

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FORUM

MONDAY, 12 JUNE 2017

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

Officers: Wendy Binmore, Rita Vasa, Clive Haines, Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown and Kevin McDaniel

### APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mills.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

### MINUTES

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2017 be approved as a true and correct record.**

### EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Rita Vasa, Senior Adviser (Early Years & Primary) stated that the Teaching School Alliance were concerned with the low outcomes of some pupil premium children. They still felt there were low numbers of pupil premium children in Early Years education but, children that there were more children eligible for pupil premium that had not yet been identified. Once identified, schools could get more funding to support them.

The Senior Adviser (Early Years & Primary) said she had looked at early years champions to promote excellent practice; and good practice for pupil premium children was also good practice for all children. An event had been held at Alwyn Infants for networking. The hall for the event was full and a lot of the attendees were confirming that pupil premium was a much higher priority for schools.

The HMI conference found that when they carried out inspections, teachers did not know how pupil premium funding was provided and spent. At the pupil premium event, that was highlighted. Something very keen to be aware of was the spirit of foundation stage which must be upheld such as mental health issues; so if they could build a mental health focus into the foundations, that would make more resilient children in the future.

Literacy was very demanding for children with limited vocabulary and language skills. Teaching Assistants (TAs) were very influential for children so they were being upskilled. Senior speech and language practitioners had set up sessions for afternoons to help with upskilling TAs and were already being viewed as beneficial. One book that was highlighted was 'Interacting or interfering' by Julie Fisher which explained if child development was misunderstood, a TA or other professional could end up interfering when it was not needed. The Senior Adviser (Early Years &

Primary) was keen to promote that book. Lplan training was also running which specialised in speech and language in preschool and reception class children.

Members noted that teachers preferred to be networking and discussing together with champions and giving presentations. At the last networking meeting, practitioners discussed future planning with cluster schools.

The Senior Adviser (Early Years & Primary) stated that the six weeks holidays in the summer were a significant time. Following the holidays, a Reception class teacher went on to take the same class in year one said she could not believe how much progress was lost during the holidays. Teachers were doing a lot of work on transitions. Members noted that two or three schools that were visited had looked closely at data and the impact such as phonics where parents felt they could not get into school. Practitioners had been encouraging them to go into schools and use the facilities; where that was happening, there was an uplift in children's levels where there parents went into schools.

The network group was much better for practitioners to get together and hold discussions. Workshop ideas were shared across schools and they had a big impact, with activities such as outdoor learning. The Chairman stated there were lots of good things going on but they did not know if the activities were making a difference. He asked how success was being measured. Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children's Services said RBWM had amongst the smallest numbers of disadvantaged pupils, making comparisons difficult: when looking at statistics at that stage, in 2016, 141 out of 150 other authorities were faring better than the Royal Borough. When numbers were released in the autumn, the Borough would be building case studies to illustrate the picture of education for pupil premium children in the Borough.

Helen McHale from the Nursery Federation listed interventions at nursery age that the federation were working on which included:

- Self-esteem
- Confidence
- Routines
- Nurture group targeted at specific children and parents for four weeks to extend children's learning by doing simple things at home
- Chatter packs to take home
- Making up playdough
- ELKLAN training
- Stay and play sessions where the parents stayed for the first hour and played with their children.

The activities had all made a huge difference. The Director of Children's Services stated the activities were in line with what Ofsted were looking for and he wanted to see the activities introduced in schools. He added the relationship between school and home was very positive and the programme was very supportive for them.

## SUMMER ACTIVITIES PLAN - EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES

Clive Haines, School Leadership Development Manager stated the Youth Service, due to external fundraising, had spaces for pupil premium children to take part in activities that pupil premium children did not normally have access to and would include children aged 8-13 years old. Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown explained there were six schools working together aiming to run summer activities in the Borough. One group

had stepped back in 2017 due to lack of planning time but, other groups were looking at forest schools and Kayaking which would hopefully take place over a weekend in July.

