was a major issue so officers targeted that but, it was also about upskilling professionals so he was looking at training such as speech and language skills and getting Pupil Premium Champions in those settings. The director of Children's Services said the team had carried out work in schools and larger settings which focused on speech and reading. Now they needed to reach other settings such as child minders; he was hoping teaching nurseries would reach out.

The Director of Children's Services stated the SEND Fund for Early Years would be tabled for the next School Improvement Forum agenda to find how nursery settings helped to improve and recognise additional help and those masked by poverty. In terms of when Cabinet would be updated on the work being carried out, there was a streamlined performance management framework that summarised the work and the results and that would be taken to Cabinet.

March 2018 would bring the review of exam results and that could also be included in the performance management framework.

Members thanks officers for their work and noted progress made.

The meeting, which began at 5.00 pm, finished at 6.00 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....