

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2018

Present:

Councillor Stone – in the Chair

Councillors Collins, Hewitson, Lovecy, McHale, Madeleine Monaghan and Sadler

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mrs B Kellner, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

Ms M Neall, Parent Governor Representative

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children's Services

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure

Margaret Cunningham, Manchester Schools Alliance (MSA) Lead Headteacher

Bernice Kostick, Headteacher, North Ridge High School

Lisa Vyas, Executive Headteacher, the Kingsway Trust

Sumayah Saadi, Member of the Youth Parliament and Manchester Youth Council

Natalie Dodd, Central Manchester Foundation Trust

Apologies:

Councillors Sameem Ali and T Judge

Mr L Duffy, Secondary sector teacher representative

Ms Z Stepan, Parent Governor Representative

CYP/18/36 Minutes

Decisions

1. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2018.
2. To receive the minutes of the Ofsted Subgroup meeting held on 26 June 2018.

CYP/18/37 School System

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided a brief overview of the school self-improving system in Manchester and how the Council worked in partnership with schools to ensure improving educational outcomes.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- School provision in Manchester;
- Ofsted outcomes and pupil outcomes;
- Manchester Schools Alliance (MSA);
- The Manchester School Improvement Partnership (MSIP);
- Manchester Teaching Schools; and
- The role of the Council in effective school improvement partnership working.

A Member provided feedback on the Committee's recent visits to Briscoe Lane

Academy and Cedar Mount Academy. She reported that the visits had focused on the work the schools had been doing to reduce the number of pupils being excluded and that Members had been very impressed with this work. She commented that on the visit to Cedar Mount Academy Members had not had an opportunity to take a tour of the school site and see the students and that she would like to do so in future. The Chair reported that local Ward Councillors, including himself, were planning to visit the school and that he could extend this invitation to other Members.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- To note that the Ofsted Subgroup had recommended that the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) and Damian Hinds, the Secretary of State for Education, be invited to a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee;
- Concern that three Manchester schools had been judged inadequate by Ofsted in the last 18 months and why, when a lot of support appeared to be available, were some schools drifting into the inadequate category;
- What was being done to improve the transition from primary school to secondary school; and
- Recognition that schools in Manchester had improved, in particularly in the primary sector.

The Head of School Quality Assurance and Strategic Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) informed Members that primary and secondary school partners were working together to improve the transition from primary school to secondary school including improving curriculum transition, particularly in relation to English and mathematics. Margaret Cunningham, MSA Lead Headteacher, informed Members that the MSA was working with the Council on this issue to identify and share good practice. She informed Members about a conference taking place in November which would provide primary and secondary school staff with the opportunity to explore good practice in relation to transition. The Chair asked whether Committee Members could attend the conference to which Mrs Cunningham responded that she would check with the Board.

Lisa Vyas, Executive Headteacher for the Kingsway Trust, advised Members that the introduction of the Curriculum for Life provided an opportunity to support transition as it helped children develop the softer skills they needed and spanned their education from 5 years of age through to 18.

The Head of School Quality Assurance and SEND outlined the support and challenge provided to schools in Manchester which were at risk of being judged as inadequate. She reported that a number of schools in this situation had successfully improved and avoided being judged inadequate, for example, through the provision of brokered support, but that details of this were not made public. Bernice Kostick, Headteacher of North Ridge High School agreed that this was the case. She also reported that it took time to turn around a school that was in decline. The Head of School Quality Assurance and SEND outlined the provisions within the Department for Education's Schools Causing Concern guidance, advising that the Council was limited in the intervention it could make, particularly if the school was an academy.

The Director of Education reported that there was a lack of clarity from the government on the role of the RSCs but that the Council was working with the RSC responsible for the north-west of England, Vicky Beer, and with local academies to identify ways to secure improvement of failing schools.

Decision

To invite Vicky Beer, the Regional Schools Commissioner, and Damian Hinds, the Secretary of State for Education, to a future Committee meeting.

CYP/18/38 Manchester Curriculum for Life

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided an update of the progress made on developing a Curriculum for Life for children and young people in Manchester in response to this being identified as the top priority for children and young people in the national 'Make Your Mark' ballot. The report outlined the plans to pilot the approach developed from September 2018 to April 2019 and the key actions for this next phase of work.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- The background to the development of the Curriculum for Life;
- Progress made so far;
- The skills and challenges included in the Curriculum for Life;
- Engagement with children, young people, schools and settings; and
- Proposals to pilot the approach set out in the report.

