

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Ofsted Subgroup

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2011

Present:

Councillor Carmody – in the Chair
Councillors Fisher, Keller and Reid

Mr D Arnold, Co-opted Member, King David's Schools
Mrs B Kellner, Co-opted Member, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

Apologies:

Councillor S Newman

CYP/OSG/11/07 Minutes

Decision

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2011 as a correct record.

CYP/OSG/11/08 Update on Victoria Avenue Community Primary School

The Chair asked for an update on Victoria Avenue Community Primary School, whose Ofsted report was considered at the last meeting. The school was rated as inadequate and the Council was supporting its application to become a sponsored academy.

The Quality Manager informed members that the school governing body has selected E-Act as the sponsor for their academy status. Of all the potential sponsors, the school's governing body agreed that E-Act were the clearest about improving the outcomes for the pupils. Victoria Avenue will continue to work closely with Pikefold and Crab Lane Primary Schools as a condition of their academy application. Members asked the Quality Manager to provide a briefing note for members to outline whom E-Act were.

A member referred to a group of schools in Gorton that had been grouped together to apply for academy status under the Government's plans for under performing schools to convert to academies. These schools included Gorton Mount and Wright Robinson College, both of which had significantly improved Ofsted inspection reports since they were put in this group. The member stated that both schools did not want to proceed with the group application to academy status. The schools had to work with Altrincham Girls School as part of this process.

A member asked whether the Council could intervene if the governing body of the school was against the decision. The Quality Manager said that the governing body of a school would have to agree to apply to become a sponsored academy. Members

requested an update on the progress of this application for academy status to the next meeting.

Decision

1. To ask the Quality Manager to provide members with a briefing note about E-Act.
2. To ask the Quality Manager to provide members with an update on the academy application for the group of schools in Gorton including Wright Robinson and Gorton Mount.

CYP/OSG/11/09 Ofsted Reports

The Subgroup commented on a range of Ofsted reports from inspections that had taken place since their last meeting.

A: Acacias Community Primary School

The school was inspected on 11-12 April 2011 and was rated by Ofsted as outstanding. The Inspection report recognised the strength of the leadership and the quality of the curriculum in particular. The Quality Manager added that the school had also identified the need for long term sustainability of leadership and it had invested in a strong middle management team.

Members were particularly impressed with the school's achievements in attainment especially as the school has to accommodate a diverse range of cultures and languages. Members were also impressed with the school's efforts to constantly make improvements to what is already outstanding provision. The subgroup agreed to write to Acacias Community Primary School to congratulate them on their achievement.

B: Abbey Hey Primary School

The school was inspected on 25-26 May 2011, was rated by Ofsted as inadequate and would be placed into special measures. The inspection report identified that pupils were not achieving as much as they could in school. There was insufficient good teaching and inconsistent marking of work. The report also highlighted that attainment results were below the national average. The

Since the inspection, the school Ofsted action plan had been approved and the Council has strengthened the governing body. The school was linked to a successful school in Bury and would work with them to improve standards. An action plan for improvements has been agreed with staff and the governing body.

Members were concerned about the lack of consistency in teaching standards in the school but they felt that low staff turnover and stability of the school teaching staff meant that they could turn the results round. Members were also concerned about the strength of the governing body, and sought assurance that it now had the capacity to implement the improvements. They acknowledged that there was a clear plan in place and they stressed the importance of the Council working with the school

to achieve this. The subgroup agreed to request an update on the school's progress at the next meeting.

C: Maudleth Road Primary School

The school was inspected on 6-7 April 2011 and was rated by Ofsted as 'outstanding'. The report recognised the strong leadership and management, which was a strong factor in the success of the school. Members noted that the range of early years activities was described as limited but that the school was already addressing this. They also noted that attendance was only rated satisfactory but it had improved on previous years. They agreed to write to the school to congratulate them on their achievement.

D: Wright Robinson College

The school was inspected 9-10 May 2011 and was rated by Ofsted as satisfactory. The report highlighted that the school has capacity to improve and that it has a very positive atmosphere for learning. The Council's School Effectiveness Officer, the Greater Manchester Challenge and assistance from Altrincham Girls School has helped the college to raise standards,

Members noted that the positive learning atmosphere and the good conduct of students, which was recognised by parents and carers of the school, was a good basis to move the school forward. The leadership of the school was strong but members acknowledged the need for all staff to support the changes for them to be successful. They noted that the school fell below the floor standards for the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more A-C grades at GCSE but they expected to see improvement in this year's results.

Some members were concerned that the inspection result did not reflect their understanding of the school. It was noted that members had agreed to bring an update on this academy status bid to the next meeting of the committee.

Decision

1. To write to Acacias Community Primary School and Maudleth Road Primary School to congratulate them for achieving an 'outstanding' rating in their Ofsted inspections.
2. To request the Quality Manager provide members with an update on Abbey Hey Primary School progress in implementing their improvement plan to the next meeting.

CYP/OSG/11/10 Selection of Reports

The subgroup discussed the reports that they would receive at future meetings and how these would be selected. A co-opted member suggested that all schools that received an "outstanding rating" and all schools that received an "inadequate" rating should be considered. The Quality Manager suggested that the subgroup may wish

to look at Ofsted reports by district so that the relevant School Effectiveness Officer could attend the meeting.

Following the discussion it was agreed that the key findings for all schools achieving the outstanding rating, and a range schools achieving a “good” rating would be reported to the subgroup for the district being considered. The subgroup will write to each of these schools to congratulate them on their achievement. The full report for all schools for the district that Ofsted had rated as failing or satisfactory could be considered. It was agreed that the next meeting would focus on the Central district due to the concerns raised about the Gorton schools application for academy status.

The subgroup also agreed to receive an update report on the revised Ofsted Inspection framework. The Quality Manager informed members that the revised framework would be implemented in January 2012.

Decision

1. To focus the next meeting on schools in the Central district.
2. To ask the Quality Manager to provide members with an overview of the revised Ofsted Inspection Framework.

CYP/OSG/11/11 Meeting Dates 2011/12

Members agreed the dates of the meetings for the rest of the municipal year.

Decision

To agree the following meeting dates for the Overview and Scrutiny Ofsted Subgroup for 2011/12

- Tuesday 22 November 2011 at 10am
- Tuesday 17 January 2012 at 10am
- Tuesday 13 March 2012 at 10am