The four LA officers had applied for funding through the Spoore, Merry & Rixman charity which, on first application, appeared to be received positively. It was hoped this would be a dynamic weekend with outdoor activities combined with literacy, cooking and residential activities the children would enjoy. It was stated that wider opportunities could be restricted for less affluent families and this had a knock on effect educationally.

The Director of Children's Services explained that often, it was a cohort of one child in a group that qualified for pupil premium and these activities gave them a chance to take part and be included in activities so they were not socially excluded. Officers were aiming for six schools working with a number of children each; it was the first year this was being trialled.

Councillor Airey asked if there were any Councillors that were also governors of schools that could encourage schools to take part. The School Leadership Development Manager confirmed that next year, the youth service would take the programme forward and expand the programme. The chairman stated it would capture the children that did not take part in summer activities and it was right to start the scheme small and build on it to grow the programme in the coming years. The Director of Children's Services stated some academy chains already ran summer activities but, the programme run by youth services was to target a specific cohort of children. Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown confirmed that an Aspiration day at Reading University on 19 June 2017 for 45 children involving three Maidenhead schools was being held; financed by Cllr Mills.

Furthermore, The School Leadership Development Manager confirmed there were applications to Youth Services for two activities per week and they had been signposted to pupil premium families; Youth Services kept the School Leadership Development Manager updated on the uptake of places. He added that Youth Spaces would be promoting the programme to schools. Councillor Airey suggested promoting the scheme for next summer in the spring edition of Around the Royal Borough. The School Leadership Development Manager stated that children in care were automatically provided with two free spaces.

Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown confirmed it was not possible to get the BCA to offer the same Aspiration event as Reading University in the summer term but, she was hoping the BCA would offer an opportunity to visit in 2017/2018. Councillor Airey suggested alternatives for outreach programmes, considering Legoland with an engineering prospective.

#### PUPIL PREMIUM PROJECT UPDATE

Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown explained that Reading University were holding an Aspiration Day event on 19 June 2017 from 10am – 2pm. Children would see the campus and would be aimed at children in year five. The children had been selected not only on pupil premium criteria, but also if they were on the periphery, low income families and children who might not be academically minded.

Councillor Airey said it was nice to see the Aspiration Day going ahead as usually events like that were aimed at the academically gifted and talented. She added it would be good to run events like this yearly or termly. Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown explained when completing gap analysis, she looked with schools at how children could explore sport or construction and matching schools with activities such as 'wear what you want to be' days. Councillor Airey stated somewhere such as Legoland had catering and construction routes with an excellent education and apprenticeships programme. Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown stated she looked at characteristics of learning and specific barriers to learners. Sometimes their role models were not going to be rich and it was those children that could be chosen for those events.

Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown stated Windsor group schools had moderation on writing and marking. She was looking at greater depth for maths and looking at assessment. There was not necessarily commonality and there was still some analysis to do on those with tracking year on year. There was a company she was looking at to trial non-verbal reasoning packs with three schools. The Chairman stated there was a need to pool all the information together showing progress and compile it into a report for the next meeting. The Director of Children's Services said it would make sense to report academic progress but an annual report would not be reported to Cabinet till March 2018. He suggested an interim report with the results so far for the next meeting.

The Director of Children's Services stated 55-60% of schools had such a small cohort of children receiving pupil premium and there was no school that was not engaging with the Borough on data. Bronwyn Hamilton-Brown suggested including case studies and types of interventions required within the interim report. The Chairman said he wanted the good work the team were doing to be out there in the public domain.

### SCHOOL INSPECTION RESULTS

The Director of Children's Services stated the Borough tracked school progress all year round till the end of May 2017. All reports were inspected and moderated and the Borough maintained 84<sup>th</sup> position of outstanding or good schools. 19 schools in the Borough were outstanding and there were three free schools in the Borough which had no public inspections but they were to be visited in 2017-2018 which was likely to change the numbers.

Courthouse, who were previously rated as Good are now 'Requiring Improvement'; they are working with the Council to produce an action plan and bring the school standard back to good. It was noted that many of the improvements necessary were identified before inspection and were beginning to be implemented. Leadership teams were relatively new due to retirement and staff mobility.

The meeting, which began at 3.00 pm, finished at 4.30 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....