Sumayah Saadi, a Member of the Youth Parliament and Manchester Youth Council who had been involved in the development of the Curriculum for Life, welcomed that the Council had listened to the voices of young people who had voted for a Curriculum for Life through the 'Make Your Mark' ballot.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- To welcome this initiative and the work undertaken, as set out in the report;
- The importance of skills such as debating and dealing with failure;
- How the evidence of pupils' achievements could be recorded without it reinforcing the gap between high-achieving pupils and other pupils and to request that, through the pilot project, officers look at who wasn't engaging with it and what the barriers were;
- Had any conversations taken place with the organisers of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme which helped young people to develop similar skills;
- How had the pilot schools been selected and did they represent the diversity of Manchester schools;
- The impact on transition from primary to secondary school if the scheme was, as suggested, used flexibly by different schools; and
- The importance of engaging with and getting support from parents.

The Director of Education informed the Committee that the method of recording evidence would be explored through the pilot and that it was important that this was sustainable. Natalie Dodd from Central Manchester Foundation Trust reported that officers had looked at the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, including engaging with young people who had taken part in it, and that the Curriculum for Life would run alongside this, and would involve young people who would not sign up for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure informed Members that this would be a universal scheme in a format that was accessible to all Manchester children. Ms Dodd advised that the recording of evidence would need to be done in a way that young people could reflect on and learn from. Sumayah Saadi emphasised the importance of young people understanding the skills that they had developed and reported that the Curriculum for Life would help young people to have a better awareness of their skills.

Natalie Dodd reported that the schools involved in the pilot had been selected from those which had expressed an interest in being involved but that it did include a diverse range of schools. The Director of Education advised Members that a balance was needed in terms of how flexible the scheme was but the framework and the skills would remain the same so pupils transitioning from primary to secondary school would find the scheme familiar, even if there were differences in approach between different schools. Ms Dodd outlined the engagement work with parents and foster carers which would be taking place as part of the pilot project.

A Member informed the Committee about work the company Seetec was doing with young people who had struggled in the education system, encouraging them to have aspirations and to realise that they did have skills. She suggested that the Council might be able to learn from their experience. The Chair suggested he or the Member should raise this with the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Committee, whose remit included skills development for ages 16 and over.

Decisions

1. To thank Sumayah Saadi for her contribution.
2. To request an update report in 12 months' time.
3. To request that the Director of Education provide verbal feedback on the pilot at the Committee's meeting on 9 October 2018.

CYP/18/39 Early Years

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided an overview of the Early Years offer in the city, including outcomes in relation to the Early Years Delivery Model (EYDM) and outcomes for children at the end of the foundation stage profile. The report also outlined proposals which were currently being developed to implement the school leadership model in two areas of the city.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- The impact of the EYDM;
- Childcare provision;
- Outcomes for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS);

- School leadership of school readiness; and
- Strengthening the link between Early Help and Early Years.

The Director of Education reported that the Early Years outcomes within the report were based on 2017 data as this was what was available at the time of writing the report; however, she reported that she now had the 2018 data and this indicated that outcomes in Manchester had improved and that the gap between Manchester and the national average had very slightly reduced.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- What the challenges and gaps were in this area and what was being done to address these;
- Whether the Health Visitor role in the EYDM was working as well as it could;
- Why the take-up of developmental reviews reduced at 9 months and 2 years; and
- To welcome the improvements made to the quality of day care settings and childminders in Manchester.

The Director of Education reported that the key challenges were improving the take-up of developmental reviews at 9 months and 2 years and improving school readiness. She informed Members about a bid for funding to support schools and early years providers to work closely together on a piece of work to develop the skills children needed to be ready for school. The Early Years Service Manager outlined the EYDM's 8 stage assessment model, reporting that the earlier Health Visitor assessments took place at the family home but that the assessments at 9 months and 2 years old took place at a health centre or Sure Start Children's Centre and that this was the probable cause of the drop-off in the take-up of assessments. She advised Members that carrying out these assessments at the family home would impact on the capacity of the Health Visitor Service but that the Council was working with the Health Visitor Service, through the Commissioning Service, on how the take-up of these assessments could be improved. She outlined steps already being taken to improve take-up, including using the Early Years Outreach Workers to remind parents of their appointment and follow up with those who did not attend.

The Chair noted the work taking place to introduce the school leadership model in Gorton and Cheetham Hill. He requested that officers update him on progress in appointing schools to lead on this.

Decisions

1. To note the report.
2. To continue to monitor progress.

CYP/18/40 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained key decisions within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was

asked to approve.

Decision

To note the report.